

国家精品课程系列教材

中华文明与地方文化英文导读

Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture

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序

大学英语应用类课程系列教材是苏州大学英语教师多年来教学研究成果的结晶。为了更有效地提高中国大学生英语应用能力,大学英语教师们坚持不懈地学习和研究国内外外语教学前沿理论和研究成果,深入探讨外语学习成功的诸多因素,多视角地展开实验性教学研究。广大教师通力合作,理论联系课堂教学实践,从大学英语教学目标、课程设置、教材使用、教学方法、评估手段、教学对象、学习动机、学习策略等方面,广泛地展开了英语教学有效性的探索,并因此形成了本套系列教材。

随着我国基础英语教学水平的不断提高,大学阶段的英语教学应该更多地重视培养学生学以致用的意识,着重提高学生综合应用英语的能力,引导学生通过口头、书面、计算机网络等途径学习和运用专业知识,获取和交流信息,开展和表达创新性思维,以便他们成为直接参与 21 世纪全球科学技术与经济发晨的优秀人才。

基于我们对大学英语教学总目标的新认识,并结合近年来广大教师课堂教学实践的成功经验,我们编写了《英语口语交际》、《大学英语写作与翻译:生成及其转换》、《跨文化交际与地球村民》、《中华文明与地方文化英文导读》、《英语影视欣赏》、《医学英语入门》、《大学英语综合能力训练》系列教材,并着力打造以下五个方面的特色:

(1) 教材题材和体裁广泛,课文取材既体现语言的经典性,又平近

时效性;学生们既可以学到充满诗情画意的美文,又可以体验反映现代气息和幽默的当代谚语。

(2) 教材所承载的信息既反映了全球特色又表现了地方特色,尤其突出传播地方文化精华或某些学科专业知识;教材从课文到练习设计既注意满足当代大学生学习、生活、娱乐兴趣,又注意培养其思维的创造性、批判性以及深刻性。

(3) 教材练习的设计遵循二语习得的科学规律,力求创造条件以便学生展开由语言输入、大脑机制内化到语言输出的循环运用活动;学生语言运用范围普遍涵盖了从词汇与语块、单句与段落直到篇章的多重层面。

(4) 教材的编写博取多种外语教学法的长处,精心设计人际、人机途径的听、说、读、写、译语言运用练习,以求满足不同学生学习风格的需求;同时,任务型、项目型练习既注意锻炼学生的自主学习能力,又促进学生合作学习能力的发展。

(5) 教材的设计还充分利用外语学习中的学习评估作用,尤其强调过程性评估对促进学生学习和教师教学效果改善的作用,从而促进学生在学习和运用外语的过程中不断调整其学习计划、学习重点和学习策略。

毋庸置疑,本套系列教材既充分反映了国内外最前沿的外语教学理念,又及时吸取了来自课堂教学一线创新性实践的成功经验,为我国当代大学生创造了一个理想的英语学习和运用世界。

孙倚娜

2008年7月



Preface

When the Olympics opened on August 8, 2008 in Beijing, we saw Chinese civilization and national harmony being showcased. Here is what Western media were excited about: “The world sees China as it sees itself and as it wants to be seen by the world. The opening ceremony of the Olympics was about China’s historical achievements and its dreams of future success.” The rich Chinese cultural heritage and civilization demonstrated in the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics made the world fascinated.

China, an ancient and beautiful land with a long history, has not only nurtured countless generations of the Chinese people, but also created splendid civilization in philosophy, history, education, science and technology, ethics, morality, cultural identity, national character, life orientation, social order, folks and customs, which are also indispensable parts of the world culture. In the long historical development, the Chinese civilization has made unique contributions to the world.

Chinese civilization has a history over 5,000 years, and it is not possible for any single book to cover all the aspects. *Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture* only provides a general introduction, attempting to inspire further interest and exploration.

In the 21st century, the world has welcomed an era of new cultural integration, with different cultures accelerating their globalization processes.



Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture

As China needs to absorb the excellent aspects of the world cultures for its modernization progress, the world, whether the East or the West, also needs to take in Chinese cultural elements for further development. Also in the 21st century, China needs to know about the world more and the world needs to understand China better. The introduction of Chinese knowledge, culture and tradition will certainly help the world to have a better insight into China.

To introduce the Chinese culture and civilization to the world, college English teaching bears the responsibility. *College English Curriculum Requirements* stipulated the objective of college English teaching in the new century is "to develop students' ability to use English in an all-round way, especially in listening and speaking, so that in their future work and social intercourses they will be able to exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels and improve their cultural quality so as to meet the needs of China's social development and international exchanges".

Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture aims to develop college English learners' sustainable ability to use English in an all-round way. English in China is a foreign language, and English learning cannot be separated from the native culture. English teaching, whether in the form of listening and speaking instruction or in the means of reading and writing training, must be endowed with new, concrete and practical teaching materials and contents. The introduction of the Chinese cultural knowledge, including regional cultural elements, not only provides vivid and understandable teaching materials for college English learners, but also enables college English learners to accurately and properly express Chinese cultural information in both spoken and written channels.

Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture hopes to improve college English learners' cultural quality. As far as English learners' cultural

quality is concerned, two cultures are certainly involved at least, English culture and Chinese culture. Unfortunately, there exists obvious deficiency (some scholars use the term “aphasia”) in the instruction of the Chinese language and culture for college English learners. “Chinese education has become a problem not only in foreign language field, but also in all academic circles.” This deficiency makes, to some extent, Chinese English learners ignorant of proper Chinese cultural expressions, affects the cultivation of their translation ability, and hinders the improvement of their comprehensive cultural quality.

Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture expects to promote college English learners’ cross-cultural communication. Cross-cultural communication is the information exchange and dialogue between and among different cultures. Obviously, the introduction of English culture alone cannot meet all the needs of cross-cultural communication, because cross-cultural communication also means to promote to the world traditional Chinese cultural elements. To meet the needs of China’s social development and international exchanges, college English learners’ cross-cultural communication practice lies more in introducing Chinese cultural knowledge.

Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture in accordance with “institutions of higher learning should set their own objectives in the light of their specific circumstance”, introduces the highlights of the local culture, with an aim to provide college English learners with better opportunities for regional development and growth.

The compilers of *Highlights of Chinese Civilization and Local Culture* sincerely hope that the book will arouse college English learners’ greater interest in Chinese culture in their college study and have better cross-cultural communication performance in their future work and social intercourses.



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Part One

Chinese Civilization



Chinese Cylinder Seal

Chapter 1

GENERAL SURVEY

I. Geography

China lies in the east of Asia and west of the Pacific Ocean, backing the land and facing the sea. Covering one fourth of the Asian land area, or one fifteenth of that of the world, China starts in the north from the central line of the main channel of the Heilongjiang River, extending south to the Zengmu Reef of the Nansha Islands, with a north-south length of 5,500 km. Beginning in the east at the confluence of the main channels of the Heilongjiang and the Wusulijiang Rivers, China reaches the Pamier Plateau in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the west, with a east-west distance of 5,000 km.

China's topography varies in all types, including mountainous regions, plateaus, hills, basins, plains, Gobi, deserts, and caves, which are all typical and magnificent. The Qingzang Plateau, called "the roof of the world", is the highest step in China's three-step topography, descending gradually from the west to the east, with an average elevation of 4,000 m. Around the highest step are the Kunlun Mountain, the Qilian Mountain, the Longmen Mountain, and the Daliang Mountain. At the east edge of the low step lie shallow sea slopes which are no more than 200 m deep. Mount Qomolangma in the bordering area between China and Nepal is the highest peak on the

earth.

The whole country can be divided into three natural topographical districts: the eastern moist monsoon areas with running waters; the northwestern drought areas with a mixture of wind erosions, ice erosions and running waters; the Qingzang high and cold areas with ice cold and wind erosions.

China is one of the countries in the world which have the most rivers. There are over 1,500 rivers covering 1,000 km² in area. The most famous ones are the Yangtze River, the longest in China and Asia and the third longest in the world, and the Huanghe River (also called the Yellow River), the second longest in China. There are also many man-made rivers, of which, the Grand Canal is the oldest and the longest in the world. Starting from Beijing in the north and ending at Hangzhou in the south, the Canal, with a total length of 1,800 km, flows through Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shandong, Jiangsu and Zhejiang and connects the river systems of the Haihe River, the Huanghe River, the Huaihe River, the Yangtze River, and the Qiantangjiang River. The 2000-year-old Canal, as famous as the Great Wall, has played very important transportation and irrigation roles from the north to the south. China's rivers, by their flow circulation patterns, can be divided into external and internal rivers.

II. Nationality

China is a unified multi-national country. Ever since the ancient time, the Han nationality and the minority nationalities have altogether experienced historical ups and downs. Together these nationalities have developed this vast and fertile land, created the splendid Chinese history and culture, and made great contributions to the unification of China.

The current Chinese nation consists of 56 nationalities, of which, the Han nationality covers 91% of the whole population. The following are introductions of the Chinese minority nationalities.

1. Population and Distribution

Beginning from 1953, China has organized four large scale nationality identification investigations. By 1954, the Chinese government had identified 38 nationalities. Further to 1964, another 15 had been identified. The Geba nationality was identified in 1965 and Jinuo in 1979. In 2000, the total Chinese population was 1.26583 billion, of which, the Han nationality had 1.15940 billion (91.59%), and the minority nationalities covered 106.43 million (8.41%). Also, of the 55 minority nationalities, 18 had a population over 1 million. They were the Mongolia, the Hui, the Zang, and the Zhuang. There were also 15 minority nationalities, such as the Lili, the Wa, and the Fan nationalities, whose population was more than 100,000 but fewer than 1 million. Another 15 minority nationalities had a population more than 10,000 but fewer than 100,000, for example, the Brown, the Shala, and the Maonan nationalities were included. There were still another seven minority nationalities whose population was fewer than 10,000. They were the Menba, the Elunchun, and the Dulong nationalities were included. There were another 734,000 people whose nationalities were not identified. The minority nationalities, fewer than 10% of the whole population, were extensively distributed over the autonomous regions covering over 60% of the whole land.

Because of historical and geographical reasons, there was a sharp difference in population density between the minority nationalities and the Han nationality in the coastal areas. In general, the distributions of the Chinese minority nationalities have their own features.

Firstly, there are small but mixed inhabitations. The minority nationalities mostly live in the southwest, northwest, northeast provinces and autonomous regions. The 1,200 national communes, 120 autonomous banners, and 30 autonomous counties in five autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, Guangxi and Ningxia are the living areas of the minority nationalities. But in the above mentioned

areas also live many Han nationality people. For example, in Inner Mongolia, Guangxi and Ningxia, the population of the Han nationality exceeds the population of the minority nationalities. Similarly, the Han nationality living areas are also inhabited by many minority nationalities.

Secondly, there is extensive distribution. The minority nationalities mainly live in the western and frontier areas. The figures of the population census in 2000 indicated that all nationalities were evenly distributed in 30 provinces and regions, and 29 nationalities were distributed in all provinces and regions. 11 provinces and regions had 56 nationalities, which took up 35.5% of the total provinces and regions. The population census in 2000 indicated that the total minority nationality population in Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou and Xinjiang covered over a half of the whole minority nationality population.

(1) Religious Belief

Most minority nationalities have their own religious beliefs. In the long process of historical development, religions have had influence on the economies, cultures, customs and habits of the minority nationalities. Some minority nationalities collectively believe in a certain religion. For example, 10 minority nationalities believe in Islam, three of which are the Hui, the Uygur, and the Kazakh. Some other minority nationalities still follow some traditional rituals, including ancestor worships, totem, witchery, and Saman. Some of these are the Dulong, the Nu, the Jingpo, the Gaoshan and the Elunchun nationalities.

(2) Custom and Habit

The different geographical locations, religious beliefs, working ways and lifestyles have enabled the minority nationalities to have formed different customs and habits, which are demonstrated in food and drink, daily living, clothing, festival and entertainment.

The Zang nationality shows courtesy by presenting Hada and the Bai nationality shows respect by offering "three courses of tea". In food and drink, the Dong nationality prefers camellia oil tea. The Uygur

nationality drinks sugar-tea. The Zang nationality likes milk-tea and butter-tea. The Mongolian nationality drinks brick-tea, with salt and cow or sheep milk added. The Hui nationality avoids pork, donkey, mule, horse and dog meat. Generally they eat beef, mutton, chicken, and fish instead. The Miao nationality likes toast dog meat. The Uygur people have the practice of roasting mutton cubes.

The living architectures of the minority nationalities are differently featured. The bamboo building of the Dai nationality, the soil piled earthen house of the Yi nationality, the tent of the Mongolian nationality, and the screen walls of the Bai nationality all demonstrate the wisdom to coexist with the nature. Xishuangbanna is the famous land of bamboo, and the Dai people there create buildings made mostly of bamboo. The Mongolians reside on grasslands and live on animal husbandry, and their easily dismountable and portable tents are very suitable for migrating herdsmen to live in.

The national costumes are the representative parts in the national customs and cultures. Different nationalities have different costumes, which still show great differences in sub-faction, living location, gender, and age. The minority nationality costumes vary in style and type. Although the Yi nationality prefers deep-colored dress, they have more than a hundred varieties of dresses. The Miao nationality is said to have more than one hundred sub-factions and each sub-faction has its own styles of clothing. The Bai nationality people like white color, which they regard as noble and incorporate white jackets as part of their costumes. The Zang nationality is divided into pastoral and agricultural areas. In the pastoral areas, males and females all wear high-heeled boots or leather shoes, and sheep skin gowns. These long gowns have a collar and large sleeves. The male costumes of the Zang people in the agricultural area are basically the same as those in the pastoral areas, but women generally wear long black gowns, waist wraps, and sometimes as many as ten silk-knit flower belts to show their wealth.



All nationalities have their own traditional festivals. The Dragon Boat Festival of the Miao nationality and the June Festival of the Hani nationality are commemorative festivals. The Water Splashing Festival of the Dai, the Torching Festival of the Yi, the Zang Calendar Year of the Zang, and the Fast-Breaking Festival of the Hui, and the Uygur are all celebrative ones. The Flower Jumping Fair Festival of the Buyi, the Whipping Top Festival of the Zhuang, the Wrestling Festival of the Dong, the Dragon King Fair in the third month of the year of the Naxi, and the Nadam Fair of the Mongolia are all recreational festivals. At these festivals, congratulating, greeting, singing, dancing, and gathering to celebrate apart, some minority nationalities hold competitive activities such as sheep snatching, horse racing and harnessing, and wrestling.

2. Language, Character and Culture

Almost all minority nationalities have their own national languages, but of which only 21 have their own writing systems. The languages of China's minority nationalities belong to different language families. 19 minority languages belong to the Han-Zang family, including the languages of the Zhuang, the Zang, the Buyi, the Tai and the Dong, and 16 minority languages belong to the Artai family, including the Uygur, the Kazakh, and the Mongolia. The languages of the Wa, the Brown and the Deang nationalities belong to the South Asian family. The languages spoken by the Tadjik and the Russian minorities belong to the Indian European family.

The minority nationalities, in their long historical development, created many splendid and unique cultural arts. Cross-stitch work, embroidery, brocade weaving, wax printing, and ornament making are representative ones. The ornaments made by the Miao are bright, colorful and world famous, and the calligraphy and painting of the Zang are well-composed with oriental features.

The myths, legends, tales, ballads of the minority nationalities explore into the history and the society, folks and customs, and life and

habits. As early as at the beginning of the 17th century, the Zang nationality had documents written in their own language, whose contents were as rich as those of the Han nationality. The Dongba writing included such unique literary works as *the Dongba Classics*, and long epics of *the Epoch Creation*.

The minority nationalities have retained their traditional music and dances. Most minority nationalities are good at singing and dancing, and quite often they incorporate singing and dancing in daily work and their national festivals. The Miao nationality is very skilled in lusheng dance. According to historical documentation, lusheng, a musical instrument, has a history of over 3,000 years. From the very ancient time, when lusheng was played, it had always been accompanied by dance. Lusheng performances vary. In some areas, when lusheng is played, solo dances and *pas de deux* are common. But in the Miao area of the southeastern Guizhou, lusheng treading is magnificent in scale. While playing, Lusheng blowers skillfully do such difficult movements as standing upside down, rolling, suspending, pole climbing, and forming a pyramid.

The minority nationalities also have many places of both historic interest and scenic beauty, for example, the Potala Palace, the Zebeng Temple, the Sela Temple, the Gandan Temple in Lasha, the Taer Temple in Qinghai, the Thousand Buddha Hole at Kezier in Xinjiang, and the Buluotuo Relics of the Zhuang in Guangxi.

3. Nationality Policy

China is a multi-national country, and the unity among all nationalities is imperative. For the state unification and stability, the Chinese government has formulated a series of nationality policies.

In the first place, equality and unity among all nationalities are stipulated in the Chinese Constitution. The nationality autonomous system, together with the People's Congress system and the political consultative system among all political parties under the leadership of the



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Communist Party of China, is one of the three basic political systems in China.

In the second place, the Chinese government has promoted the mutual development and prosperity of all nationalities by sparing no efforts into developing the cultural and economic causes in the areas inhabited by the minority nationalities, adopting series of special policies and measures to help and support the development of the minority nationality areas, and calling upon and organizing the developed Han nationality areas to offer support.

In the third place, great importance is attached to the development of the scientific, educational, cultural, and health needs in the minority nationality areas. As far as the minority education is concerned, the state gives the right for the autonomous regions to develop their own nationality education. The state also attaches importance to the nationality language and bilingual educations, enhances the training of minority nationality teachers, provides special financial support and arranges counterpart educational help between the Han nationality and the minority nationality areas.

In the fourth place, the Chinese government esteemed the religious beliefs, customs and habits of all nationalities, and stipulated that all nationalities had the right and freedom to develop their own languages and writing.

Evidence shows that China's nationality policies are successful in marching a correct road to solve the nationality challenges and develop all nationalities. In the meantime, the Chinese government is aware that because of restrictions of historical and geographical factors, there still exists a big difference in development between the minority nationalities living in the west and those in the southeast coastal areas. Some minority nationalities still have a subsistent lifestyle, and some areas are restrained from or unsuitable for sustainable development because of soil, climate, and lack of equipment. All these problems have seized the

attention of the Chinese government, who is actively taking measures to solve them. The Chinese government is confident that all nationalities will benefit from the open door policy and the rapid modernization development.



Chapter 2

HISTORY

Experiencing five major stages of the primitive society, the slave society, the feudal society, the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, and the socialist society, China has a long history of civilization, about 5,000 years. The rise and fall of the great dynasties forms a thread that runs through the Chinese history. During the middle decades of the 19th century, foreign capitalist invasion forced China to be transformed into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. The 1911 Revolution opened a republic chapter in the Chinese history. The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 marked China's entry into the socialist stage. Ever since the reform and open up in 1978, China has entered a fast lane of economic construction and social development. During the long period of historical development, the industrious, courageous, and intelligent Chinese people of all nationalities collectively created a great Chinese civilization.

I. Pre-Historical Time

China has a history longer than that of any other present-day nation. It is the only civilization that has maintained cultural continuity from the second millennium BC. Her culture has never at any period been broken off. Modern archaeological studies provide evidence of an ancient culture that flourished between 2500 BC and 2000 BC in what

is now the central part of China and the lower Huanghe River valley. Centuries of migration, amalgamation, and development brought about a distinctive system of writing, philosophy, art, and political organization that came to be recognizable as the Chinese civilization. What makes the civilization unique in the world history is its continuity over 4,000 years.

1. Archaeological Excavation

China is literally translated as the Middle Kingdom, because the Chinese viewed their culture and nation as lying in the center of the human civilization.

More than a million years ago, primitive human beings had already lived on the land. Fossil remains of the early Paleolithic Ape Man and his stone implements, as well as large quantities of other unearthed paleontological fossils, have been found on various occasions.

It is recorded that the most primitive ape man to have lived on this land was the Wushan Man in the Yangtze Sanxia (three gorges) area some 2 million years ago. Valuable materials and fossil teeth discovered in 1965 revealed that the Yuanmou Man in Yuanmou County of Yunnan Province, 1.7 million years ago, has been designated as the earliest primitive human species so far. Excavations made in Lantian County, Shanxi Province show that the Lantian Man lived some 500,000–600,000 years ago. About 400,000–500,000 years ago, the Peking Man, a primitive man that dwelled in Zhoukoudian in the vicinity of Beijing, was able to walk erect, chisel and wield simple implements, and use fire. 60,000–70,000 years ago, the people living in the Huanghe River valley supported themselves with agriculture while raising livestock.

Neolithic remains over extensive areas have been discovered in many parts of China. The findings include painted and black pottery and small stone implements. Specimens of painted pottery are representatives of the Yangshao Culture, unearthed in an area extending from Henan, Shanxi and Shaanxi to Gansu. Specimens of black pottery are



representatives of the Longshan Culture. Evidences of the Neolithic cultures of South China type, such as the Majiabang Culture and the Liangzhu Culture, have been found in many areas south of the Yangtze River.

2. Myth and Legend

In Greece and Rome people believed they were created by the God, but the Chinese held they were all children of the great Chinese heroes.

The first figure that appeared on the horizon was Pangushi, the Chinese Adam by the westerners. At the beginning of the world, the cosmos was a gas that slowly solidified into a colossal stone egg. Out of this egg was born a creature named Pangushi, who grew at a rate of one zhang (roughly 11 feet) a day and used an axe to cut the blending into two pieces. The upper part became the heaven and the lower the earth, with little Pangu standing in the middle. When Pangu died, his eyes became the sun and the moon, his breath the wind and clouds, his voice the thunder, his limbs the mountains, his blood the rivers, and his flesh the soil. His sweat descended as rain, and the fleas and lice on his body were ancestors of all living creatures on earth.

After Pangu were the three great rulers, the Tianhuang (the heavenly Emperor), the Dihuang (the earthly Emperor) and the Renhuang (the human Emperor). The three clan-rulers were said to appear around 5000 BC–2500 BC, in the Neolithic period. The three fabulous rulers formed the so-called epoch of the Three Sovereigns in which man lived a life of perfect innocence, knowing neither temptation nor impurity.

By around 2500 BC, the Chinese society turned towards a patriarchal society which contributed to the legendary myths of Wudi (the five emperors)—they were Youchaoshi, Sui renshi, Fuxishi, Nwashi and Shennongshi.

As the Chinese scripts are all monosyllabic, each syllable represents

a character. The character you means to possess or occupy, chao a nest, and shi a person. So Youchaoshi means the nest builder, who was perhaps the very person to have taught people to build shelters as protections against the animal and the natural world.

Suirensi was the fire producer, or the so-called Chinese Prometheus. The story of Sui ren clan happened around 200,000 years ago (the Stone Age), which signified that humans already knew how to produce fire by rubbing the flint stone with the wood. The use of fire signified a huge progress in human civilization, not only allowing cooked food, but also warming and protecting the humans.

Fuxishi, the ox-tamer, was considered as the first real ruler, for Fuxishi established law and order. He also taught people to hunt and collect food, to make fish nets, and to tap resources from the wild. The human civilization progressed from the primitive stage of food collection towards the Neolithic tool age of fishing, hunting, and rearing.

Nwashi, the first heroine in history, was Fuxi's wife. Fuxi and Nwawa were brother and sister, living in the Kunlun Mountain. Fuxi swore, if Heaven allows us to be husband and wife, please let the clouds gather; if not, please let the clouds scatter. The clouds gathered and the younger sister came to live with her brother. She made a fan with grass to hide her face. The present custom of women taking a fan in their hands originated from that story. The popular story of "Nwawa Mends the Sky" has the following.

In the remote antiquity, the four poles of the universe collapsed, the sky cracked open, the earth was unable to support everything, fire ran wild everywhere, flood overflowed out of control, fierce beasts ate people, and ferocious birds attacked the old and the weak. Hence, Nwawa smelted the five-colored stones to mend the sky, cut off the feet of the great turtle to support the four poles, killed the black dragon to help the earth, and gathered the ash of reed to stop the flood.

Nwawa also molded figures from yellow clay to create people. As the

clay was not strong enough, she put ropes into the clay to make the bodies erect. Nvwa was worshiped as the Goddess of marriage. Thanks to her going-between, men and women lived in harmony. Nvwa was so gentle and considerate that she later invented some string instruments such as Sheng and Huang.

Shennongshi, the divine farmer, taught people how to sow seeds, cut woods to produce different agricultural tools, make porcelains, weave clothing, and create markets, which all signified, by this period of time, humans had entered the Neolithic period (the Tool Age). The Yangshao culture ruins reflected the economic and social conditions of the Shennong clan period.

Shennong was not only the God of farming, but also the God of medicine. It was legendarily said that Shennong possessed a god-whip called Zhebian, which he used to whip and taste various herbal medicines to see whether they were poisonous or belonged to the "cold" or "warm" nature. Shennong was able to taste 70 different poisonous herbs and could nullify the poison.

Another series of great lords grouped by some Chinese historians are Huangdi, Zhuaxu (grand son of Huangdi), Diku (great grandson of Huangdi), Yao, and Shun.

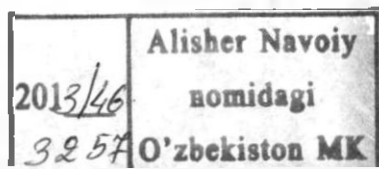
Huangdi, the Yellow Lord, invented bows and arrows, boats, carts, ceramics, writing, and silk. He was also said to have fought a great battle against alien tribes, thus securing the Huanghe River Plains for China.

By around 2500 BC, there existed several tribes forming a confederation or alliance in the upper region of the Huanghe River. The leader (chieftain) was Huangdi, a very capable leader. He built houses for his people, taught them farming, animal rearing, tools and weaponry making. He conquered another tribe led by Yandi, also a capable chief. The Huangdi and Yandi tribes formed an alliance, in which Huangdi became the chieftain and Yandi the vice chieftain. Over

the time, this alliance grew stronger and its civilization prospered across the Huanghe River. The saying that the Chinese are Yan-Huang's descendents refers precisely to these two rulers. Two other tribal-alliances coexisted during the time, the Dongyi in the east and the Miaoman in the south, both of which were conquered by the Huangdi tribal-alliance, but later developed and established the Xia Dynasty (2100 BC), whose people came to be known as the people of Huaxia, the beautiful Xia Dynasty.

The tribal-alliance had the system in which the chieftain's position was passed on to the most capable person, known as the shanrang system, instead of to his son or any family member. Yao-Shun Shanrang was a case in point. Yao was credited for creating calendars and rituals. Yao decided to have Shun as his successor, rather than his unworthy son. Shun summoned Yu, one of his most trusted officials to learn to cope the flooding in the Huanghe River. Studying the case and visiting many other places, Yu spent some 13 years building a hole in the mountain for the river water to pass through to the ocean. Yu was so righteous in working that he wouldn't stop to visit even when he passed his house. Yu became the founder of the Xia Dynasty (2100 BC - 1600 BC). Yu's position was passed on to his son Qi, and the system changed from the shanrang to the shixi system, whereby the ruler's position was passed on to the next family member.

The first pre-historical dynasty was supposed to be the Xia, from about the 21st to the 16th centuries BC. Until scientific excavations were made at early bronze-age sites at Anyang, Henan Province, in 1928, it was difficult to separate myth from reality in regard to the Xia Dynasty. But since then, and especially in the 1960s and 1970s, archaeologists have uncovered urban sites, bronze implements, and tombs to prove the existence of the Xia civilization in the ancient Chinese historical texts. At minimum, the Xia period marked an evolutionary stage between the late Neolithic cultures and the typical





Chinese urban civilization.

II. Early History

In China, slavery began around the 21st century BC. Over the next 1,700 years, agriculture and animal husbandry developed and the skills of silkworm-raising, raw-silk reeling and silk-weaving spread widely. Bronze smelting and casting skills reached a relatively high level, and iron smelting became increasingly sophisticated. The Chinese culture flourished, and a great number of thinkers and philosophers emerged.

The dynasties of the Xia, the Shang (about 1600 BC–1100 BC) and the Western Zhou (about 1100 BC–770 BC) are historically called the Three Dynasties, during which the unified patriarchal state, based on the autocracy of royal rights, was formed and developed. The notion of great national unity gradually came into being. "All the land under the sky belonged to the emperor, and all the people within this country were the emperor's subjects." The patriarchal culture of rites and music was completed, greatly influencing the development of the Chinese culture. China was called the land of ceremony and propriety. The ceremony and propriety embodied the different social strata of nobles through pervasive and over-elaborate ritual formalities. The quintessence of material civilization of the Three Dynasties was the Bronze Culture. The exquisite bronze wares were the gems of the ancient world civilization. The inscriptions on tortoise shells or animal bones of the Shang Dynasty, and on bronze or copper wares in the Western Zhou Dynasty demonstrated fairly mature writings, through which, literature recordings came into existence.

Thousands of archaeological findings have proved that the Huanghe River valley was the cradle of the Chinese civilization. As early as five or six millennia ago, the primitive people along the reaches of the Huanghe River valley undertook husbandry as a primary subsistence means. The Shang Dynasty developed on agriculture, augmented by

hunting and animal husbandry. Two important events of the period were the development of writing system, as revealed in archaic Chinese inscriptions found on tortoise shells and flat cattle bones (commonly called oracle bones), and the bronze metallurgy.

The Shang capitals, one of which was at the site of the modern city of Anyang, were centers of glittering court life. Court rituals to appease spirits and to honor sacred ancestors were highly developed. The last Shang ruler, a despot, was overthrown by a chieftain from a frontier tribe called Zhou, which had settled in the Wei River Valley in the present-day Shanxi Province. The Zhou Dynasty had its capital at Hao, near the city of Chang'an, as it was known in its heyday in the imperial period. Sharing the language and culture of the Shang, the early Zhou rulers, through conquests, gradually extended the Shang culture throughout much of China, and the north of the Yangtze River in particular.

The term feudalism has often been applied to the Zhou period. However, the early Zhou system was proto-feudal, being a more sophisticated version of earlier tribal organization, in which effective control depended more on family ties than on feudal legal bonds. The Zhou amalgam of city-states became progressively centralized and established increasingly impersonal political and economic institutions. These developments, which probably occurred in the late Zhou period, were manifested in greater central control over local governments and a more regular agricultural taxation.

In 771 BC, the Zhou court was sacked. The capital was moved eastward to Luoyang in Henan Province, because of which, the Zhou era was divided into the Western Zhou (1027 BC–771 BC) and the Eastern Zhou (770 BC–221 BC), and the Eastern Zhou could further be divided into two sub-periods. The former (770 BC–476 BC) was called the Spring-Autumn Period, and the latter (475 BC–221 BC) the Warring States Period.

The Spring-Autumn and the Warring States Period, though marked by disunity and civil strife, was the golden age of China, witnessing an unprecedented era of cultural prosperity. The atmosphere of reform and new ideas was attributed to the struggle for survival among regional lords who competed in building strong and loyal armies and in increasing economic production to ensure a broader tax collection. To further these economic, military, and cultural developments, the regional lords needed ever-increasing numbers of skilled, literate officials and teachers, whose recruitments were based on merits.

Also during this time, China entered the Iron Age, and the economy developed by leaps and bounds. Commerce was stimulated through the introduction of coinage and other technological improvements. Iron came into general use, making possible not only the forging of weapons but also the manufacturing of farm implements. Public works on grand scale projects, such as flood control, irrigation systems, and canal waterways, were executed. For example, the world-famous Dujiangyan Dam in Chengdu, a water control project, was constructed, which had equitably settled the relationship between irrigation, flood diversion and sand drainage, and more importantly, it has always been in use even till today. Also, enormous walls were built around cities and along the broad stretches of the northern frontier.

The ideological and academic movements were progressing and many masters on behalf of their individual schools wrote books and founded doctrines, asserting their views on the political and social phenomena. There emerged the phrase "A Hundred Schools", also known as "the Hundred Schools of Thoughts Contending". The leading contenders were Confucius, Laotze, Menciu and Xuntze. From the Hundred Schools of Thoughts came many of the great classical writings on which Chinese practices were to be based for the next two and a half millennia. Many of the thinkers were itinerant intellectuals who, besides teaching their disciples, were employed as advisers to various state rulers

on the tactics of government, war, and diplomacy.

The Spring-Autumn and the Warring States Period also witnessed a strong momentum of growth of the Chinese culture. All the states vied with each other for supremacy and annexed others. Nevertheless the shared consciousness of national culture determined the nature of the wars. In the process of the war, more states got involved, promoting the cultural fusion in a broader realm, which laid the basis for the foundation of the unitary feudal empire of the Qin-Han Dynasties. Corresponding with the political separatist regime was the contention of numerous schools of thoughts of ideologies. At the end of the period, Confucius initiated the privately-run schools, breaking the academic monopoly set up by the notion that education occurred nowhere but in the family of officials. He founded the school of Confucianism. Confucius was a remarkable figure in carrying forward the Chinese culture and forging it ahead. He revised the cultural achievements of the three Dynasties, i. e. the Five Classics, which were *the Book of Songs*, *Collections of the Ancient Texts*, *the Rites*, *the Book of Changes*, and *the Spring and Autumn Annals*. He put forward the ideology to integrate rites and benevolence, thus opening up a new prospect in the Chinese culture. Different schools in the field of ideology and culture were allowed to deliver freely their political opinions and academic views, an inexhaustible inspiration for the development of the Chinese spiritual culture.

III. Imperial Era

In 221 BC, Yin Zheng, the King of the Qin Kingdom ended the turmoil and chaos between dukes or kings during the Warring States Period and consequently established the first united, power-centralized, multi-national and feudal autocratic monarchy, the Qin Dynasty. Yin Zheng claimed himself as the Shi Huangdi or the First Emperor.

The Qin-Han Dynasties witnessed significant and unprecedented

achievements in many fields. China's economy and culture continued to develop, bequeathing a rich heritage of science and technology, literature and arts. The four great inventions of ancient China, paper-making, printing, the compass and gunpowder, have made enormous contributions to the world civilization. The First Emperor's main contributions were in unifying pictographs, measurement systems and currencies, founding the state system, constructing the illustrious Great Wall and building grand-scale palaces, mausoleums and sojourn residences. The chivalrous-looking terra cotta warriors buried in the proximity of the mausoleum of the First Emperor have been well reputed as the Eighth World Wonder, the grandeur of which attracts tourists from home and abroad with unceasing praise.

In the newly established Han Dynasty, the native religion Taoism came into being and with broken economy due to the chaos caused by the war, the classical Taoist thought, proposing to govern by doing nothing that is against nature, was venerated. The reconstructed Confucianism of the Han Dynasty overcame the restrictions and the conservatism of the pre-Qin dynasties and was the dominant ideology in the field of politics and academia. Confucianism and Taoism, one being refined and the other being popular, one belonging to the supreme orthodox and the other relegated to the lower class, worked in parallel, both continuously playing an educational role in the traditional society and having a great effect on shaping the national character.

Liu Che (140 BC-87 AD) reigned through the most powerful and prosperous period. He mobilized expeditionary forces to defeat and drive out the Huns and commissioned Zhang Qian as his envoy to visit the West Territory. As a consequence, the route which started from Chang'an via Xinjiang and mid-Asia to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean was opened to traffic, which became known as the Silk Road and was the route for the Chinese fine silk products to be transported westward. Meanwhile, other cultures made in-roads into

China. The most influential event was the influx of Buddhism from India during the Western Han and the Eastern Han Dynasties. The absorption of foreign cultures was instrumental in advancing the Chinese culture.

In 33 BC, Wang Zhaojun, a maid of honor in the imperial court, was assigned to go beyond the Great Wall and marry Chan Yu (King) of the Huns (the Han-Hun marriage) with a view to strengthening the bilateral relationships between the Han and the Huns.

The Qin-Han was an important period in which various cultures within the country integrated and the Chinese culture mingled with foreign ones. The First Emperor of the Qin united China, making the communion and fusion between the various nationalities and regions possible. In the Western Han Dynasty, the domestic integration was boosted with the expansion of the Hun territory. The Han culture along the Huanghe River and the Yangtze River valleys mixed with other domestic cultures, adding new vitality to the Han culture. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, the cultures of other ethnic groups and regions were also incorporated into the cultural mainstream.

The prosperity of the Chinese culture in the Qin-Han was closely associated with the development of science and technology. The Han Dynasty saw the invention of papermaking technology, which created opportunities for cultural transmission. *Zhoubi Suanjing* was a classic work on astronomy and mathematics written in the Western Han Dynasty. *Nine Chapters on Mathematical Art* covered the important achievements in this field during the Spring-Autumn and the Warring States Periods. In the medical field, *Classic of Internal Medicine* and *Febrile and Other Diseases* laid a theoretical foundation for the Chinese traditional medicine. Zhang Heng invented an armillary sphere (celestial globe) and the world's first seismograph, elevating science and technology in ancient China to a fairly high level.

By 220, China evolved into the three Kingdoms, which were the Wei, the Shu and the Wu. Cao Cao, Zhu Geliang and Sun Quan were

three most prominent figures. Cao Cao was the founder of the Wei Kingdom. Zhu Geliang served as the prime minister of the Shu Kingdom and was esteemed as the symbol of the ancient Chinese wisdom. He was a noble and moral character, inspiring the Chinese descendants for over hundreds of years that one should be dedicated faithfully to his or her cause till death. Sun Quan was known as the originator of the Wu Kingdom. Initially he allied with Liu Bei, Duke of the Shu Kingdom, defeating Cao Cao at the Red Cliff. Later Sun Quan conquered Liu Bei in the battle at Liling. He appointed officials responsible for farming and stationed troops to utilize wasteland, spurring the development of the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River valley. Their stories were adapted into a classic novel *the Romance of Three Kingdoms*.

After the Three Kingdoms, there were the Jin Dynasty (the Western Jin and the Eastern Jin, 265–420), the Southern-Northern Dynasties (420–589) and the Sui Dynasty (581–618).

By 618 the Tang Dynasty was set up by a general named Li Yuan (618–907). Li Shiming (the second son of Li Yuan), Emperor Tai of the Tang (626–649), was acclaimed as one of the foremost distinguished emperors in the Chinese history. His reign was called the peaceful order in Zhenguan period. Li Shiming promulgated a series of policies for social recuperation and national consolidation, pushing it on to the pinnacle of prosperity of the Chinese feudal stage. The Tang saw further advancement in many fields such as farming, handicrafts, commerce, dyeing, ceramics and chinaware, metallurgy and shipbuilding. A crisscross network of highways and waterways was built, and extensive social and cultural relationships were established with many countries such as Japan, Korea, India, Persia and Arabia. The Chinese civilization reached its peak and many people traded with other countries. This is why the Chinese residing overseas often call themselves the Tang Ren, or the People of the Tang.

Following the Tang Dynasty was the period of the Five Dynasties

and the Ten Kingdoms (907–960). In 960 Zhao Kuangyin, a senior general of the Late Zhou Dynasty, launched a rebellion and ascended the throne of the Song Dynasty (960–1279).

In 1206, Genghis Khan, the founder of Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368) unified the scattered Mongol tribes and founded the Mongol Empire. Kublai Khan, a grandson of Genghis Khan, swept southward across the Central China in 1271 and assigned Dadu (Beijing) as the capital.

During the course of the Song and the Yuan Dynasties, industry, commerce and foreign trade were advanced, creating a climate for many foreign merchants and tourists to visit China. Marco Polo, a Venetian merchant, travelled extensively in China and portrayed in vivid details in his travel notes the thriving industry and commerce as well as the fortunes to be made in China.

In 1368 the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) was established by Zhu Yuanzhang. Upon being crowned, Zhu Ti, the fourth son of Zhu Yuanzhang, embarked upon a large-scale project of building city walls and moats, palaces and temples in Nanjing, and later moved the capital northward to Beijing. The Ming Dynasty witnessed a definite improvement in agriculture and handicrafts, and even a rudiment of capitalism toward its concluding stage.

In the late period of the Ming emerged a new military force, the Manchu Nationality between the Baishan Mountain and the Heishui River. Led by Nu'erhachi, the Manchu tribesmen on horseback struggled for three generations within and beyond the Great Wall, finally capturing the throne of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) in 1644. Of all Qing emperors, two were rated the most renowned, Emperor Kang Xi (1661–1722) and Emperor Qian Long (1735–1796), whose reigns were recognized as the heyday in Kang-Qian period.

IV. Modern Period

By the mid-19th century, humiliated militarily by the superior Western weaponry and technology and faced with imminent territorial dismemberment, China began to reassess its position with respect to the Western civilization. By 1911 the two-millennia-old dynastic system of the imperial government was brought down by its inability to make a successful adjustment.

The Opium War occurring in 1840 marked a turning point in the Chinese history. Toward the dawn of the 19th century, Britain dumped its opium in large quantities into China, resulting in an unfavorable flow of silver to Britain as well as inflation and financial austerity within China.

In 1839, Lin Zexu, a special envoy of the imperial court, was commissioned to be stationed in Canton, or Guangzhou, responsible for prohibiting the entry of opium products. To protect its opium trade in China, Britain waged an invasion war on China in 1840. At the outset, the Chinese patriots, led by Lin and some other generals, launched a gallant resistance against the invaders. Owing to the concessions offered by the corrupted and incompetent Qing imperial court, the Nanjing Treaty, an unfair document that surrendered China's sovereignty under humiliating terms, was signed. From that date onwards, China gradually sank into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial chaos.

At the end of the Opium War the big imperialist powers, Britain, the United States of America, France, Russia, and Japan unceasingly forced the Qing court to sign various unfair treaties. Furthermore, they forcibly seized concessions and planned spheres of influence in China, effectively carving up the Qing Empire. As a result, China was further transformed into a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society. In order to resist the feudal oppression and alien invasion, the Chinese people spared no efforts to fight unyieldingly against the enemies with a host of outstanding

heroes and heroines. In 1851, Hong Xiuquan launched the Tai Ping Tian Guo (the Heavenly Uprising), the largest peasant revolutionary campaign in the modern history of China.

In 1911, the Xinhai Revolution, a bourgeois democratic one led by Sun Yat-sen, overthrew the rule of the Qing Dynasty, terminating the over two-millennium-old feudal monarchy, and set up the temporary government of the Republic of China. The 1911 Revolution started the modern history of China. However, the success was taken over by Yuan Shikai, a military lord in the north, on account of the indifference of the Chinese bourgeoisie while the populace was still lingering in an abyss of extreme suffering.

Influenced by the October Revolution in Russia, the May 4th Movement, an anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism drive triggered by the patriotic students, broke out in 1919, with the proletariats as a social class ascending the political stage. This campaign symbolized the beginning of the modern Chinese history from the old democratic revolution to the new one, bringing about the wide-spread Marxism-Leninism applied in China and arranging ideologically for the rise of the Communist Party of China.

In 1921, Mao Zedong, Dong Biwu, Chen Tanqiu, He Shuheng, Wang Jingmei, Deng Enming, Li Da and others on behalf of the communist groups in different cities, held the first national assembly in Shanghai. The Communist Party of China (CPC) came into being.

In 1924, a positive cooperation occurred between Sun Yat-sen, the pioneer of Chinese democratic revolution and the founder of China National Party, and the Communist Party of China for the purpose of jointly mobilizing the industrial workers and peasants for a punitive war against the warlords in the north. Shortly after the death of Sun Yat-sen, the right-wing bloc represented by Chiang Kai-shek conducted a rebellion and recklessly massacred the communists and other revolutionaries. The tyrannical government of the Nationalist Party

(Kuomintang or the KMT) had its base in Nanjing.

In July 1937 Japan launched a full-scale invasion war into China. The KMT armies waged an array of operations successively at the front battlefields, a crushing blow to the invaders. The Eight Route Army and the New Fourth Army under the leadership of the CPC opened up the rear-battlefields and launched series of strenuous resistance against a large proportion of Japanese armies as well as an overwhelming majority of puppet forces under most arduous conditions.

In June 1946 the KMT launched an all-round assault on the Liberated Area under the leadership of the CPC, triggering an unparalleled-scale civil war. For the purpose of the full liberation of the Chinese people, the CPC armies and populace in the Liberated Area participated in the Liberation War nationwide. It was through three gigantic battles (the Battle in Liaoning-Shenyang, the Battle in the Huaihai River valley and the Battle in Tianjin and Beijing) that the KMT establishments were finally overturned and a historic victory concerning the new democratic revolution was achieved. In 1949, the Communist Party of China established the People's Republic of China.

After the liberation, the Chinese people, under the leadership of the CPC, were marching forward to realize the four modernizations of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology. As they have overcome all difficulties, both internal and external, and were expecting more victories in the socialist construction, the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966 and was brought to an end in 1976.

Shortly after 1976, the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government implemented economic reforms and adopted the open-up policies. People's great enthusiasms for social and economic developments have been aroused to a new high. In the past 30 years from 1978 to 2008, China's economic construction, social development, reform and open up have gained unprecedented and eye-catching achievements in the world.

Chapter 3

LANGUAGE

Different from the Indo-European languages, the Chinese language with morphological symbols is a special language system whose grammatical meanings are changed by word order and functional words. The four tones are a unique feature which distinguishes the Chinese language from any other language. The Chinese characters came into being about 6,000 years ago and are fundamental in the learning and application of the Chinese language.

I. Origin

All ancient writing systems were developed from pictographs to ideographs. Some of them have died out and some of them have been converted to alphabetic writing systems. Only the Chinese characters have survived to the present.

Before the invention of any writing system, ancient people, including the Chinese, recorded information by means of knots, inscriptions, and logographs.

1. Knot

Similar to the complex and mature Quipu used in the Inca Empire, knots were used to record years, months, dates and other information. Different knot colors signified different objects or abstract concepts. For instance, red was for wars, yellow for gold, white for silver, and green

for grain. Different knots also indicated different numbers. One knot stood for 10 and double knots stood for 100. Knots were used for large pledges, such as big knots for big events and small knots for minor incidents. The ancient Chinese characters like 10, 20, and 30 depicted events.

2. Inscription

Inscriptions were carvings and pictures. Some inscriptions conveyed meanings. For instance, on the inscription board of the Lisu nationality, a picture was recorded about three men meeting guests by presenting big, medium and small blocks of earth as gifts respectively to the high-ranking, medium-ranking, and low-ranking officials.

Many inscribed symbols and some pictographs could be tracked in the ashes of the Yangshao Culture excavated in Banpo, Xi'an of Shanxi Province. 38 types of inscriptions on the pottery shards excavated in Jiagsai, Shanxi Province were found to be similar to the characters of oracle bone scripts, like "wood", or "mound".

3. Logograph

Many experts on writing systems state that the oldest ethnic writings were logographs. The hieroglyphs, applied by the Dongba record-keeper to record religious classics in the Naxi nationality, Yunnan Province, are extant logographs. Character symbols were found on the pottery shards of the Dawenkou Culture in Lingyang River, Shandong Province. They were crude images of an ax, a knife, the sun, a fire, and a mountain. An ideograph was the original form of Paleography. Chinese characters originated from the logograph that was invented earlier than the oracle bone scripts.

There have been legends about the origins of the Chinese scripts. A man named Cang Jie, according to the legend, saw a divine being whose face had unusual features which looked like a picture of writings. In imitation of his image, Cang Jie created the earliest written characters. Another story says that Cang Jie saw the footprints of birds

and beasts, which inspired him to create characters. Evidently scripts were the creations by the people to meet the needs of social life over a long period of trials and experiments. Cang Jie, if there had been such a man, must have been a prehistorical wise man who sorted out and standardized the characters that had already been in use.

II . Development

1. Oracle Bone

The earliest examples of the Chinese writing date back to the late Shang Dynasty. These are the so-called oracle bone inscriptions (jiaguwen) which were found at the site of the last Shang capital near present-day Anyang, Henan Province.

The discovery of the oracle bones in China goes back to 1899, when a scholar from Beijing was prescribed a remedy containing “dragon bones” for his illness. Dragon bones were widely used in the Chinese medicine and usually referred to fossils of dead animals. The scholar noticed some carvings that looked like some kind of writings on the bones he acquired from the local pharmacy. This lucky finding eventually led to the discovery of Anyang, where archeologists found an enormous amount of these carved bones.

The inscriptions on these bones tell us that by 1200 BC Chinese writing had already been highly developed and was used to record a language fairly similar to the classical Chinese. Such a complex and sophisticated script certainly has a history but so far no traces of its predecessors have been found.

The oracle bone inscriptions received their names after their contents, which were invariably related to the divination. The ancient Chinese diviners used these bones as records of their activities, providing us with a detailed description of the topics that interested the Shang kings. Most of these divinations referred to hunting, warfare, weather, as well as the selection of auspicious days for ceremonies.

2. Bronze Inscription

The next stage in the history of the Chinese writing is jinwen (the bronze inscriptions). These were texts mostly cast into bronze vessels, which became widely used during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty, and were also used in the late Shang Dynasty.

Since the inscriptions were located on ritual vessels used for performing sacrifices, they usually referred to ritual ceremonies and commemorations. Although most of these writings consisted of only a few characters, there were some which contained quite lengthy descriptions. The languages and calligraphic styles during this period were similar to those found on oracle bones.

3. Modern Writing

Starting from about the fifth century BC, people began to write on bamboo slips. Before the characters were written with a hard brush or a stick on bamboo surfaces, the bamboo slips had been prepared in advance and tied together with strings to form a roll.

In historical and administrative writings, bamboo slips contained the earliest manuscripts of the famous Chinese philosophical texts. At the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, a group of performers were carrying bamboo scrolls and reading out familiar lines such as "All are brothers within the four seas" from *the Confucian Analects*, which impressed upon the audience this earliest form of books in China. Apart from bamboos, texts were also written on wooden tablets and silk cloth. The written language by this time was the so-called wenyan (the classical Chinese) which remained in use till the late 19th century.

A major event in the history of the Chinese scripts is the standardization of writing by the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty. Before that time, each state had its own writing styles and peculiarities which meant that, although mutually comprehensible, the scripts had many deviations. The First Emperor introduced the Qin scripts as the official writing. The calligraphic style of this period was "the clerical

script" or lishu, which is easily readable.

III. Character

1. Layout

The Chinese characters conform to a roughly square frame and are not usually linked to one another, so they could be written in any direction in a square grid. Traditionally, the Chinese characters were written in vertical columns from the top to the bottom, with the first column being on the right hand side of the page, and the text running toward the left. The text written in the classical Chinese used little or no punctuation. In such cases, sentence and phrase breaks were determined by context and rhythm.

In modern times, the familiar Western layouts of horizontal rows from left to right, readable from the top of the page to the bottom, became more popular, especially with the rise of the vernacular Chinese. The Chinese government mandated left-to-right writings in 1955. Punctuation became more prevalent, whether the text was written in columns or rows. Punctuation marks were clearly influenced by their Western counterparts, although some marks were particular to the Chinese language. For example, the double and single quotation marks (『 』 and 「 」); the hollow period (。), which is used just like an ordinary full stop; and a special kind of comma called an enumeration comma (、), used to separate items in a list, as opposed to clauses in a sentence.

2. Traditional Style

Around 100 AD, Xu Shen wrote *the Etymological Dictionary*, which differentiated six types of the Chinese characters.

First are pictographs and simple ideographs. These characters combine to create two additional types of characters, logical aggregates and phonetic complexes. The fifth type of characters, associative transformation, extends the meaning of a character to a related

concept. The last type of characters, borrowings, give an unrelated meaning to a character, generally that of a spoken word which has the same pronunciation as the borrowed character.

3. Calligraphy

Derived from pictographs and logographs, the writing of the Chinese characters developed into an artistic form.

The Chinese calligraphy (brush calligraphy) is an art unique to the Asian culture. The shu (calligraphy), hua (painting), qin (a string musical instrument), and qi (a strategic board game) are the four basic skills and disciplines of the Chinese literati.

Regarded as the most abstract and sublime form of art in the Chinese culture, shufa (calligraphy) is often thought to be the most revealing of one's personality. During the imperial era, calligraphy was used as an important criterion for selecting executives to the Imperial Court. Unlike other visual art techniques, all calligraphy strokes are permanent, demanding careful planning and confident execution. Such are the skills required for an administrator or executive. The defined structure of words is conformed to, and the expression can be extremely creative.

By controlling the concentration of ink, the thickness and absorptive of the paper, and the flexibility of the brush, the artist is free to produce an infinite variety of styles and forms. In contrast to the Western calligraphy, diffusing ink blots and dry brush strokes are viewed as a natural impromptu expression. To the artist, calligraphy is a mental exercise that coordinates the mind and the body to choose the best style to express the content of the passage. It is a most relaxing yet highly disciplined exercise for one's physical and spiritual well-being.

Brush calligraphy is not only loved and practiced by the Chinese, the Koreans and the Japanese equally adore calligraphy as an important treasure of their heritage. Many Japanese schools have the tradition of holding calligraphy contests at the beginning of a new school year. A

biannual ceremony commemorating *Lanting Xu* by Wang Xizhi (a most famous Chinese calligrapher in the Jin Dynasty) is held in Japan.

In the West, Picasso and Matisse are the two artists who openly declared the influence of the Chinese calligraphy on their works.

In the finished works of the traditional Chinese paintings, inscriptions, poems, and seals often come side by side. Chinese paintings usually integrate poetry or calligraphy or seal carving with themes that include figures, landscapes, flowers, birds and other animals. The artistic achievement and the national features of calligraphy have won recognition by people all over the world. Another case in point is the Chinese fan. Calligraphies of the ancient Chinese verses or famous Chinese paintings can be seen on both sides of traditional hand-made bamboo fans.

IV. Four Treasures

Writing brush, ink stick, paper and ink slab are the traditional implements and materials used for writing and painting and have been named collectively as the “four treasures of the study”, whose representatives are xuan paper, hui ink stick, hu brush and duan ink slab, all highly valued in the country and known abroad as well.

1. Paper (Xuanzhi)

This paper is mainly used for writing or painting when using a brush. It has a history of over 1,000 years. Tribute paper (gongzhi as it was called) began to be used in the court as early as in the Tang Dynasty.

Xuan paper is known to some Westerners as “rice paper”, which is a misnomer. In fact, it is made from the bark of a tree mixed with rice straw. Its home is in Jingxian County, Anhui Province. As the county belonged in ancient times to the Prefecture of Xuanchou, and the trading centre of the paper was at Xuancheng, so it has always been called xuan paper.



The making of xuan paper is a painstaking procedure involving 18 processes and nearly 100 operations, lasting over 300 days from the selection of materials to the finished product.

Xuan paper is praised as the “king of all paper” and is supposed to last a thousand years, because it is white, soft and firm, resistant to ageing and insects. It absorbs but does not spread the ink from the brush. Beneath the brush it feels neither too smooth nor too rough. For these qualities, xuan paper is not only used for painting and calligraphy, but also increasingly for diplomatic notes, important archives and other documents. In addition, xuan paper may also be used for blotting, filtering and moisture-proof purposes.

2. Brush (Hubi)

Writing brush is a functional handicraft article peculiar to China and an instrument still used by pupils in calligraphy and painting classes.

The first writing brush was made under the reign of the First Emperor. Traces on the painted pottery unearthed at the ruins of the Neolithic site of Banpo Village near Xi'an show that the brush in its crude and primitive form was used 6,000 years ago. The brushes produced at Shanlian Township in Wuxing County, Zhejiang Province, which used to be under the Huzhou Prefecture, are called hubi (Huzhou brushes) and supposed to be the best in the country.

Hu brush is made of the wool of goat, hare or yellow weasel, all marked by a quality which is both soft and resilient. Dipped in black Chinese ink, hu brush may follow the maneuvers of the writer's hand to produce a variety of strokes, dark or light, wet and solid or half dry and hollow, creating different effects in the writing or painting.

The first-grade hu brushes must meet four requirements: a sharp tip, neat wool arrangement, rounded shape and great resilience. The making of these brushes involves more than 70 steps of careful work. The preparation of the material alone means that the wool of a goat or hare must be sorted out into dozens of bunches according to thickness,

length, softness or stiffness. Then wool of different specification is used to for different applications. Now more than 200 varieties of hu brushes are produced.

The handles for the brushes, made from high quality local bamboo, are often decorated with ivory, horn or redwood. Some are mounted at the top with horn or bone for the purpose of inscription.

Hu brushes, renowned as “the king of writing brushes”, is a necessary item on the desk of a man of letters.

3. Ink Stick (Huimo)

The Chinese “solid ink” or ink stick used to produce ink can also be a work of art in itself. The way to make Chinese ink is to put a little water on an ink slab and then rub the surface round and round the ink stick. When the liquid becomes thick and black, it is ready for use.

Before ink stick was developed, graphite was used for writing. When the country became more developed, probably during the Han Dynasty, there was not enough graphite to meet the growing demand. It was then that ink sticks began to be produced with pine or Tung soot. The art was perfected during the Ming Dynasty, when high-quality ink sticks were made of the soot of pine resin, pork lard and vegetable oil.

The best Chinese ink sticks were first made in Shexian, Anhui Province, and are generally called hui sticks because Shexian was named Huizhou in the Song Dynasty.

Hui ink sticks of the best quality contain musk, borneol and other precious aromatics normally used in the Chinese medicine. These preserve the black color for a long period of time.

Accomplished Chinese artists and calligraphers have always attached great importance to the selection of ink sticks and during the Qing Dynasty, a first-rate piece of ink stick could be literally worth its weight in gold.

4. Ink Slab (Duanyan)

To write with a brush, one must prepare one's own ink. The

Chinese ancestors developed ink slabs or ink stones for this purpose.

The earliest Chinese ink slabs unearthed so far date back to the Han Dynasty, indicating that this utensil for ink-making has been in use in the country for at least 2,000 years.

In a nutshell, the ink stone (yan or yantai) is a sort of millstone on which water is turned into ink by rubbing an ink stick. It is generally made of a smooth and finely-grained variety of stone.

To the fastidious calligrapher, a good ink slab should be made of the stone produced at Duanxi, a suburb of Zhaoqing (formerly Duanzhou), Guangdong Province. Named after the home of the stone, duan ink slab has a history of over 1,500 years and has always been regarded as a valuable item in the scholar's study.

The stone must go through several painstaking processes before it is turned into the finished slab, including quarrying, selecting, cutting, polishing and shaping. The most difficult part is the mining of stone, which lies under the Keshan Mountain near Zhaoqing. Quarrymen have to make tunnels at the foot of the mountain, drain them of water and crawl in to dig out the right kind of stone.

Duan ink slabs are valued for their fine, smooth surfaces which look glossy with moisture. They make ink fairly fast and wet the hair of the writing brush evenly. They are also good for keeping left-over ink. A well-chosen piece of stone may also bear fine veins, indistinct, but pretty to look at.

