

THE ORIGINS OF THE CHINESE

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If by "Chinese" we mean the inhabitants of China, then we have more than one race origin to trace, for the population of China is very complex. We have there not only the five peoples symbolized by the five-barred flag—the Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Turki, and Tibetan—but there are also the numerous indigenous tribes still maintaining more or less their separate ancient organizations, such as the Miao, the Lolos, who are said by Richard to be Indo-European,¹ the Man-tzu, the Shan, the Sifan, the Lisu, and the Musu with many others in southwest China, and the Tunguses, Daours, Solons, Koreans, Buriats and Orotchis or Fish-skin Tartars in the northeastern parts of the country. We can not ignore these tribes, but this paper is particularly meant to discuss the origin of that element of the population which constitutes the principal stock of China, which is distinguished from all other elements as the real Chinese strain, that which anciently subdued and to a large extent absorbed the indigenous tribes, and