CULTURE

I. Cultural Relic

China is the birthplace of one of the four greatest civilizations in the world, whose cultural relics, immeasurably large in quantity and diverse in variety and artistic style, are the gems of Chinese civilization. Embodying the richness and profoundness of the Chinese history and culture, these cultural relics, although produced during the long process of well over 7,000 years, continue to impress people today for their amazing artistic and technological levels.

1. Sanxingdui Culture

The Sanxingdui Culture existed around 3,000 to 5,000 years ago. When jade wares were discovered in the 1920s in the area of Guanghan, groups of the Chinese and foreign archaeologists carried out further excavations and studies in the 1930s-1940s. Large-scale excavations found the two sacrificial pits (No. 1 and No. 2) in 1986. The two pits were originally excavated with artifacts, and then covered with logs and earth. In the pits were layers of various kinds of jade ware, bronze human statues and ivories, which were the holy icons, sacrificial instruments and offerings used in the ancestral temples. The hundreds of cultural relics unearthed from the sacrificial pits are a concentrated embodiment of the Sanxingdui culture at its zenith. The

cultural relics and artifacts of Sanxingdui, unique in form and making, are the first discoveries in Sichuan. They are reputed as the most attractive archaeological discoveries in the world.

The identification of the ancient city of Sanxingdui has unveiled and clearly revealed to the people the glory of the ancient capital, and it again proves that the place was once a glorious center of civilization in the ancient east. Numerous archaeological materials show that the Sanxingdui civilization is an outstanding representative of Chinese ancient civilization on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River.

2. Simuwu Ding

In ancient China, ding, an ancient cooking vessel with two loop handles and three or four legs, was a symbol of imperial power. The word ding was often used in phrases and expressions in the Chinese language to imply authority. For instance, “yi yan jiu ding”, literally one word of promise is equal to nine dings, means a decisive comment.

Simuwu Ding was a rare cultural relic. In 1939, a bronze ding was unearthed in Anyang, Henan Province. The four-legged ding, known as the rectangle ding, was so big and heavy that it could not be moved after being unearthed.

Simuwu Ding is the biggest bronze ware unearthed in China and a treasure of the world bronze ware collection. Though the ding is big and heavy, its workmanship is exquisite. The relief of kui (a one-legged mythical animal) is carved on four sides of the ding. The animal figures are portrayed with artistic exaggeration, creating a fierce, mysterious and dignified mood.

Ding, initially made of clay, was used in the Chinese primitive society as a cooking utensil. At the end of the Shang Dynasty, some 3,000 years ago, metallurgy had emerged and developed and bronze was used instead. Ding had become a sacrificial vessel, symbolizing the owner's power and wealth.

Simuwu Rectangle Ding reveals a high level of casting technique and

artistry, the highest casting achievement of the Shang Dynasty. According to the archeologists, the King of the Shang Dynasty had Simuwu Rectangle Ding made to commemorate his mother.

3. Liangzhu Jade

Jade has been highly treasured and prized by the Chinese people. "Gold has a value; jade is invaluable" is a Chinese saying.

Discovered in Yuhang County, Zhejiang in 1936, the Liangzhu Culture (3400 BC - 2250 BC) was the last Neolithic jade culture in the Yangtze River Delta, whose areas of influence extended from the Taihu Lake in the north to Nanjing and Shanghai in the east and Hangzhou in the south. The culture was highly stratified, as jade, silk, ivory and lacquer artifacts were found exclusively in elite burials.

The jade from this culture is characterized by finely worked large ritual jades, commonly carved with the taotie (a legendary beast) motif. The most typical artifacts from the culture were its cong (cylinders). The largest cong discovered weighs 3.5 kg. Bi (discs) and yue (ceremonial axes) were unearthed. Jade pendants, designed with engraved representations of small birds, turtles and fish, were also found. Many Liangzhu jade artifacts had white milky bone-like markings due to their rock origins and effects of water-based fluids at the burial sites.

A Neolithic altar from the Liangzhu Culture, excavated at Yaoshan in Zhejiang, demonstrates that religion was of considerable importance and religious structures were elaborate. The altar has three levels, the highest being a platform of earth. Three additional platforms are paved with cobblestones, which are the remains of a stone wall. On the altar are 12 graves in two rows. A new discovery of the ancient city wall relics was announced by Zhejiang provincial government on November 29, 2007. The site was agreed to be the ancient capital of the Liangzhu Kingdom, whose influence spread as far as the present Jiangsu, Shandong Provinces, and Shanghai.

4. Changxin Palace Lantern

There was a great variety of lanterns in ancient China, the best of which were certainly the palace lanterns for the imperial households. Changxin Palace Lantern of the Han Dynasty is a precious work of art, representing the bronze art of the dynasty.

Changxin Palace Lantern was unearthed in 1968 in Liu Sheng, the King of Zhongshan and his wife's tomb of the Western Han Dynasty. The lantern combines aesthetics and scientific technologies, decoration and practicality.

The lantern is 48 cm high and weighs 16 kg. Research shows that this lantern was used by Emperor Jingdi's mother. The lantern has an unusual design, and is shaped like a maid of honor on her knees holding a lantern. The maid is hollow, and her head and right arm are removable. The lantern holder, base and cover can all be reassembled. Its round lantern base can rotate and the light intensity and direction are also adjustable. When the lantern is lit, smoke flows directly into the maid's body through her arm to keep the indoor air clean. The lantern holder can store water, which dissolves the smoke.

5. Terracotta Warrior

The First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty, at an age of 13, mobilized huge manpower and used a great deal of materials to build his mausoleum, a construction that involved hundreds of thousands of workers and needed 36 years to complete. The terracotta warriors and horses were used as burial objects to accompany the emperor in the afterworld.

The mausoleum lies about 20 miles east of Xi'an. Farmers accidentally discovered the terracotta army in 1974 while digging a well. Today, modern buildings providing a protected environment cover the unearthed treasures, which are only a part of what is believed to be inside the mausoleum.

The terracotta army consists of life-size figures of warriors, in

different battle dresses according to rank and unit, together with numerous figures of horses and chariots. The terracotta army lies approximately a mile east of the tomb which is said to contain spectacular objects. Today, only trial digs of the main tomb site have been completed, and, to date, the main entrance to the tomb has to be found.

6. Great Bell of Yongle

To welcome the historic moment, the millennium, a huge bell with a history of more than 580 years rang in Beijing right at the midnight on New Year's Eve in 2000. The 108 strikes were exciting and majestic.

The Great Bell of Yongle was cast during the reign of Emperor Yongle of the Ming Dynasty. When Emperor Chengzu (known as Yongle during his reign) moved the capital to Beijing, he initiated three great projects, the Forbidden City, the Temple of the Heaven and the Yongle Bell.

After the founding of the Ming Dynasty, Emperor Taizu (Zhu Yuanzhang) made Nanjing the capital. In order to strengthen the frontier defense in the north, Zhu made his fourth son Zhu Di the Prince of Yan and gave Beijing to him as his domain. In 1398, Zhu Yuanzhang died and his grandson Zhu Yunwen succeeded to the throne. Historically, he was known as Emperor Jianwen. After he came to power, he felt a deep threat from various vassals with powerful troops under their command. Jianwen adopted the advice of Qi Tai, the minister of war, and Huang Zicheng, minister of the imperial court sacrifices, to weaken the power of the vassals. In the sixth lunar month of the year when he ascended to the throne, he began to depose the Prince of Zhou, the Prince of Xiang and three other princes in outlying areas. Zhu Di, the Prince of Yan, who had 100,000 troops under his command, was the most powerful vassal. He launched a punitive expedition against Qi Tai and Huang Zicheng under the pretext of "no honest ministers but treacherous officials in the imperial court", and

won the war, seizing the throne in Nanjing. In 1403, Zhu Di changed the reign title to Yongle and then he decided to move the capital. In the first lunar month of the 19th year of the reign of Yongle (1421), Beijing became the capital.

According to the established law in the Veritable Records of Taizu, a big bell could be cast only for those who made great feats. He ordered the casting of the big bell. The Great Bell of Yongle was regarded as a guardian when Zhu Di moved the capital to Beijing. It was also a symbol of the greatest dignity of the imperial power.

7. Dunhuang Mogao Grotto

Located on the eastern slope of the Rattling Sand Mountain (Mingshashan), southeast of Dunhuang County in Gansu Province, the Mogao Grotto (also known as Thousand Buddha Cave) is one of three noted grottoes in China and also the largest, best preserved and richest treasure house of the Buddhist art in the world.

In 366, during the Eastern Jin Dynasty, the first cave was chiseled here. The endeavor continued through later dynasties, from the Northern Wei to the Yuan, resulting in the fantastic groups of caves.

Today, 492 caves still stand, containing some 2,100 colored statues and 45,000 m² of murals, which, if joined together, would cover a length of 30 km. The caves vary in size. The smallest one is just head height, while the largest one stretches from the foot to the top of the mountain, having a height of over 40 m. The colored statues also differ in size, ranging from a few centimeters to 33 m high, embodying the remarkable imagination of their makers.

Despite years of erosion, the murals are still brightly colored, with clear lines. All these, plus a large quantity of Buddhist sutras and relics, kept in the caves have provided valuable materials and sources for a study of the ancient Chinese politics, economies, and cultures and arts, as well as its science and technology military affairs, and religions. They have also documented the national history as well as the cultural

exchanges between China and the world.

In 1987, UNESCO placed the Dunhuang Mogao Grotto on the list of the world cultural heritage.

II. Literary Work

1. Historical Writing

(1) *Shiji* (Historical Record)

As Lu Xun noted, "*Shiji* is unique among historical writings, with a value equal to *Lisao*." Authored by the legendary Han Dynasty scholar Sima Qian, *Shiji* is the first Chinese book on general history ever written in the biographical style. Besides, being a great literary work, *Shiji* opens a new horizon of recording and narrating historical events in the form of individual biographies. Applying the five styles of *benji* (imperial biographies of the rulers and emperors), *biao* (tables of events), *shu* (treatises, or the economic and cultural records of the time), *shijia* (biographies of notable rulers, nobility and bureaucrats) and *liezhuan* (biographies of important figures), *Shiji* organizes the ample and complicated historical events into a formally coherent and organic whole, raising the structure of the Chinese prose to a completely new level. The book is also notable in terms of characterization, for it is good at highlighting the day to day details, embodying the essence of its characters' personalities, and depicting its characters by setting them in the historical backgrounds and the dramatic conflicts and contradictions. In addition, it makes frequent use of individualized dialogues in its characterization. With the technique of complementation, together with the extensive use of comparison and contrast, the book creates a large number of lifelike historical figures. Adept at language and rich in emotion, the author of *Shiji* displayed a strong capacity of creating the atmosphere of the scene and exhibiting the psychological and emotional state of its characters, often in a matter of a few sentences or even a few words to enhance the forcefulness of his narration. With its brilliant

characterization and narrative techniques, *Shiji* has exercised an enormous impact on the fictional and theatrical creations of later generations.

(2) *A New Account of the Tales of the World*

A New Account of the Tales of the World, originally entitled *An Account of the World*, is regarded as a masterpiece of the biographical stories popular during the Wei, Jin and the Southern and the Northern Dynasties. Liu Yiqing, its author and a native of Pangcheng (now Xuzhou City of Jiangsu Province), was the nephew of Liu Yu, Emperor Songwu of the Southern Dynasty. The book is in three volumes which are further divided into 36 categories according to different subject matters such as virtue, diction, government affair, literature and generosity.

The book mainly narrates the anecdotes of the officials and intellectuals of the late Han and the Eastern Jin Dynasties, cherishes the noble manner and the elegance of the celebrities of the time, praises the lofty moral characters and conducts of the people, exposes satirically the cruelty and corruption of the ruling class, and commends the feudal moral ethics and the familial system. Focusing on the kings and princes, generals and ministers, scholars and beauties, the book outlines skillfully and concisely, the individualities, personalities and charms of its characters by examples and details from the real life. The book also highlights the important aspects of its characters and stresses the peculiarities of its characters. *A New Account of the Tales of the World* initiates, in the history of the Chinese fiction, the biographical style novel writing which has a lasting popularity.

(3) *The Annals of Zuo (Zuozhuan)*

The Annals of Zuo is the earliest Chinese work of narrative history and covers the period from 722 BC to 468 BC. It was traditionally attributed to Zuo Qiuming, as a commentary to *the Spring-Autumn Annals*, although many scholars believe it was an independent work that

corresponded to *the Annal* (or *the Chunqiu*) and was later spliced into it. *The Chunqiu*, the first Chinese chronological history, records the principal political, social, and military events of the Spring-Autumn Period. *The Annals of Zuo* is a detailed commentary and provides extensive narrative accounts, ample background materials and authentic historical documents and written evidence (though fragmentary) of the philosophical schools of the time. The commentary occupies a seminal place in the history of the Chinese literature because of its influential narrative style. Historical events and personages are presented directly through action and speech, and the third-person narrative is notable for its orderly structure and clear and laconic presentation.

Most notable modern scholars hold that the book is one of the most important sources for understanding the history of the Spring-Autumn Period. With its vivid and concise language, *the Annals of Zuo* is regarded as the ultimate models of the classical Chinese prose by many generations of prose stylists.

(4) *Sanguozhi*

Sanguozhi (also known as *the Records of the Three Kingdoms*), written by Chen Shou of the Kingdom of the Shu in the third century, is an official and authoritative historical text on the period of the Three Kingdoms. The work integrates the smaller histories of the rival states of the Three Kingdoms into a single text and provides the basis for the more popular historical novel *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms* in the 14th century. The book, containing 65 volumes and about 360,000 words into three "books", is part of the early four historiographies of *the Twenty-Four Histories*. *The Book of the Wei* contains 30 volumes, *the Book of the Shu* contains 15 volumes, while *the Book of the Wu* contains 20 volumes. Each volume is organized in the form of one or more biographies. The amount of space used for a biography is dictated by the importance of the figure.

After the fall of the Shu in 263, Chen Shou became the Gentleman

of Works, and was assigned to create a history of the Three Kingdoms. After the fall of the Wu in 280, his work received the acclaim of senior minister Zhang Hua. Earlier in the period, the Wei and the Wu both had their own histories and on these works that Chen Shou began his work. But since the Shu lacked a history of its own, Chen Shou wrote it using what he could remember, as well as primary documents, such as the works written by Zhu Geliang, which he had collected. *The Book of the Wei* referred to the rulers of the Wei as emperors, whilst the rulers of the Shu were referred to as lords and rulers of the Wu only by their names or with the title "the Wu ruler". This was to uphold the legitimacy of the court of the Jin as inheritor of the Mandate of the Heaven from the Wei. The use of title "lord" for the rulers of the Shu shows in part his sympathy towards his native land.

(5) *The Intrigues of the Warring States (Zhanguoce)*

The Intrigues of the Warring States (Zhanguoce) is a renowned ancient Chinese historical recording of the Warring States Period. It is an important literature in the research of the Warring States Period as it outlines the strategies and political views of the School of Negotiation and reveals the historical and social characteristics of the period.

The author of *the Intrigues of the Warring States* cannot be verified. The book was probably not written by a single person at a time. It is interesting to note that unlike most of the pre-Qin classics, the authenticity of *the Intrigues of the Warring States*, along with the *Shijing*, *Mozi*, *Yullngzi* and *Gongsun Longzi* had never been in question since the Western Han period.

Significant contents of *the Intrigues of the Warring States* were lost in subsequent centuries. Zeng Gong of the Northern Song Dynasty reclaimed some lost chapters and proofread and edited the modern version. Some writings on cloth were excavated from the Han Dynasty tomb at Mawangdui near the city of Changsha in 1973, edited and published in Beijing in 1976 as *Zhanguo Zonghengjia Shu (Works from*

the *School of Negotiation during the Warring States Period*), which contained 27 chapters, 11 of which were found to be similar to the contents in *The Intrigues of the Warring States* and *Shiji*. *The Intrigues of the Warring States* recounts the history of the Warring States from the conquest of the Fan clan by the Zhi clan in 490 BC up to the failed assassination of the First Emperor by Gao Jianli in 221 BC.

2. Literature

The Chinese literature is a treasure of considerable proportions as each dynasty has passed down its legacy of magnificent events and works. For 3,500 years, those events and works have woven a variety of genres and forms encompassing poetry, essay, fiction and drama, each in its own way reflecting the social climate of its day. The Chinese literature has its own values and tastes, cultural traditions and critical systems. Chronologically, it can be divided into two main periods: classical, and modern periods.

(1) Classical Literature

Classical literature, referring to the works in the earliest period, has a history of over 3,000 years. In ancient China, people had many feelings to express when historical events took place, either joyful or grievous. With different literary forms, classical literature reflects a profound culture, and is the embodiment of the spirit, morals and wisdoms of the Chinese people

① *The Classic of Odes*

The Classic of Odes, covering 305 poems from the early Western Zhou Dynasty to the middle Spring-Autumn Period, is the first poem collection. As the starting form of the Chinese literature, *the Classic of Odes* enjoyed a high reputation of artistic value and had a great influence on the works that followed. The works can be divided into three parts: feng, ya, and song (ode), which derived their names from music items. Feng refers to the local tunes and collects folk songs of 15 states. Ya, including daya and xiaoya, is the movement for nobles; Song is the

music used during sacraments in temples. The writing skills are the fu (narrative), bi (figuration simile and metaphor), and xing (symbolization and contrast).

② The Four Books and the Five Classics

The Four Books and the Five Classics were the authorized works of the Confucian culture. The Four Books refer to *the Great Learning*, *the Doctrine of the Mean*, *the Confucian Analects* and *the Works of Mencius*. The Five Classics include *the Book of Poetry* (also known as *the Book of Songs*, *the Book of Odes*), *the Book of History*, *the Book of Rites*, *the Book of Changes*, and *the Spring-Autumn Annals*. The Five Classics were entitled during the reign of Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty. *The Four Books* were short for *the Texts and Annotations of the Four Books*, which were compiled and annotated by Zhu Xi, a Neo-Confucian scholar of the Southern Song Dynasty, who established his own theoretical system of li or principle. The Four Books and the Five Classics cover a wide range of subjects such as literature, history, philosophy, politics, economics, education, moral ethics, geology, arts, science and technology. They were the most important textbooks for the Confucian scholars and have had a far-reaching influence on the way of existence, intellectual quality, moral ethics and esthetic values of the Chinese nation.

③ *Collection of Yuefu Poetry*

Collection of Yuefu Poetry was compiled during the Song Dynasty. Yuefu was originally the official bureau in charge of music. It was set up during the reign of Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty. As a permanent governmental institution of the Han, Wei, and the Eastern and Western Jin Dynasties, Yuefu was responsible for compiling music books, songs and ballads and training musicians. All the songs which had been set to music by this institution were referred to as Yuefu poetry. *Collection of Yuefu Poetry* contains not only the poetry from the Han Dynasty to the Five Dynasties but also the ballads from the Pre-qin period to the last

phase of the Tang Dynasty. The poems in the collection are divided into 12 categories which are grouped into 100 volumes.

Poetry in the Tang Dynasty is an unparalleled system, really deserving its fame as a rarity of the Chinese culture. Its value consists of a combination of thoughts and art.

Li Bai is regarded as “the supernatural being of poems”, whose works were full of passion, imagination and also elegance. Du Fu, known as “the saint of poems”, was strict in his use of metric verse. His *Denggao* (*Climbing Up*) has been handed down for generations. Wang Wei, the poet of landscape, wrote lots of elegant and exquisite verses. He gave the tranquil feeling through his poetry. Cui Hao created the best of the seven-worded regulated poems, with *the Yellow Crane Tower* being one of the most famous one. Cen Shen was skillful in his descriptions of colorful scenes in northwest China. Liu Zongyuan and Wei Yiwu expressed themselves through the plain depiction of sights around them. Another renowned literary figure is Bai Juyi. His *Old Charcoal Seller* fully satirized the dark social reality. And *Chang Hen Ge* (*Song of the Eternal Lament*) praised the eternal love between Emperor Xuanzong and his beloved concubine Yang Guifei.

④ Ci / the Song Lyrics

Ci or the song lyrics in the Song Dynasty indicates another type of poetry. It came into being in the Tang Dynasty and reached its summit in the Song literature. This type of poem was akin to lyrics created for musical accompaniment as the meter varied in the way that the words had to match the rhythm of the music.

Ci, depending upon its length, can be divided into xiaoling (small-sized, less than 58 characters), zhongdiao (middle-sized, 59–90 characters), and changdiao (long-sized, more than 91 characters). Some of them have only one verse, some two, and some three or four, each of which having its own title.

Each ci has a title as well as a cipai which is the name of the tonal

pattern that designates the rhythm and form of a verse. The names of cipai, such as *the Beautiful Lady Yu*, *Buddha Dance*, and *Wine Spring*, came from historical figures or events, discourses, and former musical names.

Poets in the Song Dynasty developed ci that was deeper in content and broader in form. Some of the developers were Liu Yong, Su Shi, Yan Shu, Li Qingzhao, and Xin Qiji.

Generally speaking, ci has two main genres, wanyue (graceful and mild) and haofang (bold and unconstrained). Ci of wanyue genre endowed delicate things with exquisite feelings and elegance. The most famous verses are "How helpless I see the flowers falling, the swallows seem to know winter is coming again" by Yan Shu. Ci of haofang genre began to be popular since the introduction by Su Shi who changed ci into a lyrical art. He integrated the pastoral scenes, splendid landscapes and his dedication to the motherland into his works.

⑤ Qu (Drama)

Qu in the Yuan Dynasty had two forms, sanqu and yuanzaju. Sanqu is similar to the xiaoling of the songci. In artistic terms, the Yuan Opera was appraised with such outstanding writers as Guan Hanqing, Wang Shifu, Bai Pu and Ma Zhiyuan and with such prestigious works as *the Injustice Done to Dou E* and *the West Chamber*. *The West Chamber*, written by Wang Shifu and consisting of five acts with 21 scenes, has been widely regarded as an immortal work on love and romance. Its full name is *Cui Yingying's Romance at the West Chamber*. Through the love story of Cui Yingying and Zhang Sheng about their daring resistance to the feudal ethics in their pursuits for love and about their happy ending, the drama eulogizes the fighting spirit of the young people against the feudal forces for the freedom of marriage. It also condemns arranged marriages in accordance with well-matched social and economic family status. By integrating the personality of its characters with the dramatic conflicts, the qu(drama) creates the image

of Cui Yingying, a typical girl from a noble family who pursued freedom in marriage and was rebellious against the feudal ethics, turning her into one of the most brilliant and touching female characters in the history of the Chinese theater. The skillful application of the double-thread structure and dramatic plot greatly enhances the stage effect of the drama and strengthens the appeal of its artistic charm. The drama has been adapted into various local operas, storytelling and ballad-singing which have circulated widely among the people since the Ming and the Qing Dynasties.

⑥ Novel

The Outlaws of the Marsh is the first novel in the history of the Chinese literature that depicts the whole developmental process of peasant uprisings. It is thought to be a representative work of the heroic legendary novels of the Ming and Qing Dynasties and is based on raw materials taken by its author from historical chronicles and folk legends. Its author was generally believed to be Shi Nai'an. The novel relates the stories about the Liangshan uprisings led by Song Jiang during which the rebellious heroes executed justice on behalf of the Heavens by killing the rich and helping the poor. By correlating and incorporating its plots into an organic whole, the book builds up a magnificent artistic structure, rigorous, diverse and flexible. The first 71 chapters narrate, via relatively self-contained short stories and biographies of the heroes while the subsequent chapters relate, via a parallel structuring, the tales of the tragic ending of the Liangshan insurrectionary army. The diction of the book is lucid and lively, plain and graceful with a rich local color. The heroic legendary genre of fiction created by the author has had a great influence on the development of this genre of fiction writing. The book has been translated into several foreign languages, and has exerted considerable influence on foreign literature.

Generally recognized to be the forerunner of the Chinese historical fiction, *the Three Kingdoms*, originally entitled *the Romance of the*

Three Kingdoms, is not only the first traditional Chinese novel with separate and self-contained chapters, but also the most outstanding historical novel in the history of the Chinese literature. The author of the book is Luo Guanzhong, who lived around the turn of the late Yuan and the early Ming Dynasties. Based upon *the Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, the book also takes benefits from the folklores and local operas. *The Three Kingdoms* reflects extensively the corruption of the ruling class. It expresses people's strong desire for peace and unification. Based on, but not confined by historical facts, the book successfully combines romanticism with realism. By praising Liu Bei and depreciating Cao Cao, the book reveals the writer's political ideal for a "benevolent government". Besides, it advocates "personal loyalty", canonizes wisdom and favors talented people, thus creating artistic images, such as Guan Yu, "the incarnation of personal loyalty", and Zhu Geliang, "the embodiment of wisdom". The skillful description of war is an outstanding characteristic of *the Three Kingdoms*. It is a mixture of vernacular and classical Chinese that caters to both the refined and popular tastes.

Journey to the West was completed in the mid-Ming Dynasty by Wu Cheng'en and is generally recognized as a masterpiece about deities and ghosts. Through the depiction of the pilgrimage journey of the Tang Monk and his disciples, the book tells how they went through the 81 adversities on their journey, each of which forms a relatively self-contained story yet still centers on the general theme. The novel praises the unyielding fighting spirit of Sun Wukong (the Monkey King) in his pursuit for immortality, reflecting the long-cherished great expectations and ambitions of the human beings. As far as the artistic expression is concerned, the most striking features of the book are its eerie imagination and blatant exaggeration by which the writer created a grotesque, gaudy, fanciful and magical world which broke the boundary between time and space, life and death, and humans and deities. When

dwelling on such characters as Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, the writer combines harmoniously the humanity they embody with the divinity, thus endowing each of them with distinctive individuality. Even to this day, their images remain familiar to every household. The book is filled with witty and humorous remarks and displays a strong comic flavor because of the writer's skillful use of satire, together with a large amount of playful language. In a word, *Journey to the West* opens up a new horizon of romanticism in the history of the Chinese fiction. Since its publication, *Journey to the West* has been introduced to many foreign countries and has been enjoyed by overseas readers.

A Dream of the Red Mansion is a monumental work that is regarded as the peak of the ancient Chinese fiction. The first 80 chapters of the book were written by Cao Xueqin and the last 40 by Gao E. The book has been variously known as *the Story of the Stone*, *the Treasured Mirror of Romantic Affairs*, *the Twelve Beauties of Jinling*, and *the Anecdotes of the Romantic Bronze*. With the love tragedy of Baoyu and Daiyu as its central thread, the book describes the rise and prosperity, as well as the decline and downfall, of the feudal lord familial system represented by the Jia Family. It brings to light the darkness and corruption that permeated the feudal society and indicates its inevitable doom. The book also points out that all forms of high positions and great wealth are nothing but an illusory dream which is bound to end up in a "vast expanse of empty and desolate wilderness". Running through the book is not only a strong sense of fate and destiny but also a clear concept of "vanity" and "void". The moving and soul-stirring artistic appeal of *A Dream of the Red Mansion* is exhibited in its consummate ingenuity in terms of plot structuring. By arranging its plots in a network of two storylines with multithreads, the book combines lifelike familial life with surging and undulating social events. Its appeal is also manifested in its characterization of various personages. Using adeptly the techniques of contrast and foiling, and focusing on the description of the settings of its

characters, the book focuses, more than any other previous novels, on the portrayals of the individualities of its characters. The language of the book is succinct and sincere, vivid and visual. Through his popularization of the classical Chinese into the vernacular and his adaptation of common sayings to literary applications, the author skillfully shapes the book into a coherent and organic whole to suit both refined and popular tastes. Ever since its publication, the “studies of *A Dream of the Red Mansion*” (redology) has become a popular branch of academic discipline.

Strange Tales of the Make-Do Studio was written by Pu Songling, also known by his literary name Hermit of the Willow Spring. *Strange Tales of the Make-Do Studio* was the writer's “book of solitude and indignation” in which he expressed his dissatisfaction with reality via the odd and imaginary world of ghosts and fairy foxes he created. Rich and intricate in content with over 490 tales, the book touches upon nearly every aspect of the social life of the time. It reaches a historical high in exposing the sociopolitical darkness, the malpractice of the imperial civil service examination and in describing the sensation of love. The author successfully creates a large number of non-realistic artistic images such as the charming female ghosts and fairy foxes. By integrating their own inherent and natural identity with the sociality of the human beings they embody, the author turns them into artistic images which display an obvious duality with humanity as the principal part compounded by their divinity. Through its characterization of humans, ghosts and fairy fox, *Strange Tales of the Make-Do Studio* manifests an intense illusory flavor. Stylistically, the book features a skillful use of classical Chinese. *Strange Tales of the Make-Do Studio* has marked the summit of the development of fiction writing in classical Chinese literature.

(2) Modern Literature

Modern literature embraces the works from the late Qing Dynasty to the foundation of modern China in 1949. As the Qing failed to inspire

the minds of people, the literary forms had remained unchanged. After the Opium War, novels, poetry and other works began to appear with a theme of patriotism and a critique of social ills. With the advance of the New Culture Movement and the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, new thoughts refreshed the literary field.

The True Story of Ah Q by Lu Xun is a masterpiece of modern Chinese fiction. It is also the first modern Chinese novel that was published in other languages. Through the description of Ah Q's misfortunes and his style of personality, the novel draws the historical lessons from the failure of the 1911 Revolution. A poor peasant being deprived of all his belongings, Ah Q epitomized the image of a simple and ignorant farmer who was corrupted and poisoned deeply by the feudalism, and who was characterized by the common conservativeness and lack of self-consciousness. What was most striking in his personality was his self-satisfied spiritual triumph. Though he was at the bottom of the society as an eternal loser with frequent setbacks, he never stopped trying to defend destiny. To some extent, Ah Q's self-satisfied spiritual triumph was representative of the frailties in the Chinese national character. *The True Story of Ah Q* portrayed vividly the national soul and exposed the national weaknesses. Comedic in form while tragic in content, the novel was endowed with an enormous artistic charm.

Teahouse is Lao She's masterpiece which reflected the helplessness of the lower classes in old China. Lao She was skillful in using the Beijing dialect. The three-act modern drama *Teahouse* was set in a typical old Beijing teahouse, where people from all walks of life gathered. By portraying the rise and decline of the teahouse and the plights and successes of an array of characters, the play offered a cross-sectional view of the Chinese society during the period from 1898 to 1948. The play was premiered by the Beijing People's Art Theatre in 1958. Since the theatre staged the play in a number of countries in Europe, Asia and North America, it has been one of the most representative works in the

theatre's repertoire.

Thunderstorm, a four-act drama, is not only the masterpiece of Cao Yu but also the symbol of maturation of the modern Chinese drama. Condensing the 30 years of conflicts between the Zhou and Lu families into a matter of a single day and unfolding the story simultaneously on two scenes, the drama reflected the entanglement of the blood relationship with class contradiction. The drama contained the tragedies of the abandoned lower class woman (Shiping), of the repressed personality of the upper class woman (Fanyi), of the failed pursuit of the young lovers (Zhou Ping and Si Feng) for justified love, of the disillusioned dream of the young people (Zhou Chong), and of the lost resistance of the ordinary laborer (Lu Dahai). The drama exposed the atrocities and tragedies caused by the irrationality of the feudal familial relationships. The drama also analyzed the inherent mixture of love and hatred in human nature. The tangled blood relationships among the characters in the drama and their fated life reflected the complexity of human nature and the hardship of human life. *Thunderstorm* is an outstanding and realistic familial tragedy.

Midnight, written by Mao Dun, as a comprehensive analysis of the political, economic and social life of modern metropolises, vividly portrayed the tragic destiny of the Chinese national bourgeoisie under the multiple pressures of the imperialists, the bourgeoisie and the ruling class. The book reflected truthfully the crises of the time by drawing a capacious panorama of the Chinese social life in the late 1920s the early 1930s. It concentrated on the characterization of Wu Sunfu, the defeated hero whose image epitomized the historical destiny of the Chinese national bourgeoisie and became one of the representative images in the gallery of the eminent literary figures of the time. The book manifested the complicated social life, the historical course, and daily life as well. All these threads were interwoven into a splendid and intricate framework of art. Mao Dun also made a lively portrayal of the

mentality, sub-consciousness and illusion of his characters via the symbolic technique, which greatly enhanced the expressive force and artistic appeal of the book. *Midnight* is the first book ever written to reflect, from a positive perspective, the fundamental contradictions in the modernization over the course of the Chinese history. It has been widely recognized both as an epic masterpiece set in a modern city.

III. Performing Art

The traditional Chinese operas are regarded as the cream of the Chinese culture. They came from comedians' dances in the Spring-Autumn and the Warring States Period, acrobatics in the Han Dynasty, to canjunxi (military staff officers' performance) in the Tang Dynasty. The birth of Zaju in the Yuan Dynasty marked the maturity of the traditional Chinese opera. In the Ming Dynasty, Kunqu Opera came into being. As one of China's representative classical operas, Kunqu Opera nurtured and nourished many operas. Later, local operas flourished. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong, operas were divided into huabu and yabu. The former, also called luantuan, referred to the local operas while the latter to Kunqu Opera only. It was at this time that Beijing Opera, also known as Peking Opera, emerged.

1. Beijing Opera

Beijing Opera, more commonly known as Peking Opera, is deemed as the national opera. The accompanying music, singing and costumes are all fascinating and artistic. Full of Chinese cultural connotations, the opera presents to the audience an encyclopedia of the Chinese culture as well as unfolding stories, beautiful paintings, exquisite costumes, graceful gestures and acrobatic fighting. Since it enjoys a higher reputation than other local operas, almost every province of China has more than one Beijing Opera troupe which is called piaoyou in Chinese.

Beijing Opera has more than a 200-year history. The main melodies originated from xipi and erhuang, in Anhui and Hubei respectively, but

over time, the techniques from many other local operas have been incorporated.

It is generally accepted that Beijing Opera gradually came into being after 1790 when the famous four Anhui opera troupes came to Beijing. Beijing Opera developed rapidly under the reign of Emperor Qianlong and Empress Dowager Cixi but eventually became more accessible to the common people.

Beijing Opera was originally performed mostly on open-air stages in markets, streets, teahouses or temple courtyards. The orchestra had to play loud and the performers had to develop a piercing style of singing in order to be heard over the crowds. The costumes were a garish collection of sharply contrasting colors because the stages were dim and lit only by oil lamps.

The band of Beijing Opera mainly consists of orchestra and percussion. The former frequently accompanies peaceful scenes while the latter often follows scenes of war and fighting. The commonly used percussion instruments include castanets, drums, bells and cymbals. One usually plays the castanets and the drum simultaneously. The orchestral instruments are mainly erhu, huqin, yueqin, sheng (reed pipe), pipa (lute). The band usually sits on the left side of the stage.

It is said that this special art of facial painting derived from the Chinese opera has different origins. But no matter what its origin is, the facial painting is worth appreciating for its artistic value. The paintings are representations of the roles of the characters. For example, a red face usually depicts the character's bravery, uprightness and loyalty. A white face symbolizes a sinister treachery and guile. A green face describes surly stubbornness, impetuosity and lack of self-restraint. In a word, the unique makeup in the opera allows the characters on the stage to reveal them voicelessly. There are four main roles in Beijing Opera: sheng, dan, jing and chou.

Sheng is the leading male actor and is divided into laosheng, who

wears a beard and represents an old man, xiaosheng, who represents a young man, wusheng, an acrobat who plays the role of a military man and a fighter, and wawasheng who plays a youth. These roles usually have no facial paintings. Hongsheng, another category of sheng, whose face is painted red, mainly plays the roles of GuanYu (Chinese Ares, fighting god) and Zhao Kuangyin (the founder of the Song Dynasty).

Dan is a female role. Formerly, the term meant female impersonator. It is divided into many categories. Laodan is an old lady while caidan is a female comedian. Wudan usually plays a military or non-military woman capable of martial arts. The most important category qingyi usually depicts a respectable and decent lady in elegant costumes. Huadan represents a lively and clever young girl, usually in short costumes.

Jing, mostly a male, is a face-painted role which represents a warrior, a hero, a statesman, an adventurer or a demon. Jing is generally categorized into zhengjing, fujing and wujing.

Chou refers to a clown who is characterized by a white patch on the nose. Usually white patches of different shape and size indicate the roles of the different characters. It is these characters who keep the audience laughing and improvise quips at the right moments to ease tension in some serious plays.

2. Local Opera

Besides Beijing Opera, China boasts more than 360 local operas, of which about 50 enjoy great popularity. Though local operas are strongly challenged by film, TV, disco and other kinds of entertainments, they attract regular audience, and are trying by every means to compete in the fast-changing entertainment world. Greek tragedy and comedy, Indian Sanskrit drama, and Chinese operas are three ancient world dramas. The first two have become historical and only Chinese operas have survived. Chinese operas took shape in the 12th century. After



developing for more than 800 years, they are still full of vitality. At present, the country has more than 2,000 local opera troupes, staging thousands of pieces a year.

Local opera productions are usually regionally popular. For example, the Ping Opera is popular in Beijing, Tianjin, Inner Mongolia, North China and Northeast China. In the Beijing area, not only Beijing Opera but also the Ping Opera, Hebei Bangzi, Beijing Qu Opera and Northern Kunqu Opera enjoy acclaim.

Opera in English can be defined as a musical drama "in which the actors sing some or all of their parts" and is "a union of music, drama and spectacle". A local Chinese opera does fit these descriptions but in fact the term "opera" conjures up in the mind of an English singer, something very different indeed.

Chinese operas are a traditional dramatic form synthesizing music, literature, fine arts, martial arts and acrobatics. The major difference is changqiang (music for voices). Beijing Opera and some other local operas stress singing, acting, recitation and acrobatics and their standard roles are divided into four types, sheng, dan, jing, chou, representing the male, the female, the painted face and the clown. Compared with Beijing Opera, most local operas are more closely linked with ordinary people's everyday life and have less stereotyped patterns of performances. They have deep roots in the soils of real life and are well-accepted by the people, especially the farmers.

3. Acrobatic

Chinese acrobatics are a favorite art of the Chinese people, with a distinct style evolving from everyday life and work. Despite the advent of film shows and song-and-dance performances, acrobatics still shine as one of the brightest stars in the Chinese culture. With about 2,500 years of history, Chinese acrobatics have won the nation the title of "Kingdom of Acrobatics".

Historical records and ancient relics, including carvings on tombs,

stone and brick carvings, murals in temples and grottoes, and decorative patterns on utensils, show that Chinese acrobatics originated in the period of the Warring States. During the Qin and Han Dynasties, artists developed a wide repertoire and acrobatics were thus called “the show of a hundred tricks”. By the Western Han Dynasty, acrobatics had become a high level art.

Zhang Heng, a great man of letters in the Eastern Han Dynasty, wrote about a number of exciting acrobatic acts and magic shows, including “Balancing on a High Pole”, “Jumping through Hoops”, “Hand Feats”, “Rope Walking”, “Turning of a Fish into a Dragon”, “Swallowing Knives and Spitting Fire” and “Drawing a Line off the Ground and It Becomes a River”. All these illustrated the triumph of the ancient Chinese acrobatics. From then on, a variety of acrobatic performances such as traditional conjuring, vocal imitation, taming animals and horsemanship had been described in books and historical relics. Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, thanks to the principle of “letting a hundred flowers blossom and weeding through the old to bring forth the new”, Chinese acrobatics have developed rapidly. As musical accompaniment, costumes, props and lighting became more sophisticated, acrobatics have become a comprehensive stage art, performed by more than 100 troupes throughout China. In October 1981, the China Acrobatic Arts Association was established.

Acrobatics have played an important role in the cultural exchanges between China and other nations. In the past 40 years, Chinese acrobatic troupes have toured to warm applause in more than 100 countries and regions throughout the world. Since 1982, Chinese acrobats have taken part in 13 international competitions and won 23 gold medals. Also in 1982, China entered the Circus of Tomorrow Festival for the first time in Paris and since then Chinese acrobats have won the Award of the President of France five consecutive times.

Wuqiao County in Hebei Province is generally regarded as the

cradle of Chinese acrobatics. It is said that many acrobatic troupes in the world owe a debt of gratitude to this county. Wujiao has even been called a synonym for Chinese acrobatics. China Wujiao International Acrobatic Festival is named after this acrobatic Mecca.

4. Quyi Performance

Quyi is a traditional Chinese art form which combines story-telling with music and performance. In the Han Dynasty, the art had already existed. Deeply rooted in China, the art is divided into three make-up categories and subdivided into 300 parts, and the three major styles are story-telling, story-singing, and joke-telling.

Story-telling can either be words alone, or words accompanied with music. One of the most representative non-music styles in the North is pingshu, whose counterpart in the South is called pinghua. The most important form of joke-telling is xiangsheng, or crosstalk, the comic dialogue of Northern China, which in the South is called huaji, comic words in Chinese. Story-singing seems to have the largest sub-groups. Each style has a strong local flavor in its accent or music. Beijing pingshu is a form of ballad-singing originated with farmers who liked to sing stories in their spare time. No professionals practiced the art until the mid-19th century. The singing is usually accompanied by a dulcimer, but sanxian and sihu (a four-stringed instrument) are sometimes added. The art is popular in Beijing and Tianjin.

Errenzhuan, also known as bengbeng, is a very popular art in Northeastern China. Characterized by its humor and strong local accent, the art is often performed by two persons, a man and a woman.

Dujiaoxi, also known as "comic play", is a form of art popular around Shanghai, Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Generally, it is played by no more than three persons, and combines singing, talking, acting and using oral skills similar to those used in crosstalk.

North China dagu is generally sung by one person who beats time to the accompaniment of sanxian played by a second person on stage.

This form of ballad-singing was brought to northeastern China from Beijing during the Qing Dynasty; Jingyun dagu is a form of ballad-singing developed from a folk art called muban dagu in Cangzhou and Hebei. It is now popular in northeastern China. Its repertoire consists of short stories that can be completed in about two hours; Leting dagu is a ballad-singing art popular in Leting, Hebei Province, where the locals are said to be good at singing. Its repertoire includes many classical Chinese literature works like *Journey to the West*; Meihua dagu is a ballad-singing art popular in Beijing and Tianjin. It is also known as qingkou dagu, and meihua diao.



Chapter 5

EDUCATION

In the world history of education, China has been regarded as one of the countries with the earliest word records. “To respect the aged and love the young” and “to respect the teacher and to value education” have been the millennium-old Chinese traditions. A good education has always been highly valued in China, as people believe that education ensures not only the future and development of the individuals but also the family and the country as a whole. Passed down from the ancient times, the maxim from the *Three-Character Scripture* that says “if no proper education is given to the children, their nature will go bad” has shown to be true. The great master Confucius taught us that “it is a pleasure to learn something and to try it out at intervals”. Similarly, students have been convinced that “reading books excels all other careers”. Historical records tell us that Mencius' mother became an example to millions of mothers who are keen for their children to be talented. She moved her home three times in order to choose a fine neighborhood and create a better learning environment for Mencius.

As far back as in the Shang Dynasty, inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells were the simple records of teaching and learning. In the following dynasties, there have been such educational systems as official schools, private schools, and academies of classical learning, not only to meet the needs of people at all levels, but also to create great educators

such as Confucius, whose educational ideas and methods have influenced China for thousands of years. The imperial civil service examination system in ancient China also provided a good guarantee for the selection of talents. With the foundation of modern China the new order introduced a fresh approach to education and brought it into a new phase.

I . Ancient Achievement

1. Educational Existence in the Xia and the Shang Dynasties

The roots of formal educational systems can be traced back to at least as far as the 16th century BC, i. e. the Shang Dynasty. Recorded in *Mencius* that in the Xia and the Shang Dynasties, there were such educational organizations as xiang, xu, xue and xiao, which taught different contents. For example, xiang mainly taught how to raise children, xiao was to educate, xu taught arrow shooting to defend the country, while xue was to offer moral education.

Throughout this period education was the privilege of the elite few, and for the most part education was to produce government officials.

In around 3000 BC, the Shang Dynasty began to have a record of its history and writing. The earliest mature Chinese characters were used by the people to record religious ceremonies, rituals, decrees and regulations. Ritual learning to offer sacrifices to gods or ancestors and play music and sing songs was the major educational content in the Shang Dynasty. Using force to gain control and rule the world was the common consensus of the people then. Therefore, learning martial arts, mainly by riding horses and shooting arrows, was the teaching content of the time. Besides, because of the attention paid to witchcraft, China had made great progress in astronomy and the calendar. Arithmetic also became a school subject.

2. Educational Feature in the Zhou Dynasty

In the Western Zhou Dynasty, nobles built schools to teach their

children, as their children would be the officials of the future, while those who were gifted but of poor family backgrounds could but dream of approaching state affairs. "To learn at feudal officialdoms" was the major educational feature of the Western Zhou Dynasty. From then on, academic learning and education were controlled by the officials. The word-recorded state decrees and regulations, classics and documents, and sacrificial vessels were all in the hands of the feudal officialdoms. The consequences brought by the officialdom controlled education were that the ordinary people were deprived of learning opportunities.

But on the other hand, because education was completely controlled by the state, the schools in the Zhou Dynasty formed a comparatively unified education system from the state to the localities. Also, the educational contents were further classified into li, yue, she, yu, shu (books), and shu (figures). Li referred to the education of state politics, history and individual ethics and morality, which was imperative for noble children. Yue was a comprehensive art, including vocal music, musical instruments and dances. She referred to archery, or arrow shooting. Yu meant chariot-riding, which was essential in military training technique. Shu (books) meant history and character writing, and shu (figures) referred to arithmetic contents.

3. Educational Achievement in Spring-Autumn and Warring States Period

The Warring States Period was the time of division, in which all feudal states spared no efforts to develop their economies and cultures, advancing a large number of useful talents for the unification of the country. Thanks to the social development, the public cherished increasing anticipations for education. *The desire to master knowledge* to transform the society helped to bring about the emergence of private schools. Many scholars of different schools of thought introduced their teaching. The thriving private schools posed big challenges to the authority of the official ones. Within the period, a group of new

intellectuals represented by Confucius and Mencius created a new school of learning, getting together to deliver knowledge, pioneering in creating private schools and promoting academic learning and cultures.

Confucius, the great educator, devoted all his life to private school system and instructed many students. It is said that over 3,000 disciples also followed him, 72 sages went on to broaden the acceptance of the philosophy set out by their master. Confucianism, a philosophy embracing benevolence in living and diligence in learning became very influential. The teaching curriculum gradually gave way to the Four Books and the Five Classics, which outlined the principles for the society and the government, as well as codes for personal conducts. During the succeeding years, private schools continued to exist although there were times when state education became fashionable.

There appeared in this period a famous state-owned school in China's educational history, *ji xia xue gong*, was set up at Gate Ji in Linzi, the capital of State Qi. Supported by the financial and material resources of the state, *ji xia xue gong* existed for over a century and a half, gathering scholars from all schools of learning. Despite an official school of learning of State Qi, *ji xia xue gong* was in fact a collection of many private schools.

First of all, its scholars did not hold any official titles and were not responsible for any administrative affairs. Their major responsibilities were to provide consultancy for the rulers, and to carry out academic studies and lecturing. In this respect, *ji xia xue gong* functioned as a "brain trust".

Secondly, free debating was a normal academic practice. *Ji xia xue gong* adopted a policy of academic freedom and all-inclusiveness, in which each school of learning occupied its own position. In order to make their views of learning acknowledged, they had to hold debates to convince people by reasoning, which helped to stir different ideas and enrich learning. In the "regular gatherings" of *ji xia xue gong* not only

all masters (teachers) of the school and all other migrating talents, but also all scholars (students) could participate in the debates. The academic equality between masters and scholars contributed to the enlargement of views and the growth of talents.

Thirdly, no regular masters existed. Ji xia xue gong had a unique teaching method, scholars were free to attend lectures and free to learn at any place. There were individual and group lessons at ji xia xue gong. All learners and scholars were free to come and go. When a scholar came to ji xia xue gong, he was free to attend any master's lectures. The academic freedom and flexible attendance enabled scholars to attend all schools, breaking up any possible restrictions. The mutual criticisms and absorption among all schools promoted academic development.

Finally, as far as the management of scholars was concerned, ji xia xue gong formulated in history the first rule of regulations that scholars had to follow, Scholars' Obligations, which had strict stipulations ranging from respecting masters and parents to esteeming morality and studying courses, from eating and living to clothing and physical appearance, and from classroom attendance to after-class revision. Management features such as purposeful, planned and organized teaching were self-evident and had significant influences on the future generations.

4. Educational System in the Qin and Han Dynasties

The first unified feudal empire of the Qin was finally set up after hundreds of years of wars. The First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty realized the importance of unified characters and education. He disregarded the private schools in the Warring States Period and developed official schools, whose educational organizations and contents were provided by the state to train talents.

The rulers in the Han Dynasty inherited these practices and set up in the capital city of Chang'an the highest state education organization.

In 136 BC during the reign of Emperor Wu, the government introduced a system named the Imperial College, in which the students were provided with free food and mainly studied the Confucian classics. Those with good examination marks would be directly given official titles. Local official schools were set up according to administrative regions. In the Prefecture, the schools were called xue, in the County xiao, in the Commune yang, and in the Village xu. In xue and xiao, there was a Classic Master, and in yang and xu, there was a Piety Classic Master, respectively responsible for the education of Confucius Learning. For educational contents, Emperor Wu adopted Dong Zhongshu's advocacy to abandon the coexistence of all schools of learning popular in the Warring States Period, and to nominate the Confucius Learning as the only educational content and assessment criterion.

5. Imperial Civil Service Examination in the Sui and Tang Dynasties

It was in the Sui Dynasty that the separate states were unified. To adapt to the development and changes of the feudal economy, to expand the needs for the feudal ruling class to participate in politics, and to enforce the centralization of state power, the need for a strong, well educated civil service was realized. To bring this into effect, the Sui Dynasty resumed central control for the rights to select officials and talents through examinations. The imperial civil service examination was put into practice. The examination was held on the basis of disciplines. The examination was composed of two parts, an arts exam and a martial arts exam. The arts examination included composition, literature, law, calligraphy, and paintings. Examination of the policies of the time was the major content, such as political essays regarding state politics and life. Although it was immature at the beginning, it interwove closely the three essentials for state officials, those of learning, examination and administration. This system enjoyed a long and dominant position in the history of ancient Chinese education.

In the ancient society, class consciousness was too strong for the lower classes to have chances to rise high, not to mention having any position in the official court. But once the imperial civil service examination system was introduced, children from poor families had opportunities to attend the government exams, which enabled them to bring possible honors to their families. Also, there was a special exam for tongzijun (smart little children), which was similar in many ways to today's special classes for gifted children. Thus, regardless of parentage, or age, nearly all males were eligible to realize their self-development.

The Tang Dynasty was another unified, economically and culturally prosperous dynasty in China, whose education absorbed the merits of those in all previous dynasties and continued to develop to lay a foundation for the imperial civil service examination. The main subjects of the examination were writing and studies of classical books, as well as mathematics, law, and calligraphy.

In the Tang Dynasty, the examination was divided into regular disciplines and imperial disciplines. Annual examinations were called regular ones, and temporary ones on the call of the Emperor were called imperial ones. Also, the martial examination was introduced, which was supervised by the Ministry of War. The martial examination included shooting on horseback and on foot, pistol shooting, weightlifting, and wrestling. The excellent examinees might become military officials, whose ranks were decided by the examination scores.

The forms and contents of the exam varied. Usually one page of a classical book was chosen and several lines would be omitted, and the candidates were required to fill in. Alternatively, they might be required to explain some of the lines in the book. Therefore, the need to be able to recite was important. Most prime ministers during that feudal period, titled jinshi, were proficient at writing.

Candidates who passed the highest imperial examination held by the Board of Rites would have promising futures as court officials. The

success of examination candidates was proudly called “stepping into the dragon’s door” as the dragon had always been regarded as the symbol of mighty power and especially that of the rights exercised by the emperor. The most successful scholar was then granted the title of zhuangyuan, the second banyan, and the third tanhua. When the results were declared, there would be joyous celebrations. They collected money for famous gardens, had feasts, and left their signatures under the Big Wild Goose Pagoda. However there would be a final hurdle to cross, a test in another department “the Board of Civil Office”. The learned scholar Liu Zongyuan was given an official position directly after passing the exam because of his extensive knowledge, while another scholar, Han Yu, unfortunately failed and had to be contented with the position of an assistant to a high official.

The decision of whether a candidate was successful not only relied on the exam results but also upon the recommendation of a notable person with authority. The highly reputed poet Bai Juyi benefited in this way. As a highly intelligent teenager he visited the senior poet Gu Kuang, but was not given too much attention. However, when the old poet read Bai Juyi’s poem, he became surprised and said, “You can write so brilliant a verse that living in Chang’an will never be a difficulty for you.” The poem was “A Farewell Poem to the Old Meadow”, which continues to win universal praises today.

6. Educational Academy in the Song Dynasty

In the Song Dynasty, the examination standards had been much lower than those in the Tang Dynasty. The examination system underwent great innovation both in form and content.

Firstly, the number of examination honors was broadened. In the former dynasties like the Tang Dynasty, each year the title of jinshi was given to no more than 20 to 30 people, but in the Song Dynasty, there were hundreds of people honored, and even those who failed the exams could apply for tolerance of the emperor and serve as officials in less

important positions.

Secondly, the frequency of examination was limited to a fixed “once every three years”. The local tests came first in the autumn and in the following spring the qualifying candidates would trudge to the capital for the higher imperial examination.

Thirdly, so far as the contents were concerned, while the earlier examinations laid much stress on the ancient classical texts, the great reformer Wang Anshi advocated a more practical innovation. He changed the practice of blank-filling of verses into compositions about the verse, giving free reign to the ability of the candidates.

Finally, to prevent examiners' favoritism, examinees' names were covered on their papers, which did indeed greatly reduce the incidence of nepotism.

In the Song Dynasty, few governmental schools were erected, but it was quite a hit for scholars to set up numerous private educational organizations, academies of classical learning, which were to cultivate talented people and to encourage a devotion to learning, as well as to spread culture.

Different from the official and private schools, academies of classical learning were special cultural and educational organizations, integrating education and book storage. Academies of classical learning began to appear at the end of the Tang Dynasty. Because of wars, the state politics and economy suffered, and some knowledgeable people were no longer devoted to official careers but turned to quiet and beautiful places to pursue their studies. Therefore, there gradually appeared a custom to retreat to mountains and forests to talk about laws, cultivate moral characters, and get together to lecture. The academies of classical learning in the real sense of getting together for discussion were basically formed at the end of the Five Dynasties. But it was not until the beginning of the Song Dynasty that they began to have comparatively complete rules and regulations, of which, *Regulations of*

Bailu Academy of Classical Learning drawn up by Zhu Xi was representative. From then on, academies of classical learning began to play an important part in China's education system. The four most reputed academies of classical learning were Bai Lu Dong Academy, Yue Lu Academy, Ying Tian Fu Academy, and Song Yang Academy. Scholars were invited to give lectures and students were provided with dormitories, desks and food while studying on their own. Subsequently, most of these institutes became places where students prepared for exams. The academies of classical learning had official recognition and support, attached importance to storing and reading books, encouraged free lecturing and academic exploration, and persisted in Confucian philosophy.

7. Educational Development in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

With the coming of the Ming Dynasty, the imperial civil service examination system reached its period of full bloom. Great attention was given to the administrative procedures and the tests became more rigorous.

The central government managed to found schools called central directorates of the Imperial Academy (*guozijian*), noble academies (*zongxue*), local prefecture academies (*fuxue*), district academies (*zhouxue*) and county academies (*xianxue*). In the frontiers, there were defense academies (*weixue*). All local academies were non-subordinate and were entitled to send scholars to study at the directorates of the Imperial Academy. There were three stages leading to realizing the dream of becoming an official: provincial examination (*xiangshi*), metropolitan examination (*huishi*) by the Board of Rites, and palace examination (*dianshi*) by the Emperor himself.

The provincial and metropolitan examiners tested only "eight-legged" essays. Examinees were required to write in a fixed style with a fixed number of words, and it had to be eight paragraphs imitating the tone of the classics. Eventually, it was realized that this method was

harmful as it stifled both creativity and imagination. Once these book worms had passed their exams, they could go further to take the test set by the emperor. There were no failures during the Ming Dynasty, but each candidate's place on the pass list was decided personally by the Emperor.

The Qing Dynasty shared a similar education system with the Ming. In the Qing Dynasty, examination priority was given to the Man ethnic group over the Han. The Man examinees were not tested but required only to undertake some translation. The Han people still formed the majority of examinees. A trend appeared that the positions of court officials could be purchased, which gave rise to an unlawful pass in the degraded system.

II. Modern Development

In the mid-19th century, the imperial civil service examination began to have increasing disadvantages and shortcomings, such as dishonest behaviors on assessing or marking the examinations and impracticalities of the examination contents to social needs. Chinese education needed to be reformed.

The industrial revolution brought the Western countries unprecedented vigor and development. To find more resources for their domestic development, Britain launched the Opium War in 1840, which turned China into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. The nature of the Chinese society changed, which in turn changed the Chinese education.

Realizing the shortcomings of the Chinese education at the end of the Qing Dynasty and furthermore, feeling threatened by foreign invaders, some far-sighted scholars realized that learning the Western learning and technology was important to change the situation. With the suggestion of those far-sighted scholars, the Qing government set up the first modern school, the Imperial School of Translators in 1862 to learn Western languages and learning. As the name suggested, the school

was set up to teach Western languages. But gradually, as the self-strengthening movement went further, the reformists realized it was not enough to learn Western languages only. So in 1865, the Division of Arithmetic and Astronomy was added to the Imperial School of Translators to teach Western science and manufacturing technology, which was a very important step in the process of learning from the west. After that, many military, technical, engineering, and medical schools were set up in the port cities.

After the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, more educational reforms were urged. To meet the appeals for educational reform, the Qing Government reformed the civil service examination and set up the Imperial University, the first school of higher learning by the central government. The University was also the highest administrative institution of education. More modern schools were encouraged to be set up to learn Western learning for the social economic construction. In 1903, the first nation wide education system was implemented and in 1905 the civil service examination system was dismantled, and a series of reform measures was issued by the Qing Dynasty calling for the old academies to be reorganized into a modern system of primary, secondary, tertiary and university education, based on Western models. The educational principles were finalized, which was the Chinese learning as fundamentals and Western learning for practical use to improve Chinese education. The Chinese education witnessed a modern development.

Shortly thereafter, in 1911, the Qing Dynasty itself was overthrown in the bourgeois revolution, and a republican form of government was established. By this time, there were already European, American and Japanese educational models on Chinese soil. Because of Japan's success in education reform, their systems were tried in China first, implemented by a large number of Japanese-trained Chinese scholars. During the chaotic warlord period of the early 1920s, the Japanese education mode gradually gave way to a system more closely patterned on



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American models. The educational systems and structures were modified and adjusted to meet increasing social needs for economic construction and social development. In general, the education in this period witnessed its gradual development to a new high.

In the period from 1937 to 1945, the Chinese education, like all other social aspects, suffered a lot because of the Japanese invasion. Schools had to be moved to the inland areas to avoid being destroyed by the Japanese. Educational development stagnated.

Also in this period, the Chinese education coexisted with Western education in China. Shortly after 1840, Western missionaries from different churches, particularly the Protestantism, began to set up mission schools, firstly in the port cities, then in all areas in China. The mission education developed from primary schooling to higher education. At the end of the 19th century, the mission education formed an educational system, which was about 10 years earlier than the Chinese government one. Moreover, the mission schools established in the Chinese territory were not under the administration of the Chinese government. The mission education competed against the Chinese for educational supremacy and leadership. Only when all mission schools withdrew from mainland China did the Chinese education begin to have adjustments and smooth development.

Chapter 6

SCIENCE

According to *the Chronicle of the Natural Science* published in 1975, there were approximately 300 inventions and significant scientific accomplishments before the Ming Dynasty, of which about 175 (57%) were made in China. Arthur Lee, the dean of King's College, Cambridge University pointed out that the ancient Chinese inventions and discoveries were far more than those of all European countries at that time. For quite a long period of time, the ancient Chinese set the pace for the world scientific and technological development. The ancient Chinese technology of the chronometer, mathematics, chemistry and medicine was introduced to Korea and Japan in the east, to India in the south and, more importantly, to Persia, Arabia and European countries in the west via the Silk Road. These ancient Chinese achievements made great contributions to the development of the world science and technology. Such inventions as gun powder and compass were significantly important to Western civilization. Karl Marx once said, "Powder, compass and typography shadowed capitalism. Powder blasted the Knight, and compass inaugurated international market while typography became the instrument of Protestantism. In a word, these inventions were tools for scientific revival and great levers for spiritual development." In the ancient Chinese scientific and technological achievements, we take great pride.

I . Four Great Inventions

1. Gun Powder

In the Tang Dynasty, gun powder was firstly mentioned in the book *A Summary of Zhenyuan Fine Techniques*, and was used by the military during the late Tang Dynasty.

Gun powder was widely used in the military during the Northern Song Dynasty. A war industry was set up in Dongjing (the capital of the Northern Song) to make gun powder and firearms. *A Summary of Main Principles of War and Military* compiled under the reign of the fourth emperor of the Northern Song recorded many methods of making firearms. During the Southern Song period, assault rifle was invented. The appearance of the metal tube firearm marked a new phase in the military history. In the early 11th century, such arms as fire arrows and fireballs were produced. During the Song Dynasty, there was a large scale production of firearms. Gun powder was introduced to Arabia in the mid-13th century, and further to Europe via Arabia.

2. Compass

In the Northern Song Dynasty, people used a magnetic needle to point to the south. A compass was made by putting the magnetic needle onto a plate. The compass, a great invention, transformed senseless geomagnetic information into spatial forms.

During the Spring-Autumn and Warring States Period, after discovering the properties of the magnet, the Chinese invented the first compass called the south pointer. The Song Dynasty further witnessed the births of a fish-shaped compass, a tortoise-shaped compass and so on. People in the Northern Song made use of the compass in navigation by fixing a compass onto a plate.

Compass was taken to Arabia during the Southern Song Dynasty, then probably in 1180, onto Europe by the Arabs. The use of compass enabled long-distance navigation possible. From the 15th to the 16th

centuries, the Portuguese Vasco da Gama's travel around Africa to the Indian Ocean, Columbus' discovery of the new continent of America, and Magellan's round-the-world travel all relied on the use of compass.

3. Paper-Making

The invention of paper-making was a great revolutionary achievement of the ancient Chinese science and technology. Before the appearance of paper, people recorded things by using mud boards, brick and rock carvings, copperplates, leaves, sheepskins, turtle shells, animal bones, metals, stones, bamboo, wood, silk, none of which was a perfect recording material.

Hemp fiber paper in the early period of the Western Han Dynasty was regarded as the earliest plant fiber paper, which indicated that the Chinese had already invented paper-making methodology in the second century BC.

During 105 AD, Cai Lun, a eunuch in the Eastern Han Dynasty initiated existing paper-making techniques. He made use of hemp heads, rags and fishing net as materials, which extended the resources, lowered the costs of paper-making, and improved the quality of the paper as well. Since then, paper has spread throughout the world. Cai Lun was publicly accepted as the inventor of paper-making. During the Tang and Song Dynasties, Chinese paper-making industries achieved remarkable developments.

Chinese paper-making techniques were firstly introduced to Vietnam during the third century, to Korea in the fourth century, to Japan in the fifth century, to India in the seventh century, to Arabia in the eighth century and to Europe in the 12th century. The first paper-making factory built in Spain in 1150 was 1,000 years after Cai Lun had announced paper-making techniques.

4. Typography

Books were copied by hand at first. The invention of typography created a new era of book printing.





Typography was invented in the Sui Dynasty. During the period of the Sui and Tang Dynasties, many sutras, calendars and poems were printed by engraving typography. The earliest existing engraving presswork is *Diamond Sutra* printed in China in 868. The limitation of engraving typography gradually emerged with the increase of printing numbers required, and it was time and labor consuming because every book needed a specific engraving.

Bi Sheng eventually invented type typography between 1041 and 1048 in the Northern Song Dynasty. People engraved a single character on a clay-made board, and then assembled the required characters as needed to print books. Later in the Yuan Dynasty, wood type, tin type and cuprum type were invented, and lead type was invented in the Ming Dynasty.

The ancient Chinese engraving typography first appeared in Japan in the eighth century, in Korea in the 10th century, and in Vietnam via Turkey in the 13th century, and in Europe and Africa in the 14th century. Type typography spread to Europe in the 15th century. The Bible printed in Germany in 1456, 400 later than Bi Sheng's works was Europe's first presswork printed by type typography.

Typography changed the cultural environment in European countries, and changed the status that only clergies enjoyed the right of receiving education. The academic center thus shifted from monastery to schools, which provided powerful avenues for religious reform and renaissance. Typography also boosted the rise of bourgeoisie and cultural transmission.

II. Traditional Medicine

China was one of first countries to have a medical culture. In comparison with the Western medicine, the Chinese method took a far different approach. With a history of 5,000 years, China has formed a deep and immense knowledge of medical science, theories, diagnostic

methods, prescriptions and cures.

In the remote ages, our ancestors created primordial medicines in the process of struggling against nature. People found that certain foods could relieve or eliminate some diseases, which became the origins of discovering and applying the Chinese medicine. They also discovered that burnt rocks or sand could eliminate some local ailments. Repeated practices and improvements gave birth to hot pack remedy and moxibustion. In the process of farming activities with stones as tools, people found stabs on some parts of the human body could relieve sufferings of other parts. Based on this practice, stone needles and specula acupunctures came into existence and gradually developed to the Meridian Theory.

1. Theory and Principle

The earliest existing monograph on the Chinese medical theory *the Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor* was written 2,000 years ago. The book summarized former therapy experiences and medical theories, and made comprehensive explanations of anatomy, physiology, pathology as well as diagnoses, treatments and preventions of diseases, all of which helped to lay a foundation for the Chinese medical theory.

Shen Nong's Pharmacopoeia was the earliest existing pharmacopoeia which summarized the knowledge of medicament. It recorded pharmacological theories like four qis and five flavors. Clinical practices over a long period of time and modern science show that most of these medical effects recorded in the book were correct. For example, ephedrine could cure asthma, and coptis root could cure diarrhea.

During the third century, the famous medical sage Zhang Zhongjing wrote *Treatise on Cold Damage and Various Illnesses*. Based on his studies on *the Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor* and his own clinical experiences in the Eastern Han Dynasty, he established principles of diagnosis and treatments on the basis of an overall analysis of the illness and the patient's conditions, which was the foundation for the



development of the clinical medicine. *Treatise on Cold Damage and Various Illnesses* summarized clinical prescriptions in common use and was regarded as the first book on prescription.

Based on earlier theories, another medical sage Huang Fumi reclassified and wrote *the A-B Classics of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, which included 12 volumes and 128 articles. The book was the earliest existing book on acupuncture. In Japan, it is now still a required course book for medical students. In his book, Huang Fumi ascertained that there were 349 acupoints (acupuncture points). He also discussed symptoms and contraindication of every point, and summarized operating methods of acupuncture.

Treatise on the Origins and Symptoms of Diseases written by Chao Yuanfang was the earliest existing monograph on pathogeny and pathology. It discussed scientifically and in great details pathogeny, pathology and symptoms of internal medicine, surgery, gynecology, pediatrics and specialties of the five sensory organs of ears, eyes, lips, nose and tongue. The recorded intestinal anastomosis and induced abortion and dental extractions during that time indicated that the surgical operation reached a rather high level.

Revised Materia Medica, with 54 volumes and covering 850 types of medicinal herbs, was the first pharmacopoeia issued by the government, 883 years earlier than *the Numberg Pharmacopoeia* issued in Europe in 1542.

The medical sage Sun Simiao in the Tang Dynasty wrote *Essential Prescriptions Worthy Thousand Gold Pieces for Emergencies* and *Supplementary Prescriptions Worthy Thousand Gold Pieces*. These books discussed clinical sections, acupuncture, diet remedies, disease prevention and methods of keeping healthy. The most remarkable achievement of these two books was the prevention of nutritional deficiency diseases.

Over a 27-year period, the famous pharmacologist Li Shizhen in

the Ming Dynasty, wrote *Systematic Materia Medica* by collecting herbal medicines on mountains, making extensive investigations, anatomizing and observing animal medicines, comparing and refining mineral medicines. This book recorded 1,892 kinds of medicaments and enclosed over 100,000 prescriptions, which made great contributions to the development of pharmacology both in China and the world.

From the 17th to the 19th centuries on, in the process of struggling against infectious diseases, the school of epidemic febrile diseases was formed and developed quickly. For instance, Wu Youxing in the Ming Dynasty held that infectious diseases were not caused by wind, cold, summer-heat and damp, but by perverted qi. He further pointed out that the infection route of qi was from the mouth and the nose into the inside of human body. No matter how strong or weak he was, once he was affected by such qi, he would fall ill. This theory contradicted the traditional Chinese medical theory that diseases entered human bodies by way of body surfaces. Before the appearance of bacteriology, it was a great pioneering work.

The physiology of the Chinese medicine holds that human life is the result of the balance of yin and yang. Yin is the inner and negative principle, and yang, the outer and positive. Sickness is caused when the two aspects lose their harmony. Seen from the recovery mechanisms of organs, yang functions to protect from the outer harm, and yin is the inner base to store and provide energy for its counterpart.

2. Diagnose and Treatment

It is a wonder that Chinese doctors could cure countless patients only by physical examinations, because they had four reliable diagnosis methods, observation, auscultation and olfaction, interrogation, and pulse and palpation taking.

Observation indicates that doctors directly observe the outward appearance of the patient to know his condition. As the exterior and interior correspond immediately, when the inner organs are not

functioning properly, this will be reflected by skin pallor, tongue, facial sensory organ and excrement.

Auscultation and olfaction is a way for medical doctors to gather information through hearing the sound and smelling the odor of the patient.

Through interrogation, medical doctors question the patient and his/her relatives so as to know the symptoms, evolutions of the disease and previous treatments.

Medical doctors note the pulse conditions of the patient on the radial artery to know the inner changes of the symptoms. When the organic function is normal, the pulse and its frequency and intensity will be relatively stable.

When treating a disease, doctors of the traditional Chinese medicine usually diagnose the patient's conditions through using these four diagnostic methods. Combining the collected information, doctors will analyze the source of the disease, and then decide what prescriptions should be written out. In the traditional Chinese medical science, drugs are also different from the West, because Chinese medical doctors discovered the medicinal effects of thousands of herbs over a long period of time.

After diagnosing the patient, medical doctors would use acupuncture, operation with fire (cupping), massage, or guasha (scraping therapy) for treatment.

Acupuncture needles developed from the earliest stone, to bone, bamboo, and metal, and to the current stainless steel and silver needles. The needles are usually 15-125 mm in length and 0.28-0.45 mm in diameter. There are many passages or jingluo on the human body and on each passage, there are acupuncture points. When a passage is blocked, acupuncture can be used to make energy circulate around the body. Of course, acupuncture has other medical uses. In 1958, acupuncture began to be used in clinical anesthetics.

Cupping treatment needs apparatus and techniques. Right size cupping jars are needed. Apply a little Vaseline on the treatment spot, light a ball of cotton into the jar and quickly remove after several seconds, and cover the skin with the cupping jar as soon as possible for 15–20 minutes. When the fire in the jar is burnt, the vacuum makes the jar stick to the skin, which causes blood to stimulate and adjust the organ functions.

Massage is another great contribution the Chinese people made to the world medical field. The earliest record on massage was in the inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells of the Shang Dynasty. In the Northern and Southern Dynasties, six techniques of hand massage evolved, such as to strand, shake, twine, twiddle, knead and roll. Today over 20 varieties of techniques have developed and the study on it is thriving. The strength and direction of hand movement make the power sinking into the different parts of the body, the skin, the pulses, the muscles and the marrows. Massage can relieve the bones and muscles, reduce swelling and pain, adjust the dislocation of the joints, and remove muscle spasm.

Guasha (scraping therapy) is another ancient Chinese curing technique. Gua means to scrape and sha is the stagnant blood in the body that can be scraped out. By scraping the passage or jingluo and acupuncture points with scraping instruments, sha is raised primarily at the yang surface of the body: the back, neck, shoulders, buttocks, and limbs. Guasha is used to treat as well as to prevent common cold, flu, bronchitis, asthma, as well as any chronic disorder involving pain, congestion of the qi and blood. Modern science has proved that regular scraping will adjust channel qi, relieve tiredness and enhance immunity from diseases.



III. World-Leading Achievement

1. Astronomy

As early as in the Xia Dynasty, *xiaxiaozheng* (an astronomic calendar of that time) recorded astronomical phenomena, weather and farming conditions for each month.

Ganzhi (a chronometer of combination of the heavenly stems and earthly branches) was used as early as in the Shang Dynasty. Inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells from the Shang Dynasty recorded the earliest solar eclipse, moon eclipse and nova.

The earliest publicly recognized record of Halley's Comet was in the Spring-Autumn Period, 670 years earlier than that of the European records. The chronometer established the principle of seven leap years among 19 years, 160 years earlier than Europe.

Gan Shi Star Classics of the Warring States Period was the earliest astronomy book in the world. People could then determine seasons of a year.

During the Western Han Dynasty, Liu Che, the Emperor established *Taichuli*, the earliest macula in the world.

Zhang Heng invented the armillary sphere and seismograph in the Eastern Han Dynasty, 1,700 years earlier than the Europeans.

Huangji Calendar compiled by the astronomer Liu Chao in the Sui Dynasty established new methods of measuring and calculating the moving orbits of the sun and the moon. It was the most advanced calendar at that time in the world. Based on *Huangji Calendar*, Seng Yixing, the astronomer in the Tang Dynasty compiled *Dayanli*, which reflected the sun's movement systematically and accurately.

During the early Yuan Dynasty, the Bureau of Astronomy and Calendar was set up to compile new calendars. Guo Shoujing improved the simplified instrument and gnomon, and took charge of the national astronomic surveys. The year cycle recorded in *the Season Greeting*

Calendar compiled by Guo was similar to, but 300 years earlier than, today's Gregorian Calendar.

2. Mathematics

The Pythagorean Theorem was recorded in *Zhoubi Mathematics* during the Western Zhou Dynasty. Multiplication table appeared in the Spring-Autumn Period.

Liu Xin calculated that the ratio of circumference was 3.1547 during the Western Han Dynasty. *The Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art* in the Eastern Han Dynasty was the most advanced applied mathematics in the world of the time.

During the Three Kingdom Period, Liu Hui brought forward a more sophisticated method of calculating the ratio of circumference by using the Probability Limit Theory.

During the Southern Dynasty, Zu Chongzhi accurately calculated that the ratio of circumference was between 3.1415926 and 3.1415927, 1,000 years earlier than the Europeans. He also made annotation on *the Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art* and then wrote *Zhui Shu* (Art of Mending).

During the Tang Dynasty, in *Qi Gu Suan Jing* (continuation of the ancient mathematics), Wang Xiaotong first put forward the correct methods of solving the problem of cube root, 300 years earlier than the Arabs and 600 years earlier than the Europeans.

During the Ming Dynasty, mathematician Cheng Dawei compiled the *Systematic Treatise on Arithmetic* which laid foundations for the later abacus calculation.

During the Qing Dynasty, the Mongolian mathematician Ming Antu in his book *Circle Subdivision Method* put forward nine circle subdivision methods. He developed trigonometric function and the ratio of circumference by applying analytic geometry method.

3. Geography

The book *Zhou Yi* first brought forward the conception of



geography. The book *Shanhai Jin* (A Chinese Bestiary) in the Warring States Period reflected people's knowledge of geography.

Pei Xiu in the Western Jin Dynasty made *Yugong Diyu Tu* (the earliest map in ancient China) containing six map-making principles which were used in the practice of map-making by people till the Ming Dynasty.

The book *Shui Jing Zhu* written by Li Daoyuan in the Northern Wei Period was an integrated geographic book.

Xu Xiake Travel Track written by Xu Hongzu in the Ming Dynasty was a geographical magnum opus which recorded the observations of limestone corrosion physiognomy, 200 years earlier than that of the Europeans.

4. Agriculture

Qimin Yaoshu written by Jia Sixie in the Northern Wei Dynasty was the earliest existing integrated agricultural book. *Sketchbook of Dream Brook* written by Shen Kuo during the Northern Song Dynasty gave a detailed description of the movable-type printing, in addition to the introduction to the assembling of a compass. It was one of the precious heritages in the history of ancient Chinese scientific and technological development.

Complete Treatise on Agriculture written by Xu Guangqi in the Ming Dynasty discussed agricultural principles and introduced the European methods of irrigation works.

The Exploitation of the Works of the Nature was written by scientist Song Yingxing at the turn of the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The book covered all major industrial techniques of the time in agriculture, textiles, mining, metallurgy, chemical engineering, boat building, and weaponry, and included bibliographies of Chinese and non-Chinese sources, a glossary, and appendices on the Chinese dynasties, measurements, and transmission of techniques to the West. Though written about 300 years ago, the farming techniques and security measures in coal mining

recorded in the book are still applicable. The book introduced rice breeding, seed selection, planting, collecting, and manufacturing food-processing apparatuses. Some farming methods recorded in Song's book are still used even today in many rural places.



Chapter 7

PHILOSOPHY

Chinese people are free to believe in religions. The number of religious Chinese is considerably large since several religions are practiced in China. The commonly practiced religions are Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, and Islam, whose believers, if put together, may exceed 100 million. Besides, there are a variety of beliefs, as well as primitive religions that are still practiced in the areas inhabited by some ethnic minority groups.

The traditional Chinese culture has been molded by the three streams of philosophical traditions, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Briefly, Confucianism deals with human relationships. Taoism deals with the life in harmony with the nature, and Buddhism deals with the immortal world. In China, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism are more accepted as philosophical teachings.

I. Confucianism

1. School of Thought

Confucianism is the cornerstone of the traditional Chinese culture. It is a complete ideological system created by Confucius, based on the traditional culture of the Xia, Shang and Zhou Dynasties.

Confucianism was founded in the Spring-Autumn Period, and further developed by Mencius. Thus it was called the Way of Confucius

and Mencius. In the Qin Dynasty, the First Emperor killed Confucian intellectuals and burnt Confucian canons in order to take control and change the social ideology. In the Han Dynasty, Confucianism was adopted and other schools were suppressed by the Han rulers in order to consolidate their reign. Confucianism flourished and became dominant in the Chinese history and culture. Later it was introduced to Korea and Japan and has been influential in the two countries.

In the Wei and Jin Dynasties, Confucianism coexisted with Buddhism and Taoism. Up to the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the struggle for the dominance among the three became heated. The Song Dynasty witnessed a vital period of the development of Confucianism.

Confucianism is a system of philosophy and humanism rather than a religion though it features a few religious characteristics. Confucius and Mencius never intended to set up a religion. Confucius lived in the Spring-Autumn Period, a time when the established system could not satisfy the demands of the ruling classes as China experienced the transition from slavery to feudalism. It was a time of “collapses of etiquette and the deterioration of music”, which implied that social ethics and moralities were in decline. The intellectuals of the day were concerned about the future of the society, and a hundred schools of thoughts were introduced such as the Legist and the Taoist, and thrived in a vibrant period in the Chinese history. This was often regarded as the most exciting time for the Chinese intellectuals as no single doctrine dominated their lives. In a time of social and moral chaos, Confucianism flourished and eventually transformed the Chinese society and dominated it for centuries. Since Confucius saw the sharp difference between disunity and the lack of harmony that existed in this chaotic society, his philosophy sought to consciously restore primary values and norms.

Confucianism emphasized a male chauvinism. According to Confucianism, women had no dignity or human rights but to obey absolutely their fathers before they married, obey their husbands

absolutely after in wedlock and to obey absolutely their sons in their widowhood. Morality, proper speech, modest manner and diligent work were basic virtues they ought to have.

As a principal school of thought and the fundamental element of the Chinese culture, Confucianism was considered to have profoundly influenced the formation of the ethical ideology of the Chinese people. It had been a ruling tool for the imperial courts ever since the promotion of Confucianism in the Han Dynasty, and it remained so until the overthrow of the monarchy. It contributed greatly to the formation of ethical psychology and traits with its enduring effect on ideologies, behaviors, customs, faiths and emotions of the Chinese people.

Ru stood for officials who were originally in charge of teaching morality, music and etiquette for slave holders and aristocrats. They later became refined citizens, superior to others in knowledge and morality. Due to the number of Confucius' disciples and his prestige, ru became the term used for Confucius' disciples, and the study of Confucian thoughts and ideas is defined as Confucianism.

Confucianism was based on the teachings and writings of Confucius, the philosopher, and was based upon the concept of relationships. In Confucianism every relationship had the dual aspects of responsibilities and obligations. Therefore the relationship between mother and child, husband and wife, brother and sister all had responsibilities and obligations. However, Confucianism went beyond the family and incorporated the relationship of individuals with the state, subject and ruler, bureaucrat and civilian. If these responsibilities and obligations were observed, then society would be a just and harmonious one.

Confucianism was dominant because it conformed to the needs of the ruling class. It presented a utopian world for both the ruling class and the ordinary people. The themes in Confucian thought could be reflected in *the Three Principles*, which were, the king was the master

of the ministers; the husband was the master of the wife; the father was the master of the sons. These three relationships represented all relationships in a highly hierarchical society; and *the Five Constant Virtues*, referring to goodness, rightness, ritual, wisdom, and credibility.

Goodness or benevolence literally means loving people. The Chinese character “ren” consists of two morphemes: “ren” (person, human) and “er” (two), hence “ren” actually means “two persons” and “ren” therefore includes everything that is good when people get along with each other and includes such connotations as tolerance, forgiveness, deference, filial obedience, faithfulness, wisdom, and honesty. It is the core of five norms of Confucianism.

Rightness literally means friendship, fraternity. Rightness pronounced as yi overlaps with goodness but is above all other relationships. Confucius said that a gentleman took as much trouble to discover what was right as lesser men to discover what would pay. An often used compliment when praising a man who was willing to give up his own interest to help a friend was yiqi: personal loyalty. Friendship was to some degree a kind of blind obligation.

Ritual refers to ethical norms. In *the Analects*, Confucius said that one should be regulated by ritual. He believed that governing the people by political force, and keeping order among them by punishments would discourage people from doing wrong things, but they would lose all self-respect. Governing people by moral force and keeping order among them by ritual will then keep their self-respect. Therefore, according to Confucian teaching, in the use of ritual, harmony was prized. A harmonious relationship was the most important element of governance and therefore should be retained at any cost.

Another virtue is wisdom, meaning cleverness and knowledge. When you had knowledge, mostly about what you should do according to your status, you had wisdom. Finally, credibility was a virtue that connoted believability, reliability, and trustworthiness. This involved

doing what you said you would do.

Confucius' philosophy emphasized upon personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, justice and sincerity, which were the values that gained prominence in China over other doctrines. Confucianism has influenced the Chinese attitudes towards life, set the patterns of living and standards of social value, established standards for training government officials, and provided backgrounds for the Chinese political theories and institutions.

2. Chinese Virtue—Filial Piety

Filial piety was a cardinal principle of the traditional Chinese morality. According to Confucius, it was the essence of all benevolence. In some dynasties, "rule of piety" was set as a state policy. In the Han Dynasty, the Law of Fealty and Honesty was promulgated, stipulating that piety was a key criterion in evaluating officials, as it was widely believed that the dutiful had loving hearts and the honest were incorruptible.

The Chinese firmly believed that having a son to carry on the family name was the most important duty. Wives who could have one or more sons were highly respected and praised by their husbands, parents in law and relatives. The deep-rooted thought regarding the Chinese filial piety was that parents were always right, no matter what parents did and how mean parents were; The Chinese believed that parents acted exclusively out of good intentions towards their children. Besides, with the influence of Buddhism, the Chinese believed in the idea of reincarnation. Children should bear all sufferings in order to atone for their sins because they had previously done something negative towards their parents in their previous life. In short, there was no domestic violence in the ancient Chinese families; there were only children who got well-deserved lessons.

Last but not least, in the past, children should put parents and families as their first priority. People would look down on children who

disobeyed their parent's orders, and thought those bad-tempered children would be punished eventually. Besides, children should give up their life, careers and relationships for their families. This kind of thought originated from the agricultural age.

II . Taoism

Taoism is the second most influential school of thought in the Chinese culture and philosophy. Taoism is a genuinely Chinese philosophical thought. Some hold that without understanding Taoism, there can be no understanding of the Chinese culture. The great Chinese thinker, Lu Xun once said, "China roots deep in Taoism. If one wants to comprehend the Chinese history and culture, he must comprehend Taoism first."

1. School of Thought

Laozi (also Lao Dan, Li Er, Laotzu, and Laotse) is the founder of this traditional Chinese native religion. *The Doctrine of Morality* is regarded as their holy Bible.

Taoism was formally established in the late Eastern Han Dynasty. It has a history of 1,800 years. Most historians agree that the religion came into being in the second century, on the basis of two indigenous beliefs, namely, *the Five-Dou Rice Sect* and *the Taiping (Peace) Sect*. Dou was a traditional measure of grain. The former was named as five-dou rice because Zhang Daoling, founder of the sect, demanded that, to be a member of the sect, a person must donate five dou of rice to the sect instead of payment in cash for admission.

Taoism became a legitimate religion like Buddhism in China in the Northern and Southern Dynasties, because it was supported by some emperors for political reasons. Ten Taoist temples were constructed in Chang'an in the Sui Dynasty. The emperors in the Tang Dynasty regarded themselves as the offspring of Laozi, and Taoism developed rapidly and had a profound influence on subsequent dynasties.

Taoism welcomed its “silver age” from the Tang Dynasty to the Northern Song Dynasty. Many sects were formed during this period. Taoist temples were scattered all over the country and Taoist masters came forth in great numbers. After the Yuan Dynasty, Taoism was divided into two major sects: Quanzhen Sect and Zhengyi Sect.

In the Ming Dynasty, due to national conflicts, the court had little energy or financial support to encourage the development of Taoism. The internal unity of Taoism was shaken and conflicts arose. In the Qing Dynasty, the Manchu royal families honored the Tibetan Buddhism and showed no interest in Taoism. Taoism eventually lost support from the upper rulers. During the Opium War, Taoism further declined through imperialist oppression and many Taoists lost their focus on religious study.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Taoist Association was formed in 1957, which symbolized the dawn of a new era of Taoism. At present, many people in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan believe in Taoism. Overseas Chinese communities have built many Taoist temples.

Tao was the origin of the eternal world. It was thought to be boundless in time and space. Ordinary people could become immortals when they had Tao.

The Taoist aim, depending on the tradition or school it belonged to, was to secure and enjoy longevity or to become immortals. This could be achieved through a broad range of ways, medical treatment, breathing techniques, meditation, gymnastics, prayers, and communal rites. Basically, it was considered necessary to keep the body and its own thousands of immortals in harmony with their heavenly counterparts. For example, Taoists believed in two different yet complementary types of souls whose combined presence in the human body kept it alive, the three hun-souls, responsible for man's intellectual and moral aspects, and the seven po-souls, controlling such earthly

aspects as negative moral properties.

Taoists were experts in medicine. They invented their own alchemy, producing and swallowing specific drugs as one of the paths to immortality. A big event was the integration of the stories of the Eight Immortals. Over a long history, many legends about Taoist figures emerged and the most well-known were those of the Eight Immortals. A colloquial phrase has it, "like the Eight Immortals crossing the sea, each one showing his or her special feats". The images of the Eight Immortals could be seen in many artifacts, from the bridal sedan to cakes, vases, paper-cuttings and paintings.

2. Theoretical Concept

Taoism contained many profound theories which at first might be difficult to understand. In general, these theories reflected Taoism as a balanced relationship between nature and human beings.

The most basic concept of Taoism was Tao (law or regularity). Laozi added his unique idea on Tao and made Tao the core of his theology. In his opinion, Tao was a whole existing before heaven and earth. Everything was the deviation of Tao.

In order to make this theory more clear and vivid, Taoism drew a taiji diagram, a curve dividing a circle into two parts, one half was white representing yang (the bright side), while the other was in black, representing yin (the dark side). There was a black dot in the white part, while a white dot was in the black part representing the yin and yang of each other and could transform into the counterpart. The diagram looked like two fish end to end, so it was also called the Diagram of Yin-Yang Fish.

Qi, another concept in Taoism, made reference to the whole world and the foundation of the unity of the world. It was the basic source of any tangible and intangible objects, including Gods and spirits, as well as humans and ghosts. The vital essence of qi was called jing (genuine energy), which was believed to be necessary in order to create anything

when arranged in certain ways. Qi and shen (spirit) were considered to be the most important elements in human beings.

Taoism advocated peace and stability. The early *Taiping Classic* (Peace Classic) expressed the Taoist understandings of peace. Taoism thought that people must perform according to inherent rules in order to establish a harmonious and orderly world where everyone was equal and kind. Along with this was the belief that there should be a world without wars, since it appeared that wars brought people nothing but disaster and suffering. Taoism was always against wars and weaponry. Besides, a peaceful society also enabled people to live harmoniously with nature, and to protect nature.

Moreover, Taoism practiced non-action and non-intention in order to purify the soul. Rules should simplify government affairs to reduce the disturbance of political measures on society and the ordinary people.

Tao-te Ching, meaning *the Classic of the Way of Power*, was one of the great works of ancient China. *Tao-te Ching* is not only a significant philosophical book, but also one of the most sacred scriptures of Taoism religion. In some versions of the tale, *Tao-te Ching* was compiled by the followers of Laozi in the middle of the Warring States Period. The elements of Taoism were accumulated over time and matured into the following forms.

Tao could be roughly stated to be the flow of the universe, or the force behind natural order. The philosophical and religious Tao was infinite, without limitation and was believed to be transcendent, indistinct and formless. Laozi argued that the substance of Tao could not be named or categorized though it was the source of both existence and non-existence. Such abstract concept of Tao was the core belief of Taoism.

Laozi comprehended that everything on earth was in change and in conflict, such as full and empty, difficult and easy, long and short, tall and short, beautiful and ugly, strong and weak, glory and humiliation, blessing and misfortune, big and small, life and death, wise and silly,

victorious and failure. Each opposing view was converging. He was actually getting close to the death in the process of pursuing the life. "Misfortune may be blessing in disguise, blessing may be misfortune in disguise." Such plain dialectic notions were the most valuable treasures in Taoism which inspired a lot of people.

Laozi highlighted the concept of nature. Bearing without possessing, nurturing without taming, and shaping without forcing were the keys to harmony and so were called non-action. Laozi argued that contentment was the resource of happiness. Weakening their ambitions and strengthening their bones, and weakening their minds and filling their bellies resulted in simplicity. A harmonious society remained when rulers governed by main principles, not by strict control. In short, non-action equaled spontaneity which was the key to individual success and political harmony.

III. Buddhism

Buddhism, as a foreign culture, underwent mainly three stages of developments in China, which was somehow the process of Buddhist localization. Buddhism was well accepted in China because of the open-minded and all-inclusive characters of the Chinese nation and the rich and colorful connotations in Buddhism. The inter-flow of Buddhist philosophy and the classic Chinese philosophy opened the way for further development of philosophy.

1. Localization

The origin of Buddhism could be traced back to around 563 BC. Buddhism was a religion that was based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, who was the son of a King. Siddhartha went in search of spiritual peace, and it was on this search that he decided to abandon his worldly advantages and became known as Buddha or the Enlightened One. Buddha wanted to share his wisdom with all around him, and he traveled all over India and Nepal preaching and educating others about

the middle path. Buddha further created a theology which was based on moderation and the necessity to separate the physical from the spiritual existence.

Buddhism was therefore a practice of finding peace with oneself, a religion formulated to win happiness during the present life as well as the next. Buddhists believed it was important to find the God within everything. Buddhist followers did not worship any God and followed the eight-fold path in order to lead a meaningful life.

It was the period from the dawn of the late Han Dynasty to the fall of the Western Jin Dynasty when Buddhism was introduced into China by immigrants from Persia, Central Asia, and India. Foreign Buddhist monks attempting to spread Buddhism in China adopted Taoist and Confucian theories to interpret Buddhism. Buddhism was at first considered an insignificant devotion practiced by immigrants. Buddhism during the Han Dynasty was treated in much the same way as Taoism, and it first took root among members of the royal families and aristocracy. Buddhism continued to flourish during the Northern and Southern Dynasties.

But during the Southern and Northern Dynasties, Buddhism was in conflict with Confucianism and Taoism. Controversy between Buddhism and other traditional Chinese schools occurred usually on those questions such as "whether soul is extinctive or non-extinctive", "whether there exist a cause and an effect" and "should Buddhist monks pay their respects to the Emperor".

Buddhism reached its zenith during the Sui and Tang Dynasties. The emperors in the Tang Dynasty recognized the importance of Buddhism. Xuan Zang was the most reputed monk at this time, and it was his journey to India that was the model for the classic novel *Journey to the West*.

Not until in the Tang and Song Dynasties did Buddhism begin its process of localization. Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, the three

major philosophic schools together took on a new aspect in the Chinese society. Confucianism had absorbed a lot from Buddhism which in turn gave birth to Neo-Confucianism. Taoism had done the same and also paved the way for the new sects (Quanzheng Jiao and Taiyi Jiao) to come into being. Buddhism did finally assert its own independent identity as it attracted more attention from the native Chinese followers and had completed its localization and became a major and important part of the traditional Chinese culture.

2. Basic Teaching

Three different forms of Buddhism religion evolved as it reached population centers. The social and ethnic backgrounds in each location affected the way in which each of these forms developed and eventually became known as the Han, the Tibetan and the Southern Buddhism.

The Tibetan Buddhism, also called the Lamaism, started in the mid-seventh century. In the mid-eighth century, Buddhism was introduced to Tibet via India. The Tibetan Buddhism came into full existence in the late 10th century.

The Dai people in Xishuangbanna Prefecture, Yunnan Province believe in the Southern Buddhism. The Southern Buddhism absorbs the Dai culture and has flexible doctrines. Generally, Buddhism is the single religion among the Dai people and has a comprehensive influence over their daily life and culture like sculptures, paintings and folklores.

Buddhism had a substantial impact in architecture, sculpture, painting, music and literature. Over its long history, Buddhism has left an indelible footprint on Chinese civilization. Many words and phrases are rooted in Buddhist origins. Take a colloquial phrase as an example, "to hold the foot of Buddha at the moment" meaning "to make a last minute effort". This reveals in a sense the true attitude of the Chinese towards the utilitarian aspects of belief. Many people kowtow to whatever gods they encounter and will burn incense in any temple.

Buddha believed that there was a continuous cycle of death and

rebirth and that each person's position and well-being in life was determined by his/her behaviors in the previous life. A person's good deeds and acts might lead to a rebirth as a wise and wealthy person or as a heavenly being. A person's bad deeds and evil acts might lead to a rebirth as a poor and sickly person. Buddha also believed that the experiences of pain and suffering were very much a part of a person's life, and taught that the only way to escape human suffering was to give up worldly desires such as power, wealth, and beauty.

Buddhism is not a teaching to change others, but a teaching to change oneself. This change occurs when one is "filled with" or awakened to the Buddha, and can deeply and positively transform the way one views his life and all life around him. Ultimately, as the life of the Buddha himself demonstrated, we find that the true gift of Buddhism is really compassion. Awakening of compassion leads to the discovery of a wonderful and dynamic life full of energy and creativity.

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One of the most basic teachings of Buddha is impermanence. This is the fundamental truth that all life is always moving, flowing and changing. But besides realizing the impermanence of life, he also realized that not just he himself, but that all living things, his loved ones, the birds, the trees, would someday also be destroyed by impermanence, and he felt great compassion for every living thing, and saw that all life was interdependent.

IV. Christianity and Islam

Christianity in China is a growing minority religion that comprises Protestantism, Catholicism, and a small number of Orthodox Churches. Although its lineage in China is not as ancient as beliefs such as Taoism or Buddhism, Christianity has developed in China since at least the seventh century and has demonstrated increasing influence for over 200 years. There are four historical phases of Christianity in China.

The first phase began during the seventh century when the Oriental

Church of the Nestorians came to China, along the Silk Road from Persia.

The second phase came with the second opening of the trade route in the Yuan Dynasty or slightly earlier. A mission of Christians in China was only partially successful because the politics of the Mongol Khans was against foreign traders, technicians and monks.

The third period was the mission of the Jesuits, an order especially dedicated to foreign mission, whose first representative in China was Matteo Ricci (1610). Unlike their forerunners, the Jesuits did not travel to China along the Silk Road but by ship and arrived in Macao. Ricci recognized that it was important to adapt some issues of theology, teachings and behaviors from the Chinese culture and tradition. Ricci chose a Chinese name (Li Madou), wore Chinese clothes and learned Chinese. The missionaries also introduced Western science, mathematics, and astronomy.

The fourth phase began in the 19th century and was directly connected with the Western colonialism and imperialism. After the Western powers forced China to open treaty ports in the First Opium War, missionaries were allowed into these cities. During the 1840s, Western missionaries spread Christianity rapidly through the coastal cities and they established schools, hospitals, and orphanages, as well as churches. Quite a lot of people followed Christianity, mostly Protestantism, in this phase.

Islam in China has a rich heritage. China has some of the oldest Muslim histories. Islam derived from the word “salaam” which meant “peace which comes by surrendering to God”. It was founded by Arab prophet, Mohammed. Islam was introduced into China via the Silk Road in the seventh century by Arabian envoys. Many Persians migrated to China and they married Chinese. Their descendants preserved the faith of Islam. During the Yuan Dynasty, many Mosques and Islam learning centers were constructed. Chinese Muslims lived mostly in the



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area of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regions, and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Islam influenced the Chinese technology, science, philosophy and arts. Since 1978, many nation-wide Islamic associations have been organized to coordinate the inter-ethnic activities among the Muslims.

Chapter 8

ARCHITECTURE

Chinese architecture, with a long history of tradition, has created many architectural monuments, and the Great Wall is a case in point. In the process of architectural development, superior techniques and artistic designs were combined to make Chinese architecture unique.

The square and circular hole-shaped houses unearthed in Banpo relics in Shaanxi Province have a history of more than 6,000 years. The Great Wall built on the lofty and precipitous peaks is renowned in the history of architecture. Anji Bridge (also called Zhaozhou Bridge) built in Zhao County, Hebei Province during the Sui Dynasty is a leading example of the combination of science, technology and arts. The existing wood pagoda in Fogong Temple in Ying County, Shaanxi Province is the highest existing wood structure built in the world. The beautiful Imperial Palace of the Ming and the Qing Dynasties in Beijing is the largest completely preserved building in the world. Classic gardens of China with their uniqueness in art and style are bright pearls in the Chinese and world cultural heritages.

I. Feature

Chinese architecture refers to the style of architecture that has taken shape in Asia over the centuries. The structural principles of Chinese architecture have remained largely unchanged, except for the decorative

details. Chinese classifications for architecture include lou (multistory buildings), tai (terraces), ting (pavilions), ge (two-storey pavilions), ta (Chinese pagodas), xuan (verandas with windows), xie (pavilions or houses on terraces), and wu (rooms connected by roofed corridors), each displaying a different architectural style, with distinct characteristics.

The first characteristic is the use of timber frame structure. The proverb "collapse of walls does not cause the collapse of the house" summarizes the most important characteristic of such frame structures of the Chinese buildings. The most important one is the horizontal axis, in particular the construction of a heavy platform and a large roof, with vertical walls. Chinese architecture stresses the visual impact of the width of the buildings. Additionally, such frame structures become unique characteristics of the ancient palaces, temples and other important buildings. They consist of square woods and arched cross-rails arranged in crisscross patterns which gradually protrude outside to form a base with a large top and a small bottom.

Another important feature is the emphasis on symmetry, which may connote a sense of grandeur. Symmetry can be applied to everything from palace to farmhouse. A notable exception is in the design of gardens, which tends to be as asymmetrical as possible. The layout of the courtyard style generally takes into account equilibrium and symmetry. The principle underlying the garden's composition is to create enduring flow and match nature. Compared with European buildings, the symmetry layout style of courtyards in China has its unique artistic effect. An ancient Chinese building may look like a traditional Chinese painting panorama which can only be viewed part after part.

Ancient Chinese craftsmen were at home with using color to decorate buildings in order to enhance wood structures. Contrast and harmony of brilliant colors were typical features. Pillars and girders were generally decorated with red. Through practice, people accumulated experience in using color on buildings. Warm colors were usually used

on principal parts of the building (the parts that could be irradiated by the sun) , while cool colors were used on those shadow under eaves. Golden lines and spots were usually added to red gates, red windows under eaves. In natural environments, brilliant colors were used to bring vitality to the buildings. In the feudal society, the use of color was restricted according to strict social status classification. Since yellow was deemed the noblest color and green the second most, they were often applied on palace surfaces, and was called hexicaihua (a kind of Chinese color painting) .

Foil adornment structure was the most common artistic technique used in important buildings such as palaces and temples. Foil structure with elaborate features was mainly used on the front of mausoleums, and ancestral temples. Other types of artistic foil decoration included ornamental columns erected in the front of palaces, and memorial archways.

II . Type

Different types of Chinese architecture can be categorized into imperial architecture , religious architecture (Taoist , Buddhist) , garden architecture and general architecture.

1. Imperial Architecture

Imperial architecture includes imperial mausoleums and palaces, often imposing structures. Imperial mausoleum architecture accounts for the major part in ancient Chinese architecture since it usually represented the highest architectural techniques at that time. Historically, imperial mausoleums were usually built against hills or mountains or facing plains. Most imperial mausoleums had broad avenues called shendao (the sacred way) at the entrance, along whose sides were stone sculptures of men and animals guarding the tombs.

Imperial palaces, in the long history of the Chinese feudal society, were built by emperors and kings. There were certain unique

architectural features. One example was the use of yellow roof tiles. Yellow was the imperial color, and yellow roof tiles still adorn most of the buildings within the Forbidden City. The Temple of Heaven, however, used blue roof tiles to symbolize the sky. The roofs were almost invariably supported by brackets, a feature shared only with the largest religious buildings. The wooden columns of the buildings, as well as the surfaces of the walls, tended to be painted red in color. Red walls are visible in the Forbidden City.

The Chinese dragon, an emblem reserved for the imperial regime, was used in imperial architecture, on the roofs, on the beams and pillars, and on the doors. Only the gates used by the emperor could have five arches, with the central one being reserved for the emperor himself. The buildings faced south to avoid the cold north wind.

Ancient records described the Epang Palace of the Qin Dynasty, Weiyang Palace of the Han Dynasty and Daming Palace of the Tang Dynasty as being huge constructions with broad courtyards, magnificent halls, pavilions, terraces and towers. The only imperial palaces existent nowadays are the Forbidden City in Beijing and the Imperial Palace in Shenyang, which were built in the Ming and Qing Dynasties respectively. The Forbidden City was constructed totally in accordance with the traditional regulations of the ancient Chinese palaces, and reflected the traditional features of the Chinese palace architecture, from the general layout to the specific appearance of the structures and decorations.

Numerology influenced imperial architecture. Nine carried a special significance in ancient China where it was thought that odd numbers represented yang and even numbers yin. Since nine is the largest odd number under ten, it was regarded as the extremely lucky number. So, emperors liked to monopolize it to symbolize their superiority. Designs related with nine appeared on almost every imperial structure. For example, on the gates of the Forbidden City, there are 81 gold-plating

bronze studs which are arranged in nine columns and rows. The Forbidden City is said to have 9,999.5 rooms, just short of the mythical 10,000 rooms in heaven. Ancient palaces were usually designed to be nine-sectional architectural complexes.

2. Religious Architecture

Buddhist architecture, generally speaking, follows the imperial style. Chinese Buddhist architecture includes temples, pagodas and grottoes. Since emperors of dynasties believed in Buddhism, numerous temples were erected, usually as splendid as palaces, for many were built under imperial orders. As architectural techniques improved, glazed tiles, exquisite engravings and delicate paintings were incorporated into the construction of temples, enhancing the grandeur of these buildings.

A Chinese Buddhist temple was designed in the same layout as a traditional Chinese palace architecture. It usually had a group of courtyards and halls set on a north-south axis with rooms flanked symmetrically on each side. Chinese Buddhist architecture adhered strictly to symmetric style, with the main buildings set on a central axis, facing the south. Annex structures were on the west and east flanks. The temple gate, heavenly king hall, main hall and Sutra library stood on the axis. Dormitories, kitchens, dining halls, storehouses and antechambers usually clustered on the right side while the left side was reserved for visitors.

Pagoda was also the main integrating part of the Buddhist architecture, with varied styles reflecting local flavors. Pagoda architecture followed Buddhism into China around the first century, and quickly incorporated the Chinese architectural style to have developed into pavilion-like structures on which one could view scenery. Among the 3,000 existing pagodas, a variety of materials were used individually—timber, brick, stone, bronze and iron.

Another kind of Buddhist architecture was the grotto complex which consisted of caves opened onto cliff walls, usually huge projects with exquisite carvings. Grotto complex came from India with Buddhism and

proliferated during the Northern and Southern Dynasties. Famous examples are Mogao Caves, Yungang Grottoes and Longmen Grottoes.

Taoist architecture included various functional structures. Categorized as a palace for sacrifice, altar for praying and offering, temple for religious service, residence for Taoist abbess and garden for visitors, the style reflected the Taoist philosophy that human cosmos followed the natural cosmos to integrate energy, qi and spirit.

Taoist architecture usually followed the commoners' style. The main entrance was, however, usually at the side, out of superstition about demons which might try to enter the premise. In a Taoist temple the main deity was located in the main hall at the front, with the lesser deities at the back hall and at the sides.

Taoist architecture applied two architectural styles, traditional and Bagua. In the former, traditional architectural layout, which was symmetric, was applied. Main halls were set up on the central axis, while other religious structures were on the two sides. Usually, on the northwest corner of the complex, "Lucky Land to Meet God" was located. Annexes like the dining hall and accommodation were located at the back or on the flank of the complex. In the latter, all structures surrounded the danlu (stove to make pills of immortality) in the center according to Bagua.

Most Taoist architecture resorted to natural environments to build towers, pavilions, lobbies and other garden structural units. These were decorated with murals, sculptures and steles for people to enjoy, an avenue to interpret the Taoist philosophy of nature. Taoist architectural decoration reflected the Taoist pursuit of luck and fulfillment, and long lifespan. All Taoist architectural motifs were meaningful. Celestial bodies meant brightness shining everywhere while landscape and rocks meant immortality. Folding fan, fish, narcissus, bat and deer were used to imply beneficence, wealth, celestial being, fortune and official position, while pine and cypress stood for affection, tortoise for longevity, and

crane for man of honor.

Taoist temples were much like their Buddhist counterparts, taking the form of the traditional Chinese courtyard and palace structure. Unlike Buddhist temple which had two warriors guarding the gate, a statue of a dragon and a lion played the same role in Taoist temple. In the main hall, the trinity sanqing (three pure Gods) were represented as yuqing (jade pure), shangqing (upper pure) and taiqing (great pure). The four Heavenly Emperors in Taoism replaced the trinity and four Heavenly Kings of Buddhism.

In the Taoist philosophy of nature, gold, wood, water, fire and earth were considered the five elementary substances to form everything in the world. Taoism respected anything which was of nature and would choose the most natural material as a first choice.

Another feature of Taoist temple structure is the up-turned eaves. This up-turned structure with a beautiful curve presented a volatile style and symbolized flying to the wonderland.

3. Garden Architecture

Garden architecture, an important part of the ancient Chinese architecture, was a combination of structures and man-made and natural landscapes. It provided not only lodging but also attempts to create a harmonious environment.

Ancient Chinese gardens originated in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, when monarchs began to build parks for their own leisure and pleasure. During the Spring-Autumn and Warring States Period, it was fashionable to build gardens. In the Han Dynasty private gardens appeared. After the Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties, private gardens came into fashion as the rich and powerful sought to express their sentiments in landscaping. There are many classifications according to different criteria. Garden architecture fell into three categories.

Imperial gardens, usually spacious, exquisite and grandiose, were built by thousands of people for royal families. The most imperial



gardens are in Beijing now.

Private gardens were usually built in urban residential areas, neighbored with residences. Since land was expensive in cities, private gardens were generally small and simple but delicate, looked tasteful and served multiple functions. Most famous private gardens are situated in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province.

Monastic gardens were commonly found in monasteries against quiet and green mountains. With natural beauty, these gardens were designed to reflect the solemn and sacred atmosphere.

4. Residential Architecture

Traditional Chinese residences reflect the national culture as well as the sub-culture of a specific region and the ethnic group.

The traditional residential architecture of China consisted of seven major styles, the compound built around a courtyard (siheyuan) prevalent in northern China, Beijing's hutong, farmers' cave (yaodong) in Shanxi Province, the earthen building (tulou) in southeast China's Fujian Province, the stilt house (diaojiaolou) situated on steep inclines or projecting over water in southern China, shikumen in Shanghai, and the seal-like compound (yikeyin) in Yunnan Province. Traditional residences tended to conform to their natural environments of surrounding rivers and mountains, attempting to compliment the natural beauty.

(1) Hutong and Courtyard

Hutong is a unique form of community that exists only in China. There are thousands of hutong in Beijing, most of which were built in the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties. Hutong literally means a small street or a lane between two courtyards, although the word can also mean a community within the city consisting of hutong residences. Hutong was named for various reasons. Some derived their names from places such as Inner Xizhimen Hutong, some from plants such as Liushu (the willow) Hutong, some from directions such as Xi (west)

Hongmen Hutong, some from Beijing idioms such as Yizi (Beijing local people call soap as yizi) Hutong, some from positive words such as Xiqing (happy) Hutong, some from markets and businesses such as Yangshi (sheep market) Hutong, some from temples such as Guanyinsi (Kwan-yin Temple) Hutong, and some from the names of ordinary people such as Mengduan Hutong. The most impressive hutong is in the Shichahai area, which is a scenic spot. The oldest hutong is called Sanmiao Street, which is more than 900 years old. The longest is dong xi jiao min xiang, whose total length is 6.5 km. The shortest one is Yichi Street, only a little more than ten meters long. The Qianshi Hutong near Qianmen (front gate) is only 40 cm in its narrowest section. A lot of smaller hutong have been formed inside bigger ones.

A courtyard is square and rooms are built along the four sides. The small courtyard constructions are very simple, with several rooms arranged on each of the four sides respectively. They are north rooms, east and west wing-rooms and south rooms. The older family members live in the north rooms and the young in the wing-rooms, with the south room being either a living room or a study. The middle-sized ones are a little more complicated however still retaining all the basic structures but with rooms, corridors, and walls added. Among these, a chuihua gate is very important, which divides the courtyard into front yard (outer yard) and inner yard. The wing-rooms in the outer yard are smaller. These smaller rooms are used as a kitchen or bedrooms for servants. The south rooms have a gate room, living room or a study and a garage. The big courtyard constructions are the most complicated. They consist of more than two small courtyards. The middle-sized and small courtyards are dwellings for ordinary people while the big ones are used by government officials and their family members. The doors of all rooms face the inside of the yard. The gate of a courtyard is usually at the east end of the south side. The screen wall near the gate offers privacy. Small brick paths in the yard connect every room. There are



steps in front of every door. In the yard, people can occupy themselves by planting trees and flowers, raising fish, resting or doing housework.

(2) Siheyuan

Siheyuan is the traditional courtyard-style residence of Beijing. The houses in the yard are constructed in such a way that zhengfang (the main house), xiangfang (the wing houses) and daoziuo (house facing the main house) are connected with walls, creating an enclosed square courtyard. It has been several hundred years since this kind of architectural form took shape. During the Yuan Dynasty, siheyuan was shaping and developing. The great Italian traveler, Marco Polo, once praised the ingenious and elegant design of this highly original house style created by the ancient Chinese people as "beyond description of any language".

The existing siheyuan are mostly from the Ming and Qing Dynasties and the time of the Republic of China. The construction of siheyuan varies in type and size but is similar in general pattern. The houses in a siheyuan are built symmetrically along a south-north axis. A siheyuan that faces the south has its entrance at the southeast corner while the entrance of one facing the north is at the northwest corner. This conforms to the ancient Chinese customs under which the eight diagrams are used to stand for the eight directions and the above two directions are considered the lucky ones. The houses in the main courtyard are taller than those in the front courtyard and the rooms more spacious and bright. On the north side is the main house called zhengfang and on the east and west sides are the wing houses called xiangfang. The houses on three sides are normally connected with a winding corridor. The main house on the north side is supported by two small rooms on both sides which are called erfang (ear rooms, flanking the principal rooms). Zhaofang (the back house) is built behind the main house and is at the rear of the whole complex.

The magnitude and design of a siheyuan are based not only on the

owner's economic situation but also on his social status. During the Qing Dynasty, the residences of the princes were called wangfu while those of other royal family members could only be called fu. Wangfu was of great magnitude. The main house was called dian (hall), the roofs were covered with green glazed tiles and the gates and walls were painted red. Fu was normally smaller in size than wangfu, the main house could not be called dian and it was not roofed with glazed tiles. Apart from these, there were also rules in connection with the number of rooms, decorative paintings, the height of the foundations as well as the number of decorative nails on the gate, and these regulations could not be breached. The residences for the commoners were called zhai or di and the roofs and walls were grey in color.

(3) Shikumen

The origin of shikumen buildings can be traced back to the 1860s. As the Taiping Heavenly Uprising led by Li Xiucheng advanced east, conquering a string of important towns in eastern China, and people from southern Jiangsu and northern Zhejiang ran into the foreign settlements in Shanghai. Local merchants were encouraged to invest in housing to accommodate these people. These houses were, in most cases, rows of shikumen-style buildings in an effort to use the limited land more efficiently. Shikumen, a type of tenement housing unique to Shanghai, is a combination of Eastern and Western architectural styles featuring the traditional Eastern grey brick door lintels with a Western style of decorative engraving on the walls. In the early 1900s, shikumen was considered among the young generation as the ultimate example of crowded urban living.

Generally, shikumen-style buildings have wooden planks as doors and long bars of stones as doorframes. Shikumen-style buildings have certain elements of the West, but most of the designs and layouts are in line with those in jiangnan (south of the Yangtze River) area. Behind a shikumen door is a courtyard, and further inside is a living room, locally





known as a parlor, and then the back courtyard, kitchen and back door. To the sides of the courtyard and the parlor are the right and left wing rooms.

Shikumen-style houses formed the basis of the lilong (lane) community where private and public spaces overlapped. In this community, people's business was not a secret. As the density of the population rose, some family activities were often moved to public spaces.

At their peak, shikumen-style neighborhoods numbered more than 9,000 in Shanghai and took up 60 per cent of the total housing space of the city. Shikumen-style, which has survived for more than a century, is however no longer suitable for modern urban living. Since the 1990s, Shanghai has begun a new wave of renovation and development, demolishing many shikumen-style buildings. It was only when more and more of these houses were replaced by skyscrapers that people began to realize such monuments of Shanghai's past deserved to be preserved.

(4) Yaodong

Yaodong, an artificial dugout cave common in northern China, especially on the Loess Plateau, predates history, and continues today.

Yaodong is usually carved out of the side of a loess hill. The side must be vertical. The cross section of a yaodong is similar to that of a cave: a rectangle in the lower part connected to a semi-circle in the upper part. The width at the floor is from 3 to 4 m, and the highest point in the ceiling is around 3 m or higher. The depth of a yaodong can be 5 m or more. Windows and doors are installed at the opening. A platform called kang is built to be used as a bed. A fireplace is built beside the kang and the smoke and hot gas go through the pipes inside the kang to heat it before flowing outdoors through a chimney.

The hill, which is practically infinite in thickness, separates the indoor space and outdoor and acts as an effective insulator that keeps

the inside of yaodong warm in cold seasons and cool in hot seasons. Often, three or more yaodong in a row are constructed. First, stones or bricks are used to build the arch-shaped structure, and then soil is used to fill up the external space above the arches to make a thick and flat roof. The most famous yaodong in China are perhaps those in Yan'an. An estimated 40 million people in northern China live in yaodong.

(5) Yikeyin (Seal-like Compound)

Many people are familiar with siheyuan residences in Beijing and other northern cities. However, siheyuan is not limited to just the north of the country. In southern China's Kunming, Yunnan Province, there is a variation of siheyuan. Here the courtyard compounds are called yikeyin, whose layout, when viewed from the above, resembles the familiar shape of the square seal seen on Chinese documents and paintings.

Yikeyin is more compact than the Beijing style of residences which are noted for their royal air and aristocratic grandeur. The buildings on all four sides are two-storied and connected. There are three principal rooms with two wing-rooms on either side. The central room on the first floor of the principal building is the living room. The host's bedroom will be on either the left or the right, while immediately above it on the second floor is the ancestral hall or Buddhist hall. The remaining rooms are for other family members and for storage. Other rooms on the first floor are occupied for kitchens and shelters for livestock. The upper floors have wooden verandas supported on timber pillars.

Some compounds have two or more groups of yikeyin, that is, two or more courtyards. The entrance to the compound is in the south elevation with a screen wall standing behind it. This screen wall is important as it is a reflection of the Chinese culture and aesthetics. It ensures the privacy of those dwellings behind it and has a psychological effect on a visitor. The screen wall is supposed to protect against bad



luck, and allows the occupants' lives unobserved by the passers-by. Screen walls are often decorated with auspicious patterns or characters, adding a dignity and charm to the stately compound.

(6) Tulou (Earthen Building)

Tulou, the earthen buildings of Hakkas, is considered a wonder of oriental architecture. Around Yongding in the west of Fujian Province, there are 4,000 square buildings and 360 round ones. The buildings are usually formed in two or three circles. The outer circle can be as high as 10 m and its four stories may hold between one and two hundred rooms. The kitchen and dining room will be found on the first floor. The second floor is used as warehousing, and the third and fourth floors contain bedrooms. The inner circle is 2-storied with 30 to 50 rooms which function as guesthouses. In the middle is a rectangular hall, a public place for several hundred inhabitants.

Chinese ancestors thought the sky was round and the earth square. Round and square buildings are representatives of the sky and the earth. Roundness also implies unification and perfection, which is a foremost ideal of the Chinese people.

Tulou is made of rammed earth and timber without the use of concrete or steel. A Hakka saying has it that one bowl of rammed earth is worth a bowl of meat. The main material is a mixture of fine sand from the river, silt from the bottom of fields and even recycled mud from ancient walls. After these materials are thoroughly mixed, quality brown sugar, whisked egg white and the strained liquid from sticky rice soup are added and a new turn of mixing begins. The resultant material is then used for the earthen buildings. The ingenious Hakkas used this method to compensate for the lack of raw materials used for building.

Apart from providing defense, tulou has the following advantages: quakeproof, fireproof, theft proof, good ventilation and lighting. Also due to their thickness, the earthen walls help to provide thermal insulation, which makes the building warm in winter and cool in

summer.

Hakka, literally, means "guest" in Chinese. Hakka ancestors used to live in central China and were forced to move southward due to wars, famine and political reasons. Over their long history, Hakkas have formed their own unique culture. In architecture, there are three types of Hakka dwellings: phoenix house, round house, and piang fong.

These three types of dwellings signify the three stages of the Hakka migration. When the first Hakkas moved to Fujian, they were the imperial court officials. They could afford to build the very extravagant houses (phoenix houses) that were modeled on the imperial court.

In the mid-stage, the Hakkas were losing their support and affiliation with the imperial court. They had to compete with the locals on equal grounds. They failed to have the blessings and protection from the emperor and the round houses were built as a defensive structure to fend off the locals.

In the final stage, the Hakkas were more or less integrated with the locals. There was fewer needs for protection and defense. To befriend the locals, the piang fong were built as a symbol of openness. Piang fong could also serve as the dwellings for the lower class (servants, lower rank officials) who accompanied the nobilities in the southward migration.

(7) Diaojiolou (House on Stilt)

Diaojiolou, which literally means hanging attic, is a residential house with architectural flavor of the ethnic minority in the southwestern Yunnan Province. The Miao-style houses are of wood and high above the ground. The name diaojiolou is given, since the house has several wooden pillars as supports. The houses are usually two to four stories high. The upper layer is used to store provisions, people live in the middle, and fowls are sheltered under the house.

The wooden buildings are built close to the mountain or above the river with an extended floor space. There are several reasons of this





building style preference. Firstly, it was for protection since there were lots of wild animals in the old days. Secondly, it was for the residents' health, as the climate in the hills was very humid. Thirdly, people living upstairs had better lighting so they could work on handicrafts or rest. The second floor is divided into two parts, the front is used for rest and manual labor while the rear part consists of rooms with a fireplace, memorial ancestral tablet, as well as a place to cook and keep warm. Bedrooms are located on the third floor.

The Miao and Tujia people love beautiful things and they enjoy dressing up the environments. They like to emulate the shape of bamboo and install corridors and carved fences to the wooden buildings. They build small houses of stones with carved patterns to shelter wells and fill them with colorful fish. The Miao villages are usually bordered with huge, old trees that emit an air of tranquility and peacefulness. People pave the stone paths with different patterns, called flower streets.

5. Bridge Architecture

Networked with rivers, China has the valleys of the Yangtze River, the Huanghe River and the Pearl River, which are the cradles of the Chinese nation and her culture. Throughout history, the Chinese nation has erected thousands of bridges, which form an important part of her culture. Ancient Chinese bridges are universally acknowledged and have enjoyed high prestige in the history of bridge building both in the East and the West.

(1) Beam Bridge

The earliest reference to the beam bridge in the Chinese history is the Ju Bridge dating from the Shang Dynasty. From the Zhou Dynasty to the Qin and Han Dynasties, bridges with timber beams and stone piers were dominant.

During the Song Dynasty, a large number of stone-pier and stone-beam bridges were constructed. In Quanzhou alone, as recorded in

ancient books, 110 bridges were erected during the two centuries, including 10 well-known ones. For example, the 362-span Anping Bridge was known for its length of five li (2,223 m), a national record for over 700 years, and so gained the other name Five Li Bridge, whose construction lasted 16 years, from the eighth year (1138) to the 21st year (1151) of the reign of Shaoxing of the Song Dynasty. Another famous one is the 47-span Wan'an Bridge, situated at the outlet of the Luoyang River, better known as Luoyang Bridge. It is about 890 m long and 3.7 m wide. The construction began in the fifth year of the reign of Huangyou (1053) and ended in the fourth year of the reign of Jiayu (1059) of the Song Dynasty. Jiangdong Bridge in Zhangzhou, Fujian Province boasts the largest stone beams. In the first year of the reign of Jiaxi (1237) of the Song Dynasty, the timber beams of this bridge were replaced by stone. The bridge had 15 spans, each consisting of three sections of stone beams. But today only five spans remain, with the largest being 23.7 m in length, 1.7 m in width, 1.9 m in height, and 2,000 kg in weight. It is incredible that such an arduous task could be performed then as there was no heavy equipment to haul it to the site to set in the right position.

To extend the span, either the timber beams or the stone ones were placed horizontally on top of each other, the upper layer cantilevering over the lower one, thus supporting the simple beam in the middle. This kind of stone beam, however, could not extend far, while the timber cantilever beam could reach as far as 20 m. The earliest record of the timber cantilever beam dates as far back as the fourth century BC. The extant single-span timber cantilever bridge, the Yinping Bridge at Wenxian, Gansu Province, rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty, has a span of more than 60 m.

It was a common practice to build bridge housings or galleries on timber beam bridges, and a case in point is the Fengyu Bridge (all-weather bridge) built by the Dong people. Situated at Sanjiang Dong

Autonomous County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Chengyang Bridge across the Yongji River, built in 1916, is a 644 m 4-span timber cantilever covered bridge. Each of its five piers is crowned by a pavilion and the decks are roofed by a spacious gallery, which joins the pavilions. The pavilions not only perform the function of balance, but have added to the charm and elegance of the bridge as well.

(2) Arch Bridge

There are different views on the origin of arches. Some believe the first arch was a natural formation over caverns, others claim that the arch was brought into being by the piling of collapsed stones, and still others hold that the arch was evolved from the openings in the walls. However, a study of the tombs and the extant old arches in China indicates that the joint of the beams and sides evolved gradually into isometric trilateral, and pent lateral arches, and finally into semicircular arch. The span, too, was gradually extended, from 2 m or 3 m up to 37.02 m (clear span). It was a world record for more than a thousand years.

The oldest arch bridge in China, which is still well-preserved, is Anji Bridge, also known as the Zhaozhou Bridge, at Zhouxian, Hebei Province. Built in the Sui Dynasty, it is a single segmental stone arch, composed of 28 individual arches bonded transversal, 37.02 m in span and 7.23 m high above the chord line. Narrower in the upper part and wider in the lower, the bridge averages 9 m in width. The main arch ring is 1.03 m thick with protective arch stones. It has survived for 1,387 years. The bridge, exquisite in workmanship, unique in structure, graceful in shape, and meticulous in engraving, has been regarded as one of the greatest achievements in China. In 1991, Anji Bridge was named among the world cultural relics.

Stone arches in China vary in structure in accordance with different transportation as well as conditions between the north and south waterways. In the north, what prevail are the flat-deck bridges with

thick piers and arch rings. Lugou Bridge located at Wanping County, Beijing is a good case in point. While in the south crisscrossed with rivers, the hump-shaped bridges with thin piers and shell arches prevail. The extant Feng Bridge (the Maple Bridge) (built in the Qing Dynasty), mentioned in the well-known poem "A Night Mooring by the Maple Bridge" by Zhang Ji of the Tang Dynasty, is characterized by its shell arch.

The longest surviving joint multi-span bridge with shell arches and thin piers is the Baodai Bridge (the Precious Belt Bridge) in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. Built in the Tang Dynasty and having undergone a series of renovations in successive dynasties, the bridge is now 316.8 m long, 4.1 m wide and has 53 spans in all, and the three central arches are higher than the rest for boats to pass through. Both ends of the bridge are ornamented with stone lions, pavilions and towers.

The timber arch bridge in China dates back to the Song Dynasty. In the panorama *Riverside Scene on Qingming (Pure Brightness) Festival* by Zhang Zheduan of the Song Dynasty, there is portrayed a timber arch bridge, known as the Hong Bridge (the Rainbow Bridge) spanning the Bian River in Bianjing, capital of the Song Dynasty (now Kaifeng, Henan Province). The span of this bridge is around 18.5 m in length, 4.2 m in height above the chord line, and the deck averages 9.6 m in width. The Hong Bridge fell into ruin between the Jin and Yuan Dynasties.

(3) Cable Suspension Bridge

Cable suspension bridges vary in kind according to the materials of which the cables are made, rattan, bamboo, leather and iron chain. In 285 BC, Li Bin of the Qin State superintended the establishment of 7 bridges in Gaizhou (now Chengdu, Sichuan Province), one of which was built of bamboo cables, called Zha Bridge.

The iron-chain bridge is said to date as far back as the early time of the Western Han Dynasty. Senior General Fan Kuai superintended the

construction of the Fanhe Bridge on the ancient plank road in Maocheng County (now Liuba County), Shaanxi Province, and the bridge is believed to be of iron chain.

Jihong Bridge at Yongping County of Yunnan Province is the oldest and broadest bridge with the most iron chains in China today. Spanning the Lanchang River, it is 113.4 m long, 4.1 m wide and 57.3 m in clear span. There are 16 bottom chains and a chain hand rail on each side. The bridge is situated on the ancient road leading to India and Burma.

Luding Iron-Chain Bridge in Sichuan Province, the most exquisite of the extant bridges of the same type, spans the Dadu River and has served as an important link between Sichuan and Tibet. Its erection began in the fourth year of the reign of Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty and was completed in the following year. It is 100 m in clear span, 2.8 m in width, with boards laid on the bottom chains. There are 9 bottom chains, each about 128 m long, and 2 chain hand-rails on each side.

(4) Floating Bridge

In ancient times, there was no possibility to build piers in great rivers. To cross the river, boats were linked together to form a floating bridge. It is also named qiaohang (the bridge boat) and zhouliang (the boat beam). The earliest reference to the floating bridge is shown in *the Book of Songs*. In the 12th century BC, King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty ordered a bridge to be built on the Wei River.

According to historical records, a great number of floating bridges were built, nine over the Yangtze River and five over the Huanghe River in ancient times. In 1989, unearthed in Yongji, Shanxi Province, were four iron oxen, weighing over 10 tons each, and four life-size iron men, all with lively charms and exquisitely cast. They were intended to anchor the iron chains on the east bank of Pujing Floating Bridge in the Tang Dynasty. Based upon historical research, Pujing Floating Bridge grew out of a temporary floating bridge built in the first year of

Zhaogong's reign of the Lu State in the Spring-Autumn Period. It was not until the 50th year of the reign of King Zhaoxiang of the Qin State that Pujing Floating Bridge was permanently erected. Boats were linked together by bamboo cables until the 12th year of Kaiyuan's reign of the Tang Dynasty when the bamboo cables were replaced by iron chains.

The most impressive event relating to the floating bridges over the Yangtze River took place during the time of the Taiping Heavenly Uprising, whose peasant army succeeded in erecting floating bridges in the three towns of Wuhan in 1852 and in Guangji, Hubei Province in 1854. Once, they managed to build two floating bridges with a length of about 3,000 m each in one night. Large warships lined abreast across the Yangtze. Several floating bridges led directly to the foot of Wuchang city. Soldiers and horses crossed on the bridge just as on smooth roads.

III. Craftsmanship

Artistic and Decorative Image

Architecture construction is not only a type of science and technology, but also a kind of art. Through perennial efforts, ancient Chinese architects created rich and various images of crafts.

Ancient Chinese craftsmen made use of the characteristics of wood structure to form soft and beautiful curves on all parts of the roof and the spreading-wing-like eaves. Meanwhile, carvings are added to create art images in buildings.

The imperial palace is a good case in point. Dragon and phoenix, called long and feng in Chinese, are totems of the Chinese people. They were used to represent emperors and their consorts and were the main decorative patterns to be seen on various imperial structures. Palaces, columns, pathways and screen walls were all inscribed or carved or painted with these images. In order to show the supremacy and their authority to rule the country, the palace architects in ancient

China unanimously pursued grandeur and magnificence in their design and construction.

Besides the symbolic colors, pictures of dragons, phoenixes, clouds, flowers and grasses were painted on surfaces to make the buildings look more magnificent. Also, white marble stone columns and stone steps that surrounded the buildings were inscribed with patterns of giant flying dragons, flowers, waves or clouds, all of which were exquisitely carved or sculpted. Porcelain and cloisonné of China were mainly used as elegant ornaments in the high-ranking authorities' buildings. A palace could be literally a museum of architectural arts mixed with other arts such as painting, carving and sculpting, and other forms of crafts for decorative purposes.

(2) Stone Lion

China had no lions originally. It was believed that the earliest stone lions were sculpted at the beginning of the Eastern Han Dynasty with the introduction of Buddhism into China. It is said, Sakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, was seen after birth "to point to Heaven with one hand and to Earth with another, roaring like a lion". In the Buddhist faith, the lion is considered a divine animal of nobleness and dignity, which can protect the truth and keep away the evils.

Lion is a special animal to the Chinese people. It's the magical beast king of all animals, in the minds of the Chinese. As the Chinese regard lion as a symbol of auspiciousness, bravery and power, a pair of stone lions, a male and a female, can often be seen in front of palaces, mansions, houses and tombs to guard against evils. Normally, the male lion is on the left with his right paw resting on a ball, and the female is on the right with her left paw fondling a cub, which is a symbol of a prosperous lineage. Lion is regarded as the king in the animal world so its image represents power and prestige. The ball played with by the male lion symbolizes the unity of the empire, and the cub with the female, the thriving offspring.

When Lugou Bridge was first erected in the Jin Dynasty, all the lions were alike and very simple, but through the ages they were replaced each time by better ones, more delicately and differently carved in style. And more fascinating are the lion cubs that are playing around their parents, clinging to the breast, squatting on the shoulder, nestling at the feet, or licking the face. These exquisite sculptures on the bridge and on the ornamental columns, which show the practical application of the aesthetic principles of unity and variation, have become a scene of attraction.

Stone lions were also used to indicate the rank of officials by the number of lumps representing the curly hair on the head of the lion. The houses of first grade officials had lions with 13 lumps and the number of lumps decreased by one as the rank of the official went down each grade. Officials below the seventh grade were not allowed to have stone lions in front of their houses.

Today, stone lions also appear at the entrance to banks, office buildings, parks or even in the street. Lion is said to be fond of the legendary luminous pearl. So, most stone lions have a movable stone pearl held in the mouth.



Chapter 9

FOLK CULTURE

I . Lunar Calendar

The traditional Chinese calendar system is a combination of the solar system and the lunar system, known as nongli, the agricultural calendar. The basic principle of nongli is that a month is the period of time it takes to complete a moon change cycle, and a year is a period approximately as long as a solar year. Whenever necessary, a leap month is added. According to this system, 24 jieqi (24 seasonal periods indicating the obvious changes of weather when they occur) are designed to guide agricultural activities, so the system is commonly known as the agricultural calendar, and also known as zhong calendar, summer calendar and lunar calendar.

Generally speaking, the ancient Chinese calendar divided a year into four seasons, 24 jieqi, 72 hou, and 360 days. To be more specific, a day consisted of 12 double hours (shichen), five days made up a hou, and there were 72 hou in a year, three hou made up a jieqi, and a year had 24 jieqi, two jieqi made up a month, and a year had 12 months, three months made up a season, and four seasons made up a year. The four seasons, the eight jieqi, the Heavenly Stems and the Earthly Branches are all important factors in the forming of the Chinese festivals.

The four seasons refer to spring, summer, autumn and winter. According to the lunar calendar, the first three months make up spring, the next three summer, the following three autumn, and the last three winter. Each season is subdivided into three equal periods, namely early (meng), middle (zhong) and late (ji). For instance, early spring refers to the first month, middle spring the second month, and late spring the third month.

The first eight jieqi refer to the earliest designated and the most important eight seasonal periods. Since the ancient times, China has always attached great importance to seasonal timing, which is closely related to agricultural activities. As early as in the Zhou Dynasty, the first eight jieqi were defined as the Beginning of Spring, the Spring Equinox, the Beginning of Summer, the Summer Solstice, the Beginning of Autumn, the Autumn Equinox, the Beginning of Winter and the Winter Solstice. During the Qin Dynasty, all 24 jieqi were defined.

Whenever two jieqi meet, a festival occurs. Along with the designation of 24 jieqi, many festivals came into being. Up till now, there are still some festivals closely related to jieqi. For example, people now still celebrate the Beginning of Summer, the Summer Solstice, the Beginning of Winter, the Winter Solstice. Today some jieqi-related festivals have evolved into traditional festivals.

The Chinese ideograph nian (year) shows a person carrying a ripe crop. The cycle of planting, growing and harvesting approximately equals the length of a year. The original meaning of the Chinese character yue (month) was "the moon". In the Chinese calendar system, yue refers to the moon movement cycle. The traditional Chinese calendar divides the whole year into 12 months, of which 6 months consist of 30 days each and another six 29 days each. Thus, a "Chinese year" is 364 days, which is 1.14219 days shorter than a solar year. To make up for the gap, the ancient Chinese set up "the leap



month". In the end, they decided that in every 19 years, there should be seven leap months. The first day and the 15th day of some months have become important festivals.

After the 1911 Revolution, the first day of the first lunar month was defined as the Spring Festival, while the first day of the first solar month was defined as the New Year. Today most Chinese attach greater importance to the Spring Festival. They regard it as the "big new year", and they call the first day of the first solar month "the foreign calendar New Year". The Mid-Autumn Festival, which falls on the 15th of the eighth lunar month, was very popular during the Tang and the Song Dynasties. Today it has become the second largest traditional Chinese festival for the people of the Han Nationality.

In the traditional Chinese calendar system, the designation of years by Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches demonstrates the unique cultural characteristics. There are altogether 10 Heavenly Stems, namely, jia, yi, bing, ding, wu, ji, geng, xin, ren, gui, and 12 Earthly Branches, namely, zi, chou, yin, mou, chen, si, wu, wei, shen, you, xu, hai. The 10 Heavenly Stems and the 12 Earthly Branches are combined and their least common multiple, which is 60, is regarded as a cycle, commonly called "the sixty jiazi". Some Chinese festivals have evolved from this designation. For instance, February 2nd, March 3rd, May 5th, June 6th, July 7th and September 9th are all Chinese festivals. Among them, some have become traditional festivals. For example, May 5th has become the Dragon Boat Festival.

Traditional Chinese festivals can also meet people's psychological and practical demand. On most occasions, people held memorial ceremonies, offering sacrifices to heaven and their ancestors. The purposes are none other than asking for blessings and praying for protection.

II . Traditional Holiday

1. Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year , also known as the Spring Festival , starts at the beginning of spring. Each Chinese year is represented by a repeated cycle of 12 animals, the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. Chinese New Year is China's biggest holiday.

In the legend, nian, the beast, had the power to swallow up all the people in a village in one big bite. Villagers were very scared. One day, an old man came to the villagers' rescue, offering to subdue nian. The old man asked nian, "I know you can swallow people, but can you swallow other beasts of prey instead of people who are by no means your worthy opponents?" Nian accepted the old man's challenge and swallowed the beasts that had harassed the villagers and their farm animals for years. Before the old man left he told the villagers to put red paper decorations on their windows and doors at the end of the year in order to keep nian away. Nian was afraid of the color red. The custom of putting up red paper and lighting firecrackers continues today.

As part of Chinese New Year celebration, people buy presents, decorations, special foods and new clothing. People take their vacation days around the New Year to return home for a family reunion.

Days before the New Year celebration, Chinese families are busy giving their home a thorough cleaning. It is believed the cleaning sweeps away bad luck and makes the house ready for good luck to enter. All brooms and dust pans are put away on New Year's Eve so good luck cannot be swept away.

In many homes, doors and window frames get a new coat of red paint. The home is decorated with paper-cuts and poems called couplets of "happiness", "wealth", "longevity" and "satisfactory marriage with children".

The New Year's Eve supper is a feast with all family members getting together. One popular food is jiaozi which are dumplings boiled in water. After dinner, the whole family stays up all night playing cards, board games or watching TV programs dedicated to the New Year's celebration. Lights in the house are kept on during the whole night. At midnight, the sky is lit up with fireworks, symbolizing the sending out of the old year and the welcoming in of the New Year. People open all the windows and doors in the house in order to let the old year go out.

Very early the next morning, children greet their parents and receive their New Year presents. They get lucky red envelopes with money inside. The rest of the first day of the New Year is spent visiting relatives, friends and neighbors.

The second day of the New Year is a day for the pray to the gods and the ancestors of the family. It is also a day to be extra kind to dogs. An ancient belief was that the second day of the New Year was the birthday of all dogs.

(1) God

In China, there used to be a custom to place god drawings on the gate during the Chinese New Year. Doors or gates are believed to be the way for ghosts, monsters or other evils to get in and out. Thus it is important to have the door guarded, especially during the New Year.

Actually, there are many gods worshiped in China, especially during traditional festivals. Though the Chinese have the tradition of worshiping many gods and most people usually follow traditions, religions have never been as deeply rooted in the Chinese as those in many other countries. The Chinese people are more practical in philosophy or religion. Different gods are invited for different occasions. For example, when they lack money, the god of fortune would be the guest at the table of sacrifice. So we say, "A god in need is a god indeed."

The role of gate gods has evolved over the years. They have

become one of the traditional elements of the Chinese New Year, playing more a decorative role now. Gate gods have become more lively and colorful over the years since people love to see new faces and often look for something new for the New Year. Of the various gate gods in China, the most popular ones probably are Qin Qiong and Yu Chigong who were famous generals in the Tang Dynasty.

Many homes all over China and in Southeast Asia have a picture of Kitchen God Tsao Chun hanging above the stove. Tsao Chun not only watches over the domestic affairs of the family, but also is a moral force in the lives of all family members. It is Tsao Chun who ascends to heaven every year during the Chinese New Year to report to the Jade Emperor as to the good or bad behaviors of each family member. Customarily, family members try to "bribe" Tsao Chun by smearing his mouth with sugar or honey so that he may present a "sweetened" version of their deeds. Tsao Chun's ascent to heaven is accomplished by burning his image, the smoke rising to the heavens symbolically representing his journey to the Jade Emperor.

Tsao Chun and his wife are usually seen flanked by two servants holding jars in which are stored the rewards or punishments for the deeds or misdeeds that have occurred during the year. Two other servants standing in the foreground serve both Tsao Chun and the Jade Emperor and are intermediaries between the heavenly and earthly world.

(2) Lantern Festival

The 15th day of the first lunar month is the Chinese Lantern Festival because the first lunar month is called yuan (round)-month and in the ancient times people called the night xiao. The 15th day is the first night to see a full moon. So the day is also called Yuan Xiao Festival. According to Chinese traditions, at the very beginning of a new year, when there is a full bright moon hanging in the sky, there should be thousands of colorful lanterns hung out for people to appreciate. At

At this time, people will try to solve the puzzles on the lanterns and eat yuanxiao (glutinous rice ball) and get all their families united in the joyful atmosphere.

The festival can be traced back to the Sui Dynasty in the sixth century when Emperor Yang invited envoys from other countries to China to see the colorful lit lanterns and enjoy the gala performances. By the beginning of the Tang Dynasty in the seventh century, the lantern displays would last three days. The emperor also lifted the curfew, allowing the people to enjoy the festive lanterns day and night. In the Song Dynasty, the festival was celebrated for five days and the activities began to be spread to many big cities in China. Colorful glass and even jade were used to make lanterns, with figures from folk tales painted on the lanterns.

However, the largest lantern festival celebration took place in the early part of the 15th century. The festivities continued for 10 days. Emperor Chengzu had the downtown area set aside as a center for lantern display. Even today, there is a place in Beijing called dengshikou. In Chinese, deng means lantern and shi is market. The area became a market where lanterns were sold during the day. In the evening, the local people would go there to see the beautifully lit lanterns on display.

Today, lantern display is still a big event. People enjoy the brightly lit night. Chengdu in Southwest China's Sichuan Province, for example, holds a lantern fair each year in the Cultural Park. During the Lantern Festival, many new designs attract countless visitors. The most eye-catching lantern is the Dragon Pole, a lantern in the shape of a 27-m-high golden dragon spewing fireworks from its mouth. After the 15th day of the first lunar month the New Year is almost over and everything returns to normal.

The Chinese New Year customs vary from place to place, but the spirit underlying the diverse celebrations is the same, a sincere wish of

peace and happiness for family members and friends.

2. Mid-Autumn Festival

The second most important Chinese festival is perhaps the Mid-Autumn Festival. The cultural significance of the fall equinox and seasonal changes continues today, especially in the Northern Hemisphere, where the autumnal equinox occurs around the harvest season. In fact, the full moon nearest the autumnal equinox is commonly referred to as the harvest moon. In China and other Asian countries, this time is celebrated as the Mid-Autumn Festival, whose origin is linked to the birth of the moon goddess and the festival traditions evolve around families with reunions and feasts and special moon cakes.

The Mid-Autumn Festival falls on the 15th of the eighth lunar month. In terms of its origin, this festival can be dated back to the Han Dynasty, though at that time, celebrations were held on the White Dew Day, the 15th of the 24 jieqi, which normally falls around the sixth day of the eighth lunar month. During the Tang Dynasty, while the White Dew Day was celebrated as before, the practice of enjoying a full moon outdoors on the 15th day also became popular. According to a novel written in the Tang Dynasty, once Emperor Xuanzong was enjoying the full moon in his palace on the 15th of the lunar month, a magician took him to the Moon Palace, where the Emperor saw hundreds of pretty fairies in white dresses dancing gracefully. This story greatly aroused the common people's desire to visit the moon. The practice of enjoying the full moon at harvest time became more and more popular, and later people started to eat moon cakes and drink wine fermented with osmanthus flowers. During the Song Dynasty, celebration of the Mid-Autumn Festival was very popular and during the reign of Emperor Taizong, the 15th day of the eighth lunar month was set officially as the Mid-Autumn Festival. During the Ming and the Qing Dynasties, the Mid-Autumn Festival had developed into a grand traditional festival, with

all the activities of the Song Dynasty continued. Today people still have similar celebration activities.

There are mainly two reasons why the 15th day of the eighth lunar month could become a grand traditional Chinese festival. First, due to the regular movement of the heavenly bodies, the moon always appears bright and full on the 15th or 16th day of the eighth lunar month, and it is natural that people would choose this time as their moon-enjoying-and-appreciating day. Second, mid-autumn is at the end of the harvest season, which is a perfect time for people to relax and enjoy themselves after more than half a year's hard work.

On the Mid-Autumn Festival, people offer sacrifices and pay homage to the moon, enjoying and chasing the moon. On top of that, people may exchange presents, drink with relatives and friends, take a walk or row a boat in the moonlight, and enjoy colorful lanterns.

Generally speaking, throughout China, people from different nationalities have similar celebration activities, though in some places people have their own special customs apart from the common practices. In the area south of Mount Tai, it is customary for parents to visit their daughters on the Mid-Autumn Festival. In some areas in Beijing, people still retain the ancient practice of offering sacrifices to the moon, and in Hong Kong "chasing the moon" is popular. One exceptional case is that in some areas in Ningbo of Zhejiang Province, people celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival on the 16th, instead of the 15th day of the eighth lunar month.

The custom of eating moon cakes is observed by most of the nation, for the round shapes of moon cakes symbolize reunion. There are two legends regarding the origin of the moon cake. One legend has it that on a Mid-Autumn Festival during the early years of the Tang Dynasty, a Tulufan businessman presented some round flat cakes as tributes to Emperor Gaozu, which the Emperor shared with his subjects. Hence the custom of sharing moon cakes on the Mid-Autumn Festival

came into being. The other legend says the custom of eating moon cakes originated in the late Yuan Dynasty. According to this legend, rulers of the Yuan Dynasty were very cruel to the Han people in southern China. Under the rules, every 10 Han families were grouped into a jia. They had to share one kitchen knife and were forced to support a soldier, jiazhang. The soldiers were so morally degenerate that the masses were driven beyond endurance and they decided to revolt. They put inside flat round cakes slips of paper bearing messages and details of their planned revolt, and used the opportunity of exchanging presents before the Mid-Autumn Festival to finalize details of their revolt. They succeeded and to commemorate their victory, they ate moon cakes on the Mid-Autumn Festival.

In ancient times, all moon cakes were home-made, while today, most people buy manufactured moon cakes. Though in the Ming Dynasty, although ready-made moon cakes were available, the majority of people chose to make their own moon cakes. It was only in modern times that people started to buy ready-made moon cakes. Nearly all moon cakes have Chinese characters on them. Some express good wishes, such as "wealth and honor", while others depict beautiful pictures, such as, "Chang E the moon goddess going to the moon", and "three ponds reflecting the moon", all evoking an inviting appearance as well as a delicious taste.

3. Tomb Sweeping Day (All Souls' Day)

A well-known poem by Du Mu of the Tang Dynasty tells of a sad scene in early April: "Rains fall heavily as Qingming (pure brightness) comes, and passers-by with lowered spirits go." As it reinforces the ethic of filial piety, Qingming is also a major Chinese festival. Qingming literally means "clear" (qing) and "bright" (ming). The traditional Tomb Sweeping Day falls between April 4 and April 6 each year. It is a time for remembering the loved ones who have departed. People visit their ancestors' graves to sweep away the dirt.

In ancient times, people celebrated Qingming with dancing, singing, picnics, and kite flying. Colored boiled eggs would be broken to symbolize the beginning of life. In the capital, the Emperor would plant trees on the palace grounds to celebrate the renewing nature of spring. In the villages, young men and women would court each other. With the passage of time, this celebration of life became a day to honor past ancestors. Following folk religions, the Chinese believed that the spirits of deceased ancestors looked after the family. Sacrifices of food and spirit money could keep them happy, and the family would prosper through good harvests and having more children.

The origin of the traditional Tomb Sweeping Day dates back to the Spring-Autumn Period. Chong'er, the prince of the Jin Dynasty ran away from the country with his supporters due to persecution. They were homeless for 19 years and things got so bad that Chong'er began to starve to death. One of the prince's faithful followers, Jie Zitui, cut a piece of muscle from his own leg and served it to his master. Chong'er was saved and, in 636 BC, he took back the throne. He rewarded the officials who had stayed loyal to him but he forgot about Jie Zitui. By the time Chong'er remembered him, the heart-broken Jie Zitui had traveled deep into the mountains. Persuading Jie to come home, Chong'er had the hills set on fire. But Jie was found beside a large tree, with his old mother on his back, both dead. Saddened by the tragedy, Chong'er ordered that fires could not be lit on the day of Jie Zitui's death. From this comes Hanshi Day (Cold Food Day). People visited Jie Zitui's tomb the next day to pay their respect. Over time, Hanshi Day was replaced with Tomb Sweeping Day.

Tomb Sweeping Day is a time to honor and pay respect to one's deceased ancestors and family members. As this Chinese festival falls in early spring, on the 106th day after the winter solstice, it is a "spring" festival. For practical Chinese, this sweeping of the graves is given an extended period, that is, 10 days before and after. Similar to the

Spring Festivals of other cultures, Tomb Sweeping Day celebrates the rebirth of nature, while marking the beginning of the planting season and other outdoor activities.

4. Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival, which falls on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, is also called Chinese Poets' Festival. There are different interpretations regarding the origin of this festival, with the most popular one being related to a great patriotic poet named Qu Yuan in the Chu State during the Warring States Period.

According to historical records, Qu Yuan was born to an aristocratic family in the Chu State and became a high official in the imperial court. Later, he was wronged and banished from the court by the king of Chu. Without the support from the imperial court, he was unable to fulfill his task to serve the country. Qu Yuan felt so frustrated that he committed suicide by throwing himself into the Miluo River. The local people respected Qu Yuan. Some rowed boats in an attempt to find him and save his life, and others threw eggs and rice wrapped up in bamboo leaves into the river to feed the sea creatures so as to keep his body from being eaten.

Today, people still have boat races on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month to commemorate the attempt to save Qu Yuan, and it is common for people to eat eggs and glutinous rice wrapped up in bamboo or reed leaves. Other activities include wearing perfume bags, winding colorful threads around children's wrists and hanging certain plants on doors. All these have a common purpose, i. e. to keep the evil spirits away.

5. Double Seventh Festival

Nowadays, Valentine's Day on February 14 wins high popularity among the Chinese people. Girls send chocolate (many sorts are made into heart-shapes) to their Mr Right. Boys send roses to their girls. These gifts are called valentines in English, and they stand for love.

But we also have our Chinese Valentine's Day, the Double Seventh Festival. The Double Seventh Festival, on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, is a traditional festival full of romance. It often goes into August in the Gregorian Calendar.

This festival is in mid-summer when the weather is hot and the grasses and trees reveal their luxurious greens. At night when the sky is dotted with stars, people can see the Milky Way spanning from the north to the south. On each bank is a bright star, which faces each other from afar. They are the Cowhand and the Weaver Maid, and a beautiful love story about them passed down from generation to generation.

Long, long ago, there was an honest and kind-hearted man named Niu Lang (Cowhand), whose parents died when he was a child. Later he was driven out of his home by his sister-in-law. So he lived by himself herding cattle and farming. One day, a fairy from the heaven Zhi Nu (Weaver Maid) fell in love with him and came down secretly to earth and married him. The Cowhand farmed in the field and the Weaver Maid wove at home. They lived a happy life and gave birth to a boy and a girl. Unfortunately, the God of Heaven soon found out the fact and ordered the Queen Mother of the Western Heavens to bring the Weaver Maid back. With the help of celestial cattle, the Cowhand flew to heaven with his son and daughter to follow his wife. At the time when he was about to catch up with his wife, the Queen Mother took off one of her gold hairpins and made a stroke. One billowy river appeared in front of the Cowhand. The Cowhand and Weaver Maid were separated on the two banks forever and could only feel their tears. Their loyalty to love touched magpies, so tens of thousands of magpies came to build a bridge for the Cowhand and Weaver Maid to meet each other. The Queen Mother was eventually moved and allowed them to meet each year on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month. Hence their meeting date has been called qixi (double seventh).

Studies have shown the Double Seventh Festival originated from the Han Dynasty. Historical documents from the Eastern Jin Dynasty mention the festival, and records from the Tang Dynasty depicted the grand evening banquet of Emperor Taizong and his concubines. By the Song and Yuan Dynasties, special articles for the qixi were seen being sold at markets in the capital. The bustling markets demonstrated the significance of the festival.

Today some traditional customs are still observed in some rural areas of China, but have been weakened in urban cities. However, the legend of the Cowhand and the Weaver Maid has taken root in the hearts of people. In the recent years, in particular, urban youths have celebrated it as Valentine's Day in China.

6. Double Ninth Festival

Taoism has a close relationship with the Chinese folk customs. There are many Taoist festivals, and quite a few of them have evolved into folk festivals. For example, the Double Ninth Festival on September 9 of the lunar calendar is a case in point.

According to the traditional Chinese yin and yang theory, nine is a yang number, so the festival is also called Double Yang Festival. For some time in history, it was even called Mountain-Climbing Festival and Zhuyu Festival, as there was a custom of climbing mountains and wearing zhuyu (an herb). According to *the Miscellany of the Western Capital* written by Liu Xin in the Han Dynasty, early in the Western Han Dynasty, the practice of wearing zhuyu and drinking chrysanthemum wine on the Double Ninth Festival was popular, which was considered beneficial to people's health and conducive to longevity.

Also reported in *the Miscellany of the Western Capital* was that in the Eastern Han Dynasty, there was a Taoist immortal named Fei Changfang, who was resourceful enough to drive all devils away. At that time, he had a pupil called Huan Jing. One day, Fei Changfang foresaw a disaster on September 9 in Huan Jing's family, and told Huan



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Jing to fasten a bundle of dogwood onto his arm, and drink chrysanthemum wine in high places so as to prevent the disaster. Having done what he had been told, Huan Jing's family was indeed safe and sound. Along with the spreading of Taoism, this legend has evolved into the Double Ninth Festival. When the day comes, people will carry dogwood and drink chrysanthemum wine in high places.

As an important part of this festival, chrysanthemum wine in Chinese sounds similar to "forever", suggesting an eternal life. In traditional Chinese medicine, chrysanthemum is considered a valuable herb which benefits human body in many ways, as introduced in *the Compendium of Materia Medica* written by Li Shizhen of the Ming Dynasty. Because of its great medicinal values, chrysanthemum has always been popular with the Chinese people. In the ancient times, people used to eat every part of the herb, its root, stems, leaves and flowers. Later, they made it into chrysanthemum wine.

Eating cakes on the Double Ninth Festival is another important part of the festival. In Chinese, "cake" sounds the same as "high". Therefore, it is considered auspicious to eat cakes on this occasion. In some families, people would make cakes of nine layers shaped like a pagoda. They would then put two wheaten yang (wheaten lambs) on top, meaning double yang. Finally, they would put two little red flags (representing zhuyu) on the very top. Sometimes deng (candles) was added to the cake, for in Chinese deng also means "ascending". All these had the same purpose, wishing one's children all the very best.

Because of the fact that nine is the largest digit and "nine nine" sounds the same as "forever" in Chinese, and people related the Double Ninth Festival to longevity. In 1989, the Double Ninth Festival was officially defined as the Chinese Festival for Senior Citizens. On this day, labor units often organize such activities as outings, fishing trips or mountain climbing for retired people. Young people often accompany their aged parents for a walk in a park or in the neighborhood. Some

may cook a meal for, or present a bunch of chrysanthemum to their parents to express their love and respect. Thus the Double Ninth Festival has become a day of loving and respecting and helping the aged nationwide.

III. Ritual Practice

1. Duilian (Chinese Couplet)

Duilian (Chinese couplets written on scrolls, or a pair of scrolls containing a poetic couplet), and also known as yinglian (pillar couplets) or duizi (antithetical couplets), is a unique literary genre in China. Generally speaking, duilian can be classified into Spring Festival, wedding, longevity, elegiac, decorative, trade, social, and miscellaneous couplets. Couplets can be long or short. The shortest one contains one or two characters, and the longest one several hundred characters. These can also be seen on the ancient Chinese architecture. The structure of the couplets can be zhengdui (parallel in meaning), fandui (antithetical in meaning), liushui dui (the same meaning expressed in two sentences, and jiju dui (a couplet made of two lines from different poets).

Duilian developed from the antithesis or antithetical parallelism of a poem of eight lines, each containing five or seven characters, with a strict tonal pattern and rhyme scheme. A couplet must have the following features. First, each line has an equal number of characters. Second, the writer should strictly adhere to the tonal patterns. Third, characters of corresponding parts of speech in either line should be in the same position. Last, there is the interconnection between the contents. The meaning of the first line should be interrelated to that of the second, and yet the two sentences must not have the same meaning.

It is a tradition to write couplets vertically and when they are pasted or hung. The first line should always be on the right and the second on the left. Another piece, closely related to the couplet, is called hengpi.

a horizontal scroll bearing an inscription, or horizontal plaque, which is in fact the title or theme of the couplet. A good hengpi adds the finishing touch to the couplet. Whether it is to chant things or describe the scenery or to express one's hopes or feelings, the writer is expected to be proficient in Chinese so as to produce a couplet in a few characters, which is excellent in content and language, full of aesthetic beauty as well as thought-provoking.

With the cultural exchanges between different countries, duilian or Chinese couplets have begun to be introduced to Vietnam, Korea, Japan, and Singapore. And the custom of pasting Spring Festival couplets during the New Year is observed in these countries as well.

2. Chinese Knot

Chinese knot is a very special kind of the traditional Chinese art, which is a distinctive and traditional Chinese folk handicraft woven from one piece of thread and named according to its shape.

Chinese knot has a long history, going back to the Xia Dynasty. It developed in the Tang and Song Dynasties and flourished in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. At first knots were only used to record events. Our ancestors knew how to tie knots by using cords ever since they began learning how to join together animal pelts to keep their bodies warm. They gradually became a fixture in palace halls, daily households and today the purely ornamental folk art. The exquisitely symmetrical knots with so many forms are the great cultural heritage of the Chinese people.

In Chinese, "knot" means reunion, friendliness, peace, warmth, marriage, and love. In addition, "knot" and "luck, felicity" have the same pronunciation, so Chinese knots are often used to express good wishes, including happiness, prosperity, love and the absence of evil. The Two-Coin Knot, for example, shaped like two overlapping coins, stands for courtesy, goodwill and sweetness of the couple.

Cotton, flax, silk, nylon, leather and precious metals, such as gold

and silver, can all be used as materials for making knots. Gold and silver are used on valuable knots while cotton and silk especially red, yellow, and blue, are used on common ones, which are used to decorate on clothes as accessories, to make them more elegant. Nowadays, Chinese knots are also used in chamber decoration, giving the house a more classical look and a Chinese atmosphere.

Chinese knots are pulled together tightly and are strong enough to be used for binding or wrapping, making them practical. Almost all basic Chinese knots are symmetrical, because symmetry is consistent with time-honored ornamental and aesthetic standards in China. Visually, the symmetrical designs are more easily accepted and appreciated by the Chinese people.

Chinese knotting is three dimensional in structure. It is comprised of two planes which are tied together to leave a hollow center. Such a structure lends rigidity to the work as a whole and keeps its shape when hung on the wall. The hollow center also allows for the addition of precious stones. The complicated structure allows for all kinds of variations and enhances its decorative value. Chinese knots are named according to their distinctive shapes, or meaning. The most basic and popular knots include Double Coins, Double Connection, Cross, Good Luck, Cloverleaf, Double Loop, and Round Brocade.

3. Paper-Cut

Paper-cut, a traditional Chinese folk art, uses scissors or an engraving knife as the tool and colored paper as the material to cut out various motifs or patterns, which are either worn by women on their hair or pasted on windows, gates, or doors to bring good luck and avoid disasters. It is not only one of the most popular handicraft arts among the people, but also one of the most widespread decorative arts in China.

Paper-cuts are used for many purposes. Five colored "gate labels" could be seen hanging in the upper part of the famous scroll, *the Head*

of the Year by Zou Yuandou, a court painter during the Reign of Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty. This is considered to be the earliest paper-cut works of gate labels, which is still one of the most important decorative arts in many parts of China during the Spring Festival.

Today, great strides have been made in the art of paper-cutting in terms of themes, pattern mounting, and cutting or engraving skills of the artisans or craftsmen. Many styles of paper-cut have been developed with the passage of time. Everything can become the theme of paper-cuts, from people to objects that can be found in everyday life, such as birds and flowers, animals and insects. In many parts of China, paper-cutting skill has become a must for women, old and young, and is the symbol of a clever mind and smart fingers for the Chinese ladies as a whole.

From an artistic point of view, paper-cutting is an art of picture composition, employing the "blank space" in a piece of paper, with a plain figure as the result. Patterns should be skillfully done to ensure the completeness of the picture. Therefore, the secret of paper-cut, besides the ingenuity of the picture, is that the patterns are cut out without any break in the paper. For instance, in a paper-cut work of *A Cat Catching a Mouse*, the mouse is seen in the belly of the cat. This lifelike pattern is indeed original and thought-provoking.

Nowadays, paper-cut artisans fall into two groups, professional and amateur. Hence two types of works regarding paper-cutting techniques are found. Simple paper-cut works are usually those of amateur women practitioners'. As far as the techniques are concerned, paper-cut is also classified into two kinds, one-page cutting and multi-page engraving. To make a simple paper-cut work, a piece of colored paper is folded before a design or pattern is drawn on it. Then the blank space is scissored out with the happy result of a paper-cut with symmetrical patterns on both sides. Some of the paper-cut works for wedding decorations are of this type, such as the patterns of the character lan (literally meaning a

able; figuratively meaning that the newly-wed couple will be bound for forever), and bianfu (bat, which is homonymous to the phrase bianfu, meaning happiness everywhere). Sophisticated or complex patterns are directly from the paper without even drawing the pattern on it. Mass-produced paper-cuts are usually done by engraving. First, a pattern is drawn on a piece of paper. Then the piece of paper with the motif on it will be placed on a pile of colored paper to be engraved with a knife. The “gate labels” pasted during the Spring Festival are a case in point.

4. Drum Dance

Drumbeats can be refreshing and inspiring and therefore the word “encourage” in Chinese is composed of two characters guwu (literally meaning “drum dance”). In ancient China, drums were initially used in the army and beating drums was a signal of marching on. Gradually, drums became an accompanying musical instrument and drumbeating an independent singing and dancing form. Among the traditional folk drum dances in China, the colored drum and waist drum dances are the two most representative types.

The colored drum dance, also called flower-drum opera, is a folk singing and dancing performance acted by a male and a female or in some places by many people. As a popular dance, the colored drum dance can be found in almost any part of China.

The waist drum dance refers to a barrel shaped wooden drum with the middle part larger than the two ends. It is a folk dance characterized by simultaneous drum beating and dancing, with beating the drum being an accompaniment to the dance. It is generally thought that the waist drum dance derived from the colored drum dance.

The drum dance performance usually involves many people, sometimes hundreds, a magnificent sight for viewers. During the performance, the drum is hung on a slant on the left side of the performer's waist, and with drumsticks in each hand, the dancer dances and beats the drum at the same time. The waist drum dance is

characterized by strong and varied rhythm, vigorous and dynamic style, a harmonious combination between drum beating and dancing. The drumbeats also vary from a single beat to varied beats, from slow to insistent beats, which, when combined with performing movements, have vivid names such as “three nods of phoenix”, “a good wash of the tiger’s face”, “drumming of the thunder god”, “flying of the butterfly”, “pecking of the chicken”, and “horse trotting”.

5. Lion Dance

In the traditional Chinese culture, lion is the king of all beasts and to the Chinese people it has always been a mascot that is capable of scaring off evils and bringing good luck.

Lion dance has evolved from an old folk dance in China. Lion dance, also called by the ancients “lion teasing”, is a folk show performed by one or two persons wrapped around with lion skin costume. Like the dragon lantern dance, lion dance is an indispensable performance in the traditional Chinese village festive activities. Thanks to the inclusion of acrobats, it has become very popular with audience.

Acrobatics not only performs the various movements of the lion, rolling and jumping, but also vividly portrays the lion’s strength and agility, as well as the quiet and playful side of the lion’s character. Accompanied by the rhythmic Chinese traditional tap instruments, acrobatics bring out a gay and festive atmosphere.

Lion dance is performed in two forms, pair acting and individual acting. The former involves two actors cooperating as a single lion, one as the head of the lion, the other as the body. When the lion shakes its head or blinks its eyes, the body will move accordingly, a feat that demands close cooperation between two performers. The individual actor performs as a lion cub with a small lion costume wrapped around the performer. In addition, there is always a man acting as a lion tease, usually dressed as a warrior or a fat monk who holds an embroidered ball and plays with the lions, accompanied by gongs and drums.

From the perspective of acting styles, lion dance can be categorized into two types, gentle style and wild style. The former shows the lion's gentleness and playfulness by grabbing the ball, playing with the ball, rolling about, licking and shaking its fur, scratching, rubbing its ears, and caressing the lion cub. The latter focuses on the lion's aggressiveness and skills such as walking on and scrambling for the ball, rolling and diving for the ball, jumping and turning, climbing, walking on the seesaw and pointed stakes and other highly skill-demanding feats. The wild style performance can be soul-stirring as it displays the lion's majesty and wildness.

While lion dance has been popular with the Han people, it can also be found in Xinjiang, Tibet and among minority groups in the southwest part of China. Over time, lion dance has developed local features and styles. Take lion dance in Hebei for example, the lions are strong and vigorous, capable of climbing and jumping from one big table to the next, up to five tables at a time. Lions of Guangdong, on the other hand, can climb a high bamboo pole and take the present on top of the pole. Whereas lions of Anhui can perform with lit candles on their bodies, and lions of Sichuan can walk on high stilts.

IV. Custom

The Chinese life is colorful with many interesting folk customs. In fact, the difference can be seen not only in marriage but also in the year of a symbolic animal and in naming a new baby. The unique culture shows the Chinese's wish for a happy and lucky life.

1. Marriage

Chinese wedding may be a focus of interest. There is much difference between Chinese and Western weddings, as people in the West go to church before celebrating with a feast while the Chinese celebrate with a feast only. Westerners ask God to bless them while the Chinese thank heaven and their parents. Westerners mostly wear white

wedding dresses while the Chinese bride and groom wear red because red symbolizes good luck. Of course, Chinese have also adopted the Western custom of wearing white wedding dresses.

Chinese marriage was systemized into customs in the Warring States Period. In the ancient times, it was very important to follow the basic principle of Three Letters and Six Etiquettes, since they were considered essential to a marriage.

Three letters include a betrothal letter, gift letter and a wedding letter. A betrothal letter is the formal document of engagement, a must for a marriage. Then, a gift letter is necessary, which will be enclosed with the gifts to the girl's family, listing the type and quantity of gifts for the wedding once both parties accept the marriage. The wedding letter refers to the document which will be prepared and presented to the bride's family on the day of the wedding to confirm and commemorate the formal acceptance of the bride into the bridegroom's family.

Six etiquettes used to cover proposing: If a boy's parents identified a girl as their future daughter-in-law, they would turn to a matchmaker for help. The proposal used to be practiced by a matchmaker. The matchmaker would formally present his or her client's request to the identified girl's parents; Birthday matching: If the potential bride's parents did not object to the marriage, the matchmaker would ask for the girl's birthday and birth hour record to assure the compatibility of the potential bride and bridegroom. If the will-be-wedding birthdays and birth hours did not conflict according to astrology, the marriage would step into the next stage. If there was any conflict, the marriage arrangement stopped; Presenting betrothal gifts: Once birthdays match, the bridegroom's family would arrange the matchmaker to present betrothal gifts, enclosing the betrothal letter, to the bride's family; Presenting wedding gifts: After the betrothal letter and betrothal gifts were accepted, the bridegroom's family would later formally send wedding gifts to the bride's family. Usually, gifts might include tea, lotus

seeds, red beans, green beans, red dates, nutmeg, oranges, pomegranate, lily, bridal cakes, coconuts, wine, red hair braid, money box and other objects, depending on local customs and family wealth. Picking up an auspicious wedding date: An astrologist or astrology book would be referred to in selecting an auspicious date to hold the wedding ceremony; Wedding ceremony: On the selected day of the wedding ceremony, the bridegroom departed to the bride's home with a troop of escorts and musicians who would play happy music all the way to the bride's home. After the bride was clustered to the bridegroom's home, the wedding ceremony began.

2. Sedan Chair

As one of the main vehicles of the ancient times, sedan chair is often featured in movies about old China. But its function was not limited to transport. Sedan was linked with one of the important ceremonies in life, marriage.

According to the legend, the sedan first appeared in China during the reign of Emperor Yu in the Xia Dynasty. Boasting a long history, Chinese sedan developed throughout the dynasties. But for common people, the most familiar type of sedan was the one used during wedding ceremonies. Finances allowing, sedan was always the preferred prop at weddings.

In feudal China, remarried widows could only go to their husbands in the evenings and were generally not seen in sedans. Concubines also rarely enjoyed the privilege of sitting in sedan chairs, even in marriage. At best, they were seen in black sedans only. The honor of sitting in a sedan was a great source of pride for women.

There were generally two types of sedans, the "hard cover" and the "soft cover" chair. The former was a completely wooden structure shaped like a rectangle with a pagoda-like cover on top decorated with standing phoenixes. Pictures of the dragon, kylin, phoenix and other figures from the Chinese mythology were often painted on four

surrounding sides. The “soft cover,” chair-like sedan, was enclosed with colored silk of various embroideries.

There are various folk customs in terms of sedans all across China. In cities, there were generally three kinds of rental sedans. The first was called a sacred or official sedan, which was used to transport the rich and powerful. This kind of sedan was usually carried by four to eight people. The second, which was usually much smaller and made of bamboo, was used as a vehicle for ordinary people. Usually, it took only two people to move it around. The third type was the bridal sedan. As its name suggested, it was used during wedding ceremonies and was often carried by more than four people. Due to this particular sedan's delicate ornamentation and heaviness, usually more men were needed to work in shifts for long journeys.

3. Twelve Symbolic Animals

The Chinese Zodiac includes rat, cow, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, chicken, dog and pig. It has a long history and plays an important role both in the ancient and modern times.

As a cultural phenomenon, previous scholars had different opinions about the origins of the Chinese Zodiac. A massive amount of literature materials shows that the Chinese Zodiac indeed stemmed from China. From the Zodiac came the worship by the Chinese ancients of animals, totems as well as early astronomy.

Some scholars think that Zodiac animal worship in the primitive time was mainly because in the primitive society productive forces were low, and people's understanding ability was extremely limited. Their feeling for animals was three-fold, dependence, fear and respect. They relied on the animals that were closely linked to their life, such as horse, dog and ox. They feared the animals dangerous to them, such as snake or tiger, and they respect the animals whose senses were highly developed, for example, dog that was talented in smelling.

Scientist Liu Yaohan thought that the Chinese Zodiac was related to the "twelve beasts" time and "ten months calendars" law of the Yi Minority Nationality. The Han Nationality Chinese Zodiac was influenced by this law and it later developed into the Yi Minority Nationality Chinese Zodiac.

Some people think that the Zodiac and 12 Earthly Branches are similar. According to historical records and research, the Zodiac didn't appear until "the Heavenly Stems and the Earthly Branches" were established. The 12 kinds of animals strictly matched the 12 Earthly Branches, thus making the animals the symbol of the 12 Earthly Branches.

In the Han Nationality Zodiac, the choice of animals was not complex. They were close to people's daily and social life. And they could be divided into approximately three categories. The first kind was called "the six domestic animals", namely the cow, the sheep, the horse, the pig, the dog, and the chicken, which were fed for consumption, barter or companionship. The saying "All domestic animals are thriving" represents the family's flourishing and everyone is healthy and happy. The second category was the wild animals, namely the tiger, the rabbit, the monkey, the mouse, and the snake. Some of them like the tiger and the snake were frightening to people, some of them such as the rat were hated by people but actually relied on the human for survival; and some of them were lovely, like the rabbit and the monkey. The third category was the Chinese traditional symbolic dragon, which was the imaginary collection of many animals' characteristics.

In terms of folk tales, it was said that when 12 animals were needed to be the palace bodyguards, all of whom went to sign up, and after fierce competition the final winners were today's Zodiacs.

But according to the Chinese belief in ying and yang, the 12 animals are divided into ying and yang because of the odd or even of

numbers of toes. The one who held this view was Song Ren Hong Ji, because he maintained "the 12 Earthly Branches" was under the earth, and therefore ying and yang should be seen as the number of the toes. The rat, with four front toes and five hind toes was thought unique, so it ranked first. Accordingly, the rat was followed by cow, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, chicken, dog, and pig.

Another view is that the Chinese Zodiac arrangements conform to the animals' daily activity time. For example, from 23:00 to 1:00 the mouse is searching for food. From 17:00 to 19:00, the night falls, and the chickens start to return to the nest, and from 19:00 to 21:00, the dog starts to watch the door.

Every 12 years, people meet their own Zodiacal year. The folk think that the Zodiacal year will be a famine year, and people old or young need to hasten to wear a red waistband to avoid disaster, and this is called "gripping red".

In China, many minority nationalities use the Chinese Zodiac, but in different ways. For instance, in the Dai Nationality, they have the Zodiac of rat, cow, tiger, rabbit, big snake, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, chicken, dog, and elephant. The dragon and the pig are replaced by a big snake and an elephant. The Kirgiz Nationality use fish and fox as their Zodiacs.

All the 12 animals have their individual characters. Our experiences of life tell us that the rat symbolizes wisdom, the cow industrious, the tiger fierce, the rabbit gentle, the dragon firm, snake mysterious, horse forward, sheep kind-hearted, monkey smart, chicken stable, dog loyal and pig amiable.

4. Name

Chinese surnames are said to have originated in the pre-historical matriarchal society. In China, the surname comes first, followed by the given name. The given name has its own traditions and can have one or two characters. In the same clan, the given name is arranged in the

order of seniority in the family hierarchy. And the given names of the peers usually have one Chinese character. The names of the ancient men were more complicated than those of the modern people. The character for surname, *xing*, is a combination of two other characters, *nv* and *sheng*, meaning “born of woman”. An ancient Chinese name often included four parts. First the family name, followed by the given name, the alias, and then what’s known as the “style”. Take the great poet Li Bai for example. His surname in Chinese is Li. His given name Bai means “white”. His alias is Tai Bai, and “style” Qing Lian, meaning “green lotus”.

In the past, when elders named a new born baby, they took several factors into full consideration, the astrological principle, the birth date, the array of the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth) told by the fortune-teller, the form, pronunciation, and meaning of a name. Even though superstition has lessened and constraints reduced, there are still some rules of thumb to be followed in naming. People might maintain balance between the baby’s birth date and the five elements in its life so as to remedy any defects with the name. They might also try to avoid the same initial consonant and simple or compound vowel (of a Chinese syllable). An obvious change in Chinese names is that many people now use only two characters. However, it’s always the Chinese people’s wish to give their children a name which sounds good and meaningful.

Among closer acquaintances, the names of older people are usually prefixed with “lao”, which literally means “old or senior”. For instance, “Laozhang” means “old Zhang”. Younger acquaintances, on the other hand, are often prefixed with “xiao”, which means “little or junior”, so “Xiaowang” means “little Wang”. For those who know each other very well, given name may be used. However, given name is customarily referred only by other family members.

Because there is no space between the family name and given



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name, the family and given names are determined by using the following way. If a name has two or three characters, the first character is the family name and the rest is the given name. If a name has more than three characters, the first two characters are the family name and the rest is the given name.

Chinese names usually have a certain meaning, expressing some kind of wish. Some names embody the location, time or natural phenomenon when the person was born, such as Jing (Beijing), and Chen (morning). Some names indicate the expression of some virtues, such as Zhong (loyalty). Some names have the meaning of health, longevity and happiness, such as Jian (health).

Men's names usually have the characters meaning power and vigor, such as Long (dragon). And the names of females usually use characters representing gentleness and beauty, such as Feng (phoenix).

China's huge population shares a great deal of surnames. According to ancient Chinese documents, they ranged from 300 to 3,000. But most specialists in this field agree that the most common surnames of the Han Chinese number about 500.

Chapter 10

LIFE

It's not surprising that we can enjoy the traditional Chinese food in many parts of the world. We can also see that elements of the traditional Chinese costumes such as the Tang and the Cheongsam have been used in international fashions. The Chinese people have always had their own unique life styles and the artistic ways of the Chinese people's life can be found in many of their living ways.

I . Dietetic Culture

Food culture in China has experienced approximately four periods of development. Early in the primitive time the Chinese people had already learned to grow crops like wheat, millet and rice, and raise domestic animals like pigs, dogs and sheep. This laid a foundation for the Chinese dieting structure, characterized by agricultural products as staple food and meat as supplementary food. In the pre-Qin period, some cooking theories had already been formed. From the Qin and the Han to the Sui and Tang Dynasties, iron cooking utensils and improved stoves cast a great impact on the development of Chinese food culture. From the Song Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty, Chinese food culture grew into maturity. It was at this time that major Chinese cooking styles were formally recognized.

1. Feature

Variety in flavor is one of the features. Chinese cooking arts are rather complicated, and in different places, there are different ways to prepare dishes. Since there is much difference in climate, product, and custom, there are varieties of flavors in Chinese food. Sweetness, saltiness, sourness and spiciness are the respective food characteristics in the south, the north, the east, and the west.

Varying with the change of seasons is another feature of Chinese dishes. To select raw materials and flavor dishes according to the season has been a conventional practice since ancient China. Food in winter is often made by stewing or braising, and is rich and strong, while in summer the food is light and cool, or cold.

Next feature is the pleasure to the eyes. Chinese cuisine is characterized by a sense of beauty, i. e. a harmonious combination of color, shape, aroma, taste and container. "Color" refers to the layout and design of the dishes. "Aroma" implies not only the smell of the dish, but also the freshness of the ingredients and the blending of seasonings. "Taste" involves correct seasoning and fine slicing techniques. These three essential factors are realized by careful coordination of a series of procedures, selecting the ingredients, mixing flavors, timing and cooking, adjusting heat, and laying out the food on the plate.

Chinese food also has a sense of art. For a long time in the past, the Chinese people have been very particular about food, not only in the respect of color, aroma, and taste, but also of the naming, way of tasting them, pace of dining, and the inclusion of entertainment. Some dishes are named after cooking techniques or after the ingredients and seasonings, others are named after historical stories, fairy tales or legendary stories, famous persons as well as the shapes of the dishes. There is a lot of cultural background knowledge involved in the naming of Chinese dishes, such as the General Passing the Bridge (made of

millet), Toasted Chicken in Earth, and Dong Po's Pork.

Chinese cuisine attaches great importance to nutrition, which can also be viewed as a combination of diet and medical/health care. As a matter of fact, Chinese cuisine has long been closely related to the traditional Chinese medicine. Several thousand years ago, it was already contended that food made up of ingredients of a medical nature could improve health as well as the traditional medicines did.

There is a specific term in Chinese, yaoshan or medicinal food, for dishes with medicinal functions. In ancient times the Chinese believed that treatment of any disease consisted of three stages. The first was yaoshan, medicinal food, and the second was daoyin, physical exercise. The third was drugs, considered a last resort if the first two failed. They are effective and the traditional Chinese medicine still follows these rules. Any traditional Chinese medicine practitioner will tell you that medicine and food share the same origins, which is why an everyday meal can also be of medicinal value. Ginseng, walnut, Chinese angelica and the fruit of Chinese wolfberry are often used as ingredients in certain Chinese dishes.

Nowadays it's getting popular to have yaoshan, medicinal dishes. The recommended dietary regime comprises five tastes: sour, bitter, sweet, pungent and salty, and four natures: cold, hot, warm and cool. The five tastes determine how a food or drug affects the organism. For example, pungent food promotes circulation and evaporation of vital energy qi. Bitter tasting food opens blocked centers and promotes healthy bowel movement. Eating sour dishes accumulates and concentrates vital energy, and salty food alleviates all feelings of heaviness. The four natures are effective in treating diseases. According to the ancient theory, the body was an organic whole. If any part of it did not work properly within the overall regime, the body became unbalanced and the person fell sick. Medical remedies opposite in nature to the illness should be prescribed in order to return the body to a balanced state. For

example, medication considered hot by nature was used to treat disease cold by nature.

2. Style

In China, there are 56 ethnic groups and 31 provinces, each having preference for different food. People in the south of the Yangtze River like light, sweetish savory and refreshing food; they lay more stress on nutrition and quality than on quantity. By contrast, people in the northeast find more pleasure in fatty but not greasy dishes, especially those made of fish and meat. For them, the quantity of food is of importance. While people in the northwest prefer economical and sour dishes or dishes made of beef and mutton.

As a reflection of the different flavors resulting from the differences in geographical factor, climate, custom and local product, Chinese cuisines (as far as the Han Nationality alone is concerned) can be divided into the eight cuisines.

Sichuan Cuisine (or Chuan Tsai) is distinctly spicy. Chili peppers, huajiao (mild Chinese pepper), pickled peppers and fresh ginger are indispensable ingredients. Typical examples of the Sichuan dishes are Yu Xiang Rou Si (*shredded pork with vegetable and chili*), Ma Po's Bean Curd (bean curd with mince and chili oil), and Gong Bao Ji Ding (diced chicken stirred with soy sauce and peanuts).

The wide range in the selection of raw materials features Guangdong Cuisine (or Yue Tsai). The ingredients in the Cantonese food range from fish, shrimp and poultry to snake, wildcat and giant salamander. Snake dishes have been part of the Cantonese diet for 2,000 years. Besides, Guangdong dishes are also fresh, tender, delicate, and thick. The most famous dish is called the Combat Between the Dragon and the Tiger. The dragon is a cobra, and the tiger is a spotted cat. Dim sum, or Yum Cha (small snacks), as it is commonly referred to in English, is something like a local institution in Canton.

Thanks to its coastline, Shandong Cuisine (or Lu Tsai) excels in

fish and seafood dishes such as sea cucumber, squirrel fish, jumbo prawns, crab and eel. Shandong dishes are refined in raw materials, precise in cutting, economical and practical, of diverse patterns, and with scallion and ginger used frequently. Typical examples are quick-fried mutton slices with scallions, sea cucumber with scallions, and braised conch.

Jiangsu Cuisine (or Su Tsai) is mainly constituted by the Huaiyang cooking, Suzhou cooking, and Nanjing cooking. Su dishes are usually exquisitely made where different cooking techniques are employed according to the raw materials and seasonings used with tastes refreshing, or thick but not greasy. Simmering, boiling or baking in earthenware pots over a low fire are a feature of this cuisine. Su specialties are Barbecued Crispy Pork, Sweet and Sour Fried Mandarin Fish, Boiled Duck with Salt, and Beggar's Chicken (baked in lotus leaves in a clay pot).

Zhejiang Cuisine (or Zhe Tsai), developed from Hangzhou, Ningbo, and Shaoxing flavor, stresses variety, and the cutting and slicing skill. The West Lake fish with vinegar, braised bamboo shoots, and the West Lake water shield soup are the best examples.

Fujian Cuisine (or Min Tsai) is marked by delicacy in preparation, pleasantness of color, and freshness and coolness in taste. The dishes such as Buddha Jumping the Wall, prawn in starchy sauce, stewed duck cooked with wine, snowflake chicken are typical ones.

The chefs in Anhui Cuisine (or Hui Tsai) are skilled at cooking dishes with products from the mountains and game by braising, stewing, or steaming, but seldom by quick frying. Their representative dishes are stewed turtle with ham, and roast chicken (Fuliji style).

Hunan Cuisine (or Xiang Tsai) specializes in dishes cooked with dried and smoked meat. Representative dishes are spicy chicken, Laweihezhen (dried pork, chicken, and fish steamed together), and Dongting sliced wild duck.

3. Habit

Traditionally, the diet in China is mainly characterized by vegetal foodstuff, with five cereals of rice, two kinds of millet, and wheat as staple food, vegetables, and sometimes a small amount of meat. Such a diet structure has resulted from agriculture being the chief form of industry in the Central Plains in China.

Another eating habit is that the Chinese prefer heated or cooked food, which has something to do with the early beginning of civilization and the development of cooking techniques. To the ancient Chinese, the unpleasant smell of fresh aquatic products and domestic animals could only be removed after they were heated or cooked. The Chinese have long been famous for their wide ranges of recipes and cooking techniques.

The Chinese habitually have soup, a must dish with the concept of harmony. Soup made from a variety of ingredients has a taste that is an organic mixture of the five flavors, each distinct, but which all blend to give an altogether richer and more appetizing piquancy. It is hence desirable to use more ingredients as they produce better results when functioning under the principle of harmony. Soup embodies a complementary relationship within which all the components are complementary. Harmony as a strategy connotes a dynamic process of creative transformation during which all the elements involved undergo a transformational synthesis, changing and collaborating but maintaining individual identity.

Regarding the way of dining, being together is characteristic of the Chinese, which can be traced back to its ancient origin. In ancient China, people prepared food and dined at the same place, i. e. in the centre of the room, with a skylight to let smoke out and a fire on the ground for the food to be cooked. After the food was ready, people would sit around the fire to eat. This ancient custom of dining, which has lasted for a long time, is a reflection of the emphasis that the

Chinese laid on kinship and family values.

As for tableware, the Chinese choose kuaizi or chopsticks. Chopsticks are the dining utensils most frequently used in the Chinese people's daily life. In ancient China, they were called zhu. In the remote ages, chopsticks were made of branches, bamboo or natural animal bones. Later they were made of scraped bamboo or wood. Ivory and jade chopsticks appeared during the Xia and Shang Dynasties, bronze and iron in the Spring-Autumn Period, and lacquer in the Han Dynasty. Later silver and gold chopsticks were made. Chopsticks are characterized by convenience, simplicity and economy.

4. Custom

(1) Having Meal

Though customs and the kinds of food eaten vary regionally, it is most common for Chinese families to have three meals a day.

The center of the Chinese meal is fan, or grain. In the south and among urban families in other areas, fan may be rice or rice products, as is the wheat eaten in the north in the form of cooked whole grains, noodles, or bread. The meats and vegetables are known as tsai, which means something like "side dishes", one could almost go so far as to call them condiments for the fan. To facilitate access to all dishes, Chinese dining tables are more likely to be square or round, rather than elongated like their Western counterparts.

Eating begins in order of seniority, with each diner taking the cue to start from his or her immediate superior. To eat fan, a diner raises the bowl to his or her lips and pushes the grains into his or her mouth with chopsticks. This is the easiest way to eat it and shows proper enjoyment. To leave even a grain is considered bad manners, a lack of respect for the labor required to produce it.

Neither beverage nor dessert is commonly served with a meal. People drink tea nearly all day, but at meals soup is usually the only liquid provided. At special events there may be wine or liquor. Sweet

foods are usually reserved for special events, where they are served between courses, or for small meals at tea houses.

(2) Dining Etiquette

Banquets are held to celebrate the New Year, the Mid-Autumn Festival, weddings, and other special occasions. Each event is associated with particular treats, such as moon cakes for the Mid-Autumn Festival or puddings for the New Year, but there are also many common characteristics and ceremonies involved. A banquet acquires much of its festive character through two elements: the release from some everyday eating customs (usually those that impose restraint) and the exaggeration of others. At a banquet, for example, rice doesn't need to be treated as the center of the meal, but the respectful interaction between guest and host must be performed with extra enthusiasm.

Regular Chinese meals are served all at once, but a banquet is about a host's generosity and prosperity, and the joy of celebration, so the food is served in many successive courses. In a further display of exaggerated courtesy, the host apologizes in advance for the meager and ill-prepared meal about to be served. Hot towels are distributed at the beginning and end of the meal.

There are rules regarding the order of serving dishes and the way dishes are set on the table. For meat and vegetable dishes, there are cold dishes and hot dishes. Normally cold dishes are served earlier. Dry dishes are served before soup. Hot dishes are the main course, and usually there are even numbers of hot dishes, four, six or eight. Sometimes there could be 16 or 32 dishes. The most sumptuous feast, the Man Han Feast, has as many as 108 dishes. Soup is usually the last dish. In some places, however, fish (the Chinese word for fish is yu, which is a homonym of surplus) is the last dish, which symbolizes that there will always be a surplus of food for people to eat.

For the way dishes are set on the table, there are also rules to

follow. For example, newly served dishes are always put near the most honorable guest. When a whole fish, a whole chicken or a whole duck is served, the dish is normally put in such a way that the head is towards the most honorable guest. This is a way to show respect to the most honorable guest.

In order to show their respect and hospitality, the Chinese hosts often help the guests to the dishes. For hygiene's sake, when doing this, they usually use an extra pair of chopsticks or spoon.

Throughout the meal, the guests pay elaborate compliments to the food. Enjoyment of the food offered is much more important than dinner table conversation. At a banquet, the food itself is the medium communicating the host's good wishes and the joy of the celebration. The Chinese host will not expect a visitor to know all the traditions associated with the meal. But the visitor who knows some of them will gain "face" and give "face" to his host. Chinese food seems to taste better when it is eaten with chopsticks, and the whole meal will be more enjoyable if one knows a little of the ancient traditions and beliefs that place the meal in a 5,000-year-old culinary heritage.

(3) Seat Order

China has long been known as the "land of ceremony and propriety". Consequently, there are certain customs that should be observed at banquets or formal dinners. The Chinese people attach great importance to the seating order at a banquet or formal dinner.

In ancient times, at a banquet, people sat in a circle on the ground. Their seating arrangements are unknown, but it is thought that they were arranged in a certain order. It was recorded that the most honorable guest sat facing the east, the next facing the south, next facing the north and the last facing the west.

Even today at formal banquets people are arranged in a certain order, but there are different rules concerning seat order. In the past, the Chinese people often sat around a so-called eight-immortal table (a

table with a rectangular top, normally with eight seats around it) to dine. In the north, the seat order is arranged this way. The two seats facing the door are the most important, and the host sits on the right and the most honorable guest on the left. Opposite these two seats sit two specially invited guests who are supposed to help entertain the main guests. The other people, guests or specially invited guests, are arranged, according to their age, to sit on the other two sides of the table. The two seats closer to the host are considered more important than the other two seats. In the south, the seat order is a bit different, and it is similar to the seat order in the west.

Today for round table banquets, there are also special rules regarding seat order. Normally, the host sits facing the door, the one who sits on his right is the most honorable guest, the one who sits on his left the second guest, the one sitting facing the host is the vice host, the one sitting on the left of the vice host is the third guest, and the one sitting on the right of the vice host is the fourth guest.

(4) Saving "Face"

Saving "face" is the special characteristic of Chinese culture. Despite a universal human nature and a concept that occur in all cultures, face is particularly noticeable in Chinese culture. Even some scholars believe that the concept of face is in fact of the Chinese origin. In *the Short Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles*, "to lose face" is rendered directly from the Chinese phrase diulian, with its English explanation being "to lose one's credit, good name or reputation".

"Face" is evident in all aspects of the Chinese life. The Chinese often avoid the word "no" to save face for both parties. Words such as bufangbian (inconvenient), taikunnan (too difficult) or huoxu (maybe) are often synonyms of "no" in the Chinese culture. The Chinese "yes" (shi) can also be a word that has little meaning because it is used to respond to almost everything, such as "Yes, but it is inconvenient", which actually means "no".

Face is also evident in a Chinese business negotiation context. Many observers find that the Chinese prefer to do business with large companies of world reputations in order to gain face. Even in business negotiations, you can use face to explain the Chinese negotiation style. Chinese customs have a curious characteristic unknown in Western countries. They order too much food. It is because the Chinese attach a lot of value to the concept of “keeping face”. When inviting guests and friends out to dinner, the Chinese do not view it simply as “eating together”. People come to restaurants (in many cases, expensive ones) to strengthen friendly ties and to do business. A big banquet is therefore considered a good investment. Impressive banquets in China are similar to lengthy business negotiations in the West, so the Chinese hosts tend to splash out on these occasions. The reason behind this is simple—the hosts fear that if all the food is gone at the end of the meal, their guests might think they are stingy.

5. Wine

(1) Classification and History

In Chinese the word for alcohol *jiu* is used to mean all types of alcoholic beverages, from *pijiu* (beer) to liquors (just called *jiu*) to grape wine (*putaojiu*).

Chinese wines can be generally classified into two types, namely yellow liquor (*huangjiu*) or clear (white) liquor (*baijiu*). Chinese yellow liquors are fermented wines that are brewed directly from grains such as rice or wheat. Such liquors contain less than 20% alcohol, due to the inhibition of fermentation by ethanol at this concentration. These wines are traditionally pasteurized, aged, and filtered before their final bottling for sale to consumers. Yellow liquors can also be distilled to produce white liquors. White liquors are also commonly called *shaojiu*, which means “hot liquor” or “burned liquor”, either because of the burning sensation in the mouth during consumption, the fact that they are usually warmed before being consumed, or because of the heating



required for distillation. Liquors of this type typically contain more than 30% alcohol in volume since they have undergone distillation. There are a great many varieties of distilled liquors, both unflavored and flavored.

In China, wine could also be called the "Water of History" because stories about wine can be found in almost every period of China's long story. The origins of the alcoholic beverage from fermented grain in China cannot be traced definitively. It is believed to have a history of 4,000 years. A legend says that Jade Emperor (about 2100 BC) invented the method. At that time millet was the main grain, the so-called "yellow wine". It was not until the 19th century that distilled drinks become more popular. In general, Chinese distilled liquors are consumed together with food. Although China has a 6,000 year history in grape-growing, and a 4,000 year history in wine-making, it was not until this century that Chinese wines were recognized in the West.

(2) Wine and Chinese People

There is no doubt that wine occupies an important place in the culture and life of the Chinese people. Wine was not only intimately connected with most Chinese men of letters, but also an inseparable part of the life of ordinary Chinese people. The banquets of ancient emperors and kings could not take place without wine. Every sort of wine vessel thus became an important kind of sacrificial object. Inscriptions on bones and tortoise shells as well as bronze inscriptions preserve many records of the Shang people worshiping their ancestors with wine. There were many famous Chinese poets or artists who crafted their masterpieces after getting "drunk". The famous poet Li Bai of the Tang Dynasty has been known as the "Immortal of Wine" because of his love of alcohol. Guo Moruo, a modern scholar, compiled statistics about Li's poems and found 17 per cent of them were about drinking. Early writers liked drinking and thought it an elegant way to pass the time. Apart from the taste of the wine, they also concentrated on the process of drinking wine. They created many games to go with

drinking sessions, involving knowledge of history, literature, music and poetry. In ancient times, before a battle, a general would feast his soldiers with alcohol and meat. If they won the battle, they would be rewarded with good wine. If a warrior fell in battle, his fellows would scatter wine on the ground as part of a memorial ceremony.

(3) Wine Culture Today

Ordinary Chinese today use alcohol to help them celebrate the happiness in their lives. In China, a banquet known as *jiuxi* means an alcohol banquet and the life of every person, from birth to death, should have causes for drinking, starting a month or 100 days after a baby's birth when the parents invite people in for a drink. When someone builds a new house, marries, starts a business, makes a fortune or lives a long life, he is expected to invite people in for a drinking session. In modern times it is a pity that the games going with drinking are not the elegant ones of the past that involved poetry or music. Today, drinkers just play simple finger-guessing games. It seems today that friendship depends only on the volume of drink being consumed. "If we are good friends, then bottoms up; if not, then just take a sip" is a common phrase exchanged during gatherings.

Depending on the drinker's social and literacy status and interest, *jiuling* now has many forms, which can be classified into three categories, general games, contest games and literal games. General games include those suitable for everyone to play, such as telling jokes, riddling and *chuanhua* (passing flowers one by one). This category usually appears at the banquets for ladies. Animal betting is a very interesting game every Chinese can play. In the game, one uses his chopstick to tap the other player's chopstick and at the same time calls out one of four words. The other player does the same. There are four words: stick, tiger, cock and insect. The regulations are simple. Stick beats tiger, tiger eats cock, cock pecks insect, and insect bores stick. Contest games consist of archery, arrow pitching, playing chess, finger

guessing and animal betting. In finger guessing, two players stretch out their right hands, with or without fingers extended and then each person calls a number from nil to ten. If the extended fingers add up to the player's number, then he wins and the loser will have to drink. The game can differ somewhat from region to region. The literal game is popular among bookworms since they have received a good education and have a refined knowledge and background information about the essence of the traditional Chinese culture.

6. Tea

(1) Origin

Tea is native to China. The story of tea began over 5,000 years ago. According to a legend, one summer day while visiting a distant region of his realm, Shennong and the court stopped to rest. In accordance with his ruling, the servants began to boil water for the court to drink. Dried leaves from a nearby bush fell into the boiling water, turning it brown. As a scientist, Shennong was interested in the new liquid, drank some, and found it very refreshing.

Tea was thought of as a medicinal drink in China. In 780 the Chinese merchants commissioned to write *Chajing* (*Tea Classic*), a book about the history of tea to extol its virtues. An abridged version of *Chajing*'s description of proper tea making-process was as follows: After being picked on a sunny day, tea leaves must be baked over an even fire. After baking, tea leaves should be placed in a paper bag to cool. Only when completely cold, could the leaves be ground. Then spring water should be heated to just under boiling point and a little of salt added. Then it should be brought to a second boil, and stirred only in the middle portion of the liquid. The ground tea leaves were then steeped in water in individual cups and drunk before it cooled. The first and second cups tasted the best. The skill of making tea properly has been highly valued in China. Making tea was an honor, and only the lord of the house was allowed this privilege and duty.

(2) Type

Of hundreds of varieties of Chinese tea, there are three major types. They are green tea, black tea, and Oolong tea. The method used for processing the leaves distinguishes the types. Another special tea is called tightly-pressed tea lumps. The black tea or green tea is pressed into brick, cake or ball shapes. The tea lump is convenient to store and transportable to the people in border regions. In recent years, tea bags, instant teas, and medical teas have also become popular, expanding the world of tea.

In terms of tea production, China can be divided into four areas of origin. Tea grown in China's southwestern region, including Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan Provinces as well as Tibet; Tea cultivated in the southern part of China, including Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Taiwan, Hainan and some autonomous regions suitable for tea growing; Tea grown in the Yangtze River area and in the lower reaches of the south, including Zhejiang, Hunan, Jiangxi and Anhui. These are the major tea producing areas, and represent about two-thirds of the country's total output; Tea is also grown in the middle and lower reaches of the north shore of the Yangtze, including Henan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Shandong and northern Anhui, Jiangsu, and Hubei.

(3) Drinking

There are several special circumstances in which tea is prepared and consumed. Tea drinking can be used as a sign of respect, for a family gathering, a kind of apology, expressing thankfulness to elders, and a way to connect a large family.

Different tea drinking customs in various parts of China make up the rich Chinese tea culture. The Chinese people, in their drinking of tea, place much significance on the act of "savoring" the tea, which is a way to tell good tea from inferior tea. Snatching a bit of leisure from a busy schedule, making a kettle of strong tea, finding a serene place to serve and drink in by yourself can help remove fatigue and frustration,

improve your thinking ability and inspire your enthusiasm. Buildings, gardens, ornaments and tea sets are the elements that form the ambience for savoring tea. A tranquil, refreshing comfortable and neat locale is certainly desirable for drinking tea. Chinese gardens are well-known in the world and beautiful Chinese landscapes are too numerous to count. Teahouses tucked away in gardens and nestled beside the natural beauty of mountains and rivers are enhancing places for people to rest and revive themselves in.

Tea houses have even changed the way people do business. The saying now is "At a table of spirit (jiu), the more you talk, the more confusing things become, but at a table of tea, the more you talk, the clearer things become."

Tea represents thriftiness. Now even government agencies like to host tea parties to celebrate public holidays as it is an inexpensive way to socialize. Thus a cup of tea can be used for social and economic purposes, as well as political functions.

(4) Gongfu Tea

As for tea etiquette, different areas have different rules. Take Gongfu tea of Fujian Province for example, Gongfu Tea, meaning time-consuming tea came into being in the Qing Dynasty. When drinking Gongfu Tea, one must choose very carefully the appropriate tea set, take time to prepare, taste, and drink. Normally, tea vessels are small and exquisite, with teapot as small as a fist and teacups as small as walnuts. During the drinking process, teapots and teacups are heated with hot water, tea leaves are put into the teapots (about seven tenth of the capacity). When pouring boiling water from the kettle into teapots, one should raise the kettle high. When pouring tea from the teapot into teacups, one should lower the teapot and keep its spout close to the teacups. Moreover, when serving Gongfu Tea, one should not fill the teacups in one go. Instead, one should place the teacups in a circle and pour a small amount of tea into the teacups at a time. Only

after two or three rounds of pouring should the teacups be filled. This is to ensure that each teacup gets an even share of the tea and each cup of tea has the same taste, so that all drinkers will feel treated equally. Even when only a few drops of tea are left, the person who is serving tea should not stop serving; instead, he should drip the tea into all the teacups in turn to the last drop.

Gongfu teapots are very small, and the person who does the serving should not take the teapot into his hand, but take the teapot handle with his thumb and middle finger, and push the teapot lid open with his forefinger. When drinking tea, one should not drink it all at once, instead, he should first smell it, taste it, and then drink it slowly.

II. Costume

1. Silk

Chinese silk first made its way to Rome sometime during the first century BC, where it was known as "serice". Silk, like other precious fabrics, had to pass through many hands before reaching Rome. It is thought that the term "serice" was derived from the Chinese word *si* (silk), the original pronunciation having been corrupted by successive relays of merchants travelling West. The Romans had never seen anything like "serice" before, and believed that it was made by some distant people they called "Sericians". It was also rumored that beyond the "Silk Kingdom" of the Sericians was an even more distant and mysterious land, known as "Chine".

Foreigners who came to China were often astonished at what they saw and heard. The Greek geographer Pausanias in the second century AD gave the first account to the West of the technique of silk production in China, "The Chinese feed a spider-like insect with millet and reeds. After five years the insect's stomach splits open, and silk is extracted there from." From this extract, we can see that the Europeans at that time did not know the art of silk manufacture.

Silk was highly sought after in Rome, in part due to its mysterious origins, but even more because of its exceptional quality. It was the first trade commodity to travel from China to the West. It was first used as decorative trim, then for cushion covers, and only much later for clothing. Tougher, more supple and comfortable than flax or woolen fabrics, silk was popular with both men and women.

According to archeological evidence, silk and silk fabric emerged in China at least 5,500 years ago. The cultivation of silkworm can be traced back to the third century BC. During the Zhou Dynasty, a special administration was set up to manage sericulture (silkworm breeding) and silk production. The famous Silk Road to the Middle East and Europe started under Zhang Qian. Under imperial order, he started his diplomatic mission to the West from 138 BC to 126 BC. Gradually, sericulture and silk production techniques spread to other countries. Chinese silk was highly prized among the wealthy of the ancient Roman Empire. Today, Chinese silk still enjoys its reputation for high quality throughout the world.

2. Clothes

China has a very rich costume history. Early in the Eastern Han Dynasty, people in black preferred to wear purple silk adornments to match their clothes. A long hat was worn at grand ceremonies when offering sacrifices to the gods or ancestors.

In early history, the color black was thought to represent the Celestial Ruler Supreme God who ruled everything. So in the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Dynasties, clothes were black. With the development of the feudalism, people began to prefer the ground (yellow) instead of god (black). The colors of traditional clothes were influenced by the color of the five elements (iron, wood, metal, air, and water) which are blue, red, black, white, and yellow. They were used mostly by first class society members to present as being noble.

The Tang Dynasty is regarded as the epitome of Chinese women's

traditional dress. It was influenced by the culture and arts of the Western regions. The trade and cultural exchanges with Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Persia and other countries gradually became more frequent. In this way, a special and romantic style of dress and personal adornments evolved.

Simple straight styles were used in traditional Chinese clothes, giving the impression that people were taller. The Qing clothes were looser and wider. While the hair styles and the high-heeled shoes of women and slim lines of the long cheongsam made them appear taller. The long sense of the clothes can make up for the oriental short figures. The smooth shape of the clothes is thought to enhance the soft features of the Chinese faces.

The Chinese styles like to depict happiness by the designs. From the old time to now, from expensive silk to the flowered folk clothes, the happy designs widely used phoenixes and dragons, the flying phoenix and dragon, or nine dragons playing with a pearl.

(1) Royal/Official Clothes

The costumes of ancient emperors had special tags and strictly followed the established customs. Every detail of an emperor's costume, a string of beads, a pattern, color and length, or fabric, reflected certain customs. The emperors' clothes were the footstone and criteria of the country's entire costume system. The standard emperor's costume first appeared in the Zhou Dynasty.

Very strict rules were set up about clothes for different classes, incorporating the rules as part of the rites. The differences among different ranks were glaringly obvious, and no violation was tolerated. 12 silk patterns woven or embroidered in silk were often found on the emperors' robes and were exclusively used by the emperors. The patterns included figures of the sun, the moon, the stars, mountains, dragons, birds, rite vessels, aquatic plants, fire, rice, axes, and double-backed bows.



Design patterns were used on most official robes of the early Tang Dynasty. However, when Wu Zetian, China's first and only empress came to power, she designated a new type of official clothing named "embroidered robe". Various design patterns were embroidered onto the robes of different official ranks. Usually, birds were embroidered on the civil officials' robes and beasts on those of military officers.

Patterns, which were used to signify official ranks, were later developed into patches in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Patches embroidered or woven with spun gold and colored threads were attached to the front and back of official robes, which would enable others to know the wearers' ranks at the first sight. Beginning in 1393 of the Ming Dynasty, all court officials and officers, regardless of their ranks, had to dress themselves in costumes with patches on their chests and backs.

Civil officials of the Ming Dynasty also wore patches to signify their ranks. These were red crowned crane for the first rank, golden pheasant for the second rank, peacock for the third rank, goose for the fourth rank, silver pheasant for the fifth rank, egret for the sixth rank, water bird (mandarin duck or drake) for the seventh rank, yellow roe (a huge legendary bird) for the eighth rank, quail for the ninth rank, and fly catcher for the 10th rank and below. Judges were often embroidered with patches in patterns of ancient goats that reputedly would gore a guilty person in court.

Patches for the military officers of the Ming Dynasty were simpler. For the first and second ranking military officers, patches with the pattern of a lion were used, while those with tiger and leopard patterns were for the third and fourth ranking officers. The bear-patterned ones were for the fifth ranking officers and those of young-tiger patterns for the sixth and the seventh ranking officers. Rhinoceros-patterned patches signaled the eighth ranking officers and hippocampus-patterned ones for the ninth ranking officers.

The custom of attaching patches continued in the Qing Dynasty, but with some difference in form and color. For example, while patches of the Ming Dynasty were in a whole piece on both the front and the back of an official robe, the front patches of the Qing Dynasty were halved in the middle of the robe. Moreover, while Ming Dynasty patches were mostly light colored, with design patterns woven from golden thread against a red background, Qing Dynasty patches were richly colored, with the background color being either black or darkened. Also, there were no floral borders around the edges of the Ming patches, while the Qing patches were always bordered with decorative patterns.

In regard to style, while in the Ming Dynasty, ranking patches for some civil officials were embroidered with a pair of birds, those of the Qing Dynasty had just a single bird. The Qing Dynasty patches were also attached to the robes of women (usually the wife or mother of a senior official) with a rank title conferred by the emperor. These design patterns depended on the son's or husband's official rank, but for the mother or wife of a military officer, bird-patterned patches were used, rather than the beast-patterned ones.

(2) Cheongsam (Qipao)

Qipao is one of the most typical, traditional costumes for the Chinese women. Also known as cheongsam, it is like a wonderful flower in the Chinese colorful fashion scene because of its particular charm. It combines the elaborate elegance of the Chinese tradition with unique elements of style. The high-necked, closed-collar qipao is a tight fitted dress with attractive slits up the sides.

There is a legend that a young fisherwoman living by the Jingbo Lake. She was not only beautiful, but also clever and skillful. But when fishing, she often felt hindered by her long and loose fitting dress. Then an idea struck her: Why not make a more practical dress for work? She got down to sewing and produced a long multi-looped-button gown with

slits, which enabled her to tuck in the front piece of her dress, thus making her job much easier.

In the early 17th century, Nurhachi, a great political and military strategist, unified the various Nuzhen tribes and set up the Eight Banners System. Over the years, a collarless, tube-shaped gown was developed, which was worn by both men and women. This was the embryo of qipao, translated as “banner gown”, for it came from the people who lived under the Banner System.

In the 1920s, qipao became popular throughout China. With the influence of the Western dress styles, qipao underwent a change. The cuffs grew narrower and were usually trimmed with thin lace. The length of the dress was shortened as well. This new adaptation allowed the beauty of the female body to be fully displayed. In the 1930s, wearing qipao became the fashion among women in China. Various styles existed in this period. Some were short, and some were long, with low, high or even no collars at all. Starting from the 1940s, qipao became closer-fitting and more practical. In summer, women wore sleeveless dresses. Qipao of this period were seldom adorned with patterns. Qipao became standard female attire until the 1960s.

Wearing qipao nowadays has turned into something of a vogue, both at home and abroad. Due to its elegance and classical looks, qipao becomes a source of inspiration for fashion designers. Qipao is usually made of excellent materials like silk, silk brocade, satin, satin brocade or velour. Often qipao will have a certain pattern on it, such as Chinese dragons, different kinds of flowers, butterflies or other typical Chinese icons. While a tall and slender figure is most desirable, qipao is ideal for most women. It is adaptable to different body shapes by altering sleeves and necklines as well as the length. A variation of qipao more suitable for larger figure types is a two piece ensemble consisting of a loose fitting top and a long straight skirt. Qipao can be made in a great variety of fabrics, making it suitable for all seasons and occasions.

3. Shoe

In the Neolithic age, ancient shoes were made from three types of materials, grass, cloth and leather. Cloth shoes were made with hemp fiber and silk; In the Han Dynasty, the toe cap of a cloth shoe was usually bi-forked, and the tread was made with linen thread. Such a shoe was called *shuangjian qiaotou fanglv* (square shoes with double tips and rising heads); In the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the front tip of a shoe was usually decorated with a double-beast pattern. The matching color was harmonious, and the whole shoe looked very graceful; In the Northern Song Dynasty, *ji* was popular among the people, from the Emperor down to the ordinary people; In the Song Dynasty, most men wore leather shoes with a pointed toe, and women usually wore shoes with a round, flat or rising toe, sometimes decorated with various patterns such as flowers or birds; In the Ming Dynasty, men's shoes usually required thickness and strength, and the materials and fashions were varied. In general, in the north people wore diamond-patterned shoes, and in the south people wore palm fiber shoes. Generally, from the Yuan Dynasty to the Ming Dynasty, female cloth shoes were popular, which were characterized by high rising toes and flat and thick treads; In the Qing Dynasty, men's shoes were mostly pointed-toe ones. The tread might be thick or thin, the instep might be single-ridged or double-ridged, and the upper might have embroidery. Women's shoes were very special. The tread was usually wooden and in the shape of a horse roof, as high as one to five inches, so they were called *matidi* (horse hoof shaped tread). The instep was usually lined with silk, with colored embroidery on it. Those worn by noble women also had some jewelry inlaid on the upper. Old women usually wore wooden flat-soled shoes.

Opinions vary about the origin of high-heeled shoes, which are said to have originated from China. There were already high-heeled wooden sandals as early as in the Three Kingdoms Period. Some *qixie* (Manchu

shoes) worn by the Manchu women in the ancient times had a heel higher than five cun (inch).

Boots, worn by the nomadic nationalities in north China, are also called "riding boots". There were many kinds of boots, hanxue (dry land boots), huaxue (colored boots), yuntouxue (boots with cloud patterns at the toe), and edingxue (boots with a goose-shaped toe). In the Northern and Southern Dynasties, boots were popular in the north. In the Tang Dynasty, boots were worn by both officials and ordinary people. In the Song Dynasty, boots for females began to appear. In the Yuan Dynasty, Korean-style boots prevailed. In the Ming Dynasty, although the court forbade ordinary people to wear boots, there were still many short boots, which looked like both shoes and boots. Men in the Qing Dynasty usually wore shoes, and only wore boots with official uniforms.

Chinese foot binding originated in the Southern Tang Dynasty. The so-called "three-inch golden lotuses" (sancunjinlian) referred to women's tiny bound feet, and also to the shoes they wore which were in the shape of a rising bird head. Their treads were wooden, in a bent shape like a bow. Therefore, they were called "bow shoes", which originally meant bent-tread shoes, but later generally referred to the small shoes worn by foot-bound women. In the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, there was a rule that foot binding was permitted only for women from noble families. The bow shoes of that time had treads as high as four to five cun. By the Qing Dynasty, "three-inch golden lotuses" worn by the Han women had won the favor of the Manchu women. The Qing court issued orders many times prohibiting the Manchu people from foot binding, but still many Manchu women liked to follow it. There were various kinds of bow shoes, sleeping shoes, huanjiaoxie (shoes for change of feet), sharp-crested shoes, tatangxie (shoes for walking in the main room), net shoes, lotus shoes, overshoes, and funeral shoes. The exquisite bow shoes had various

kinds of embroidered patterns at the toe, the tread, the inside and the upper. Rich women's bow shoes even had some bright pearls or other ornamentation on them.

III. Sport

1. Wushu (Martial Art)

Wushu, a cultural heritage of the Chinese nation, is a traditional Chinese sport with a unique national characteristic. Based on movements employed in fighting, such as kicking, striking, throwing, catching, repelling, and stabbing, wushu is practiced in various types of set exercises, either barehanded or with weapons. It can be practiced singly, in pairs or in groups. Offensive or defensive, quick or slow, hard or soft, the practitioners wrestle and try to outwit each other. These exercises help to build up physique, heighten will, and prolong lives.

(1) History

Wushu began to take shape in the struggle of the people against the nature. In the primitive society, there were more animals than human beings. The tools people used were very simple and crude, and productivity was low. To survive, people came together, moving from place to place, hunting and gathering wild fruits. During their hunting trips, they not only developed "free exercises" such as striking and kicking, jumping and dodging, but also learned to use stones and sticks as weapons for cutting, chopping, pricking and stabbing. These movements were in fact a primitive way of combat, and a form of instinctive self-defense, which gave rise to the early stage boxing and the use of weapons.

In the clan society, tribes resorted to force to gain wealth, which often led to wars. As a result, weapons such as bows and arrows, and broadswords and battle-axes appeared to meet the growing needs of wars. In years and years of practice, people began to acquire combat skills, offensive or defensive, and practiced again and again in their free

time, those skills proven useful in battles.

In the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, violent military conflicts resulted in the improvement of weapons, from simple to more sophisticated and diversified ones, as well as in the improvement and development of combat skills. This was also true of the tactics concerning wars such as using chariots in the north and battles fought on the water in the south. With the advent of the copper-smelting industry, more and more copper weapons were used, including spears, dagger-axes, battle-axes, tomahawks, halberds, and swords. Manuals on how to use such weapons and how to defend were published. Such simple movements as chopping, pricking, grappling, pressing, and lightly pushing were based on people's experience in the battlefields, which laid a good foundation for the future development of wushu.

During the Spring-Autumn Period, battles were fought one after another. Boxing and the art of attack and defense were highly valued to improve the combat effectiveness or fighting capacity of the soldiers. Special attention was paid to the application of skills and tactics in the battlefield.

With the development of technology, ironware came into being, resulting in the change of mode of operations and weapons. To be more efficient for foot soldiers and cavalymen, long weapons became shorter and less heavy so that chopping, fending, and sweeping could be done more easily. On the other hand, short weapons became longer to bring into full play the potential of double-edged swords, slashing, cutting, and chopping. In the meantime, mechanical crossbows also appeared. The improvement of weapons enriched the contents and methods of wushu. It was during this period that wushu became widely popular among the ordinary people. As a result, there appeared quite a few martial artists with unique skills such as Yuan Gong, and Lu Shigong. To promote the exchanges of wushu, extraordinary martial artists from all parts of the country came together for a competition

twice a year, respectively in spring and in autumn. Hand-to-hand combat and swordplay became the most popular events of the competition. Wushu at this time did not just meet people's needs for survival. It gradually became part of people's everyday life or cultural enjoyment. Over time, wushu began to become an important component of the Chinese culture.

The Ming and the Qing Dynasties saw the vigorous development of wushu. There were myriad types of wushu. All kinds of boxing, barehanded or with weapons, flourished. And wushu was accepted as a combination of military skills, bodybuilding exercises and a performing art. The art of attack, defense, skills and tricks in wushu were perfected and standardized in the Ming Dynasty. Books on wushu reached a record high in terms of both quantity and content. *Geng Yu Sheng Ji* (*Skills Left over by Farmers*) by Zong You, *She Xue Xin Zong* (*A New Treatise on Shooting*) by Gao Ying, *Ji Xiao Xin Shu* (*Retrospect and Prospect of Military Training*) and *Quan Jing* (*On Chinese Boxing*) by Qi Jiguang are a few representative works. These books, promoted to a certain extent, the development of wushu in terms of skill, combat, and fitness.

There were an unprecedented number of wushu events in the Ming Dynasty. These events were generally known as the "skill in wielding the 18 kinds of weapons", namely bow, crossbow, spear, saber, sword, lance, shield, battle-axe, tomahawk, halberd, rod, mace, guo, yi (a weapon made of bamboo), fork, batou, lasso, and baida (hand combat). Exercises with weapons became "set exercises", which spread among the army as well as the masses, and grew to be an important means of bodybuilding as well as killing the enemy. At the same time, martial arts competitions involving hand-to-hand combat, wrestling and combat with weapons developed considerably. And such competitions were called "arena contests".

Wushu in the Qing Dynasty also experienced a rapid development.



With the emergence of the White Lotus Society, the Boxers Uprising, and the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, wushu was very popular. Soon, wushu organizations or centers sprang up all over the country where skills in wushu were taught.

(2) Style

Wushu in the Qing Dynasty fell into two categories, the internal family, based on neigong or the art of building up one's strength through breathing and other exercises of the internal organs, and the external family, based on waigong or external work, meaning exercises to benefit the muscles and bones. There was also a division of the southern style, practiced along the Yangtze River and characterized by its small and tight movements, and the northern style, practiced in Shandong and Henan Provinces and famous for its big and open movements. Some classified wushu movements by using the names of the mountains and rivers. And others categorized wushu in terms of form. Such divisions reflected that there were indeed a great many schools of wushu at that time. Besides, an integrated wushu theory was beginning to take shape. Today wushu generally falls into five categories, barehanded exercises, exercises with weapons, dual combats, group performances, and combats using offensive and defensive skills.

The movements in wushu include kicking, boxing, wrestling and seizing, all of which have set rules. There are also various "sects" of wushu or martial arts. Generally speaking, Shaolin Sect and Wudang Sect are the two most famous ones. As the old Chinese saying goes "In the north, Shaolin Kungfu is primarily recommended, while in the south, Wudang Kungfu is especially valued." Both of them lay emphasis on the external practice for jing (genuine energy), qi (vital energy) and shen (spirit) and internal practice for muscle, bone and skin.

① Kungfu

Being an important part of the traditional Chinese martial arts, Shaolin Kungfu is considered to be authentic Chinese kungfu.

Originally, Shaolin Kungfu was developed from Shaolin Temple, in the region of the Song Mountain. While farming in the thick forest of the high mountains, monks created a set of body-building exercises by imitating the postures of flying, jumping and running of birds, beasts and fish. Gradually, these body-building exercises evolved through long practice and improvement into a sort of boxing, which was generally called "Shaolin Boxing".

Shaolin Kungfu includes boxing, stick art, spear art, and sword art. Shaolin Boxing is strong and powerful, which is a combination of attack and defense, thus making it practical for real fights. Stick art plays an important role in wars. It can be used for war, to improve health and promote longevity. Spear is regarded as the king of the ancient weapons. Spear arts are various, including Shaolin spear, Yezhañ spear, Lanmen spear. Sword art has a far-reaching influence on Shaolin Kungfu. The vigorous sword dance gives many practitioners a wonderful aesthetic feeling.

Wudang Kungfu is closely related to Taoism. It is said that Zhang Sanfeng, a Taoist who lived in the Song Dynasty created Wudang Kungfu. The Ming Dynasty saw the formal popularity of Wudang Kungfu. In order to promote Wudang Taoism all over China, Emperor Yongle assembled 300,000 civilian workers to build 33 Taoist complexes in Mt. Wudang. The whole construction took 13 years to finish. Wudang Kungfu emphasizes the strengthening of bones and muscles and internal organs, and encourages the use of softness to conquer the unyielding. It doesn't advocate attack but at the same time it is hard to defeat because of the evasive techniques used.

Shadowboxing, bare-hand fighting in six steps, and Wuji boxing are all types of Wudang Kungfu. Wudang Sword is regarded as Wudang's priceless treasure. Taiji Sword, Liuhe Spear, and Baihong Sword are also famous Wudang weapons.

② Taijiquan

Taijiquan is considered to be one of the internal styles of the Chinese wushu, and is the most widely practiced in the world today. The term taiji refers to the ancient Chinese cosmological concept of the interplay between two opposite yet complementary forces (yin and yang) as being the foundation of the creation. Quan literally means “fist” and denotes an unarmed method of combat. Taijiquan as a form of wushu is based on the principle of the soft overcoming the hard.

The origins of Taijiquan are often attributed to Zhang Sanfeng (a Taoist of either the 12th or the 15th century depending on the source) who created the art after witnessing a fight between a snake and a crane. All of the various styles of Taijiquan which are in existence today can be traced back to a single man, Chen Wangting, a general of the Ming Dynasty.

A beginner will usually start training with very basic exercises designed to teach proper structural alignment and correct methods of moving the body, shifting the weight, and stepping. All of the Taijiquan arts have at their very foundation the necessity of complete physical relaxation and the idea that the intent leads and controls the motion of the body. The learner is also taught various postures which serve as basic exercises in straight line and relaxation as well as a kind of meditation.

The ability to “stick, adhere, continue and follow (zhan, nian, lian, sui)” is vital to the application of Taijiquan combat techniques. Techniques that include pushing, pulling, wrapping, bumping, sweeping, locking, knocking down and throwing far outnumber striking and kicking techniques. Solo forms of training are designed to develop the ability to control oneself, and paired practice trains the practitioner to apply the power developed during solo training to another in the most efficient manner.

Chen Wang Ting’s original form of Chen style Taijiquan is often

referred to as the “Old Frame” (laojia) and its second form as “Cannon Fist” (paochui). Descendant of Chen Wang Ting simplified the original forms into sets which have come to be known as the “New Style” (xinjia).

Despite variations in form and technique, the underlying concepts of relaxed, whole body power and the avoidance of using force against force are the foundations of all styles of Taijiquan. True Taijiquan elevates the practice of common martial skills, which primarily rely upon superior strength and speed, to the level of art. As the classics say, “The ability to overcome a thousand pounds of pressure with a force of four ounces is not due to superior strength. A man in his eighties who is able to defend himself against multiple attackers is not relying upon superior speed.”

2. Tug-of-War

A traditional folk sport, tug-of-war is a test of strength in which two teams with an equal number of participants pull against each other on a rope, each trying to pull the other over a dividing line. Like other folk games in China, tug-of-war is also a much-loved competitive game. In ancient China, tug-of-war originated in the Spring-Autumn Period and was also called qiangou, gouju, gouqiang, tuogou, or shigou. Initially it was employed as an approach to training soldiers' physical power.

Bahe, the term being used today for tug-of-war first appeared in the Tang Dynasty according to many historical documents. But why was this game of a rope with two competing teams named bahe (literally meaning competing for the river), and not basheng (literally meaning competing for the rope)? There are different explanations. One explanation is that the river is symbolic of the boundary line (a river) between the State of Chu and the State of Han in the Western Han Dynasty. According to the descriptions in the book *Mo Zi*, soldiers of the Yue State defeated those of the Chu State in river battles. Another explanation is that it came from an ancient sacrificial service,

the purpose of which was to pray for rainfall in order to ensure a bountiful harvest. Bahe meant “pulling the river of heaven to make water fall onto earth”, a belief that man could conquer heaven.

As a sporting game, tug-of-war not only strengthens the body, but also brings about a lot of fun. Besides, it is not restricted by space, for it can be held wherever there is an open ground and a thick rope. More importantly, tug-of-war cultivates strong team spirit, the base of cohesive forces in a nation and in a working unit as well. These are the reasons for tug-of-war's long-standing existence and popularity among the Chinese people.

IV. Entertainment

1. Chinese Chess

Chinese chess is a very popular recreational and intellectual game among the Chinese people. The basic rule is that each player has 16 chess pieces, one general, two mandarins, two elephants, two chariots, two horses, two cannons and five soldiers. The player moves the pieces according to the game rules with the ultimate aim of capturing the general of the other side.

According to most theories, chess originated in India and spread to China where it was influenced by bo and yi games. The Indian chess gradually became Chinese chess. Both of bo and yi games were intellectual board games popular during the pre-Qin period. Yi was an ancient encirclement chess, while bo, a six-piece chess, was the predecessor of the modern chess. As the chess pieces were mostly made of carved ivory, bo was also called elephant chess or elephant game. Because the ancient bo and yi both had a gambling nature, the ancients held both positive and negative attitudes towards these board games. Confucius said in *Analects of Confucius*, “A man who eats three square meals a day and does not at all use his brains is a good-for-nothing fellow. Aren't there the games of throwing dice and playing chess? It is

always better to play such games than to do nothing at all." Mencius, however, held a different opinion. In the chapter *Li Lou* of the book *Mencius*, he said, "There are five universally acknowledged unfilial cases ... second, indulging in games of chessmen and drinking bouts, to the neglect of one's parents."

The term *xiangqi* (the elephant chess) first appeared in Qu Yuan's poem *Zhao Hun* in *Chuci* in the Warring States Period. There was also a record of this game in Liu Xiang's *Shuo Yuan* of the Han Dynasty. However, the board game referred to as the elephant chess was not the same type of chess being talked about today, for it was a six-piece chess played in ancient times.

Today, Chinese chess has very standardized and specific game rules. The chess board is a grid of nine files and 10 ranks with 90 intersections called points on which the chess pieces are placed. In the middle of the playing field is a river. The x-shaped area is called "nine-palace". The chess pieces differ in color (black for one side, red for the other). The setup of the chess pieces is that the general is in his palace, while on each side of the general from near to far are placed the mandarin, elephant, horse and chariot. Cannons are positioned in their special places in the middle of each territory, with soldiers on the front line near the river. Usually the game starts with a move by the red side. The rules for the movements are the horse can only move one point in any non-diagonal direction, followed by one point in a diagonal direction, so that it ends two points away from where it starts. The elephant can only move two points in any diagonal direction, and the soldier can only move one point forward. The chariot can move any number of points in any non-diagonal direction, and the cannon can move just like the chariot when not capturing. When capturing, the chariot must leap a single piece of either color before proceeding to the point occupied by the target piece. The general can never leave his palace. The object of the game is to capture the enemy general. The

game is over as soon as one player cannot make a move to prevent the capture of his general.

2. Shuttlecock Kicking

Shuttlecock kicking, or tijianzi, is another traditional popular folk game. Some records date its origin as far back as the Han Dynasty. This game prevailed during the Tang Dynasty when shops specializing in shuttlecock business appeared. In the Ming Dynasty, formal competition of shuttlecock kicking was held. In the Qing Dynasty, shuttlecock kicking reached its climax in terms of both making techniques and the kicking skills.

To make a shuttlecock, a piece of cloth wrapped around a coin is needed, and then a punch of feather is inserted through the coin hole, which retards the rising and descending of the shuttlecock.

There are endless variations in terms of styles and methods of kicking, just as long as the shuttlecock remains in the air. With one leg fixed on the ground, the shuttlecock is kicked by the inner ankle of the other leg. Some other styles include kicking the shuttlecock back and forth between two people. Those who advance to a high level of mastery can perform some truly impressive feats. The challenge of the increasingly difficult levels of shuttlecock kicking has made it a popular and timeless game among the Chinese children. This game helps people strengthen their legs and enhance their concentration.

Shuttlecock kicking provides vigorous physical exercise. Shuttlecock is convenient to play, for only a very small area is needed to kick, and it can be practiced anytime.

In the 1930s, the sport of shuttlecock kicking was in decline for a time. After the establishment of new China, it regained vitality and the first National Shuttlecock Kicking Competition was held in Guangzhou City in 1956. Since the establishment of Shuttlecock Kicking Association in 1987, the national shuttlecock kicking tournament has been held annually. Shuttlecock kicking has gained great favor both at home and

abroad.

3. Kite-Flying

In ancient China kite was known as zhiyuan (paper glide). Originally regarded as a technology, kite also featured prominently many art collections, and was considered to have unique artistic value.

Kite first appeared in the wars of the Spring-Autumn Period. According to historical records, Mo Zi spent three years constructing a wooden kite which failed after one day's flight.

The technology evolved further during the famous historical Chu-Han War of 203 BC-202 BC. The general of the Han troops Zhang Liang ordered his soldiers to fly kites in the heavy fog around the Chu troops led by Xiang Yu. Children played tunes of Chu on flutes. Hearing the melodies, the Chu soldiers began to miss their homes and scattered without fighting the war. Xiang Yu, who had been so powerful and renowned for a time, cut his throat.

During the prosperous Tang Dynasty, when amusements thrived, kites became favorite toys of the people of both court and country. In spring, people took time not just to worship their ancestors but also to take a walk in the countryside to enjoy pastoral life. Making and flying various kites reflected the pleasing mood of the spring. Kite-flying is now believed to be good for health.

The delicate procedure of making kites can be divided into three parts. Firstly, pare and flex bamboo into thin strips for the frame of the kites, making full use of the strength and flexibility of the bamboo. According to different tastes, kites can have shapes as diverse as those of a dragonfly, swallow, centipede or butterfly. Secondly, paste paper onto the framework. The paper is required to be tough and thin with even and long fibers. Some high quality kites are even covered with thin silk. Finally, decorate the kites with colorful chiffon, ribbons and paintings.

While the basic procedure remains the same, styles of kite-making vary in different regions. The kites in the "World Kite Capital" of





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Weifang in Shandong are well known for their exquisite craftsmanship, materials, paintings, shapes and flexible flying movements. A large kite can measure hundreds of meters while the smallest can be put in an envelope. Every year the World Kite Festival is held there, drawing many fans with a passion for flying kites.

Swallow-shaped kites are quite popular in Beijing. Craftsmen fashion them in many different ways. Some are decorated with peonies, bats and other auspicious patterns to bring the owner good fortune. Kites made in Nantong are usually flown with whistles and rings and when they are flying in the sky, they resemble a bevy of birds. Tianjin boasts the largest variety of kites. Kites with soft wings in the shape of insects, goldfish, clouds and even swallows linked with dozens of little swallows are all available, and each of these attractive kites reflects the consummate skills of the craftsman.

4. Music

Music has always been an important aspect of the Chinese culture. Chinese people play music for entertainment, education, self-cultivation, and for religious or civil ceremonies. Throughout history, Chinese achievements in music have been as spectacular as in science and technology.

The ancient musical instruments were constructed of eight kinds of material, i. e. silk, bamboo, wood, stone, metal, clay, gourd, and hide. Pipa, xiao, fou, guqin, dizi, sheng, and guzheng are the major Chinese musical instruments, widely used in the Chinese folk music.

(1) Guzheng Music

Some well-known pieces such as "Yu Zhou Chang Wan" (singing at night on fishing boat), "Gao Shan Liu Shui" (high mountains and flowing water) and "Han Gong Qiu Yue" (autumn moon in the Han palace) are typical guzheng music. Guzheng is a traditional Chinese musical instrument. It belongs to the zither family of string instruments, but should not be confused with guqin, another ancient Chinese zither

but without bridges.

Guzheng has existed since the Warring States Period and became especially popular during the Qin Dynasty. Ancient guzheng had 12 strings. Until 1961, the common guzheng had 18 strings. Later, guzheng was tuned to a pentatonic scale. There are many techniques used in playing guzheng. These techniques can create sounds that can evoke the sense of a cascading waterfall, thunder and even the scenic countryside. Plucking is done mainly by the right hand with four plectra (picks) attached to the fingers. Advanced players may use picks attached to the fingers of both hands. Ancient picks were made of ivory and later from tortoise shells. Guzheng pentatonic scale is tuned to do, re, mi, so and la, but fa and ti can also be produced by pressing the strings to the left of the bridges.

Two broad playing styles (schools) can be identified as the Northern and the Southern, although many traditional regional styles still exist. The Northern style is associated with Henan and Shandong while the Southern style is with Chaozhou and Hakka regions of the eastern Guangdong. Both "Gao Shan Liu Shui" and "Han Gong Qiu Yue" are from the Shandong school, while "Han Ya Xi Shui" (winter crows playing in the water) and "Chushuilian" (lotus blossoms emerging from the water) are major pieces of the Chaozhou and Hakka repertoires.

During the Spring-Autumn Period, there was a man called Yu Boya, a famous music master, who had a good command of the temperament and superb skills in playing guzheng instrument. "Gao Shan Liu Shui" played by Boya was divided into two parts later. One is "Gaoshan" (high mountain) and the other is "Liushui" (flowing water). The piece of music was chosen to represent the Chinese music in a gold-painted bronze record carried on the American space craft in 1977.

(2) Erhu Music

Erhu is a four stringed instrument with a long neck and a rather small sound box. Erhu, also called huqin, was known as xiqin during the





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Song Dynasty. Huqin described in the Yuan Dynasty records was the real forerunner of the modern erhu, having its stem, sound box and pegs made of wood. The sound box can be round, hexagonal or octagonal, with one end covered with snakeskin, sometimes from a python, and the other end, an ornamentally carved sound vent. There are two strings, played with a bamboo bow with horsetail hairs passing behind the strings. The range is normally five octaves, and sometimes four in special cases.

The most widespread piece of erhu music in China is "the Two Springs Reflect the Moon", composed in the mid 20th century by the Wuxi folk artist Ah Bing, also known as Hua Yanjun. This work has two themes, which complement and intertwine, and finally melt into each other subtly and smoothly. Step by step and variation upon variation, the two themes rise and fall effortlessly. The crescendos especially show the composer's steely and unyielding spirit. There is a profound range of feeling in this piece, which incorporates a majestic spirit within a tightly knit composition. Vigorous variations in bowing technique make full use of the five hand positions, resulting a fiercely emotional coloring that expresses the composer's suppressed grief at having tasted the full life bitterness in the old society.

Part Two

Local Culture



Part II

Local Culture

Chapter 11

PROFILE

I. Jiangsu Province

1. Introduction

Jiangsu Province, the most populous province in China, lies in the center of China's east coast, covering 1.06% of the whole country land, and occupying the plains of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. With many rivers and lakes, the Taihu Lake, and the Hongze Lake are the third and fourth largest freshwater lakes in China. Jiangsu has a coastal line of 1,000 km, abundant in marine life. Low mountains and hills can be found on its southwest and north edges. The name "Jiangsu" comes from the combination of the first Chinese character of "Jiangning" and "Suzhou" (two prefectures in the Qing Dynasty), with a short form "Su". The provincial capital is Nanjing.

Situated in the climatical zone of warm-temperate and sub-tropical, Jiangsu has a mild weather, moderate rainfalls and clear-cut seasonal changes. There are frequent "plum rains" between spring and summer, and typhoon rains between late summer and early autumn.

Jiangsu is known as "the Home of Fish and Rice". Thanks to its fertile soil and rich products, Jiangsu ranks high in the country in farm produce of vegetable, oil, cotton, silkworm cocoon, livestock, fowl and fish.

Human beings started to live in the area of Nanjing more than 100,000 years ago and primitive villages appeared in Nanjing and near the Taihu Lake over 6,000 years ago. Smelting and forging bronze wares in Jiangsu already reached a quite high technological level about 3,000 years ago. In the third to the sixth centuries, Nanjing became the economic and cultural center of south China. During the seventh to the 10th centuries, China's economic center moved southward, which brought about sayings like "the sustenance of the country depends on the southeast", with Yangzhou turning out to be the most prosperous city in China. From the 14th to the middle of the 17th centuries, Suzhou, Songjiang and Nanjing became the cradles of capitalism in China. Since then, Jiangsu continued to be at the forefront of economic and social development.

Jiangsu is a communication center in east China. Nanjing and Xuzhou are two rail transfer stations. Passing through the province are the Longhai (Lanzhou-Lianyungang), the Beijing-Shanghai and the Nanjing-Wuhu railways. The completion of the Yangtze River Bridge at Nanjing in 1968 has helped improve transportation between the north and the south. Maritime shipping and inland navigation along the Yangtze River are well-developed. Lianyungang is the principal seaport, and Nanjing and Zhenjiang have large river ports. Jiangsu has a 14,000 km highway network.

Jiangsu has a rich tradition of science and technology and education, and many learned people have originated in this province. For example, Zu Chongzhi, a great scientist in the Southern and Northern Dynasties, Huang Daopo, a textile technology initiator in the Yuan Dynasty, Xu Guangqi, a scientist, Xu Xike, a geographer, in the Ming Dynasty, and Hua Luogeng, a mathematician, and Wu Jianxiong, a physicist, in modern time, are all outstanding figures. In recent years, Jiangsu has adhered to the principle of fostering science, technology and education, and has achieved great success.

2. Major City

Nanjing, Wuxi, Xuzhou, Changzhou, Suzhou, Nantong, Lianyungang, Huai'an, Yancheng, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Taizhou and Suqian are the major cities in Jiangsu.

Nanjing, one of the four most famous Chinese ancient capitals, is an important central city in the region of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. As the political, economic and cultural center of Jiangsu, Nanjing is also one of the leading cities in science and technology as well as education and industry, and is a key transportation and communication hub.

Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou are seated in the south of the Yangtze River Delta or "the Golden Triangle" region in Jiangsu. Suzhou's GDP has ranked as among the leading cities of China for many years. Jiangyin of Wuxi won the first place in the Top 100 Chinese Counties for many years. Changzhou is a burgeoning industrial city.

Zhenjiang, Yangzhou and Taizhou are located on the banks of the Yangtze River. Zhenjiang and Yangzhou, facing each other across the Yangtze River, lie at the convergence of the Yangtze River and the Jinghang (Beijing to Hangzhou) Canal. In recent years, their economic and social developments have gained speed. Taizhou has concentrated on machine building, refrigeration and light industry.

Nantong and Lianyungang have fine ports able to berth giant seacrafts. Their construction industry also enjoys a reputation both at home and abroad. Lianyungang is the east bridgehead of the railway between the Asian and the European Continents named the New Asian and European Continent Bridge.

Xuzhou, Huai'an, Yancheng and Suqian are all positioned in the north of Jiangsu. Xuzhou, a central city in the Huaihai Economic Zone, is an important base of energy resources, raw materials and also a transportation hub of Jiangsu and East China. As a rising industrial city, Huai'an is the key base of grain producing, fishery and salt mining.



Yancheng is a cotton-producing base of Jiangsu and an important producing area of sea prawns. Suqian is situated in the cross-linked area of the coastal and riverside regions and the Xulian Economic Zone. It is an agricultural and fishery producing base.

(1) Nanjing, Ancient Dynastic Capital

Lying in the southwestern part of Jiangsu Province, Nanjing, shaded by luxuriant trees everywhere, is endowed with a favorable geographical location, with the Yangtze River rolling past in the northwest and the Zhongshan Park (Purple Mountain) towering to the southeast.

By order of Sun Quan, the ruler of the Wu Kingdom, the stone city wall was built to crouch behind the Cool Hill (qingliangshan) in the northwest. Built in a strategic place close to the Yangtze River, it was used for naval training by Zhou Yu, a general of the Wu Kingdom. When Zhuge Liang, the prime minister of the Shu Kingdom, came to Nanjing on a mission to the Wu Kingdom, he described the terrain of Nanjing as "Zhongshan curling like a dragon and the stone city crouching like a tiger". Since then, Nanjing has also been referred to as "the Stone City".

Nanjing is one of the six famous ancient capitals of China, the others being Xi'an, Beijing, Luoyang, Kaifeng, and Hangzhou. Starting with the Kingdom of Wu some 1,700 years ago, the dynasties of the Eastern Jin, the Song, the Qi, the Liang, the Chen, the Southern Tang, and the Ming all established their capitals in Nanjing. The present city wall was built between 1368 and 1398 during the reign of the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty.

The Yangtze River Bridge connects the transportation between the north and the south of China. The Qinhuai River, passing through the city, was the waterway for shipping grain to the imperial court during the dynasties which made Nanjing their capital. The west bank of its lower reaches was a major commercial area in ancient times as well as a

residential area for dignitaries and noble families. Today, the Qinhuai River has become a famous tourist attraction.

Built in 1934, the Purple Mountain Observatory is one of the most famous observatories in China. Many asteroids, comets, and other celestial bodies have been discovered here, and many have been named after the Purple Mountain by the international organizations concerned. Some of the astronomical instruments of ancient China kept here are the armillary sphere, celestial globe, and gnomon.

Located on the north bank of the Qinhuai River inside the Zhonghua Gate, a Confucius Temple was built to worship and offer sacrifices to Confucius and is now a market and recreation area.

Now an industrial city with well-developed railway, water, highway, and air communication systems, Nanjing has mining, metallurgy, iron and steel, machinery, automobile manufacturing, synthetic fiber, telecommunication equipment, and petrochemical. As a cultural center and ancient capital, there are quite a few well-preserved historic sites that reflect the Chinese architectural charm, especially in the mausoleum complex.

Sun Yat-sen's Mausoleum, built in a style combining the Chinese and Western architecture, is situated on the south slope of the Purple Mountain outside the Zhongshan Gate, east of Nanjing. Sun Yat-sen, the great forerunner of the Chinese democratic revolution, died in Beijing in 1925 and was buried here in June 1929. Built against the Purple Mountain, the Mausoleum faces a broad semicircular area with a bronze statue of Sun Yat-sen. From the entrance of the Mausoleum, 392 stone steps lead up to the memorial hall, in the center of which is a marble statue of Sun Yat-sen surrounded by bas-reliefs depicting his revolutionary career. Behind the hall is the coffin chamber housing a marble statue of Sun Yat-sen in repose.

Differing from Sun Yat-sen's Mausoleum, the Ming Tombs typically represent the traditional Chinese imperial architectural style. About one



One kilometer west of Sun Yat-sen's Mausoleum lies the tomb of Zhu Yuanzhang who founded the Ming Dynasty. Known to some as the "Beggar Emperor" because of his poor family background and childhood poverty, he ascended the throne in 1368. Construction of his tomb began in 1381 and was completed two years later. But most of its buildings were destroyed in wars. The remaining structures include the front gate, merits and virtues monument, sacred road, imperial stone tablet pavilions, sacrifice halls, treasure city, and the cemetery.

One kilometer east of Sun Yat-sen's Mausoleum is the secluded Soul Valley Temple surrounded by towering pines and is rated as the most scenic place in the Purple Mountain vicinity. Built in 514 and renovated in the Ming Dynasty, the Temple houses a memorial hall to the famous monk Xuan Zang, who once traveled to India on a pilgrimage for Buddhist scriptures. The Temple represents a masterpiece of the ancient Chinese stone and brick architecture, erected entirely without wood or a single nail.

(2) Lianyungang, Outlet to the Sea

Lianyungang, the eastern terminus of the Lanzhou-Lianyungang Railway on the Huanghai (the Yellow Sea) coast in northeast Jiangsu Province, is the nearest outlet to the sea for northwest China and the areas in the lower and middle reaches of the Huanghe River. Located at the northern foot of the Yuntai Mountain, the Lianyungang Port is a natural deep-water harbor where oceangoing ships of up to 10 thousand tons can be docked. The offshore area teems with fish and shrimp, particularly prawns, and is one of China's major fishing areas.

Lying between mountains and sea, Lianyungang is a newly developed city with an area of 740 km² and a population of 390,000. Its charm and mild climate make it a favorite place for sightseeing and summer vacations.

Across the city proper and with a circumference of more than 140 km, the Yuntai Mountain comprises 136 peaks. The 620-m-high Jade

Maid Peak (yunvfeng) is the highest in Jiangsu Province. The Yuntai Mountain has been called the “number one fairyland in East China Sea” for its beautiful sceneries, deep caves, flowers, and fruits. Many places depicted in the Chinese classical novel *The Journey to the West* are said to be based on this mountain’s scenic spots. The flower and fruit mountain and waterfall cave were where Monkey King Sun Wukong lived. The family reunion palace was the family temple of Monk Xuan Zang. And the pig rock was associated with another character from the same novel. The 1,300-year-old Sanyuan Temple, situated on the mountain 400 m above the sea level, is one of the famous ancient monasteries in China.

(3) Xuzhou, Historical Battleground

Xuzhou, called Pengcheng in ancient times, lies at the junction of Jiangsu, Shandong, Henan, and Anhui Provinces and is on the Lanzhou-Lianyungang Railway. A site of many great battles in ancient times, Xuzhou is also where the well-known Huaihai Campaign occurred in modern Chinese history, when the Chinese People’s Liberation Army wiped out more than half a million troops of the Chiang Kai-shek regime at the end of 1948 and the beginning of 1949.

In the southern suburb of the city, the Dragon in Clouds Hill is often blanketed in mist, with cloud rising like a dancing dragon. The Xinghua Temple was built on the hill during the Ming Dynasty, which houses a 10-m-high statue of Sakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism. On the rocks flanking the statue are hundreds of small stone Buddha carved during the Tang and Song Dynasties.

The Yunlong Park and its lake lie at the foot of the hill to the west. At the north foot stands a palace where Emperor Qian Long of the Qing Dynasty once stayed when he made an inspection tour of south China. The palace now serves as a municipal museum which displays many relics unearthed from the tombs of the Western Han Dynasty around Xuzhou, including a jade burial suit sewn with fine silver wire, and more

than 300 stones engraved with scenes depicting fairy tales, legends, and historical events.

(4) Yangzhou, Ancient Cultural Stronghold

Yangzhou, a famous cultural city with a long history, is just across the Yangtze River from Zhenjiang and on the bank of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal. Yangzhou was called Hancheng when it was first built under the order of King of the Wu State, Fu Chai in 486 BC. For years Yangzhou was one of the most prosperous cities in China, and the construction of the Grand Canal made it a pivot of communications and transportations from the Sui and Tang periods to the late Qing Dynasty. After the Grand Canal was initially completed in the Sui Dynasty, Emperor Yang made three inspection tours to Yangzhou.

Yangzhou was also an important port for foreign trades and exchanges with the outside world in ancient China. The prominent Tang Dynasty monk Jian Zhen (688-763) made six attempts to sail from here to Japan for cultural exchanges. The world-renowned traveler Marco Polo once served as an official in Yangzhou.

The Slender West Lake in the southeast part of the city is so named because its long, narrow shape is similar to that of the West Lake in Hangzhou. In the lake park, the winding streams are interconnected, and along their twisting courses are such famous scenic sights as Little Gold Hill, White Pagoda, Five Pavilions Bridge, and Moon Viewer. The Little Gold Hill, originally named Changchun Hill, is an islet in the lake. During the Qing Dynasty, in order to open a water channel connecting the Slender West Lake and the Grand Brightness Temple Monastery, a canal was excavated in the northwest side of the lake. The Five-Pavilion Bridge is situated in the northwestern corner of the lake. Elaborate in its structure and magnificent in its decorations, this bridge possesses the characteristics of architecture of both Northern and Southern China.

(5) Zhenjiang, River Meeting Canal

Zhenjiang, 70 km east of Nanjing, lies on the south bank of the

Yangtze River in central Jiangsu Province. The Beijing-Shanghai Railway passes through the city, and the Grand Canal and the Yangtze River meet here.

An ancient city with a history of 2,500 years, Zhenjiang occupies a strategic position, being screened on three sides by the Jinshan, Beigu, and Jiaoshan Hills (from the west to the east). Although the hills are only about 100 m high, they appear to rise majestically beside the Yangtze. Zhenjiang is especially well-known for its cultural relics.

The Gold Hill Temple was built some 1,600 years ago on the hill where gold had been found. There are several temple buildings on the slope of the hill. On its top the seven-story octagonal wooden Benevolence and Longevity Pagoda commands a panoramic view of Zhenjiang. The Gold Hill is also a popular spot for watching the moon in the Mid-Autumn Festival. About the Gold Hill Temple, there was a legend. A white snake turned into a girl and married a young scholar named Xu Xian. Abbot Fa Hai tried again and again to undermine their marriage. Out of indignation, the white snake summoned a deluge and flooded the Gold Hill Temple.

Built on the Beigu Hill from 258 BC to 256 BC, the Morning Dew Temple was said to be where King Liu Bei of the Kingdom of Shu met with some intrigues during the Three Kingdoms Period. Liu Bei had "borrowed" Jingzhou (today's Jiangling in Hubei Province) from King Sun Quan of the Kingdom of Wu, but showed no intention of returning it. Under a scheme worked out by the Wu general Zhou Yu, Sun Quan invited Liu Bei to Zhenjiang, presumably to marry his sister. But Sun's real intention was to take Liu Bei hostage and force him to give Jingzhou back to Wu. However, Zhou Yu's plot was seen through by the Shu Prime Minister Zhuge Liang, who sent Shu's gallant general Zhao Yun to accompany Liu Bei to Zhenjiang. In the end, Liu Bei succeeded in marrying Sun's sister. Wu not only lost the girl but suffered a heavy military setback in an ensuing battle with Shu.

(6) Wuxi, Pearl of the Taihu Lake

Wuxi is situated beside the Taihu Lake in southeast Jiangsu. The Nanjing-Shanghai Railway and the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal pass through the city. Its industries include textile, meter, metallurgy, machine building, and light industry.

Located on the west bank of the Taihu Lake and 50 km south of Changzhou, the county-level city of Yixing is the home of fine pottery. Hills and water accentuate the city's landscape, and the hilly area to the southwest is studded with wonderful caverns. Pottery has been made here for 5,000 years, renowned during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Yixing turns out more than 6,500 varieties of pottery including terracotta wares, for which it is famous.

In the southwest and on the shore of the Lihu Lake (formerly the Wuli Lake), the famous Liyuan Garden occupies 5.4 hectares, almost half of which is water area. It was said that in the fifth century BC, Fan Li, a senior official of the State of Yue, retired after having helped his master King Gou Jian defeat the State of Wu. He went boating on the Wuli Lake with Xi Shi, a famous beauty, and changed the name of the lake to the Lihu Lake after his own given name. The Liyuan Garden, with its pavilions, corridors, and causeways at the lake side, is exquisitely designed and harmonious in color. Its man-made hills were erected to resemble the shapes of clouds, which are ascended along spiraling, labyrinthine paths.

II. Yangtze Delta

1. Introduction

The Yangtze River Delta, or the Yangtze Delta (YRD), or the Golden Triangle of the Yangtze, generally comprises the triangle-shaped territory of Shanghai, southern Jiangsu and northern Zhejiang Provinces. The area lies at the heart of the region traditionally called Jiangnan (literally, south of the Yangtze River). The Yangtze River

drains into the East China Sea. In modern times the area is the home to an economy, the size of a medium-sized developed country. The urban build-up in the area has given rise to the Yangtze Delta Metropolitan Area, the largest metropolitan area in China, with an area of 99,600 km².

The delta is one of the most densely populated regions on earth, and includes one of the world's largest cities on its banks, Shanghai. Most of the people in this region speak the Wu language (dialect), in addition to the Mandarin (Putonghua). The Wu language is distinctly different from any other dialect of China and the Mandarin.

The Yangtze River Delta was the location of the Majiabang Neolithic Culture from around 5000 BC–3000 BC. In late Neolithic times, the delta was the site of the Liangzhu Culture (3400 BC–2250 BC). From the mid to the late Tang Dynasty, the delta emerged as an important agricultural, handicraft, industrial and economic center. During the mid and late Ming Dynasty, the first capitalism bud of East Asia appeared and developed in this area. It continued its development throughout the rest of the Qing Dynasty. Since the 19th century, the delta has been the most populous area in China, and one of the most densely populated areas of the world.

The Yangtze River Delta has a marine monsoon subtropical climate, and it is generally warm and humid. Winter temperatures can drop as low as -10°C, however, and even in springtime, large temperature fluctuations often occur.

The area is home to a very extensive transportation network that includes railways, airways, waterways and expressways. The area has one of the highest private vehicle ownership in the country. The region is served by some of the country's largest seaports, and the Port of Shanghai is a case in point. The region has the following major airports, Shanghai Hongqiao Airport and Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Nanjing Lukou International Airport, Hangzhou Xiaoshan International



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Airport, Ningbo Lishe International Airport, Guangfu (Suzhou) Airport, Shuofang (Wuxi) Airport, and Changzhou Airport. Also in the region are quite a few modern bridges. The main bridges include the world's longest sea-cross bridge, the Donghai Bridge. The Hangzhou Bay Bridge, the Jiangyin Suspension Bridge, the Runyang (Zhenjiang-Yangzhou) Bridge, and the Sutong (Suzhou-Nantong) Bridge are also in this area.

The Yangtze River is referred to as a golden channel. As an important port city, Shanghai is the pivotal point for the prosperity and development of the whole Yangtze River Delta. The cities around Shanghai, such as Suzhou, are places where many overseas investors are concentrated, so the future development of the Yangtze River Delta appears likely to expand.

2. Development

The area of the Yangtze River Delta incorporates 20 relatively developed municipalities in three provinces. The Delta can be generally used to refer to the entire region extending as far north as Lianyungang in Jiangsu Province and as far south as Taizhou in Zhejiang Province. The region includes some of the fastest-growing economies in China.

The strong growth of Shanghai and its satellite cities over the past decade is in no small measure due to the coordinated efforts of the 15 cities within the delta. All of the other 14 cities in the Delta view Shanghai as the regional economic heart, and are aware of the advantages they can gain from shortening the travelling time between the cities.

Cities within the Delta are also coming to realize that closer cooperation on environmental protection issues will ensure a win-win situation for all. Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Shanghai have reached a consensus on protecting the environment with regard to the repair and maintenance projects of the Taihu Lake, the Yangtze River and the Qiantang River. Similarly, coordinated development of their rich tourism resources

translates into a prosperous future.

With Shanghai leading the race, the Yangtze River Delta, an economic giant, is China's strongest economic region, and its economic prospects also make it the most appealing region to investors both at home and abroad. This is expected to continue as globalization pushes down transportation costs, and economic integration magnifies the benefits of industrial clustering and economy of scale. The robust growth of the cities in the Delta over the past few years is also showing that economic integration drives regional growth.

With only 2.1 percent of the whole China's territory, the Delta region produces 22.5% of its gross domestic product (GDP), contributes 31.5% to the national fiscal income and attracts 35% of all foreign investments to the country, which all make the Delta the major international gateway of Asia-Pacific region, the advanced manufacturing base of the world and the world-class city group with strong international competitiveness.

With a population totaling 120 million and an advantageous geographical position, the Delta is home to the seaport city of Shanghai, Zhejiang Province, and Jiangsu Province. The two provinces are also noted for their export-oriented industries. As well, China plans to actively develop a service industry in the Yangtze River Delta.

3. Metropolises

Shanghai, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Suzhou, and Ningbo can be regarded as the urban cores in the Yangtze River Delta. More broadly speaking, besides Shanghai, the delta has in Jiangsu Province, Suzhou, Wuxi, Nantong, Changzhou, Zhenjiang, Yangzhou, and Taizhou; and in Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou, Ningbo, Shaoxing, Jiaxing, Huzhou, Zhoushan, Taizhou, and Jinhua. Among them, Shanghai and Hangzhou are two neighboring metropolises.

(1) Shanghai

Shanghai is the largest city in China and the center of the



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continental coastline as well as the gateway of the Yangtze River Valley. Being in the middle of China's coastline from the north to the south, Shanghai enjoys the advantages of geographical position, the East China Sea in the east, the Hangzhou Bay in the south, being bounded by Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces in the west and adjoining the Yangtze estuary in the north.

Shanghai is of typical subtropical marine monsoon climate with four distinct seasons, enough sunshine and ample rainfall. The climate is mild and humid. Spring and autumn are short while summer and winter are long with an average annual temperature of about 16°C.

Often called Hu or Shen for short, Shanghai is one of China's largest industrial bases and trade centers as well as one of the most important commodity distribution centers in the Yangtze River Delta. The Yangtze River Delta was known to have been inhabited since the period of the Songze Culture 5,000 years ago, and Shanghai, until relatively recently, consisted of only several fishing villages around the mouth of the Yangtze River. It wasn't until the 19th century that it began to grow into a major city.

Located at the mouth of the Yangtze River, Shanghai is now the largest seaport city in China and is also the world's largest cargo port. As the most important industrial center in China, Shanghai makes the largest contribution to the automobile and steel industries in China. Shanghai is an international center of economy, finance, trade and transportation. Especially in financial regard, Shanghai boasts itself as the city with the most domestic and overseas financial organizations in China. Commodity, metal, grain, oil, transportation and stock exchange, foreign currency exchange, foreign-funded bank, insurance and credit company have been mushrooming in Shanghai. Shanghai plays an important role in the mainland China's social and economic development. With the goal to becoming an international modernized metropolis, Shanghai is taking the responsibility of facing abroad,

serving the rest of China and cooperating with other cities in the Yangtze River Delta.

Shanghai has now planned eight directions for advanced production of complete plant development, including power station equipment and electricity transmission and distribution, transportation, microelectronic appliance, key specialized equipment, energy resource, environmental protection and automated control. The Shanghai Municipal Government encourages corporations to strengthen international exchanges and collaborations to accelerate the technological progress.

(2) Hangzhou

Hangzhou, known as "Paradise on Earth", is an international tourist city and one of the seven ancient capitals in China. It has been experiencing great changes in terms of its local economy, and city visage with the rebuilding of the old town area, redevelopment around the West Lake, and the westward expansion of the West Lake. Eight districts, three county-level cities, and two counties are under its jurisdiction.

Hangzhou is famed for the Qiantang River and the West Lake. The literary figures of the past dynasties left their frequently cited poems praising the mountains and waters in Hangzhou. "The West Lake may be well compared to Xizi, the ancient beauty, no matter how she adorns herself, lightly or heavily."

Throughout history, Hangzhou has won many honors like "The City of Civilization", "The Land Abundant in Fish and Rice", "The Home of Silk", and "The Capital of Tea". Marco Polo, the Italian traveler, once applauded Hangzhou as "the most splendid and luxurious city in the world". As a city situated on the southern wing of the Yangtze River Delta, Hangzhou has been a prosperous place for its commerce and trade throughout the ages. Currently, its comprehensive economic strength ranks the second among all provincial capitals in China.

Chapter 12

GATEWAY TO SUZHOU

Suzhou, one of the key cities in the Yangtze River Delta, is a renowned cultural, historic and tourist city. The city is located in the southeast of Jiangsu Province, bordering Shanghai on the east, Zhejiang Province on the south, the Taihu Lake in the west and the Yangtze River in the north.

Suzhou covers an area of 8,488 km², of which the city proper covers 1,650 km². Under its jurisdiction are the cities of Zhangjiagang, Changshu, Taicang, Kunshan, Wujiang, and the districts of Wuzhong, Xiangcheng, Pingjiang, Canglang, Jinchang, Huqiu, the Suzhou Industrial Park, and the Suzhou New District.

The fabric of the city's history is resplendent with its many strands of local history and culture. It is a regional centre with its own special flavors, histories, and opportunities for cultural and economic activities. "Up in heaven is paradise, down below, are Suzhou and Hangzhou." Suzhou, while actively engaged in modern reform and industrial development, retains much of its ancient character.

Around the city of Suzhou are rich rice fields, boasting a strong agricultural sector, including silk and cotton production. Aside from traditional textile industries, Suzhou is now a major centre for new industries with substantial foreign investments. The ancient core of urban Suzhou is flanked by two industrial parks, a Sino-Singaporean

project known as the Suzhou Industrial Park in the east, and the Suzhou New District in the west. To the west, the Taihu Lake has developed into a large integrated system of resorts. Suzhou is a locus for tourists, to whom many of the scenic areas in and around the city are well known.

I . Historical Briefing

A history of nearly 2,500 years has witnessed so many changes, with the rises and falls of all those dynasties all gone into the past like the waters that have flowed away. Fortunately, the ancient city has been kept as a whole in its original site, with all the historical relics telling its long story. The number of cultural heritages of Suzhou is only second to the time-honored cities of Beijing and Xi'an.

The early Kingdom of Wu was mentioned in the Chinese annals from the seventh century BC onwards. Suzhou people trace their history back to the end of the Shang Dynasty around 1100 BC. When Taibo and Zhongyong, both princes of the Zhou, fled from China's northwest to the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, they were elected as leaders of the local people, laying the foundation of the ancient Wu State. That is why Suzhou was originally called the Wu.

The city, at that time, had a circumference of 23.5 km, with walls and a moat and eight gates, traces of which can still be found today. Suzhou itself was founded as the Wu capital in the sixth century BC by the order of King Helu, who was supposedly buried near the Tiger Hill, his tomb lying under the deep crevice of the sword pond. In 514 BC, Helu's Prime Minister, Wu Zixu, was ordered to reconstruct the capital, and after divinations and inspections of water and soil conditions, a site was chosen and the city was completed in 508 BC. This was the beginning of the city as it stands today.

The Kingdom of Wu absorbed some aspects of the evolving culture as early as the Zhou Dynasty. During the Spring-Autumn Period, the

Wu Kingdom had become one of the larger outer states to the south of the so-called inner states (the *zhongguo*). This made it a competitor of the Kingdom of Chu. In 473 BC, the Wu was attacked by its southern neighbor, the Yue, a state that might well have spoken a language much the same as that native to the Wu, although the Yue was not as sinicized. The territory that had been the Wu, was, in turn, taken from the Yue by the Chu forces. Still later, like the rest of the Chu domain, the Wu lands were incorporated into the Qin Empire.

Throughout its history, Suzhou has seen many changes, including its name. The present name was adopted in 589 during the Sui Dynasty. But it has remained at the same site and retained its original construction for more than 2,500 years.

With its grid structure of roads and waterways, ancient Suzhou used to be one of the largest cities in China. Records indicate that its main avenue was 45 m wide and its main canal 38 m wide.

The Pingjiang Map, inscribed on a stone tablet that dates back to the Song Dynasty, preserved the layout of the then Suzhou in an accurate and artistic way. On the map, city walls, government offices, markets, rivers, bridges, Buddhist pagodas, temples, pavilions, granaries, military camps, towers, gardens and lakes can all be identified. Even scenic spots outside the city are included on the map. The city is water-oriented, with the Yangtze River to its north, the Taihu Lake to the west and the Grand Canal going through it.

Suzhou was regarded as the city of *zhuangyuan*. The strictness and popularity featured basic education of Suzhou in early times. *Sishu* (private school) and *shexue* were the elementary educational units in the past time. There were different types of *sishu*. Children from age 5 to 12 could attend a *sishu* for their basic education. The first step was word-learning, then *Baijiaxing* (a hundred family names), *Qianziwen* (a thousand character classic), and *Sanzijing* (three-character classic). The final step was to learn Four Books and Five Classics. After the basic

education, some top scoring ambitious youngsters would go on to practice bagu (eight-legged essay) in preparation for the imperial civil service examination.

During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Suzhou already had between 700 and 800 schools and dozens of academies. These institutions of learning helped to nurture not only generations of talented personages in all areas of life, but also a great number of zhuangyuan, the people who received the top scores in the imperial civil service examination held in the presence of the emperor. Throughout history, there have been 50 zhuangyuan from Suzhou, of whom, 45 were selected for their academic prowess and five for their martial arts ability.

Of the 112 zhuangyuan in the Qing Dynasty, about 24 came from Suzhou. No wonder that some people call Suzhou a city of zhuangyuan. Among those zhuangyuan, Weng Tonghe from Changshu is a person that deserves mentioning. After winning the title of zhuangyuan, Weng served as teacher for two successful emperors, Tongzhi and Guangxu, enjoying the status of prime minister. During the palace reform in 1898, he recommended Kang Youwei and other reformers to the emperor and played a significant role in the movement. Beside Weng Tonghe, his nephew Weng Zengyuan, and calligrapher, Lu Runxiang and his great grandfather Lu Kengtang all won the title of zhuangyuan.

Aside from zhuangyuan, there were others who have taken a place in history as great masters of literature and arts, even though they did not attend or win high places in the imperial civil service examinations. If the number of zhuangyuan in Suzhou seemed impressive, those who carried the title of jinshi, winners of the highest level of imperial examinations were even more numerous.

II. Achievement

1. Agriculture

The original complex Chinese character “su” is comprised of the

characters for fish and rice, which stands for a famous land of fish and rice. Suzhou is one of the first rice plantation areas in China, and its history of rice plantation can be dated back to 6,000 years ago.

In the Tang and Song Dynasties, with many grand water conservancy projects and the rapid improvements of plantation techniques, there appeared a wide-spread saying "when Suzhou and Huzhou city ripen, the whole country will have no worry about food supply". Suzhou at that time was worthy of its fine name as "a rice barn".

In the inland areas, dyeing and polder had drained the swamps and decreased the saline content of the soil, so that the fields were suitable for rice. A network of canals and drainage systems was constructed, with high embankments to protect fields and sluice gates to control the water for irrigation. The Kingdom produced a superabundance of rice and exported it to a number of other states. Silk was another celebrated product of the area. Sericulture using mulberry trees grown on the embankments was a local agricultural sideline.

However, during the Ming and the Qing Dynasties, an abrupt change took place. Planting commercial crops was greatly encouraged. Historical records show that in the Ming Dynasty cotton was planted on over 50 percent of cultivated land in Taicang County, while in the Qing Dynasty, the rate went up to 60-70 percent. During that period, more wasteland was brought into cultivation, the production per mu kept increasing, and Suzhou was no longer referred to as a "rice barn". The former rice barn turned out to be a plantation base of commercial crop like mulberry and cotton. Silk weaving contributed to the development of handicraft industries centered on Suzhou.

2. Commerce and Business

After the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the economic center moved to the southern regions along the Yangtze River and the Huai River. Thanks to the construction of the Grand Canal, Suzhou burst into refreshed vigor and energy. The completion and opening of the Grand

Canal in the late Sui Dynasty solved the problem of separation between political center and economic center. Therefore, free and unobstructed networks of watercourses helped to make Suzhou transportation and communication with the outside convenient. Excellent traffic avenues of both water and land made Suzhou a major traffic hub connecting to the north the Yangtze River and Huai River and south to Jiaxing and Hangzhou. The population boom and the big stride in economy greatly strengthened Suzhou's position as an economy-centered municipality.

Although founded in 514 BC, it was not until the Sui and Tang Dynasties that Suzhou became an important commercial centre of southern China. From the Ming Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty, Suzhou became a highly flourishing economic center. Changmen city Gate was granted the name of "The Number One Wharf in China". The commercial district around Panmen Gate boasted of three major economic bands starting from Changmen Gate to the Maple Bridge, the Tiger Hill and Xumen Gate. The Maple Bridge was one of the most famous grain distribution centers in the southern region of the Yangtze River. Shantang Street along the foot of the Tiger Hill was portrayed as the "gold basin"; while it appears that Xumen Gate was only second to Changmen Gate judging from the old saying "Gold Changmen Gate, Silver Xumen Gate". With steady economic development and mass immigration of businessmen from the outside, the suburban commercial district gradually caught up with the urban commercial district and integrated.

In the Qing Dynasty, the "land of fish and rice" became short of grain and food, and the Taihu Lake area was reported to be the biggest food importing area. Rice importation boomed, and over 200 rice shops were opened. Especially around the Maple Bridge, seven li west of Changmen Gate, there emerged the most famous rice and bean collection and distribution center in the southern region of the Yangtze River.



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Suzhou's severe insufficiency of rice was because of two reasons. For one thing, with the development of industry and commerce, a number of new towns and counties were established, bringing about a denser population and greater demands for food. For another, the total amount of grain production decreased with the conversion of rice plantations to the cultivation of mulberry, cotton, vegetable and fruit. The food provision from Hunan, Sichuan, Jiangxi and Anhui Provinces continued its growth. At the same time, businessmen who brought in grain production to Suzhou shipped out large varieties of the locally made handicrafts to their food suppliers and then to the whole country. Anyway, this change in economic organization fitted in well with the reputation of Suzhou as a highly advanced industrial and commercial center.

The boom of rice trade around the Maple Bridge area not only helped the growth of Suzhou, but was indicative of the adaptation of agriculture to the economy in Suzhou. In the 1700s, Suzhou was the most flourishing industrial and commercial city in China. 240 years ago, court artist Xu Yang completed a 13-m-long painting, which gave a complete and delicate account of the civilization and charming customs of Suzhou. A famous poet in the Ming Dynasty Tang Yin in his poem about the Changmen Gate gave a lifelike account of Suzhou, "Suzhou is a pastoral land, while its Changmen Gate seems grander piles of gold, businessmen shuttling back and fro, prosperous pictures embarrassed the most excellent artist to paint it true to life."

During the periods of the Ming and the Qing Dynasties, silk weaving industry developed rapidly, thus bringing about commercial prosperity. Businessmen from all walks of life to manufacture or supply in Suzhou the materials needed for production in the increasing development of silk weaving industry. Businessmen from all over the country flooded into Suzhou to purchase silk, satin, and cotton cloth, and meanwhile they brought with them specialties from other regions,

thus a large-scale commodity circulation took its shape.

3. Finance and Trade

By the 19th century Suzhou was a key example of early capitalist development, bringing together capitals, resources, labors, and trade routes. Up to 20,000 workers were employed in the short-term market of dying workshops in Suzhou. It was in Suzhou that bank notes were used in lieu of silver as a medium of exchange. They became part of a wider trading system in response to shortages of silver in China after 1830.

Having developed in the Ming and the Qing Dynasties, Suzhou became one of the biggest industrial and commercial cities in the southeast of China. Financial institutions have long been established in Suzhou. The pawn trade can be dated back to the Southern Dynasty. National banking took place in the Ming Dynasty and flourished in the Qing Dynasty. The southeastern area of China was the wealthiest land at that time, while Suzhou's wealth was matchless in the area.

Suzhou's pawn trade took the leading position in southeast China, and it was recorded that there existed 14 pawn shops in the Wu County of Suzhou in 1744. Silver was the basic currency in the Ming and the Qing Dynasties. In daily life, people bought major foods with silver and minor items with paper money. As a result, silver shops dealing in silver casting took shape.

By 1229, Suzhou was one of the great cities of China, with a likely population of 300,000, rising towards 500,000 in the 16th century. Suzhou became a major warehousing city, rivaling Canton and Wuhan. Located near the nexus of the Yangtze River and Grand Canal, it therefore partook of the great flows of trade which linked the east-west trade of the Yangtze Basin and the north-south traffic along the coast regions. While the Grand Canal remained open, Suzhou was a crucial link in the life-line connecting Hangzhou and Beijing. Shipment of goods through the region of Suzhou included a wide range of items.

Rice flowed out of the rich rice producing area, much of it going north in later imperial times to Beijing. This rice tribute contributed in large part to the barge activity along the Grand Canal, Suzhou being the main regional collection point. Yet at times rice was imported in the lower Yangtze area from other provinces, largely due to three reasons. Population growth made parts of east-central China the most densely populated areas in the country. The imperial government forced rice exports as part of tax revenues to Beijing. A larger proportion of farmers in east-central China than elsewhere were engaged in commercial agriculture of products other than grain. Yet local trade networks developed rapidly during the Qing period as well. Within a radius of some 50 miles as many as 40 daily markets or towns with warehouses and stores were located. In the 18th century Suzhou had a branch of the Jianghai guan, the river and sea customs service, allowing it to be involved in regional and international trade.

III. Development

1. Industry

Being on the sea coast, Suzhou commenced its sea communication in very early times. Since the Tang and Song Dynasties, there have been friendly contacts between the city and the outside world, which expanded the vision of its people and enriched its culture. Now, the people of Suzhou have lost no time in seizing opportunities to accelerate their economic development, and have written a new chapter of modernization. The protection of the ancient town of Suzhou, the development and construction of the Suzhou Industrial Park and the Suzhou Hi-tech Development Zone are not only brilliant achievements in the coordinated economic growth of Suzhou but have also added vigor to the thousand-year-old city and fresh cultural impetus for future development.

Traditionally, Suzhou has long been a centre of major textile

industries, including silk and cotton production, as well as embroidery, paper and handicraft production. Aside from these traditional industries, Suzhou has now consciously planned to embrace new industries and widen its industrial bases. Suzhou is an open economic zone, and therefore can benefit directly from the open-door trade policy and opportunities for foreign investment. This includes development in machine building, electronics, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, building materials, and metallurgy.

The investment plan for Suzhou has largely been facilitated through the creation of two large industrial parks, the Suzhou Industrial Park in the east and the Suzhou New District in the west.

The Suzhou Industrial Park was launched in 1994 as a major project bringing Singaporean and other international investments into the region. The Park, a joint project run by a Singaporean consortium and a group of Chinese companies, originally owning 65 percent and 35 percent respectively, was to be completed over a 20-year period. After several years, the Singaporean government reduced their holding to 35% with China now having a stake of 65%. Some 130 companies have committed themselves to setting up in the Park, with companies such as Harris Semiconductor, Hitachi, Sumitomo, Samsung, RJR Nabisco, Black & Decker, Advanced Micro, Vickers, Solectron, L'Oreal and ZF Friedrichshafen Ag having been attracted to join the project.

The Suzhou New District established in 1992 has drawn more than 320 foreign-funded enterprises from 30 countries and regions. Major overseas corporations have been involved, including Motorola, Acer, Philips, Fuji Film, Logitech Inc., Sony Chemicals Suzhou Co. Ltd, and Schindler Co. Ltd of Austria. Operations include electronic information, machinery, electronics, bio-medicine, machine-building, optics, textile, and hi-tech industries.

2. Commercial Center

Over the years three main commercial districts have gradually been

formed in Suzhou proper. Being Suzhou's most thriving business center, the Guanqianjie Commercial District evolved from the Suzhou China-made Goods Market set up in September 1933. The most famous restaurants and stores are Songhelou Restaurant, Huangtianyuan Pastry Store, Lugaojian Cooked Meat Store, Caizhizhai Candy Store, Shengchuyang Salted and Cured Meat Store and Qiantaixiang Silk Fabric Store. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, large and medium-sized department stores have been built here, such as Suzhou Number One Department Store, Suzhou Industrial Product Market, Suzhou Food Market, Hualian and Changfa Department Stores.

Situated just outside the gate to the Changmen, the Stone Road has been a traditional prosperous market. Early in 1912, the road was lined with over 320 various general stores, restaurants and luncheonettes, the most famous ones being Zhaotianlu Teahouse, Dujia Laosan Meat Store and Mutaishan Herbal Medicine Shop. Since 1979, a number of commercial buildings have been located or expanded in the district, such as Xinhua Restaurant and department stores with names of the Stone Road, the Hong Kong-Shanghai, the Asia and the Venice. The famous Stone Road Small Commodity Market has special appeal for customers with its rich, colorful small commodities.

Located at the juncture of the city of Suzhou and the New Area of Wuzhong District and the intersection of the Sujiahu (Suzhou-Jiaxing-Shanghai) Highway and the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, the Nanmen (South Gate) Commercial District is a fast developing business quarter which came into being after 1949. In 1993, the original Nanmen Commercial Building was expanded and renamed the Suzhou Commercial Building with a floor area of 13,800 m². The Taihua Building has a designed floor area of 50,000 m². Adding to the prosperity of the Nanmen District are the brisk markets at Nanmen Xi'er Road, selling agricultural products, wholesale small commodities, as well

as three large wholesale markets selling eggs, aquatic products and fruit.

3. Open Economy

A metropolis of industry and commerce in the south-eastern coast of China since ancient times, Suzhou has always been a hub for merchants, who as the Tang poet Bai Juyi described over 1,000 years ago: "... has a population greater than Yangzhou Prefecture and more than half of the shops in Chang'an, the capital". The classic novel *A Dream of the Red Mansion* written 200 years ago set the beginning of the story in the Changmen Gate, a prosperous area outside the city of Suzhou, describing it as a place of "prime social congregation of the rich and cultured".

Suzhou today is an open city with developing economies and frequent exchanges with the outside world. It has been officially declared as part of "the coastal economic open zone of the Yangtze Delta". A comprehensive industrial system has taken shape, and there has been tremendous expansion in foreign trades and international economic cooperations. Currently, Suzhou has sister cities in Italy, Canada, Japan and the United States of America.

Traditionally, the city of Suzhou has been one of the nation's important suppliers of goods for export. After 1988, the continuous efforts to restructure the city's overall economy have led to the diversification of the types of foreign trades and the utilization of foreign funds on an unprecedented scale. New types of foreign trades have expanded rapidly, also on the increase are the volumes of direct capital investments, the amount of loans from international financial organizations and foreign governments, the scale of advanced technological equipments from foreign companies. Now, Suzhou ranks the second, after Shanghai, among the 13 large and medium-sized cities along the Yangtze River Delta in terms of the supply of merchandise for export, the foreign trade volumes, and the number of enterprises with foreign funds, the amount of contracted foreign investments and overseas



representative offices and subsidiaries.

With the introduction of considerable foreign funds, advanced technology and managerial expertise, new blood has been injected into Suzhou enterprises that are usually short of funds and whose profitability has been chronically affected by their relatively outdated technology and management. To date, many internationally respected companies have set up joint ventures with their Chinese partners in Suzhou, such as America's General Motors, DuPont and the Warner's, Japan's Panasonic, Sharp and Toyota, the Netherlands' Philips, Germany's Siemens, France's Alsthon. The list of joint ventures goes on and on, and continues to grow.

A series of preferential policies have been set out to encourage foreign investors to lease state-owned land for a certain period (at most 50-70 years) in the city's Economic and Technological Development Zone and set up new operations there. Kunshan Economic and Technological Development Zone is the first of its kind in Jiangsu Province. The Zone has so far attracted many companies from America, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan of China to locate their subsidiaries there. Now, within the Zone, there already exist five industrial parks developed by foreign investors, such as the Japanese Industrial Park and the American Industrial Park.

Up to now, there are about 39 real estate development companies which have invested \$234 million (\$116 million from foreign investors) in about 49.41 hectares of land. Among those projects are three tourist holiday resorts located at the Taihu Lake, Kunshan City and the Fenghu Lake in Wujiang City.

The openness of Suzhou's economy lies not only in the city's embrace of foreign funds, technology and management, but also in its export of skilled work force, sometimes funds and technology, and its overseas subsidiaries. There have been hundreds of overseas offices and subsidiaries of Suzhou companies with locations in over 60 countries and

regions. The significance of those offices and subsidiaries is manifold. Through them, many Suzhou companies have obtained larger export orders, and local manufacturers have found more foreign partners who would like to provide necessary capital and technology mutually beneficial to both sides.

4. Development Zone and Satellite City

The construction of development zones is part of the local government's important strategic plans to strengthen the city's economy. At present, the development zones in Suzhou comprise five state-level zones and nine provincial-level zones, namely, Suzhou Industrial Park, Suzhou New District, Kushan Economic and Technological Development Zone, Zhangjiagang Bonded Zone Park, Suzhou Taihu Lake State's Holiday Resort; Changshu Economic Development Zone, Zhangjiagang Development Zone, Taichang Economic Development Zone, Taichang Port of Liujia Development Zone, Wuzhong Economic Development Zone, Wujiang Economic Development Zone, Suzhou Xushuguan Economic Development Zone, Kunshan Tourist's Resort, and Wujiang Fenhu Lake Tourist's Resort.

The satellite cities under the jurisdiction of Suzhou all share their reputations in China. Changshu, honored as "the fortunate land of the south of the Yangtze River" in the northern part of Suzhou, covers an area of 1,264 km², which boasts a 3,000-year history of civilization and has won the reputation of "the National Historical & Cultural City" and "the International Garden City" issued by the UN. Changshu is a modern port city with beautiful landscapes integrating commerce, trade, industry and tourism together. There are in Changshu about 13,000 foreign and domestic industrial enterprises in light industries, textiles, chemicals, steels, energies, electronics and new materials.

The first development zone in Suzhou is Kunshan Economic and Technological Development Zone set up in 1985. Kunshan is located in the eastern part of Suzhou. Investors from 55 countries and regions



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have established over 4,800 projects with registered foreign capitals of more than USD 17.5 billion. 52 projects are run by the 24 of the world's top 500 enterprises. Kunshan is ranked number three by the Taiwan Electrical and Electronic Manufactures Association of the most praise-worthy cities regarding investment environment on the mainland. Kunshan has successively won the following titles: the Nation's Cleanest City, the Model City in Environmental Protection, and the Nation's Outstanding City for Tourism, the Nation's Forest Garden City and the City with Nation's Ecological Demonstration Zones. Kunshan has achieved the first place in the comprehensive assessment of the social economy for the nation's county-level cities in China for the past two years.

With an area of 999 km², Zhangjiagang lies in the northern part of Suzhou. Zhangjiagang Port, with deep water close to the bank, ice-free and non-alluvial, has 51 berths that can handle 10,000 ton, or above, ships. With 18 international shipping lines opened to Europe, America and Southeast Asia, its annual cargo handling capacity has exceeded 100 million tons. Zhangjiagang Bonded Zone is the only inland river port bonded zone in China. By 2006, more than 1,300 foreign investment enterprises had set up industrial parks and zones.

Located in the southernmost part of Suzhou, Wujiang has now ranked the ninth in the top 100 counties and county-level cities in terms of the economic and social comprehensive index system in the country. The three main industries are IT, silk and textiles, cable and optical equipment, and the three feature industries include color armor plates, woolen garments and sewing machine manufacturing, and the eight growing industries cover colorful metal processing, new type of construction material, and elevator manufacturing.

Taicang is located in the eastern part of Suzhou, covering an area of 823 km². Taicang is an important developing coastal harbor for container shipping, ore and liquefied petroleum gas. Taicang has

recently formed some leading industries, such as logistics, electric power, petrol-chemistry, paper-making and fine machinery, and has built the biggest advanced lubricating oil production base at home. Taicang also manufactures the most bicycles for eastern China and has the highest representation of German companies in China.



Chapter 13

SUZHOU CLOSE UP

The layout of Suzhou has a close relationship with water. The criss-cross network circulation of watercourses not only connects Suzhou city and other counties around, but also makes the city a key position for transportation from the north to the south. The network of watercourses was the most efficient, economical means of commodity circulation.

Quite different from the other cities and towns, the water system in Suzhou wasn't naturally formed, but rather manually constructed with careful planning and organization on a large scale. The poet in the Tang Dynasty Du Xunhe expressed his image of Suzhou in a poem, "If you come to Suzhou, you may find every family living by the river. There are numerous bridges in this waterside city." Of course, what Du Xunhe depicted was just the pastoral scenery before any economic development. The layout of Suzhou city gradually took on a new look. As the economy changed, there appeared five types of streets and lanes, namely a street along a river, river without road, two streets along a river, lane and commercial street.

Originally, the city had eight land gates and eight water gates. The line of rivers and canals that formed an inner moat for the city can be easily identified. This sense of mingled past and present, of the ancient and the briskly modern side-by-side may disorient the expectations of tourists. However, Suzhou landscapes provide a more realistic sense of

contemporary China, where the ancient and the post-modern are often linked together. It is possible to wander along an ancient street lined with a canal hundreds of years old, and see an Internet pub where people pay a few yuan to surf the net or play their favorite computer games. To the citizens of Suzhou, there is nothing incongruous about this picture.

Ancient counties and towns around the city also bore the similar features. The city and town layout fits in with the economic demands of the city. Within a 100 km of Suzhou, there are dozens of historical towns and villages, many of which are nationally famous, such as Zhouzhuang, Mudu, Dongshan, Tongli, Luzi, and Shengze. Some of them have been listed in China's Ten Best Historical Townships or Historical and Cultural Townships of Jiangsu Province.

Blessed with beautiful scenery of hills and waterscapes of south China, the old city of Suzhou resembles an art gallery. Nurtured by the Wu culture and the physical environment of the Taihu Lake basin, Suzhou's natural and cultural attractions are peculiarly elegant.

Suzhou is beautiful for its harmonious integration with its surrounding mountains and rivers. And just from this single aspect, we cannot help admiring the adept ingenuity of our ancestor's craving for integration of nature, site and man. Suzhou boasts numerous scenic spots, and historical sites. All these add a rich flavor of civilization and culture after many a year's harmony of man with nature.

I. Suzhou, Venice in the Orient

The ancient city of Suzhou, starting from the Kingdom of Wu, had eight land gates and eight water gates. The water gates were the Changmen, the Xumen, the Panmen, the Shemen, the Loumen, the Jinmen, the Pingmen and the Qimen Gate.

The land gates and water gates stood side by side. Despite wars and the passing of 2,500 years, the Panmen, the Xumen, and the

Changmen Gates have survived to the present day. The existent defensive city walls, gates, walled ambush areas and watchtowers of Suzhou, as component parts of the old city Suzhou, bear exceptional testimony to a millennia-long cultural tradition and authentic architectural ensemble. The old city of Suzhou was laid out uniquely in a double chessboard fashion with alleyways and streets running parallel with canals.

1. Panmen Gate

Situated in the southwestern corner of the city, the Panmen Gate was called the Coiled Dragon Gate in ancient times. Remains of the wall, watchtower, walled ambush area, roadway and land and water gates still exist. It is an important cultural site of the old city of Suzhou.

2,500 years old, this city gate is the most completely preserved part of the ruins of the ancient city of Suzhou. Stepping onto the top of the gate, you can see the Women Gate Bridge and the Auspicious Light Pagoda, which are popularly known as the Three Scenes of the Panmen Gate.

The construction of the Panmen Gate began in the first year of the reign of Helu. It has been renovated and rebuilt many times through the ages. The present Panmen Gate was rebuilt in the 11th year of the reign of Zhizheng at the end of the Yuan Dynasty and renovated during the following Ming and Qing Dynasties. With water and land gates towering side by side, the Panmen Gate looks very imposing. The land gate consists of double gates, one inner and one outer, with city walls forming a square terrace of about 20 m long on each side. Once the invading enemies were seduced into this area, they would be like turtles locked in a jar. The gate tower we see today was rebuilt in 1986, looking magnificent with flying eaves and up-turned corners. Equipped with all kinds of facilities needed in ancient defensive battles, such as shooting holes, sluice gateways and lookout towers, one can visualize how ancient Suzhou might have been.

The Panmen Gate is a fortress suitable for ancient water-towns in the southern part of China. The two water gates adjoining the land gates are the only water cross linking the inside and outside of the southwestern corner of the city. Built with granite, each of them has enough room for two boats to pass side by side. At each gate there is a huge sluice gate to control the water flow. It is easy to imagine the vibrant scenes of the Panmen Gate enlivening the Great Canal, as horses and carriages with flags fluttering entered and exited the city, while at the same time boats were paddling through the water gates.

The Wumen Gate Bridge, once named a gateway to the Wu, is located on the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal. The construction of this bridge began in the Northern Song Dynasty, but the bridge seen today was rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty. Looking like a rainbow hung in the sky, the bridge, about 6 m high and 63 m long, is the longest one-arched stone bridge in Suzhou.

At each end, south and north, there are 48 steps carved out of a whole rectangular stone slab 5 m long and 0.5 m wide. The entire Wumen Gate Bridge was built with carefully and precisely sculpted granite from the Jinshan Hill and the seams were filled with a mixture of alum, glutinous rice soup and lime. The Bridge remains as solid as when it was newly built, though hundreds of years have passed.

The Auspicious Light Pagoda was originally an attached building of the Buddhist Monastery of Universal Relief. It was built by Sun Quan, King of the Wu, during the Three Kingdoms Period. The current Auspicious Light Pagoda is from the early years of the Northern Song Dynasty and its wooden parts went through several renovations during the Song, Ming and Qing Dynasties. It is the second oldest structure of its kind in the area of Suzhou, next only to the Tiger Hill Pagoda.

Standing 44.42 m high, the Auspicious Light Pagoda is a seven-storey octagonal structure. Its elegant outline is often reflected in the Great Canal. At daybreak or twilight when highlighted by the sunrays,



the Pagoda looks particularly magnificent.

2. The Grand Canal

Suzhou has still preserved its 2,500 year old ancient hydro-system. In greater Suzhou, 42% of the area is covered by water. Most part (four-fifths) is the Taihu Lake, one of the four major freshwater lakes in China and the famous ancient wonder, the Grand Canal, both run through the city. The Yangtze River also skirts the city. The Jinji (the Golden Rooster) Lake area in the eastern part of the city reveals Suzhou's modern image, while the city moat forms the boundary line of the old town. Along with these major waterways, numerous small lakes, rivers and canals make Suzhou a water city in the truest sense of the world.

The Grand Canal flows by Wuxi on the northwest and western parts of the city of Suzhou on its way to Hangzhou, facilitating the transport between China's north and south and forming a unique travel route which includes picturesque canal scenes, old bridges, old temples, old townships, and old cities.

The moat around the old city of Suzhou as defense in the past joints the Grand Canal and the urban canal system. Like a beautiful art gallery on water, the moat has now become a waterway for tourists to enjoy pleasure cruises round the wonderful old city of Suzhou.

3. Shantang Street

The Shantang historical and cultural street block occupies an area of 25.60 hectares. From the Changmen Gate in the east to the Tiger Hill in the west, the 3,829.6 m-long street was built and opened in the first year of the Baoli reign of the Tang Dynasty by Bai Juyi, a regional inspector to Suzhou. The Shantang Street, originally called the Revered Bai's Embankment, connects the historical Tiger Hill with the bustling commercial area around the Changmen Gate.

The Shantang Street is a thousand-year-old street with a rich flavor of the Wu Kingdom culture, integrating residences, tourisms, trades,

arts and crafts. In the 17th and 18th century, each time Emperor Kangxi and Emperor Qianlong visited the south, they would come to the Tiger Hill and the Shantang Street. Besides, the Shantang Street is the prototype of the Suzhou Street in the Summer Palace in Beijing.

Of those numerous alleys in Suzhou, the Shantang Street is regarded as “the first street of Gusu” based on three major elements. Firstly, the Shantang Street is an ancient street with a 1,100-year-long history. Secondly, the structure of the Shantang Street is considered a representative pattern of Suzhou streets. Thirdly, the Shantang Street is associated with many well-known people and events.

Within this Street block, there is a historical unit under the state protection, two units under the protection at provincial level, eight units under the protection at municipal level and 15 buildings under the municipal controlled protection. In addition, there are more than 20 ancient bridges and archways as well as many other traditional buildings.

The Shantang Street has now become a famous pedestrian street with many franchised stores, business mansions, and bars. Ever since the initiation of the “protective restoration” years ago, the ancient Shantang Street has become a tourist destination and recreational venue as well as a popular backdrop for wedding photography.

4. Scenic Hill and Lake

Geographically, Suzhou belongs to the Lower Yangtze Plain, although there are some rolling hills lying to the west of the city and close to the Taihu Lake. The Tiger Hill, the Tianchi Hill, the Dengwei Hill and the gionglong Hill, to name a few, are famous for their scenic splendor.

Lacking the grandeur of Mt. Tai and the precipices of Mt. Hua, the hills of Suzhou are small but enchanting. Their far-famed scenic beauty is enhanced by the clear water of the nearby lakes and watercourses. “The verdant hills in the distance are discernable across the wide expanse of water; in late autumn the landscape of Jiangnan

(South China) shows no sign of withering vegetation” reads a line of verse.

The scenic hills of Suzhou are also places of special cultural and historical interest, vying with great mountains elsewhere for beauty, fame and majesty. The cultural sites at the celebrated Tiger Hill can be traced back to the Spring-Autumn Period when the Kingdom of the Wu existed here. Every stele, every pavilion, every rock, every spring in the Tiger Hill seems to be a page of the history of the ancient Suzhou culture and geography.

Ruins of the mysterious Wu Palace can be found in the Lingyan Hill. Legends about the hill are numerous, kindling worshipers' imagination. The awe-inspiring Tianchi Hill has a rich cultural flavor. Innumerable people from all walks of life and from the past to the present have come to pay their respect to Fan Zhongyan and let their souls be baptized and purified by his great saying of “being the first to raise concern and the last to enjoy comforts under the sun”.

(1) Tiger Hill

The Tiger Hill, known also as the Surging Sea Hill, is a large hillock, standing 36 m high and covering an area of some 14,100 m². In 496 BC, during the Spring-Autumn Period, Helu, King of State Wu died in battle against the Yue, the neighboring state. Helu's son buried him in the hill and three days after the funeral, a white tiger came and sat upon the grave, seeming to be a guard. From then on, the place has been known as the Tiger Hill.

The pagoda standing on the hill summit is part of the Yunyan Temple. The oldest pagoda in Suzhou, it serves as a landmark of the city. Built during the Northern Song Dynasty, the 48-m-high seven-story eight-sided structure has leant towards the northwest over the past 400 years.

King Helu was a zealous collector of rare swords and it is said that he tested swords upon a rock now named the Sword Testing Rock,

leaving a crevice on the rock. As for his swords, it is believed they were buried beneath the Sword Pool as funerary objects. Another mystery is the whereabouts of the remains of the 1,000 tomb builders who were killed upon the completion of the project.

Lu Yu was a master of tea art who wrote the first book on the subject, *The Treatise of Tea*. Lu lived on the Tiger Hill when he wrote the final part of his book. He excavated the well there and declared that the water from it was the third best in China. Owing to Lu's research and teaching, tea growing and consuming has become an important part of the Suzhou people's lifestyle.

The Verdant Mountain Villa was built in the 10th year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty, and is a masterpiece of classic Suzhou gardens. The architect's ingenious design made the Villa a natural vista for views of the surrounding landscapes.

(2) Lingyan Hill

The Lingyan (miraculous rock) Hill is situated in the northwest of the ancient town of Mudu. With rugged and graceful rocks, it is claimed as the Number One Peak in Suzhou. The wonderful Hill boasts many scenic splendors and grotesque rocks. The King of the Wu built the Guanwa Palace on the Hill to please the beauty Xishi. The King of the Wu's Well, the Pond for Playing the Moon, the Playing with Flowers Pond, the Music Terrace, and other scenic spots still bear old names from the Guanwa Palace compound. With a history of over 1,700 years, the Lingyan Temple, a Buddhist shrine remains an active religious site famous in southeastern China.

Many poets of the Tang Dynasty, such as Bai Juyi, had written their lines with inspirations of the Hill. Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty had both established their temporary palaces here during their tours to the south.

(3) Taihu Lake

As early as the Paleolithic Age more than 10,000 years ago, the

ancients of the Wu area lived, and worked in harmony with nature in the Taihu Lake basin. Over a span of millennia, the ancient Wu culture evolved by the Taihu Lake and has been a branch of the Chinese culture.

Since the Tang and Song Dynasties, the scenic and historical Taihu Lake region has become an attractive tourist-site. The East Hill, the West Hill and Guangfu with the scenery of the Taihu Lake as their backdrops are three scenic sights of Suzhou.

Comparing the Taihu Lake with that of the West Lake in Hangzhou, the great Song literary man Su Dongpo said in his well-known poem, "If the West Lake is likened to Xi Zi, a beauty, with much or little make-up, she's always pretty." Dotted with 72 peaks and sailing-boats, the misty and soul-stirring Taihu Lake covers 36,000 hectares, linking the Wu and the Yue together.

The East Hill borders the winding shores of the Taihu Lake. The East Hill, an abbreviation of the Dongting East Hill, lies 40 km to the southwest of the city of Suzhou. With flower and fruit fragrances permeating the air, it is a wooded, hilly peninsula jutting into the southeastern section of the Taihu Lake. Its major attractions include the Zijin Temple, the Carved Mansion, the Garden of Enlightenment, the Xuanyuan Palace, and the Three Hills' Island.

The West Hill, an abbreviation of the Dongting West Hill, is the largest island in the Taihu Lake. The Hill has 41 peaks and over 20 islets, making a picturesque scene of islets and small lakes.

Guangfu lies to the west of the city of Suzhou at the foot of the Dengwei Hill by the side of the Taihu Lake. Celebrated for its long history, culture and unique beauty-spots, Guangfu has long been known as a scenic wonderland. Guangfu possesses rolling hills and has flowering trees in all four seasons. "A Sea of Snow-like Prunus Mume" is one of the four beauty-spots for the enjoyment of prunus mume across the country. The Situ Temple in Guangfu is celebrated for its four weather-

beaten Han Dynasty cypress trees, called "Purity, Oddity, Antiquity and Grotisque." It is one of the sights of Suzhou and a wonder of the nature.

5. Well and Bridge

Water is life-giving liquid. In Suzhou, there are still 639 ancient wells under controlled protection. In the past, wells were the necessities of life, now the daily function of wells has gradually faded away. Age-old rope marks on the stone surrounds of the wells are historical and cultural reminders of the past. Still you can find more than 20 old wells, which are hundreds of years old but still under use now.

Covered by a pavilion, the Twin Wells of the Southern Song Dynasty with limestone protection around them are found in the Houbu Village on the Dongting West Hill. Surrounded by a rectangular stone protection, a double well named the Happiness and Longevity Well is found in the Cang Street in the eastern part of the city of Suzhou.

Suzhou is naturally a gallery of bridges. For most visitors, the first impression of the so-called Venetian like the city of Suzhou is perhaps the scene of small bridges, houses and flowing canals. Bridges form routes for the local people, providing easy accessibility within the prosperous Venetian city of Suzhou. As people say, one would not feel tired when strolling in water-borne Suzhou since there are many bridges. Going out across bridges in the early morning and having a deep breathing while facing the red morning-glow interwoven with fine willow branches, one would feel spirited and refreshed for the whole day. At dusk, one hurries back home while observing receding charming light of the setting sun, serenity over the river and the arched bridge reflected quietly on the water.

Of all Chinese cities, Suzhou has the most bridges as well as the most densely located bridges. The Pingjiang (Suzhou) Map inscribed on a Song Dynasty stele shows that there were as many as 359 bridges in the urban area of only 1,459 km. "There are greenish canals running



from west to east and from north to south, and 390 bridges with red balustrades," said the great Tang poet and Mayor of Suzhou Bai Juyi, leaving one to contemplate. He did not exaggerate the case but stated it in a matter-of-fact way. In the recent years, the means of transportation have changed radically. Quite a number of old bridges were dismantled or reconstructed anew. Some valued bridges of great age have survived and have been protected very well, for example, the Precious Belt Bridge spanning the Grand Canal and the far-famed Feng Bridge. As an invaluable cultural heritage, these old bridges bear testimony to the historical city of Suzhou.

Built in the Tang Dynasty across the Grand Canal, the Precious Belt Bridge is the longest bridge existing in China. With 53 stone arches, it resembled a jade belt floating on the water and linked roads on the north and the south. The Tang Dynasty Mayor of Suzhou Wang Zhongshu contributed towards the expense of construction by selling his precious belt. The Precious Belt Bridge is reputed as one of the 10 most splendid bridges of China.

Lying on the outer side of the Fengmen Gate to the southeast of the city of Suzhou is, the Free-from-Ferry Bridge, popularly called the Ferrying Bridge. It was built in the reign of Dade in the Yuan Dynasty by a Buddhist monk who raised a fund for the expense of construction. The bridge was repaired in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and has been repaired and reinforced again recently. On the Grand Canal in a great span, the elegant bridge slopes gently.

Bridges of water-borne Suzhou not only accompany pedestrians forever, but also stay emotionally with affectionate poets, painters, photographers and tourists, leading them into romantic art world and vast historic space.

II. Historical Township

Situated in the surrounding areas of the city against similar cultural

and physical backgrounds are the old townships of Zhouzhuang, Luzi, Tongli, and Mudu. Possessing more or less the same characteristics as in a long scroll of panoramic painting of charming old townships with alleyways running parallel with canals, waterside houses with their gray tiles and white-washed walls, winding roofed walkways and embankments, waterscape gardens, and stone bridges crossing the network of waterways, each township has some features that differentiate it from the others.

1. Zhouzhuang

Zhouzhuang, once called Zhenfengli, one of the most famous water townships in China, is situated in Kunshan, only 30 km (18 miles) southeast of Suzhou. In 1086, Zhou Digong, a noted Buddhist, donated 13 hectares of land to Quanfu (full fortune) Temple, which later took the name of Zhouzhuang as a memorial to Zhou. The historic canal town of Zhouzhuang is affectionately known as the "Number One Water Town", and its combination of charming bridges, enchanting narrow alleys, well preserved historical residences, and an array of small museums undeniably earn that title.

Zhouzhuang is noted for its profound cultural background of strong colorful local traditions and customs, well preserved ancient residential houses and elegant water views. Surrounded by water, Zhouzhuang abounds in interlaced rivers and lakes. Traffic was once mainly by means of boats. With a history of more than 900 years, Zhouzhuang has been characterized by the picturesque water scenery, a combination of exquisite bridges, clear riverlets and antique houses.

The typical styles and features of this water town and the way of its inhabitants' life remain unchanged. All the houses in the town are built with sidewalks along the canals which form a web of water lanes. Stone bridges and towers span the waterways to provide free passage for local people. The streams under small bridges and the dwelling quarters with delicate courtyards now rarely seen in East China are distinctive features of Zhouzhuang.



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60 percent of Zhouzhuang's structures were built during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, including nearly 100 classic courtyards and 60 carved brick archways. The mansions of two local wealthy families have been restored and are fascinating to explore into. The Zhang Family Mansion and the Shen Family Mansion share a common layout, but each has its own features.

Entering the mansions from the street, one passes through several similar waiting rooms. Ordinary business would be handled in the front rooms, while honored guests and close family friends would be received in the inner rooms. All of the sitting rooms have period furniture and decoration. In the Shen Mansion, at the top of the side walls in the inner sitting rooms are two small windows. In the past, unmarried women were not allowed to meet guests, so from the upper stories they would peek down and observe visitors. Often the daughters of the family would spy down on potential grooms, and if they were satisfied, a marriage might be arranged. Beyond the sitting room is a private living room, where the family might read, play chess or card, or play music. From here stairs lead up to the second story, which holds the most private rooms, the study, library, and various bedrooms. The Zhang Mansion has a small traditional garden nestled around the surrounding buildings. Both houses have private docks at the rear. The Zhang Mansion even has a small square pond for boats to turn around. The Shen Mansion originally extended all the way to the edge of the front canal, so that goods could be unloaded directly into the building, by an overhead bridge.

While Zhouzhuang is a splendid example of the traditional Chinese water town, it is hardly a lifeless museum. Most of the buildings are still home to the families who have lived there for centuries. Many of the boats plying the canals are not filled with tourists, but storekeepers making their deliveries, and neighbors coming from the market still pause on the charming stone bridges for a quick chat.

Beside these historical sites, local folklores and legends, activities such as the dragon boat race, granny tea or the Wansan home-style banquet, are traditional attractions.

2. Luzhi

Situated in the Wuzhong District to the east of Suzhou, Luzhi is also named Fuli, a typical ancient town in the water country of the southern Yangtze Delta. Located in Kunshan about 25 km east of Suzhou, Luzhi is an old and extremely beautiful water town. With a history of more than 1,400 years, it compares favorably to Zhouzhuang. Covering just one km², Luzhi has been awarded the great name of the first water town in China.

The ancient township of Luzhi is the leading scenic and tourist spot of the Taihu Lake scenic area. It is dotted with numerous quaint small bridges, canals and cultural relic protection units published by the State Council.

Puli was the ancient name of the river town Luzhi. It was named after the Tang Dynasty recluse poet Lu Guimong who retired in this town. Lu Guimong had a pseudonym: Mr Puli. At that time, Puli consisted of two districts: Puli and Liuzhi. Liuzhi meant that there were six straight rivers in the town. In Suzhou dialect, liu was pronounced as lu. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, Puli was changed to Luzhi.

Luzhi was reputed to be the Venice of the East, famous for its beautiful waterways and ancient bridges. A walk in the ancient town is said to be a walk into history frozen in time, tranquil and serene.

In 2003, the Chinese government published a list of "Ten Famous Chinese Historic Townships". Luzhi is on the list. In 2004, Luzhi together with Tong Li and Zhouzhuang were on the list for UNESCO World Heritage Sites and awarded a Township Preservation Award by UNESCO.

Like other water towns, Luzhi is a fascinating maze of narrow ancient streets crossing over a network of thin canals on countless small

bridges. Some over 1,000 years old. The closely packed houses, most of which are centuries old, almost all have whitewashed walls, black tiled roofs, and cobblestone streets. With so many canals, the city is naturally a museum of traditional bridges. Strolling along the streets, you'll see that almost all of the town's 40 bridges differ. Some have pillars, others rise in high arches like half moons, while others are long and low slung. Some seem to be gifts to the community, decorated with relief carvings, while others are roughly made from the local stone. A long arcade runs over the street alongside one of the canals, and locals often gather here, drinking tea, playing cards, chatting at small tables, and looking out over the water.

Boating would be the best way to experience the town's charm. Rowed in the old style by locals, the view from the middle of the old canal is fabulous, with ancient bridges just overhead, traditional buildings rising up on both sides, and on the shores residents returning home with groceries, and old people seated around chatting. From a boat, one can see a fascinating array of carved mooring stones on the walls of the canal. Carved like flowers, plants, animals and jewelry, they were set into the canal walls where boats could be moored.

Tucked in among Luzhi's charming streets and canals are several interesting historic sights. The Bao Shen Temple is a well-known Buddhist sanctuary in the region and a national monument, in which are preserved the tomb of the effects of Lu Guimong, the Pavilion of Refreshing Breeze, the Pavilion of Fighting Ducks, and the tomb of Ye Shentao, an educationist in modern China. The Bao Shen Temple houses precious and extremely rare collections of Buddhist clay statues from the Northern Song Dynasty, almost 1,000 years ago. The 18 Buddhist statues represent the arhats and Buddhist sages respected for their holiness and wisdom. Since each arhat had a distinct appearance and personality, they were popular subjects for traditional Chinese sculptors. Made from clay by the Song Dynasty master sculptor Yang

Huizhi, the arhats are remarkably lifelike and vivid, each with facial expressions that let their personality shine as vividly today as when they were created so many centuries ago. The statues are not set on pedestals, but incorporated into a backdrop of gnarled rocks sculpted from clay and designed to frame the statues and complement their poses. It is the only surviving group of clay statues from this period in all of Southern China.

Another feature of the town is the distinctive traditional costume worn by women. Both shirts and trousers are characteristically pieced together using different cotton materials in a variety of designs. In addition to wearing these interesting clothes, local women are accustomed to wearing colorful kerchiefs and embroidered shoes. These lovely traditional Luzhi-style costumes add freshness and loveliness to the water town, like a beautiful landscape picture.

The natural beauty of the town is awe-inspiring. Old stone bridges, limpid water, venerable maidenhair trees and old-style dwellings, as well as the traditional women's costumes, create a civilized, rich, pastoral and harmonious environment.

3. Mudu

Mudu, 10 km west of Suzhou, is another famous historical and cultural town. "Mudu", meaning "timbers blocking the rivers", comes from a story. During the Spring-Autumn Period, King Wu was building the "Guanwa Palace" for his concubine Xishi. The timbers rafted here were so many that they blocked the rivers. With many Ming and Qing Dynasty gardens, Mudu is called a town of gardens.

Mudu is a small town that dates back to the Ming Dynasty. Built at the foot of the Lingyan Hill in the western suburb of Suzhou, the town once included more than 30 private gardens where wealthy officials, revered intellectuals and artists enjoyed the peace of canal side living. Its claim to fame is touted on a sign near the entrance to the old town: Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty Visited Here Six Times.



Four of the ancient dwellings have been restored along the main canal and offer a glimpse of the life enjoyed by the fortunate during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. All four are within walking distance of the town gate.

The Hongyin Mountain House is the attraction that brought Emperor Qianlong back so often. It is huge by any standard of architecture from the period. The estate is actually the combination of the former Xiuye (beautiful field garden) Garden and the Xiaoying (privacy) Garden, which were once home to Shen Shou, known as the embroidery princess south of the Yangtze Delta.

Yan's Garden is perhaps the most attractive scenic delight among the four houses. The Garden is centered upon a lake that meanders through the grounds. It is lined with trees and its amazing ornamental West Lake rockery that is unlike any other decorative rockery in the world. Former home to Yan Jiagan, who hailed from China's Taiwan Province, Yan's Garden was designed in the classic style on its own, plus hectare setting by Liu Dunzhen, perhaps the most famous architect of his time. A large magnolia tree in the Garden was reputedly planted by Emperor Qianlong during one of his many visits to the area.

Some 200 m (about 219 yards) to the east of Yan's Garden, there is the Hongyinshanfang. This was the private landscape garden of a scholar named Xu Shiyuan who lived during the Qing Dynasty. It is made up of two small gardens of the Ming Dynasty, the Xiaoying Garden and the Xiuye Garden. In contrast with other gardens in Suzhou, the Hongyinshanfang combines the characteristics of a delicate southern landscape and a grand northern royal garden. In the eastern part of the Xiaoying Garden, old trees, remarkable rocks and bamboo groves show people a charming but peaceful natural scenery. In the western part of the Xiuye Garden, which is now a museum, where 20 Decrees of the Emperors and the papers of imperial civil service examinations in the Qing Dynasty are exhibited. During the Qing

Dynasty, Emperor Qianlong visited the gardens to listen to opera every time when he traveled south of the Yangtze River. Now, many relics of this emperor, such as a tablet carved with a poem written by him remain in the garden.

In the Xiatang Street lies the Bangyan Mansion (bangyan means the person who wins the second place in the imperial civil service examination), another garden with a poetic feeling. In this garden, there is a carving on the rock wall which depicts the prosperous image of Suzhou. This carving is made up of eight rocks, 1.2 m high each. Most of the sceneries on these carvings are about the fairs, streets and people of Mudu. In the back yard, there is a beautiful lake in the center. Around the lake are pavilions, chambers, corridors and artificial hills. Among those buildings stand many vigorous green trees.

4. Tongli

There are quite a few ancient riverside towns in South China, especially in the south of Jiangsu Province and the north of Zhejiang Province. Tongli in Wujiang City particularly stands out as one of the best preserved. Intersected by so many canals, Tongli is like a town floating on the water.

Many people regard Tongli as a substitute for Zhouzhuang because Tongli has a similar history and natural scenery, but Tongli has its own unique features which are worth exploring and experiencing.

Tongli is divided into seven islands intersected by 15 canals. In front of the buildings there are small stairs leading down to the canals, which are convenient for residents to wash clothes and for boarding boats for travelling around the town. With a network of lakes and waterways, Tongli has not suffered from war since it was inaccessible in the old times. Therefore more ancient buildings are preserved, among which we can still enjoy the scenic spots such as the Moon Viewing at the East Stream, the Misty South Market at Dawn, the Night Crossing at the West Ferry, the Spring Sight in the North Hill, the Fishermen's Flute in

the Water Village, and the Misty Bamboo of the Chan Hill. The traditional houses densely settle on the sides of the fine banks and winding alleys and streets paved with pebble stones still keep an ancient appearance.

Tongli is rich in culture. In the long run of its history, it was once famed for achievements by citizens in the imperial civil service examinations and has produced famous Confucians and notables. About 40 stone tablets from different periods have been well preserved and quite a number of streets and alleys are named after official titles such as the Zhuangyuan Street and the Tongzhi Street.

Owing to the charming environments, in ancient times many noblemen and distinguished families built their private gardens there. These complexes of buildings, featuring the harmonious combination of residential buildings and gardens, are unique, rare even among other waterfront towns south of the Yangtze River. From 1271 to 1911, 38 mansions and gardens were built in the town one after another, many of which have been well preserved till now.

Tongli boasts a museum of ancient architectures in China. With their whitewashed walls, black tiled roofs, carved wooden windows and elegant wood structures, these buildings feature a harmonious combination of residential buildings and gardens. In Tongli, the Ming and Qing buildings occupy four tenths of the total number of buildings, among which there are as many as nine row houses, small exquisite courtyards and gardens. The gateway with the brick carving of the Zhu Family and the wood carving of Chongben Hall and Jiayin Hall are exquisite. Yanyi Building in the court of Gengle Hall is wrought so elegantly that it is like a swallow flapping its wings.

Tongli has a very different mood from its neighbors, and the canals of Tongli are lined by wide cobblestone sidewalks. Trees grow along the embankments, and the wider walkways are great for a pleasant stroll or whiling away the hours at a sidewalk teahouse. Arched roofs, lofty

gables, stone bridges and green willows lining the banks can be found almost everywhere in the town. They help create a poetic and romantic atmosphere, especially in early spring when trees are budding and refreshing drizzles are frequent.

The landscape also makes Tongli a town of bridges, with 49 stone bridges linking different sections of the town. Probably the most notable are the Taiping Bridge, the Jili Bridge and the Changqing Bridge. They are known as Ternate Bridges, as they cross three rivers at their confluence and form a natural ring road.





Chapter 14

FEATURED ARCHITECTURE

The gardens in Suzhou constitute an art form and have influenced other types of classical Chinese gardens. Through thousands of years of development and enrichment, Suzhou gardens have formed three major styles: royal, monastic and private ones. Most of the existing gardens here are private gardens, though. They have a high regard of natural beauty. They are in pursuit of surprising changes and variety in design, following a more difficult law than geometrical rules. They also heavily emphasize the general themes and implied meanings suggested by the superficial scenes, so the objects are used only as reminders or stimulators of people's feelings.

Since Buddhism and Taoism were introduced to the area at the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, there have emerged numerous temples inside and outside the ancient city, making the city the "Number One Prefecture of Temples in southeastern China". Religious traces of the past are seen in the ancient pagodas. The Kaiyuan Temple is famous for its beamless hall. In the Baosheng Temple there were clay sculptures of Budhidharma and Arhats. Stone relief was engraved in the Hall of Pure Trinity at the Temple of Mystery.

Colored architectural paintings are seen on traditional Chinese buildings everywhere across the country. The uniqueness of Suzhou-style colored drawings lies in its refined touches and elaborate designs, which

still keep intact today both in the Historical Site of the Heavenly Kingdom in Suzhou. The architecture of present Suzhou has preserved such a feature of an intermixture of the ancient and the modern, with ancient buildings preserved amid new buildings and house complexes. Within the confines of the ancient city area, most of the buildings have been kept to be lower than five stories.

I . Temple and Pagoda

Temples in large numbers and with long histories are common to Suzhou. The history of temples can be dated back to the Three Kingdoms Period, although the majority was constructed in the Tang Dynasty and the Song Dynasty and even in the Ming Dynasty. The magnificent Tiger Hill Pagoda and the North Temple Pagoda have served as the emblems of Suzhou.

Temples in Suzhou, showing both Buddhist and Taoist features of architecture are neat in composition and elegant in style, and stand in harmony with the classical gardens. In most temples, major buildings like main halls are put on a central axis while auxiliary buildings are arranged along a horizontal axis. Pavilions and balconies set off the natural sceneries of water, with flowers and trees adding radiance and beauty to each other, and thus the features of architectural arts are highly enhanced.

The Buddhist architecture of Suzhou consists of temple, pagoda and grotto. The layout is that of the traditional Chinese palace architecture and usually has a group of courtyards and halls set on the north-south axis with side rooms flanked symmetrically on each side.

The Taoist architecture of Suzhou usually follows the commoners' style of wooden structures. They resort to using the natural topography such as surrounding rivers where there are towers, pavilions, lobbies and other garden structural units. These structures are decorated with murals, sculptures and steles to fully interpret the Taoist philosophy of

nature.

1. Mysterious Taoist Temple

The Mysterious Taoist Temple is situated on Guanqian Street in the center of Suzhou. The construction of the temple began in the second year of the reign of Hanning in the West Jin Dynasty. It was originally called Zhengqing Taoist Monastery and was renamed the Mysterious Taoist Temple in the Yuan Dynasty.

The most magnificent building of the temple is the Hall of Pure Trinity, which is spacious, towering and solemn. It is an imposing wooden hall with typical upward curving roof that seems common for older structures in Suzhou and buildings of the Southern Song Dynasty. In front of the Temple is an open-air terrace of green stones. The terrace is surrounded by finely engraved railings of green stones on the eastern, southern and western sides, with a stepping battlement on each side. The relief sculptures of birds, beasts, figures and stories on the arch plate are based on the customs handed down from the stone reliefs of the Han Dynasty. On the sunken panel of the Temple's ceiling are magnificent paintings of cranes, deer, clouds, and the instruments used by the Eight Immortals in the Taoist legend.

Consecrated on the pedestal are the three statues of the ancestors of Three Taoist Seniors, Taiping, Yuqing and Shangqing. Each of these Qing statues is more than 15 m high and has brilliant golden lights and dignified postures. These statues are excellent examples of the Taoist sculptures of the Song Dynasty.

2. North Temple Pagoda (Temple of Paying Debt of Gratitude)

The North Temple Pagoda, more than 1,700 years old, was originally the Tongxuan Temple, built by Sun Quan, the King of the Wu. It was granted as the "Epoch-making Temple" in the Tang Dynasty but became known as the "Reciprocation Temple" at the end of the Five Dynasties.

The pagoda is a provincial preservation unit of historical and cultural

relics and is popularly praised as the “Number One Pagoda South of the Yangtze River”. With multi-roofs, the magnificent octagonal pagoda stands skyward in the temple ground, being the highest building and serving as one of the emblems of the old city.

The pagoda is a brick and wooden Buddhist pagoda style of building and has nine stories with eight sides on each story. With a height of 76 m, it is the highest of the pagodas in the old city. It is famous for flying corners and double eaves which are extraordinarily long. The base of the pagoda covers 1.3 mu (= 0.0667 hectares). The body of the pagoda consists of outer corridors, and inner corridors with square rooms in the center. Visitors can walk up the wooden stairs in the internal corridors and by leaning on the railings they can have a panorama of the city as well as see in the distance the hills, water, and the rural scenery of Suzhou.

3. West Garden Temple

The West Garden Temple, the largest one in Suzhou, covering an area of 10 mu (about 1.6 acres) was constructed in the Yuan Dynasty and features sacred temples and classical gardens.

From the south to the north along the axis of the Temple are the Arches (paifang), the Mountain Gate, the Jingang (diamond) Temple, the Fangsheng (free captive animals) Pond, the Daxiong (grand) Palace, and the Sutra Collection Pavilion.

Constructed at the end of the Ming Dynasty, the Arhat Hall of the Temple has 500 arhats with different names and facial expressions, who maintain the characteristics of having round faces and plump bodies. They are all seated and wear clothes of quality texture. These 500 arhats were carved and painted with special care. Viewing the whole, one will find they are of different ages, from old to young, and of different personalities, from the lion-hearted to the kind-hearted. But these characteristic arhats all have one thing in common, they are regarded as the symbol of power and luck by everyone in all walks of

life. The whole architecture represents the consummate craft of sculpture from the southern area of China, which belonged to the first-rate sculpture of arhat in the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

In the center of the Arhat Hall is a sculpture of Kwan-yin, 13 m high carved in fragrant camphor timber, which has thousands of eyes and hands. Kwan-yin who has four faces was said to represent the four famous mountains of Buddhism: Mt. Jiuhua in Anhui, Mt. Emei in Sichuan, Mt. Putuo in Zhejiang and Mt. Wutai in Shanxi. In addition, inside the Arhat Hall are two well-known sculptures called "the Mad Monk" or "Jigong Monk" whose words and deeds were also praised by people and were given the name of the "Live Arhats". The Arhat Hall is the only one in the southeastern coastal area.

In the center of the Fangsheng Pond, a name derived from the Buddhist habit of freeing captive animals, is an octagonal pavilion, with flowers and trees around it, and a bending bridge bestriding the water to create a neat and artful landscape. Fish swim freely and rare tortoises are well kept in the water. It is said that two tortoises are the offspring of a tortoise from the Ming Dynasty, more than 400 years old.

Since the People's Republic of China was founded, the temple has been expanded several times with governmental financial support and Buddhists' donations. Now it has been refurbished with the former styles and features, and many new scenic spots have been added to enhance its fame of "The Holy Land of Buddhist Altar".

4. Temple of Confucius

In Chinese, Confucian temples are known as Kongmiao. Their alternative names are the Culture temples, the Sacred temples, or the Master temples.

The largest and oldest Temple of Confucius is found in Confucius' hometown, the present-day Qufu in Shandong Province. It was established in 478 BC, one year after Confucius' death, by order of Duke Ai of the State of Lu, who commanded that Confucius' residence

be used to worship and offer sacrifice.

The Temple of Confucius in Suzhou, along with Suzhou Prefecture School, was built by the Mayor of Suzhou Fan Zhongyan in the Northern Song Dynasty. The temple on the east side and the school on the west side were in parallel alignment. The Suzhou Stele Museum is located therein. The four Song-Dynasty Steles kept in the temple are famous. The complex consists of two courtyards, one to the east and one to the west. The eastern courtyard was used for the worship of Confucius as a sage. The Hall of the Great Saint (Dashengdian) is the chief building where the spirit tablets of Confucius and other important sages were housed. To the west is a second courtyard where the Confucian academy was located. The academy was run by the state and had facilities for students to live and study. The large hall to the north was where the local civil service examinations were given.

Unlike the Daoist or the Buddhist temples, the temples of Confucius do not normally have images. In the early years of the temple in Qufu, it seemed that the spirits of Confucius and his disciples were represented with wall paintings and clay or wooden statues. However, there was opposition to this practice, which was seen as imitative of Buddhist temples. It was also argued that the point of the imperial temples was to honor Confucius teachings, not the man himself.

Lack of unity in likenesses in statues of Confucius first led Emperor Taizu of the Ming Dynasty to decree that all new temples of Confucius contain only memorial tablets and no images. In 1530, it was decided that all existing images of Confucius in imperial temples in the capital and other bureaucratic locations should be replaced with memorial tablets, a rule still followed today. However, statues remained in temples operated by Confucius' descendants, such as that in Qufu. The state sect of Confucius centered upon offering sacrifices to Confucius' spirit in the temple.

With the spread of the Confucian learning throughout East Asia,

temples Confucius have also been built in Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. Started in the 18th century, some temples of Confucius were even built in Europe. At the height of their popularity, there is an estimate of over 3,000 such temples.

II. Government Building and Guild-Hall

Suzhou was the capital of the Kingdom of Wu during the Spring-Autumn Period. In the Qing Dynasty, Suzhou was still one of the capital cities. As a result, provincial government buildings like official offices and academic courtyards were built in great numbers. Remains of many government buildings can still be found.

The government buildings were laid out and constructed in accordance with strict feudal class differentiations, ritualistic rules and regulations. High-quality materials and excellent workmanship were an occurring feature of the elegant Suzhou style buildings.

Noted for its brisk trade and economic prosperity, Suzhou has for a long time been a metropolis in the Yangtze River Delta. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, businessmen from the north and the south and even foreign countries came to Suzhou by boat or carriage. Far away from their hometowns, they resided here and established guild-halls to help one another and promote common interests. The majestic guild-halls played an important role in business activities and symbolized successful amassment of large fortunes. In spite of the fact that only a few of them have been well kept, the remains of guild-halls cause us to think about their functions in business events and triumphs.

Each of these building compounds became the basic unit of spatial organization of the city, and the courtyard built in definite shape was essential in incorporating all the elements into a coherent whole. This mode of spatial arrangement was in accordance with both the traditional conception of socialized space and the sociopolitical reality of the city.

1. Loyal Prince Palace

In the spring of 1860, Li Xiucheng, the general and Loyal Prince of the Taiping Heavenly Uprising, rebuilt the east and west housing complex of the Humble Administrator's Garden in the north of the city and turned them into the Loyal Prince Palace of the Taiping Heavenly Uprising. For a time Li Xiucheng had his official residence in the Loyal Prince mansion. Archeological literature tells that the main entrance was several zhang in height, looking both magnificent and solemn. The front main hall and the rear hall were arranged in the form of the Chinese character gong. There used to be a five-story quadrangle tower functioning as a military lookout, and two drumming pavilions used for military convergence.

This large building, with exquisitely painted roof beams, now houses a wide range of archaeological items, pottery, painting, fans and remnants of the Taiping period in the city. The collection includes some 30,000 cultural relics and 100,000 ancient and modern books.

The complex was especially filled with the Su-style colored wall paintings and carvings with dragon and phoenix engravings as the major feature. One can see those carved images on stone lions in front of the main entrance and on the 20 gate windows of the Gong-shaped mansion. The complex was decorated with wall paintings of various kinds of patterns such as flowers, birds, fish, mountains and rivers. These refined paintings are of great value in art history with their particular Suzhou style. The palace is the only historical site that is preserved in such a pristine condition in the history of China. In 1961 the palace was listed as a cultural relic of national importance.

2. Governor's Administrative Office

Suzhou was once the provincial capital city in the Qing Dynasty, when the counties of Wu Changzhou and Yuanhe were also under the jurisdiction of Suzhou. Official offices of finance, official personnel affairs as well as places for official occasions are still to be found.

Judging by the neat and strict composition of these buildings, one can form a picture of the past and get a better understanding of silver checking and banking in the office of the financial department and of examinations held in the ministry of official personnel affairs. Another important place for official activities was the area used by officials coming out to welcome the imperial commissioner.

In the Ming Dynasty the Governor's Administrative Office of Yingtian was situated in the Shuyuan Lane on the site of the ruined Song Dynasty Heshan School. In the Qing Dynasty the Governor's Administrative Office of Jiangsu was established here. Prominent governors Zhou Chen, Hai Rui, Tang Bin, Song Luo, Liang Zhangju, and Lin Zexu directed public affairs here. Local government magistrates of provincial level mainly took charge of military affairs, the administration of officials, and the prison system.

The front portal of the Governor's Administrative Office was built in a firm mountain roof style, being 23 m wide and 10 m in length. The main entrance, the ritualistic porch, two halls and a building at the rear have survived to the present day.

3. Textile Bureau

Silk production may have begun as early as the late Neolithic period, as indicated by stone artifacts. Silk weaving skills were highly developed by the Tang Dynasty, refined in the Song Dynasty, and remained highly skilled throughout the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Suzhou was one of the three famous weaving bureaus south of the Yangtze River. Silk was produced for both royal and noble use. It was possible that silk from this region reached Japan as early as the first century BC, and that the Wu dress styles even influenced the design of the Japanese kimono.

The Textile Bureau, also called the Textile Mansion, was established at the beginning of the Qing Dynasty in what is now Suzhou No. 10 Middle School. In the 10th year of the reign of Xianfeng, Emperor of the Qing

Dynasty, all the buildings were destroyed in a war conflagration. It is recorded that the Bureau used to be spacious and on a large scale. The main halls, the garden pond, the workshops and the accommodations inside were well facilitated. Now the well-preserved relics comprise the 13.4 m wide main entrance gate of the firm mountain style, ritualistic portals, five stone tablets, door pegs, bottom sills and three masonry doors, though some of the existent buildings were rebuilt in the reign of Tongzhi in the Qing Dynasty.

It is interesting to note that the state-run textile bureau of Suzhou prefecture in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, unlike those in the Yuan, were all located on the peripheries of the district of the gentry and the officials in the southwest, but closer to the district of family-based textile industry in the northeast. These bureaus functioned not only as the places for textile production but also as administrative centers for control of all local activities associated with this industry. During the Ming Dynasty, for example, every household engaged in spinning and weaving had to register with the bureau, and during the Qing Dynasty, these bureaus also took charge of extracting tax for every loom used in family-based textile production. Their special location therefore seemed to have indicated both the governmental nature of these establishments and their direct links with the central government.

4. Guild-Hall

Tradition holds that there were once more than 100 guild-halls in Suzhou. Some noted guilds were the Anhui Guild-Hall, the Jiye Gongsuo Guild-Hall and the Quanjin Guild-Hall, the most well-preserved buildings for the communal association of the textile profession.

In the reign of Tongzhi in the Qing Dynasty, the guild-hall of Anhui was set up and the Benefiting Posterity Garden at the rear restored by Li Hongzhang was at what is now Suzhou No. 1 High School. The gateway, the hallway and the garden have now been restored to their former splendors.



Tucked down a narrow lane near the Pingjiang Road is an establishment that truly opens the door to the real culture of Suzhou. The Quanjin Guild Hall was originally built by a group of businessmen from Shanxi Province during the reign of Emperor Guangxu in the Qing Dynasty. The hall was used for the accommodation of guests and as a gathering place for Shanxi businessmen in Suzhou at the time. As a result, the architecture is typical northern China style and now many delicate brick-and-wood sculptures are well preserved within the building.

At the center of the guild stands an ancient stage believed to have been built in 1879. It is more than classical architecture and art. Dark red in color, the stage features a unique arched roof and coffer (sunken) ceiling with sophisticated wood-carvings connected to copper sheets on the ceiling, designed to achieve the best acoustic effect.

The first section of the guild covers 3,600 m² and is a showcase of many rare cultural relics such as ancient musical instruments, old Kunqu Opera costumes, manuscripts, documents and a back stage display.

The earliest professional guild, the Jiye Gongsuo, was founded in Xuanmiaoguan, its main building being the Jifang Dian on the east side of the Hall of Pure Trinities. During the Ming Dynasty, taking advantage of the favorable location neighboring to Xuanmiaoguan, hundreds from the small loom households boisterously gathered by the entrance of the temple every morning, waiting to be hired by the large loom households. As for merchant and craft associations, only one of the guilds of the textile industry was situated in the temple, while three other guilds and those of other trades were widely scattered either within or outside the city walls, notably in the west suburbs.

III. Classical Garden

Classical gardens are one of the symbols of China, constituting an important part of the traditional Chinese culture. The classical gardens of Suzhou are seen as the finest specimens of the classical Chinese

gardens. “The gardens of South China are better than other gardens under the sun, and the gardens of Suzhou beat them all”, as the saying goes, clearly and definitely express their value and position.

Characteristically and artistically, the gardens, small in size but very elegant, are idealized landscape gardens following the consummate pattern of the Mother Nature. Their perspectives and vistas are exquisite, ever-changing, and arousing feelings, thoughts and aspirations. Living in these landscape garden-residences and viewing picturesque scenes of rockeries, winding, clear waterways, shade-trees along pathways, weeping willows on embankments, the garden owners could find pleasure in man-made splendors imitating the nature, as well as establishing spiritual and harmonious relationships with the nature.

The history of the classical gardens of Suzhou can be traced back to the royal gardens of King Wu. The earliest record of a private garden is the Pijiang Garden in the Eastern Jin Dynasty. The garden design and construction in Suzhou came to its prime between the 16th and the 18th centuries, when private gardens could be found everywhere in and out of this ancient city. According to the records, there were more than 200 gardens at that time, many of which have survived to today.

The classical gardens of Suzhou employ unique garden designs and construction techniques, recreating poetic and picturesque natural landscapes in miniature within the limited space beside civilian residences by adding ponds, lakeside rocks and rockeries, planting flowers and trees, and building interesting constructions. Those “hills and forests within the city”, full of natural taste, succeeded in creating an environment featuring harmony between the man and the nature, and indicated people’s honoring of the nature and their wish to blend into the nature. The classical gardens of Suzhou are the material evidence of the history of the Chinese garden design and construction, the models for the Chinese garden art, and the important examples for the studies in the Chinese garden theory.

1. Aesthetic Feature

The classical gardens in Suzhou deserve the honor of being the most outstanding representatives of the Chinese private gardens. With beautiful scenery, developed economy and large numbers of native literati, poets and painters, Suzhou provided favorable conditions for the creation and development of classical gardens. Many of the gardens benefited in their designs and constructions from the advice and suggestions of the famous literati and painters. The Humble Administrator's Garden was designed with the help of a great painter, Wen Zhengming.

(1) Natural Beauty

Emphasized by the designers was the appreciation and creation of the natural scenery harmoniously integrated with artificial buildings. They pursued the special pleasure of "enjoying the beauty of nature without leaving your house", and aimed for the standard of the "four fits" and "one effect" proposed by Gao Xi, a great landscapist of the Northern Song Dynasty. In his *Lofty Ambition of Forests and Streams*, he wrote of garden requirements as fit for strolling in, for sightseeing, for amusement, for residence, and for having the effect of being "pleasing to the ears, with the sounds of apes and birds as well as pleasing to the eyes, with the scenes of mountains and waters". This kind of design on the one hand satisfies the needs of daily life, feasts and entertainments, while on the other, makes itself part of the nature, creating a man-made landscape with such great craftsmanship that "although it is made by man, it is as if formed by the nature".

(2) Spatial Beauty

In general, the private gardens in the city were small in size, so the designers employed various architectural techniques to expand the visual space to raise visitors' awareness of the aesthetic use of the space.

The most frequently applied techniques in the garden construction are the masterly use of contrast between straight and winding, closed and open, and light and shade. Frequent transitions between expanding

and shrinking in space, bright and dim light, and large and small in size could effectively enhance visitors' awareness of the aesthetic use of space.

Other important techniques for arranging and extending the spatial dimension in garden designs are "separating", "partitioning" and "borrowing". As a principle, waters must be devious and gardens must be separated. Without the dividing and hiding effects created by the winding corridors, trees or artificial hills, a small garden could only be a small enclosure.

Borrowing refers to the technique of implying infinite space in a limited area by borrowing pleasant scenes inside or outside the garden. After thousands of years, this technique has developed into a variety of forms, such as borrowing distant scenes, borrowing nearby scenes, borrowing adjacent scenes, concrete borrowing, abstract borrowing, mirror borrowing and seasonable borrowing.

(3) Nature Integration

The artificial hills, pools, brooks, trees, flowers and architectures in the garden could only compose the framework of the scenery. The spirit and vitality of the garden to a large extent rely on the effective use of ever-changing nature, such as rain, wind, clouds and sunshine. Therefore, garden designer attempted to bring into the garden the shade of clouds, the sheen of sunlight, and the changes of daylight from dawn to dusk and the variations in weather, enabling even a small garden to contain beautiful and diverse scenery. This technique was effectively applied in both private and royal gardens.

The sight of rain, as with the moonlight, could also evoke sentimental emotions and imaginations. With haze and mist swirling around, it can be even more attractive in the rain. The silver lake rippling, the haze steaming, the green trees swaying, the pavilion standing alone, and a small boat barely seen among the lotus flowers, are, in effect, like a beautiful ink-painting of southern China. Most

gardens in and around Suzhou use viewing the moon and listening to the rain as their thematic concept.

(4) Rock and Stone

Artificial hills are a representative feature of the gardens in Suzhou. The remarks made by the famous painter Shi Tao about some traditional Chinese ink-paintings might well be paraphrased to describe the agglomeration of rocks: "Some leaning upward and others downward, some slanting and others leaning, some gathering and others separating, some near and others faraway, some inside and others outside, some false and others true, some broken and others connected, some open and others closed, some vaulted and others standing, some squatting and others jumping, some majestic, some gorgeous, some steep, some precipitous, some hierarchical, some stripped, some charming and some barely discernible."

The classical gardens of Suzhou are also known as the scholar gardens of mountain and water. One can imagine how important mountains and water are to these gardens. Garden builders of ancient China gave clear definitions of these elements when they said, "Rock is the bone and water is the artery of a garden." Rock is the symbolic substitute for mountain. Scholars of different ages have given incisive summaries of the aesthetic features of the Taihu Lake rocks. Of these summaries, the four-character epigram of the Song Dynasty calligraphy painter Mi Fu is superior to all others. The four characters are slenderness (shou), pause (lou), cavity (tou) and, wrinkle (zhou). Slenderness symbolizes more or brightness. Pause symbolizes the free flow of life. Cavity suggests transparency, and wrinkle plasticity. Appreciating the Taihu Lake rocks is an aesthetic on a higher level. That is because most of the Taihu Lake rocks are manifestations of mental states and personalities. Sculptures of the nature, the formations leave ample room for imagination. It is through the images of these rocks that many of the scholar officials who have retired into their

residential gardens found their true self and their spiritual sentiments.

(5) Flower and Tree

In addition to the pavilions, terraces, buildings, hills, brooks and rocks, the indispensable elements in the traditional Chinese gardens are flowers and trees. The gardens in Suzhou provide a rich display of beautiful trees and flowers, with, in their various colors, pleasant fragrances, shape and special characteristics, greatly add to the charm of the gardens. Furthermore, different flowers bloom in different seasons, giving a changeable beauty.

The Master-of-Nets Garden, for instance, offers an attractive floral show. The garden blossoms throughout the year with forsythia, magnolia and coltsfoot in spring, wisteria and lotus blooms in summer, sweet osmanthus and maple leaves in autumn and pines, cypresses, plum blossoms and bamboo in winter. In fact, almost all of the famous gardens in Suzhou are so full of flowers that any one of them could have been qualified as the realm described by the great poet Ouyang Xiu: "There is never a day in the garden without blossoms."

(6) Light and Shadow

All the royal gardens in Beijing look as imposing and magnificent as the splendid Chinese landscape paintings by Li Sixun of the Tang Dynasty. However, the private gardens in Suzhou are of a totally different style. Architectural structures in Suzhou gardens are distinctive with their black tiles and whitewashed walls, simple and elegant, with the charm of a sharp contrast between black and white. White walls are of great importance in the composition of gardens, for without the foil or partition of the white walls, the charm and beauty of the trees, flowers, hills or rocks in the garden would be largely reduced.

In Chinese gardens, great attention is paid to the beauty of the shadows from the light. Take the Joy Garden for example, in the southern courtyard of the Stone-Worshipping Hall, there stands a white wall facing west. At sunset, the rockworks, peaks, bamboo, cypresses

and the other trees and flowers in the garden all cast the black shadows of their profiles onto the white wall, artistically abstract and deforming, overlapping and flickering in different shades and shapes, making up a picture of lingering attraction.

2. Representative Garden

The history of Suzhou gardens can be traced as far back as the Spring-Autumn Period. Distinctive gardens continued to appear throughout the following dynasties, but it was during the Ming and Qing Dynasties that the garden art of Suzhou was at its zenith. The prosperous city and its outskirts were dotted with exquisite private gardens. Dozens of them, such as the Humble Administrator's Garden, the Lingering Garden, the Master-of-Nets Garden and the Mountain Villa with Embracing Beauty, are representatives of the landscape architecture in the area south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. In 1997, the four gardens were on the prestigious list of world cultural heritage sites made by the UNESCO.

Imperial and private gardens each developed their own distinctive features over the years. The gardens of Suzhou are the epitome of landscaping art for private gardens, with their delicacy, intimacy, and simplicity. The designers of private gardens, not bound by the rigid conventions of the imperial court, had greater freedom of expression in their art.

The ancient gardens of Suzhou were the places people lived in. Paths invited residents and their guests to wander, offering a new view at every bend. Pavilions, gazebos or simple seats offered comfortable spots to relax, chat, and perhaps to take some refreshments or pen a poem. This type of landscaping was often used in the densely-populated cities, where residents recalled the countryside with nostalgia and yearned to commune with the nature.

Horizontally inscribed boards, hanging scrolls, sculptures and hall decorations, as well as trees, stones and ponds in the gardens are not only delightful treats for the senses. They also provide a wealth of

information as to the histories, societies, values and aesthetics of the eras in which they were built. They are storehouses of the artifacts of their times, calligraphy, carvings and paintings. But they are also treasure-trove of classical thought. Wandering through the gardens even today, people can enjoy reflecting on the philosophic concepts and ideologies of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and they can still sense the romance of the ancient poetry and prose that influenced the garden builders.

In recent years, the influence of Suzhou garden designs has even traveled across oceans. The Ming Hall Garden at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City is a copy of a section of the Master-of-Nets Garden. The design of the Dr. Sun Yat-sen Garden in Vancouver, Canada, is based on the Ming Dynasty Suzhou garden style.

In 2000, the UNESCO amended its prestigious list of world cultural heritage sites. The Surging Wave Pavilion, the Garden of Cultivation, the Couple's Retreat Garden, the Lion Forest Garden and the Retreat and Reflection Garden were added to the list.

(1) Humble Administrator's Garden

Located in the northeastern part of Suzhou, the Humble Administrator's Garden, with a total area of 51,950 m² (5.2 hectares), is the largest private garden in Suzhou. It has been listed as one of the four most famous national classical gardens together with the Summer Palace in Beijing, the Summer Resort in Chengde and the Lingering Garden of Suzhou. Around 1513, during the Ming Dynasty, Wang Xianchen, an imperial inspector, returned to Suzhou after his retirement and built this garden as a private mansion. The name, the Humble Administrator's Garden, reflected his feelings as a man retreated from the public life.

The garden is a masterpiece of the Ming Dynasty Chinese classical garden. With the central pond as focus, it is a compound of various structures, including pavilions, terraces, chambers and towers, which

are divided into eastern, central and western parts.

The central part is the cream of the garden with marvelous hills, clear waters, exquisite buildings and exuberant trees and flowers. The garden designer elaborately used the architectural technique of "borrowing a view from afar", which enables visitors to see much wider sights within a limited space. The pagoda, for example, which seems to be seated in the western part of the garden, is actually situated a kilometer away.

The buildings in the western part of the garden are arranged around the lake. Of them, the Hall of the Thirty-Six Mandarin Ducks and the Hall of Eighteen Camellias are the most magnificent. Both being stylishly furnished, with paintings and calligraphy works hung on the walls, these two halls symbolize the leisurely life of the owner. At the end of the west part, about 700 bonsais are displayed. The Humble Administrator's Garden is also representative of the horticultural art of the Yangtze River Delta.

A treasure house of the architectural art, calligraphy works, carvings, and paintings, the garden was listed as a key national cultural relic under the state protection in 1961 and was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1997.

(2) Lingering Garden

Covering an area of 2.3 hectares, the Lingering Garden is the best preserved among all Suzhou gardens. It is also one of the four most famous gardens in China.

Situated outside the Cangmen Gate of Suzhou, the garden was built in 1583 by Xu Taishi, a bureaucrat of the Ming court, as his private residence. Named the East Garden, it is recorded to have "magnificent multi-story houses in the front and halls in the rear, and a range of awe-inspiring stone mountains built by the well-known master Zhou Bingzhong, resembling a long scroll of landscape painting".

Later in 1794, the garden became a property of the Liu family.

After being expanded and renovated, it was renamed the Hanbi Villa, which was popularly known as the Liu Garden. In 1873, it was purchased by the Shengs, and again renamed the Lingering Garden, since “lingering” in Chinese sounds the same as “liu”, the surname of the former owner.

Today the garden is separated into the eastern, central, northern and western parts. The central part features man-made mountains and lakeside scenes. The eastern part is noted for its joyous groupings of gardens and elegant buildings. The western part is for the enchantment of woody hills, and the northern part has cottages with bamboo fences and idyllic scenes.

The number of steles in the Lingering Garden has not been surpassed by any other garden in Suzhou. Masterfully inscribed with the works of over 100 calligraphers in the Jin, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, they illustrate the evolution of the Chinese calligraphy during the past 1,000 years.

In 1961, the garden was listed as a key national cultural relic under the state protection and was included on the World Heritage List in 1997.

(3) Master-of-Nets Garden

The Master-of-Nets Garden is the smallest among the four most famous classical gardens in Suzhou, but yet it is the most impressive, thanks to the architect who used its limited space cleverly to create the illusion of a much larger area. Even more than the architectural achievement is the sense of tranquility and harmony that this small garden embodies.

This exquisite garden was first built during the Song Dynasty as part of a residence, which was in use until the Taiping Heavenly Uprising in the 1860s. It later became the residence of a government official and was given its present name. It is said that by giving his garden such a name, the owner indicated that he would rather be a fisherman than a

bureaucrat.

The garden is divided into three sections, the residential quarter, the central garden and the inner garden. Surrounding the big pond in the main garden, there are structures such as the Ribbon Washing Pavilion and the Pavilion of Moon and Breeze built over the water. As is commonly seen in Suzhou gardens, there is a small pavilion standing in the center of the pond, with a bridge of less than one-foot wide linking it to the shore. Small bridges link walkways and open halls, while above an ancient tree (reputed to be 900 years old), left with one branch of living greenery, pushes into the clear autumn sky.

When you walk in the garden's corridors, through the windows, you often catch views of beautiful flowers or plants in the distance. As a private mansion, the garden is obviously designed for the convenience of the family members and their guests. From any of its buildings, you can always find easy access to the main garden. The rooms, furnished in the Song Dynasty style, are quite impressive, too.

The exquisite inner garden has been copied as the Ming Hall Garden in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and miniaturized for an exhibit in the Pompidou Center in Paris. In 1982, the Master-of-Nets Garden was listed in the cultural relics list of national importance and in 1997 it was placed on the World Heritage List.

(4) Mountain Villa with Embracing Beauty

Located inside Suzhou Embroidery Research Institute on the western section of the Jingde Road in the center of the ancient city of Suzhou, the Mountain Villa with Embracing Beauty is a famed classical garden dating back to the Qing Dynasty.

The Mountain Villa covers an area of 0.2 hectare, with houses built in front of a garden. Rockeries and the pond in which they are displayed form the centerpiece of the entire garden. To the west of the pond there is a side chamber and a corridor. The rockwork was created in 1807 by Ge Yuliang, an expert of artificial mountains. It is the most

outstanding agglomeration of rocks among all the gardens in Suzhou.

The rockwork covers 0.03 hectare of land and rises 6 m above the ground and 7 m above the water surface. Though small, the rocky hill has a maze of paths, caves, running streams, stone chambers, secluded ravines, and surging peaks. Perfectly blending with the scenes in the entire garden, it imparts a wonderland to evoke the memory of a masterpiece of the traditional Chinese landscape painting.

In 1988 the Mountain Villa with Embracing Beauty was listed as one of the cultural relics of the national importance and in 1997 it was inscribed on the World Heritage List.

(5) Surging Wave Pavilion

The Surging Wave Pavilion, located in southern Suzhou, is the oldest among the existing classical gardens in Suzhou. It is also one of the four most famous gardens in the city. The garden was originally the private property of a prince of the Five Dynasties. During the Northern Song Dynasty, Su Zimei, a scholar, built his mansion here and named it the Surging Wave Pavilion. The garden has been rebuilt many times but most of the present garden buildings, simple and plain, are from the Qing Dynasty.

Covering an area of 10,656 m² (1.1 hectares), the garden features well-arranged man-made hills and waters. Over the stream winding through the garden, elegant stone bridges are built. On the hills, there are age-old trees and bamboo groves.

The Surging Wave, a square pavilion, stands at the top of a hill. The couplets carved on its stone pillars read: "The refreshing breeze and the bright moon are priceless; the nearby water and the distant mountains strike a sentimental note." A corridor built by the canal lies in the north of the garden, linking the scenes inside the garden with that of the outside.

The Enlightened Way Hall, located at the foot of the hills, is the major building of the garden. It was a hall for lectures during the Ming

Dynasty. Surrounded by verdant trees, it looks significant, though the structure is of a simple architectural style.

In addition to the hills and water, the garden is also famous for buildings with unique latticed windows. With different impressive designs, these windows have an extremely high artistic value.

The Surging Wave Pavilion was included on the Word Heritage List in the year 2000.

(6) Lion Grove Garden /Lion Forest Garden

The Lion Grove Garden is located at 23 Yuanlin (garden) Road, in the northeast of Suzhou. It is one of the four most famous and representative classical gardens in Suzhou.

Built in 1342 during the Yuan Dynasty by Monk Tianru and a group of Buddhists of the Zen Sect, and in memory of High Monk Zhong Feng, the Lion Grove Garden has changed hands and been renamed several times. It was first given the name of the Lion Grove, as the grotesque rocks of its man-made hills resembled lions. Later, in 1342, its name was changed to Puti Temple. The Lion Grove Garden was a popular center for Buddhists, as well as literary activities. Many scholars created their paintings or lines after being inspired by the garden.

After Monk Tianru's death, his disciples were dismissed. The Lion Grove Garden was abandoned. In 1589 of the Ming Dynasty, Monk Ming Xing rebuilt the garden and temple with donations collected. During the reign of Emperor Kangxi in the Qing Dynasty, the two parts were separated. Huang Xingzu, the governor of Hangzhou, bought the garden and renamed it the She Garden. His son, Huang Xi gave it a new name, the Five-Pine Garden in 1771, after a major renovation. The garden was again left in ruins due to the Huang family's bankruptcy, until it was purchased by the Bei family in 1917. After liberation, the garden was donated to the government.

Covering an area of about 1.1 hectares, the Lion Grove Garden is an ideal site for sightseeing as it has richly ornamental pavilions and

towers in different styles, each having its own history and story. The True Delight Pavilion is the most magnificent. Built in royal architectural style, it has a horizontal board inscribed by Emperor Qianlong, who visited the gardens six times. The Standing-in-Snow Hall was named according to a Buddhist story which tells how a devoted Zen adherent stood in snow for a whole night to worship his master monk. The Pavilion for Greeting the Plum Blossoms was a place where painters and poets gathered. In addition to the plum trees around the pavilion, all the furniture and utensils inside are all decorated or carved with designs of beautiful plum blossoms. Many rare tablets and steles, paintings and calligraphy works are kept in the garden, among which are precious Ming Dynasty artworks such as the Panoramic View by Ni Yunlin and “the Twelve Scenic Spots in the Lion Grove Garden” by Xu Ben.

A representative garden of the Yuan Dynasty, the most noted attraction of the garden is the labyrinthine rockery made of limestone from the Taihu Lake. Rocks in this “Kingdom of Rockery” are piled up skillfully and ingeniously, and most of them looked like lions in different postures and liveliness, playing, roaring, fighting, sleeping, or even dancing. It is said that in the past, looking north from the Small Square Hall, one could see nine stone lions standing in a row and that is the Nine Lion Peak.

In 2000, the Lion Grove Garden was inscribed on the World Heritage List.

(7) Garden of Cultivation

The Garden of Cultivation is small in scale but distinctive in artistic characteristics. Built in the Ming Dynasty, it was called Yaopu at first. During the early Qing Dynasty, its name was changed to the present one, but was also called the Jingting Mountain Cottage. The garden occupies an area of 0.33 hectares, more than half of which are residential houses.

The garden's setout is open and simple, and buildings, ponds and



mountain trees are laid out from north to south. This is the most basic method of arrangement of Suzhou gardens. In the southwestern corner there are some small courtyards comprising views, which offer the visitors very calm and joyful feelings. All the structures in the garden are used to create an artistic garden view with hills shrouded in mist, waves reaching far into the distance, and trees growing luxuriantly. There are also springs and deep pools, lofty pavilions and terraces.

The pond in the middle of the garden occupies one fourth of the total area. It features "mountain scenery" to the south and buildings to the north. The pond is a roughly rectangular shape with coves in its southeast and southwest, spanned by low, flat and small bridges. On the east and west banks of the pond, there are roofed galleries, pavilions, rocks and trees, serving transitionally as a foil to the northern and southern scenes. The pavilion standing by the pond is a Ming Dynasty structure. A moon gate in the wall that borders the pond and the hills leads to a small courtyard in the southwest. The Water Pavilion of Longevity standing to the north of the pond overlooks a broad expanse of water. It is the biggest waterside pavilion in Suzhou. To the north of the pavilion is the Hall of Erudition and Elegance, also in Ming architectural style. The Garden of Cultivation has 13 buildings, altogether 17 tablets and couplets, eight steles and stone-carvings, in addition to valuable old trees.

The Garden of Cultivation was placed on the World Heritage List in 2000.

(8) Couple's Garden Retreat

Surrounded by a canal on three sides, the Couple's Garden Retreat is an art treasure among the classical gardens of Suzhou. The mansion has rooms built in the middle, with two gardens, set on either side to the east and to the west.

The East Garden has a dominant hill rising from a pond, with pavilions, terraces and towers spreading around the surroundings. This

man-made hill was a masterpiece of Zhang Nanyang, a great master of garden architect in the late Ming Dynasty. The principal structure, the City Corner Cottage, is actually a group of double-roofed and multi-storied buildings. To the south of the pond is the Water Pavilion Amongst Mountains. On its circular doorframe, there are carvings of pine, bamboo and plum trees, symbols of vitality.

The West Garden consists of studies, pavilions and courtyards. A limestone rockwork sits at the entrance. To the north of the "hill" is the old house with woven curtains. Behind it is a study, an "L"-shaped tower, with rocks, trees and flowers in front of it.

The Couple's Garden Retreat has 24 buildings, 21 tablets and couplets, in addition to brick-carvings and precious ancient trees. In 2000, the Couple's Garden Retreat was included on the World Heritage List.



Chapter 15

CULTURE AND LIFE

There are several distinctive features of Suzhou and its people. Their history has left a distinct literary and cultural legacy. Suzhou is part of a broader region of over 85 million speakers of the Wu dialect. The dialect of Suzhou is famous as a softly spoken, refined dialect with its own literary and operatic traditions. Likewise, Suzhou, as an important southern city, was a centre of the Song and Ming cultures, a trend which continued to the early Qing period. Suzhou was the place of Zhuangyuan in the Qing Dynasty, making it a foremost centre of scholarship.

The city is especially famous for its craftsmen and artists, and is the centre of the Wumen School of Painting, which greatly influenced the landscape paintings throughout the Ming and Qing Dynasties. With marked changes in season, ranging from hot summers to cool winters with occasional snowfalls, the area has a particularly impressive range of atmospheric and light conditions. Surrounded by lakes and rivers, the sky is often misty, and an impressionistic light makes the area ideal for landscape painters. The ancient canals and houses, tree-lined streets and numerous gardens provide suitable backdrops for a wide range of local artists.

Other local art forms include the Kunqu Opera, and Suzhou Pingtan, a local dialect form of ballad-singing and story-telling. Artists

are still extremely active in capturing the differing aspects of the city, and opera performances are still played to packed Chinese audience in halls.

Overall, Suzhou represents the height of culture and refinement in many areas of the Chinese cultural life. A senior scholar and professor of the Chinese history and civilization at Princeton University wrote: "Suzhou drew to it and fostered the arts of China, the literary arts above all, but also music and painting, calligraphy, the craft arts, the decorative arts, and the minor arts that contributed to the elegant life. Also, Suzhou sustained learning, the mechanism for achieving social status and official careers, and the prestige affectation of all who could afford it. It lavished wealth on gardens and art collections and religious institutions; its citizen's dress, their mansions, their delicate foods, their pleasure boats and pleasure houses and theatricals and festivals were reputed to be the finest in all China. If some of those statements were also made about other places ... it only proves that Suzhou was the first among many rivals in the multi-centered urban life of China."

I . Language and Art

Some say that the style of Suzhou lies in "the softness", like the tone of the Wu dialect, which also sums up the character in feminine beauty, tenderness, serenity, subtlety and elegance.

The Chinese folk arts and crafts are the crystals of the Chinese wisdom. Though having much difference in different regions, they have the same characteristics of being created and accepted by the public and handed down from generation to generation. The most representative Suzhou arts and crafts are its local operas, paintings, embroideries, jade-carvings, mahogany-carvings, silk fabrics, fine fans, and woodcut prints.

Being the source land of the Wu culture, Suzhou plays an important role in the national cultural history, where great names in history

appeared one after another. The Wumen Fine Arts School, represented by the Wumen Four Masters of Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin and Qiu Ying, whose poems, calligraphies, and paintings might be named as “the three incredibilities of the Wumen”, was famous in the fine arts circle. Nowadays, in Suzhou fine arts circle, promising young painters not only inherit the traditional styles, but also learn from their predecessors. They then extensively absorb their mentor's strong points, and combine them into their own new styles, assisting the Wumen Fine Arts School to develop and prosper in the fine arts circle.

The block-printed Chinese New Year pictures are a traditional form of folk art in China. These pictures are printed from wood blocks into which both the texts and the illustrations have been carved by hand. The prints are used to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year. As a form of folk art, the Suzhou Taohuawu Woodcutting New Year Pictures from the Peach Blossom Castle are very popular with their rich contents, lively plots, and art styles of images and bright colors.

Suzhou traditional Chinese Operas show a flourishing scene of prosperity and it is from Suzhou that the Kunqu Opera, called “the King of the Chinese Operas”, originated. The stage performance of the Opera is captivating and its “dancing and singing” is extremely expressive of emotions. Suzhou Pingtan has become one of the nation's top four operas, using the local dialect as its performance language, and impressing the audience in the form of story-telling and singing to the accompaniment of stringed instruments.

Suzhou embroidery is celebrated for its sophisticated stitching, vivid pictures, beautiful patterns and elegant colors.

1. Suzhou Dialect

China has always been a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-dialect nation. It is hard to guess how many dialects exist, but they can be roughly classified into one of the seven large groups: the northern dialect, the Wu dialect, the Xiang (Hunan) dialect, the Gan (Jiangxi)

dialect, the Hakka dialect, the Min (Fujian) dialect and the Yue (Guangdong) dialect. These dialectic groups are largely mutually unintelligible.

The Wu language is one of the major divisions of the Chinese language. It is spoken in most of Zhejiang Province, the municipality of Shanghai, southern Jiangsu Province, as well as small parts of Anhui, Jiangxi and Fujian Provinces. The major Wu dialects include those of Shanghai, Suzhou, Wenzhou, Hangzhou, Shaoxing, Jinhua, Yongkang, and Quzhou. The traditional dominant dialect of the Wu is the Suzhou dialect, though considerably due to its large population.

The Wu language had its origin in Suzhou. The sociolinguistic evolution of the Wu region, however, is not well established. From the center of its origin, the language spread to regions south of the lower Yangtze River. It is a language that has gained importance because of the rise of Shanghai as a metropolitan center.

The Sinitic Wu culture is thought to have reached its highest point during the Southern Song Dynasty. This would have been the period when the Wu region was at the geographical core of what has been considered to be the most highly cultured state in China. The Southern Song Dynasty, with its capital at present-day Hangzhou, played an important role in transmitting Buddhism to neighboring countries such as Japan.

The Wu people are far more diverse than the people in Shanghai, the sublanguage's largest population center. Shanghai does not really play the role of being the center for the Wu people, because it is a relatively new city. Furthermore, the population in Shanghai has come from various Wu-speaking districts as well as from Nanjing and beyond. Centers such as Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Shaoxing have all played major roles in the history of the Wu language, but none can truly be said to be its center. As of 1991, there were at least 77 million speakers of the Wu language, making it the second most populous Chinese

language.

The Wu people are also different from other Chinese in that they would not usually describe their subethnic identities in terms of their province of origin. This is because only the southern part of Jiangsu Province is Wu speaking. Unlike the Yue, the Hakka, and the Min people to the south, the Wu people did not join the modern migration of Chinese abroad on any major scale, and as a result the Wu speakers have only a minor representation in the overseas Chinese population.

The Wu language is often subjectively judged to be soft, light, and flowing. There is even a special term used to describe the quality of the Wu speech, which is likely a combination of many factors. Among the speakers of the Wu, for example, Shanghainese is considered softer and mellower than the variant spoken in Ningbo, although some Wu speakers still insist that old standard Suzhou dialect is more pleasing and beautiful than the dialects of Shanghai and Ningbo.

Like other varieties of the Chinese language, there is debate as to whether the Wu is a language or a dialect. By the standard of mutual intelligibility, the Wu is a separate language. However, socially it is considered to be a regional form of the Chinese language.

When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the government began promoting Putonghua (the Mandarin) so that all Chinese citizens could communicate with other Putonghua speakers. In the context of social and economic development, the use of Putonghua is becoming more and more widespread, while the use of local dialects is decreasing.

Language experts have urged that the dialects be preserved alongside Putonghua. A dialect is not only a linguistic tool, but also a person's "birthmark" and part of his/her local identity and feeling of belonging. Dialects carry and preserve local culture. The sweet tune of the Suzhou dialect is still existent in the local Pingtan Opera. Considering the Suzhou dialect as a national treasure, language experts have recommended that

TV and radio stations set up channels and programs using Suzhou dialect, and schools offer selective Suzhou dialect courses.

2. Pingtan

Suzhou Pingtan is a generic term for Suzhou Pinghua (story-telling) and Suzhou Tanci (ballad-singing). It is a regional performing art in the south of the Yangtze River. Originating in Suzhou 400 years ago and performed in Suzhou dialect, Suzhou Pingtan also enjoys great popularity in the rest of Jiangsu and in Zhejiang Provinces as well as in Shanghai. It has been acclaimed as a wonderful branch of performing art.

Pinghua is mostly performed by a narrator who holds a fan and a piece of wood while telling historical, judicial, heroic and epic stories. The most popular stories are “the Tale of Yue Fei”, “the Gallant Heroes”, “the Water Margin”, and “the Seven Gallant Men and Five Heroes from the Three Kingdoms” and “the Sui and Tang Dynasties”.

Tanci is mostly performed by two singer narrators, and occasionally by one or three narrators, accompanied by a three-string zither and a pipe lute, telling and singing stories ranging from daily life to love affairs. The most popular stories are “the Pearl Pagoda”, “the Jade Dragonflies”, “the Gilded Hairpins”, and “the Three Smiles”.

Suzhou Pingtan performance is composed of four parts, story-telling, joke-telling, music-playing and aria-sing (shuo, xue, tan and chang). Performed in teahouses or special storytelling houses, a whole Pingtan story can stretch over several weeks, usually two hours a day at a time. Natives in Suzhou like listening to Pingtan singing while sitting in the teahouse with old friends, sipping tea and enjoying their leisure hours.

With its flexible forms of performance, melodious music, vivid narration and fascinating story, Suzhou Pingtan has become well known all over China and the world. It has been praised by Yu Dagang, a master of Chinese learning, as presenting “the sweetest tunes in

China”.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the government set up Suzhou Pingtan School, the Research Institute of Suzhou Pingtan and some other institutes to contribute to the protection and inheritance of this traditional art form. Under all efforts, Suzhou Pingtan has gained popularity both locally and overseas. Performers have staged performances in Japan, Singapore, Italy, Canada, and the United States of America.

3. Kunqu Opera

The Kunqu Opera, also called “Kunshanqiang”, is one of the oldest extant forms of Chinese operas. The Kunqu Opera ranks among the most splendid cultural art forms created by the Chinese people in their long history. Ever since it came into being in the district of Kunshan near Suzhou in the mid-14th century, the Kunqu Opera has been artistically refined over a period of 200 years and has stood out prominently among the various competing schools of operas in China for its “delicate tunes and elegant melodies”. With a 600-year history, it dominated the Chinese theater from the 16th century to the 18th century. Because of its influence on other forms of Chinese operas including the Beijing Opera, the Kunqu Opera is known as “the Queen of Chinese Operas”.

The Kunqu Opera evolved from Kunshan melody. Its emergence ushered in the second golden era of the Chinese drama. During the reign of Emperor Jiajing of the Ming Dynasty, Wei Liangfu, a famous musician, by combining the essences of the Haiyan and the Yiyang melodies, reformed the Kunqu Opera, based on the artistic achievements in the southern opera of the Song and Yuan Dynasties. He created the most known shuimoqiang or shuimo melody, making a leapfrog contribution to the development of the Kunqu Opera. Dominating the theatrical stage during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Kunqu Opera was the most fashionable, influencing the whole nation.

In the reign of Emperor Qianlong, there were over 40 such opera troupes such as those in the north, Sichuan, Hunan, Zhejiang, and Anhui Provinces.

The Kunqu Opera has suffered somewhat from a decline since the 18th century because it required a high level of technical knowledge from the audience but was shown to royal or wealthy families only. As China's oldest surviving opera form, the Kunqu Opera was almost lost to the world by the late 1940s. In the year of 1921, a Kunqu Opera inheriting and study training class was run, in which 50 students were trained. The students in this class had a chuan, meaning inherit, as the first character of their name. After the liberation in 1949, the Kunqu Opera flourished again. The revised drama fifteen Strings of Coins (Shi-Wu Guan) performance achieved great success and earned nationwide attention.

The Kunqu Opera forms a complete system of acting and has its own distinctive tunes. Most of the stories in the opera are romantic. It is rare to have any military roles or acrobatics in a play. It has a subtle performing style through practice in the past hundred years. Its wide ranging repertoire has many elegant tunes. The orchestra consists of traditional instruments including dizi, a horizontal bamboo flute playing the lead part, xiao, a vertical bamboo flute, sheng, a mouth organ and, pipa, a plucked string instrument with a fretted finger board.

There are two schools of the Kunqu Opera, the southern, prevalent in Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces, and the northern, prevailing throughout North China. Today the Opera is performed professionally in seven Chinese cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou, Nanjing, Changsha, Wenzhou, and Taipei.

The roles in the Kunqu Opera are broadly divided into seven categories, including sheng (male roles), dan (female roles), jing (painted face), mo (middle-aged male roles), chou (clowns), wai, and tie, and each category has further subdivisions. For instance, the

sheng roles have laosheng (aged male roles), wusheng (male warriors), and xiaosheng (young male roles), each of which is further divided according to the characters' prominence within the play. The xiaosheng, young male role, is divided into daguansheng (big hat role), xiaoguansheng (small hat role), jinsheng (kerchief role), qiongshe (pauper role) and zhiweisheng (a warrior whose helmet is decorated with a pheasant tail feather).

The Kunqu Opera style of stage makeup is mainly used for jing and chou roles, and occasionally for sheng and dan roles. The three predominant colors are red, white and black. Shades of blue, green, purple and gold are used to portray forest brigands, or ghosts and demons. As in the Beijing Opera, the color red represents loyalty and justice, black conveys uprightness and straightforwardness, white signifies cunning and shrewdness, and yellow indicates a fierce, tough character. Most of the patterns and techniques of the Beijing Opera's facial makeup have evolved from, and some were just copies from the Kunqu Opera.

The most prominent characteristic of the Kunqu Opera performance is its lyricism, where the posture of each role is in a dancing mode. Almost all traditional Chinese dramas have elements of dance, and in some plays dances have been added. But these are unlike the Kunqu Opera, where every physical movement from the beginning to the end is in the mode of dancing, thus creating a complete scope of performance technique.

Mei Lanfang, a great master of the Beijing Opera, also learned the Kunqu Opera, and had a deep understanding of both. He said, "In the Peking Opera, postures are relatively unrehearsed, with no structured choreography, but the Kunqu Opera is quite different in this respect. The performer matches specific postures to each aria. The Kunqu Opera truly integrates singing and dancing into each individual performance, with equal emphasis on singing and acting. The

performing of the Opera is particularly demanding because the actor is, in effect, dancing from the beginning to the end.”

The Kunqu Opera dance is divided into two categories. One is mime, used to interpret to the audience the verses the performer sings, and the other is lyrical, to describe scenery, the characters' situation, and their emotions.

One zhezixi (opera highlight), *Zhaojun Leaves the Pass*, tells of Wang Zhaojun, a beauty at the Han Dynasty imperial court, on her way to marry the Xiongnu Khan in order to cement relationships with the rulers of ethnic minorities in the border regions. The drama describes Zhaojun's complex emotions and the hardships of the journey. On stage, Zhaojun sings while dancing and her attendant turns somersaults throughout the performance. This Opera is seldom performed today because few performers are able to fulfill its demands.

Plays in this genre are taxing, not only for the performers, but also for the audience, since the lyrics are difficult to understand and the singing is slow and drawn-out, a challenge in concentration and patience. In addition, a drama is generally quite long. In June 2001, *the Peony Pavilion* was performed in Berlin, Germany, and lasted 19 hours. The local newspaper dubbed it as “a drama marathon”. It is rare to see a full performance of this play at one sitting. Usually only a few acts are staged at a time, with each lasting 30 to 40 minutes.

The Kunqu Opera has for several centuries, undergone ups and downs, but its supreme status has never been challenged. It has played a guiding role in the creation of other forms of traditional operas, and it has generated a dedicated following of devotees.

In recent years, following the Chinese peoples' rapid and dramatic changes in concepts and lifestyles, the Kunqu Opera has had to face an enormous challenge for survival. However, it has preserved its ancient tradition, and its supreme artistry is acknowledged over the world.

June 2001 marked the 44th anniversary of the founding of the

Northern Kunqu Opera Theater in Beijing. On hearing the news that the Kun Opera had been listed as a world cultural heritage, people in the Kunqu Opera circles were ecstatic, and a grand celebratory performance was held. Officials from Beijing Cultural Bureau promised that it would, within the coming years, set aside a venue for the Kunqu Opera performance, and work out a series of protective measures and policies. On June 9, the Chinese Ministry of Culture listed the Kunqu Opera as a key protected art form and promulgated eight specific measures.

Owing to its splendid and incomparable influence in the Chinese operas, the Kunqu Opera was awarded the title of “masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity” by the UNESCO in 2001. It is so far the only Chinese art form listed as the common cultural heritage of humankind. Hopefully, this international recognition will help this ancient art meet the challenge of modern art by merging it with traditional culture and open wholly new creative and innovative horizons.

4. Wumen Painting School

During the Ming Dynasty, Suzhou was an agricultural, industrial and commercial center with a developed economy. The beautiful scenery, famous gardens, and rich material life made Suzhou “a paradise on the earth”. Hence, Suzhou became a gathering place for high officials, noble lords and rich merchants as well as intellectuals. About one-fifth of all the famous painters gathered here, which made Suzhou the biggest center for the Chinese painting during the period. An influential school of painting named the Wumen came into being and gradually became the most dominant school throughout the nation. Historically, Suzhou was known as the Wumen, hence the name the Wumen Painting School.

Though the subjects of the Wumen School paintings were not of a wide range due to the painters' narrow experiences and life circles, these painters inherited the traditional Song and Yuan scholar-artist

styles of painting (renwen painting) skills enabling them to produce their own vivid paintings. Their brushstroke techniques and creative painting methods revealed their aesthetic pursuits and aspirations in art and had a tremendous impact on painters of later times.

During the reign of Emperors Longqing, Wanli and Chongzhen of the Ming Dynasty, the Wumen Painting School flourished. Among the painters the most famous ones were the "Four Wumen Masters": Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin and Qiu Ying.

Shen Zhou was born into a wealthy intellectual family and received a good education. His great grandfather, grandfather and father were all proficient at painting and poetry. Influenced by his family, Shen Zhou developed a great interest in reading, writing poems and proses and paintings. He was dissatisfied with the political situation and never attended the imperial civil service examination. He lived a secluded and unrestrained life and spent most of his time doing calligraphy and painting. As the founder and major representative of the Wumen Painting School, Shen was good at flower, bird and landscape paintings. Inheriting the painting traditions of the Song and Yuan Dynasties, Shen formed his own elegant and unconstrained painting style.

Wen Zhengming was one of the most well-known calligraphists and painters in the late period of the Ming Dynasty. Though attending the imperial civil service examination several times, young Wen failed because his opinions were not accepted by the administrative officials. He then committed to poetry, prose, calligraphy and painting. Wen obtained a solid painting grounding from his teacher Shen Zhou and had a good command of brushstroke techniques. He was good at not only green landscape painting but also bold black ink landscape paintings in both freehand sketches and fine brushwork. The Humble Administrator's Garden was designed with the help of this great painter, who painted 31 paintings for the garden.

Tang Yin, better known by his courtesy name Tang Bohu, was a great achiever in poetry, prose, calligraphy and painting. In his early life, Tang was put into prison for the malpractice of the imperial civil service examination. His family broke up after he was released from prison. Experiencing many hardships, Tang Yin formed an unrestrained personality. He spent most of his time in studying painting of the Song Dynasty and the Five Dynasties and built up his painting style. Tang was talented in painting landscapes, human figures and flowers and birds. His figure painting won him a great reputation.

Qiu Ying was born into a poor farmer family. He was much younger than Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming and Tang Yin, but yet he excelled in various painting techniques. Though the Wumen Painting School specialized in ink washes, Qiu Ying painted in a green-and-blue style. He was talented in landscape and figure painting, especially in painting court ladies in meticulous details and with bright colors. He incorporated many different techniques into his paintings, and acquired a few wealthy patrons. His talent and versatility allowed him to become one of the Wumen Four Masters.

II. Handicraft

1. Kesi Silk

Kesi, or engraved silk, is an ancient silk-weaving technique using raw silk as the warp and colored scouring silk as the weft. It involves meticulous craftsmanship and time-consuming labor to weave the colored silk on a 2,000-thread loom by running the shuttle back and forth and then cutting the threads at each end. Producing Kesi silk is rather like embroidering and carving out patterns and figures directly on the warp. This highly detailed and valuable fabric is formed throughout the woven textile industry for its intricate and artistic designs.

The origin of Kesi silk can be traced back through archaeological evidence to the Lou Lan site of the Han Dynasty. During the Song

Dynasty, Kesi silk tapestries became so highly desirable due to their classical designs and refined craftsmanship that this method was applied to weave robes for royalty and the aristocracy. It was considered a tribute all throughout ancient history. In the Yuan Dynasty, Kesi silk art and craft was used for dragon robes for the emperor and his royal families and the nobles. Since the Ming Dynasty, Kesi silk has become known throughout the world. In the Qing Dynasty, Suzhou became the center of Kesi silk production. As the art of Kesi silk developed rapidly, weaving techniques became increasingly precise and even. The range of patterns also blossomed as designs became ever more abundant and complex. The practice of combining weaving and painting became more widely spread, resulting in further variations of this art form.

Kesi silk artisans use the weaving method of “continuous warp and discontinuous weft”. Each tiny passage of thread forms part of the structure of the cloth. Thus both sides of the silk fabric have an identical color and image, representing an integration of silk weaving and painting. Within this technique, artisans are free to depict figures, landscapes, flowers and birds as they choose. Famous calligraphies and paintings also left their traces on Kesi silk craft. Being flexible in size and shape, Kesi silk fabric is widely used and can be applied to apparel, paintings, ornaments, and household goods. As it is especially durable, Kesi silk has been recorded as lasting for a thousand years.

Although Kesi silk products are refined in technique and soft in picture, the craft of Kesi silk is extremely time-and-energy-consuming. It can take months or even years to complete a product. In addition, its hand-made techniques, long productive cycles and high costs also restrain it from mechanical manufactory. That is why Kesi silk began to decline in modern times. Very few old artisans are still engaged in Kesi silk production. The government has placed it on the list of cultural protection and Suzhou government has applied to the UNESCO to put Kesi silk on the list of World Cultural Heritage.



2. Embroidery

Embroidery is done by pulling colored threads through silk, satin, and other textiles with embroidery needles to stitch colored patterns that have been previously designed. The adoption of different needling methods results in different embroidery styles and technique schools. Suzhou embroidery, together with Xiang embroidery, Yue embroidery and Shu embroidery, is one of the traditional Chinese embroideries.

The origin of Suzhou embroidery can be traced back more than 2,000 years. Suzhou was favored with a suitable climate for raising silkworms and planting mulberry trees, providing the necessary raw material for embroidery. So as early as in the Song Dynasty, Suzhou was already famed for its delicate and elegant embroidery. During the Ming Dynasty, influenced by the *Wumen Painting School*, Suzhou embroidery experienced a peak of development in both quantity and quality and began to rival painting and calligraphy in its artistry. There were embroidering girls all over towns and villages, and schools multiplied and skilled people doing embroidery increased. With detailed needlework and intricate images, Suzhou embroidery became so prominent that it became fashionable to have Suzhou embroidery at home. Suzhou embroidery set the standard for other styles. In the mid-and-late Qing Dynasty, Suzhou embroidery experienced a further development, double-sided embroidering. During the Republic of China period, Suzhou embroidery industry experienced a rapid decline due to frequent wars, but it was restored and regenerated after the founding of the new China. In 1950, the government set up research centers for Suzhou embroidery and opened training courses for the study of embroidery.

Suzhou embroidery is very refined and exquisite. One silk thread can be split into as many as 48 strands, barely visible to the naked eye. Suzhou embroidery girls are able to use more than 40 types of stitches and 1,000 different types of threads to realistically depict flowers and

birds, animals and figures on a piece of cloth. The main theme of Suzhou embroidery is the nature and environment. The representative content of double-sided embroidery is a cat with bright eyes and fluffy fur looking vivid and lifelike.

The techniques used in Suzhou embroidery are characterized by the following. They are: the product surface must be flat, the rim neat, the needle thin, the lines dense, the color harmonious and bright, and the picture even. Thus, stitching is smooth, dense, thin, neat, even, delicate and harmonious. As a folk art, Suzhou embroidery displays exquisite craftsmanship, immaculate execution and strong aesthetic appeal.

Suzhou embroidery products are used in three major areas: costumes, decorations for halls and items for daily use. Suzhou embroidery has been used in clothing, pictures, bookmarks, scrolls, wall hangings and even intricate book covers.

There are various patterns for Suzhou embroidery, such as single-side embroidery, double-sided embroidery, thin-needle embroidery, random-needle embroidery, thin-random-needle and mixed embroidery. Today, Suzhou embroidery is showing some new features. Apart from these traditional patterns, a wide range of other needlework has appeared, such as brocade-like embroidery, hair embroidery, and knot embroidery.

Suzhou embroidery has been developing in style and theme with the effort of contemporary artists. Exhibitions of works of art by Suzhou embroiderers are held around the world. A growing number of traditional art lovers have been attracted by the beauty and exquisiteness of Suzhou embroidery.

3. Woodblock

The New Year's woodblock picture is a type of print pasted on walls and doors during the Spring Festival. In ancient China, most families would clean their houses and courtyards and put New Year's woodblock

prints on windows, doors, walls and stoves during the Spring Festival to seek good luck in the coming year.

The Taohuawu Woodblock New Year Print originated in the Ming Dynasty and reached its peak in the reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty. The main woodblock producers at that time included Mianzhu of Sichuan, Wuqiang of Hebei, Zhuxianzhen of Henan, Shaoxing of Zhejiang, Taohuawu of Suzhou, Yangliuqing of Tianjin, Weifang of Shandong, and Foshan of Guangdong. Of these, the New Year prints from Yangliuqing, Taohuawu, Yangjiabu, and Mianzhu were acknowledged as the "Four Great Woodblocks in China", with each boasting unique features. Taohuawu of Suzhou was the center for New Year prints in southern China. Taohuawu and Yangliuqing were recorded as "the Southern Peach and the Northern Willow" for their brilliant artwork.

The print-making process consists of three different processes, painting, carving and printing. First, an artist draws figures on a piece of thin, translucent paper. Then a skilled carver pastes the paper onto the woodblock and carefully carves a key block leaving the outlines of the painting raised and the rest of the pattern carved out. Using this key block, a black and white print copy can be printed. The painter then marks the different colored areas. Black, red, green, blue and yellow are the preferred colors. For each color a separate block will be carved. Finally, the printer will print the various colors evenly on the paper.

As a form of folk art, the Taohuawu Woodblock New Year Print stands out in its artistic expression. These printers have inherited the traditional Chinese sketching techniques and the prints depict the local people's life and customs using intense colors and contrasts. Famous prints like *Harmony*, *Abundant Harvest of All Food Crops*, and *Surplus Every Year* have prevailed across China for hundreds of years.

The Taohuawu Woodblock New Year Prints may be categorized into the different themes. For example, the theme of people's wish for

good fortune is shown in some of the prints like *Zhong Kui Driving Away Demons*, *Summoning Wealth and Receiving Treasures*, the *Golden Tiger* and *Booming Business at the Opening*. Local event and folk custom is another theme. The *Pilgrimage to Bao'en Temple* and *Lantern Decorated Pleasure Boats at the Tiger Hill*, are representative works of that category.

As the themes of the New Year prints are deeply-rooted in ordinary people's life, these pictures emitted a strong local flavor, which gained great popularity and thrived in the mid-and-late Qing Dynasty.

However, with the introduction of lithographic and offset printing, the Taohuawu Woodblock New Year Print began to decline toward the end of the Qing Dynasty. What's more, Fengqiao and Shantang areas in Suzhou, the center of the New Year print were completely destroyed in the war between the Qing government and the Taiping Heavenly Uprising, and this was a destructive blow to the Taohuawu Woodblock New Year Print. This once-flourishing traditional form of art was on the verge of extinction after the ravages of wars. The liberation in 1949 made a revival possible. Many New Year prints, excellent in both content and form, have since been produced. They depict the real life of people after the founding of new China. Along with the improvement of printing technology, there are more new materials used in the production of New Year prints.

4. Fan

Suzhou has long been a center of fan production in China, and Suzhou fans have been one of the best-known special local products. Suzhou fans were first produced in the Southern Song Dynasty and flourished in the Yuan and the Ming Dynasties when many masters appeared. In the Xuande Period of the Ming Dynasty, some celebrated brands appeared like the black bamboo-boned gold coated fan. In the Shunzhi Period of the Qing Dynasty, Suzhou fans became a royal tribute, which stimulated their prosperity.

Suzhou fan is famous for its exquisite designs and elegant handicrafts. There are numerous varieties, of which the most reputable ones are silk palace fans, folding fans, and sandalwood fans. They were given the name "elegant fans" for their delicacy and elegance. The elegant fans of Suzhou combine the techniques of design, picture-mounting, engraving, inlaying, and lacquering, and were an inseparable treasure of the ancient scholars, who liked to paint and write poems on the covering of the fan. Painting on fans has even become a recognized painting technique. Its content varies from flowers and birds to figures and landscapes. The name of "elegant fans" indeed matches the reality.

Originally, palace fans were only used by ladies in the imperial palace in the Han Dynasty, but gained popularity during the Tang Dynasty. Palace fans have long handles. The coverings of palace fans are made of thin silk with painting and calligraphy or embroidery on them. The frames, usually engraved or painted, are made of bamboo, or ivory. They are usually elliptical, rectangular, or hexagonal. Elegant and feminine, silk palace fans have always been painted with landscapes, flowers and birds, human figures as well as poems and calligraphies.

Folding fans were introduced from Korea in the Tang and Song Dynasties. In the Southern Song Dynasty, Suzhou started mass-production of these fans. Folding fans were named as they could be folded and carried around easily. The frame is mainly made of bamboo slats with fan covering made of paper. The most celebrated polished bone and jade folding fan has flowers and birds, figures and landscapes engraved on its ribs, with the handle carved in an amalgamated shape of bamboo stem, yulan, and plum tree.

Sandalwood fans, the body made of sandalwood, evolved from the folding fans and are unique to China. The most outstanding feature of the fan is the refreshing and fragrant scent that comes from the wood. As sandalwood is a very precious imported wood, some less expensive

scented woods, such as cypress, are used as well.

Sandalwood fan is traditionally carved in elegant and elaborate latticework patterns, both to make it lighter and also more beautiful. Fan artisans apply various complex techniques to carve patterns on the fan, among which the most distinctive ones are “seesaw flower”, “bronze flower” and “drawing flower”. The seesaw flower involves a traditional sawing tool which looks much like an archer's bow. The artisan works carefully with it to shape the wood. The bronze flower refers to the drawing of pictures on the opened sandalwood fan using a hot iron rod, the end of which is heated in a coal brazier. The artisan creates brown singed lines by pressing the tip directly onto the wood. The term drawing flower means the painting of different patterns onto the fan, though most fans today are made by stamping the patterns or by machine. Better quality fans are still made by hand.

III. Cuisine

As people mostly traveled by boat in the water city of Suzhou, a lot of expensive restaurants and other eating places were traditionally located along rivers and canals. They formed a scenic sight along the rivers. With lanterns outside at night, the windows of the restaurant rooms opened upon a view of the river, the moat or a canal. Moreover, the rich aquatic products were good sources of local dishes, which contributed to another special style of dish called the Taihu Lake Boat Dish.

In the old days, even snack booths with local flavor could be seen everywhere in Suzhou near a bridge, by the water and at a busy marketplace. In order to win customers, most of the snack booth keepers paid close attention to their reputation, used good ingredients, cooked their snacks with great care and kept their tableware, tables and chairs perfectly clean.

1. Popular Dish

As part of the Huaiyang Cuisine, Suzhou style of cooking is closely related to the local culture and characterized by the natural flavor, beautiful presentation, light and palatable taste, and seasonal varieties. The selection of ingredients has much to do with the water country. Dishes and pastries traditionally served aboard pleasure boats remain the principal forms. Seasonal foods are water mallows, gorgon fruits, fish, shrimps, crabs, and other aquatic products.

The city's catering trade became ever more brisk with the prosperity of the overall economy, with restaurants and eating houses scattered in almost every street and lane. The restaurants in the Guanqian Street and the Stone Road serve food and snacks with distinctive and local features. The most famous ones were and still are the Songhelou Restaurant, the Deyuelou Restaurant, the Wangsi Public House, the Jinghua Tavern, the Dasanyuan Tavern, the Shanghai Laozhangxing Restaurant, and the Wufangzhai Noodle.

Through hundreds of years of experimentation, Suzhou dishes have been developed with a strong local flavor exclusively of their own. Each course is prepared with quality ingredients and care, and is enticing in color, scent, shape and taste. The fish and vegetable dishes of the area are well-known throughout China.

The Squirrel-Shaped Mandarin Fish is the first dish that is worth mentioning. Tradition has it that once stopping at the Songhelou Restaurant during his south tour along the Yangtze River, Emperor Qianlong saw a carp frisking on the holy table and ordered it cooked for him. The chef, knowing it was the emperor's order, spared no effort in flavoring and seasoning. In order to be exempted from the sin of killing the "holy fish", he made the carp into the shape of a squirrel with its head and tail soaring high. The dark reddish brown fish crisp outside and tender inside, was a combination of sour and sweet, enough to safe and the taste of the emperor, whose appreciation raised the name of

the Squirrel-Shaped Mandarin Fish within China. Fresh from the water, the mandarin fish is characterized by its tenderness of flesh and sparseness of bones. After scaling and frying, the head of the fish looks big with its mouth wide open, and the tail bending upwards, the flesh having been cut in a crisscross pattern imitates the erect fur of a squirrel. Thus the Squirrel-Shaped Mandarin Fish is attractive in color, sumptuous in smell, and flavor, and will arouse the appetite of whoever sees it.

The First Dish on the Earth is another traditional dish highly appreciated by guests from home and abroad. It is not known how the name of this dish came into existence. One of the various stories follows that in the year of Emperor Zhu Houzhao of the Ming Dynasty, Gu Dingchen, the Minister of Rites and Grands, secretary to the emperor, had a meal at a country woman's house while he was on an errand of investigating the taxes of the common people. After serving the stir-fried spinach and the tofu (bean curd) with watercress, the clever woman made a bowl of delicious soup with sauce rice, which was highly appreciated by the official. When asked about the name of the soup, the woman smiled and said "Since you are the first to taste such soup, we may call it the First Dish on the Earth." Thereafter, the name of the First Dish on the Earth became famous. With large amount of tasty flavorings of shrimp meat, chicken slivers and rice crust soup, its bright color and delicious taste would win high praise from clients.

The Cracking Eel Paste is a popular dish for its nutritious rice field eel. Rice field eel can be prepared by broiling, stir-frying or quick-boiling. Quickly boiled eel slivers, stir-fried eel slices and cracking eel paste are all Suzhou cuisines, enjoying great popularity. The name of cracking eel paste came into existence because the oil in the dish still crackles after it is served. The making of cracking eel paste needs not only skill but meticulous timing, or it would be unworthy of the name if no crackling noise is heard when the oil cools.





The Whitebait Soup is also a famous traditional dish in Suzhou. Li Genyuan and Yu Youren, two renowned veterans of China's 1911 Revolution, tasted the Whitebait Soup in 1926 and 1933 respectively. They were deeply impressed by the distinctive flavor and each extemporaneously inscribed a board with "the Whitebait Soup House" and a scroll with "the Widespread Fame in the South". From then on, the Whitebait Soup rose into lasting fame. The fish, with a white belly and leaden streaky back, can, when cooked, bubble up floating like a ball. Hence the name "streaky fish" or "bubble fish". The fish is characterized by its tender flesh. The light delicious soup is made up of liver and flesh. Seasoned with ham, bamboo slices and green vegetable leaves, the fleshy liver tastes savory and attracts countless guests.

The Taihu Lake Boat Dish first appeared in the Tang Dynasty, over 1,000 years ago, when rich officials and merchants loved to hold banquets on boats so they could enjoy the beautiful scenery while dining. Since then, boat dishes have become well established in Guangfu town on the eastern bank of the Taihu Lake. There are now quite a few magnificent boat restaurants in the fishing harbor, serving a variety of food, including fish dishes from the Taihu Lake as well as various kinds of home-style delicacies. Steamed white fish and water shield with egg flakes are two of the eight famous dishes. White fish, as its name implies, is white in color. The fish for the dish should be carefully selected, weighing around 0.5 kilogram (the best). The steamed white fish dish is usually prepared with shredded ginger with a small amount of red and green pepper. This dish has a good taste, pleasant texture and aromatic smell with tasty water shield and egg flakes in it. The water shield is believed to help enrich people's blood, nourish the lungs, and relieve internal heat.

2. Restaurant

Suzhou could be a paradise for gourmets. Fresh seasonal vegetables, fish and a slight sweetness are the main features of Suzhou cuisine.

Quite a number of quality restaurants of the region are one's choice.

The 2,000-year-old Songhelou Restaurant has long been known for its authentic Suzhou dishes. Prepared with the freshest seasonal ingredients, Songhelou's most popular dishes are based on freshwater fish and shrimp, including sweet and sour mandarin fish, fried snails with shrimp and braised eel. Sweet Mandarin Fish was a favorite of Qing Emperor Qianlong, who dined here every time he visited Suzhou.

The Deyuelou Restaurant, founded in the years under Emperor Jiajing of the Ming Dynasty, has a history of over 400 years and mainly features Suzhou cuisine dishes. The restaurant consists of three smaller ones featuring different flavors. More than 300 dishes are served. What's more, visitors can afford a nice view of the surrounding gardens.

The Wangsi Restaurant is also a very old restaurant, first built in the Qing Dynasty. This one is not as big and grand as the Songhelou Restaurant, nor as sophisticated as the Deyuelou Restaurant but is still a nice restaurant serving delicious food. The Beggar's Chicken (whole chicken baked in a mud coating), the Sweet-scented Osmanthus and the Blood-color Glutinous Rice are worth a try.

The Xinjufeng Restaurant, founded in the 30th year under Emperor Guangxu in the Qing Dynasty, was named Jufengyuan originally and renamed Xinjufeng in 1940, a famous Suzhou cuisine restaurant and the "Time-honored Store in China". Committed to carrying on the tradition to develop Suzhou cuisine dishes, under the promotion of the old-brand renowned dish of the Whole Duck Prepared in Mother Oil, there are newly-developed famous dishes of Eight-Treasure Bottle-Gourd Duck and Homely Prepared Wild Duck with duck being the main ingredient. Among the dishes best received are original-juice and original-taste Suzhou cuisine dishes such as Sauté Shrimp Meat, and Mandarin Fish in White Juice.

3. Snack

Snacks became popular for their flavors in early times and gradually



formed their own particular styles. Rice is a staple food for people in Suzhou. In addition to serving it during regular meals, rice is also used for brewing or making starch. People also grind rice into powder to make rice dumplings, cakes and many other kinds of feature products such as pyramid-shaped sugars and smoked fish. Suzhou snacks feature in sweetness, fragrance, tenderness, glutinousness, and smoothness. Now many celebrated snack stores in Suzhou try to offer a variety of traditional snacks in an attempt to satisfy customers at home and abroad.

The Caizhizhai Candy Store was founded in the Qing Dynasty. An initiative idea brought the store a brisk trade. The candy store compounded pyramid-shaped sugar with fruit juice and some edible medicinal ingredients such as peppermint, licorice root, and pine nuts. A single bite of the sugar would provide one distinctive flavor with its crispness and softness. This pyramid-shaped sugar could help clear away lung-heat and nourish the intestines and could help invigorate blood circulation.

Founded in the first year under Emperor Daoguang of the Qing Dynasty, the centennial Huangtianyuan Cake Store is a "Time-honored Store in China" and a "Renowned Chinese Catering Store". The Huangtianyuan Cake Store mainly sells Suzhou style sweet cakes and dumplings as well as noodles with associated garnishes on top. The most distinctive feature is the variety of seasonal pastries obtainable each month based on Suzhou traditional customs, for example, rice dumplings in January, waist supporting rice cakes in February, and green rice dumplings in March.

Yeshouhe, originally named the Yeshou Tea Refreshment and the Candy Shop, was founded in the 11th year under Emperor Guangxu. The owner was surnamed Ye, a rich Zhejiang native merchant. Based on the meaning of friendliness being conducive to business success, he adopted his full name Ye Shouhe. By learning widely from others'

strong points, he became the first to create dried shrimp-roe, specially prepared smoked fish, smoked wild ducks and other feature products. His tea refreshments were also made mainly in Suzhou style, with the flavor of his own native land, Ningbo, added only later. Meticulously made, Yeshouhe's products enjoy high reputation in the south of the Yangtze River.

Dao xiang cun originated in the 38th year of Emperor Qianlong. The domestic food industry is one of the oldest, most influential and well-known brands, with deep cultural roots, superb production skills and the quality reputation of excellence. The most famous product of Daoxiangcun is Suzhou moon cakes. Suzhou moon cakes, featured by their soft flaky surface, and delicious fillings, are regarded as the cream of Suzhou pastry. There are two types of moon cakes, sweet and salty according to taste, or baked. The sweet moon cakes are baked, two such kinds are the rose moon cake, and the ginkgo moon cake, while the salty ones are toasted and include such kinds as ham moon cake with lard, and fresh meat moon cake. Of the two types, rose moon cakes, ginkgo moon cakes, hemp moon cakes with spiced salt and sweetened-bean-paste-laden moon cakes with lard are considered the best. The local ingredients and flavorings of Suzhou moon cakes are carefully chosen. The fillings of the sweet moon cakes are mainly roses, osmanthus flowers, walnut kernels, shelled melon seeds, and peanut kernels. The salty ones have mainly ham, meat, shrimp meat, lard, and onion as their fillings. The surface part of the cakes is mainly with a mixture of flour, white sugar, maltose, fat, and other ingredients.

4. Biluochun Tea

Suzhou's Biluochun Tea is one of the most famous teas in China. It is locally known as "Fearful Incense" due to the strong aroma of the brew.

During the Qing Dynasty, Emperor Kangxi visited Suzhou and praised the flavor of this aromatic tea. The tea leaves are picked from

the Bi Luo Mountain near the Taihu Lake, and are collected traditionally in early spring between what is known as “Tomb Sweeping Day” and “Grain Rain Day”.

The technique for collecting tea leaves is very complex. Only the tender tip of the leaf is used for the tea-making. This part of the leaf should be no longer than one inch and shaped like the tip of a spear. One tin of tea requires 60,000 spears. It is no surprise then, that some of the finest Chinese teas are very expensive. The next step in the process is to repeatedly knead, rub and roll the leaves by hand over heat. Biluochun Tea involves a particularly labor intensive process but the end result is leaves that are compact, tender and wonderfully fresh and aromatic.

Biluochun Tea not only smells and tastes great but is reportedly very good for one's health. To start with proper procedure, one should first take a few tea leaves and sprinkle them at the bottom of a cup. Next, cover them with boiling water until the tea leaves sink. Leave it to rest for a minute and then fill the cup to the top. The tea will then change color, to a light green shade and should taste delicious. Teahouses are located in main and side streets or along the riverside. A teahouse is a place not only for people to drink tea, but also to settle disputes, hold business discussions and for old friends to get together. It is also an unofficial information center, where one can hear all the important news about the political situation, social affairs and even idle gossip.

IV. Festival

While following most of the traditional national festivals, people in Suzhou have never abandoned their long-lasting local festival customs. For example, to celebrate the Lunar New Year and the Lantern Festival that follows the New Year on the 15th of the first lunar month, local people in Suzhou keep a long tradition of a lantern party on the night of the Lantern Festival, when people of all ages come out to see the

lanterns and guess the answers to the riddles written on the lanterns. Also, people in Suzhou pay particular attention to the winter solstice, regarding it as a special occasion for a family reunion. There is no better place than the Stone Lake to appreciate the Strings of Moons Festival on the Mid-Autumn Day. And as a lucky start to the year, one would never miss counting the 108 bell chimes of the Hanshan Temple to welcome the New Year.

1. Winter Solstice

The Winter Solstice Festival or the Extreme of Winter is one of the most important festivals celebrated by the Chinese and other East Asians during the Dongzhi (the coming of winter) solar term on or around December 21st when sunshine is the weakest and daylight the shortest. Traditionally, the Dongzhi Festival was also a time for families to get together. One activity that occurs during these get-togethers (especially in the southern parts of China and in Chinese communities overseas) is the making and eating of Tangyuan (balls of glutinous rice), which symbolize reunion. Though the Winter Solstice is a traditional and ancient observance, many of China's provinces no longer celebrate the solstice. However, the early Wu Kingdom recognized this occasion as the first day of the New Year. Locals in Suzhou still value this festival highly. On that day, they may eat traditional red beans and sticky rice or dumpling soup to drive away evil spirits.

Around December 21st annually, people of Suzhou have reunions of the whole family, eat the Winter Solstice evening meal, and drink Dongniang wine (a type of rice wine). According to historians, the local people had started to make wine in winter way back in the Spring-Autumn Period. Local residents say that most children and women in Suzhou also like to drink such wine. According to the old rules, people visit the elders in the Winter Solstice like they do in the New Year, because the Winter Solstice is the beginning of a year.

2. Yashenxian

Perhaps the most notable festival in Suzhou is Yashenxian, which falls on April 14th in the Chinese lunar calendar. Yashenxian is also known as “immortal seeking” temple fair, which is one of Suzhou's first cultural heritages that have applied for a national level heritage. On April 14th, many citizens of Suzhou will visit the fairy temples. The temple fair will last three days. Cartoon images of the Eight Immortals drawn by citizens are also unveiled on that day. The “immortal seeking” temple fair is the largest in Suzhou and was created to commemorate Lu Dongbin, one of the Eight Immortals. April 14th in the Chinese lunar calendar is said to be the birthday of Lu Dongbin. It is said that Lu Dongbi disguised himself as a human and visited Suzhou on this day to spread peace, happiness and prosperity. According to legend, Lu would dress himself up as a beggar on the day of his birthday and mingle with the crowd to save people. Many people in Suzhou want to burn joss sticks at the temple. It is believed that every person one meets on that day may be disguised Lu and one will share Lu's spirit if they meet him.

To receive more luck from the immortal, people from all over Suzhou crowd the streets in celebration. Today, this activity has turned into a bustling temple fair with various displays including handicrafts, plants, animals, and local snacks. The temple fair features fashion shows and folk performances which attract many residents and tourists. Visitors buy traditional craftworks and enjoy the performances at the same time.

3. Hanshan Temple Bell Ringing

The Hanshan Temple has its annual Bell Ringing Celebration on New Year's Eve every year. The fame of the Hanshan Temple and the bell was carried far and wide by the Tang poet Zhang Ji's poem entitled “A Night Mooring by the Maple Bridge”.

On New Year's Eve both Chinese and foreigners, especially the Japanese, will make a special tour to the temple in order to listen to the

sound of the bell and to bid farewell to the old year and welcome the arrival of the New Year. A Buddhist concert, some cultural performances and an exhibition of handicrafts are presented to visitors. In addition, a big bell and a huge tablet are unveiled. The bell weighs 108 tons and is inscribed with a Buddhist sutra while the tablet, with a pedestal and a head, is 15.9 m long and 367 ton in weight. It is the largest of its kind around the globe. The Bell Ringing Celebration is organized by Suzhou Municipal People's Government along with Suzhou Municipal Administration of Tourism. It has especially attracted Japanese groups as it is also a traditional activity back in Japan. The ringing of the bell at the Hanshan Temple on Chinese New Year's Eve is a major pilgrimage and tourism event for visitors. Furthermore, tourists may know the Hanshan Temple through the famous poem "A Night Mooring by the Maple Bridge". They would together make a wish for the New Year while appreciating those beautiful lines: "While I watch the moon go down a crow caws through the frost; under the shadows of maple-trees a fisherman moves with his torch; spending the night on a boat I feel lonely and homesick; and I hear from beyond Suzhou, from the Temple on the Cold Mountain (Hanshan Temple); ringing for me, here in my boat, the midnight bell."

V. Lifestyle

Reminiscing about the daily life of the people and activities of town dwellers engaged in many different trades in Suzhou in the different periods of the 20th century will bring back memories of childhood experiences for local seniors. It can also enable one to rediscover poetic charm in the most commonplace everyday life in the misty atmosphere of the lower Yangtze River. With the progress of time and development of science and technology, people's lifestyle has greatly changed, and the tempo of life has accelerated. Some of the trades have gradually faded away or even completely disappeared, but many of them are still

indispensable.

1. Candy Barterer

Of the many peddlers who hawked in the streets, candy barterers were the most welcome to children. As soon as their hawking was heard, the doors of families with children would open. Some children had already collected the old newspapers and books, empty bottles and tins, waiting for the arrival of the candy barterer. Other children even carried out the exchange of junk for candy themselves. This not only transformed junk into candies, but also allowed the children to experience the joy of accomplishing business transactions. As for the amount of candy they received or whether the exchange was of equal value, it was of little concern to them.

Candy barterers usually carried a basket at each end of a shoulder-pole with a square tray on top. There were candies of many kinds on the tray, such as fruit drops and sesame bars, which were the currency for the exchange.

2. Sesame Cake and Fried Dough Stick

Sesame cakes and fried dough sticks make a typical Chinese breakfast. When housewives in Suzhou go out to buy vegetables in the early morning, they often buy sesame cakes and fried dough sticks to bring back home for breakfast for the family. Buy a sesame cake and two fried dough sticks and eat them as you walk to your place of work and you will find it is a breakfast different from any other.

Sesame cakes and fried dough sticks are made for immediate sale at booths in almost every neighborhood in Suzhou. There are also vendors who carry them in a basket and sell them as they walk from street to street. The tradition of a breakfast of sesame cakes and fried dough sticks already has a history of more than 1,000 years. The sesame cake is made of a round and flat dough, about 10 cm in diameter, with sesame seeds on one side. It is baked in an oven until it is nice and brown on both sides. A fried dough stick is made with strips of dough

with salt and yeast. The strips are twisted before they are fried in hot oil.

Bean curd jelly has also been a regular item on the morning table. The white bean jelly is so tender that it melts in the mouth. Rich in nutrition, it is favored and served by mobile shoulder-pole vendors. There are many condiments used to flavor the bean curd jelly, such as sesame oil, soy sauce, salt, dried radish, slivers of mustard tuber, and dried shrimps.

3. Seller of Sweet Gruel

“Du, du, du ... sweet gruel three liters of rice and four liters of husk” was a popular children’s rhyme in Suzhou in the past and has been passed down for countless generations. It shows how popular the sweet gruel was for children in the bygone days. As fast food has become widespread today, few people still favor the sweet gruel.

Sweet gruel is made by boiling rice with sugar and osmanthus flowers. When it is ready, the grains of rice remain whole and the cooking liquid is clear and refreshingly sweet. Sometimes, lotus roots or taro are added to it to give it a different flavor. In the afternoon in the past, when the wooden clappers of the sweet gruel seller echoed in a side street in the past, people would come out to buy and eat on the spot or take it home to share it with other members of the family.

4. Molder of Candy Figurine

The molders of candy figurines in Suzhou can be called sculptors. The soft maltose in his hands is transformed into a life-like figurine in almost no time.

A molder of candy figurines carried a shoulder-pole with a wooden box at one end. On the top of the wooden box was a fixed wooden frame with molded candy figurines on it. A small charcoal burner in the wooden box kept the maltose warm. At the other end of the shoulder-pole was a stool. When the molder, hawking his wares, came to a street with many children in it, he would stop, sit down on the stool and

begin to mold candy figurines. Children would immediately come to him to watch and buy. After buying a candy figurine, a child was often unwilling to eat it immediately and would lick it carefully with his tongue to savor the sweet candy. The molders of candy figurines hawked in local Suzhou dialect, which is both interesting and pleasant to the ear: "Come quickly and buy. Come quickly and look. There are 'Wu Song Killing the Tiger', 'Piggy and Monkey Sage on a Tree'. Look at it and see if it is lifelike. Try it and see if it is sweet."

Children of today have a wide choice of candies in markets, while molders of candy figures have long retreated to those few well-preserved ancient streets and townships that have become commercial scenic spots.

5. Indigo Print

Indigo prints, very popular in Suzhou and the water country in the lower Yangtze are made of homespun fabric with blue designs on a white background or white designs on a blue background and used for making women's skirts and hats and items for use at home, such as quilt covers, mosquito nets, pillow cases and curtains. The blue and white motifs on them are simple and elegant. The dye comes from the leaves of the plant known as true indigo. A sheet of oil paper is cut with decorative motifs and placed on the cloth. The empty spaces are then covered with a coat of lime and bean flour mixed with water to prevent dye absorption. When the coating is dry, the cloth is dyed in the indigo solution. After drying, the dye-preventing coat is removed, leaving the undyed parts exposed. After washing and drying, the process is complete. If the motifs on the oil paper are exposed, the finished print will have white designs on a blue background. Otherwise, there will be blue designs on a white background.

Although the dye for all indigo prints comes from the sap of true indigo; each dye-works uses a different formula, which may have been handed down from the owners' forefathers.

6. Silkworm Breeding

Silkworm breeding and silk weaving has a very long history in China. Its origin cannot be traced. Archaeological excavations show that as long as 5,000 years ago, there were already mulberry-tree planting, silkworm breeding and silk weaving.

Since ancient times, Suzhou has been one of the centers of silk weaving in the country. As Suzhou is favored with a suitable climate for raising silkworms and planting mulberry trees, silkworm breeding has always been an important sideline production in the villages of Suzhou. Silkworm breeding involves much hard work and does not allow the least slackening and carelessness. The various stages of work include bathing and hatching the eggs, collecting the larvae, feeding mulberry leaves, the first, second, third and great hibernations of the silkworms, silk secretion, cocoon spinning, and collecting and storing the cocoons.

The whole process lasts more than a month when the silkworms are watched day and night to regulate the temperature and moisture of the silkworm room. The silk cocoons are bought by traders who come to the doors of the breeders or sold by the breeders to purchasing station.

7. Writing Brush

The writing brush is a special Chinese tool for writing and painting. Writing brushes with bamboo shafts of the Warring States Period more than 2,000 years ago have been unearthed in Changsha, Hunan Province, and Xinyang, Henan Provinces.

Suzhou has long been known for the writing brushes made here. In 1694, Zhou Huchen, a former maker of writing brushes, founded the Zhou Huchen Writing Brush and Ink Shop in Suzhou, employing more than 100 workers. The writing brushes made there, known for their fine point, neatness, roundness and resilience are famous both in China and the world because they are finely crafted, long-lasting and large in variety. The manufacture of writing brushes in Suzhou is still a

flourishing business today. Among the varieties are goat brushes (made with goat's hair), mixed brushes (made with more than two kinds of hair), weasel brushes (made with weasel's hair) and brown brushes (made with brown rabbit's hair).

It requires more than 70 processes, mostly by hand, to make a writing brush. Each process has to be executed with meticulous care.

8. Repairing Umbrella

As history recorded, it has been more than 3,500 years since umbrella was first invented in China. In people's daily life, the main function of umbrella is to fend off rain, wind and sunshine, and it also has many cultural meanings in China.

In ancient China, umbrella was the symbol of dignity, power and status. Only the wealthy could use umbrellas. It was not until the period of the late Wei Dynasty that umbrella was used for official activities, and was called Luosan, or Huagai.

Umbrella also played an important role in ordinary people's life. A paper umbrella was a blessing to the new couple, it was round when an umbrella was opened, and it's the symbol of perfection and happiness.

Another major function of umbrella was to avoid evil. So umbrellas were often seen in religious celebrations.

In ancient times, the surface of an umbrella was made of silk. With the invention of paper, silk was replaced by paper. Paper umbrella began to be popular in the Song Dynasty.

As there are many rainy days in Suzhou, people prefer sunny days and like to call umbrella a sunshade umbrella. The early umbrellas were made of bamboo paper or cotton cloth covered with tung oil. The handle and folding radial frame were made of wood and bamboo. The nylon umbrella with metal frame appeared only 20 or 30 years ago.

Exposure to rain and sun and frequent folding and unfolding damaged umbrellas. For this reason, quite a number of people in Suzhou were engaged in repairing umbrellas. They set up a stall or

wandered from street to street carrying with them their tools and materials. Owners of umbrellas would rather choose to pay only a minimal amount of money to have their damaged umbrellas mended as it was cheaper than buying a new umbrella.





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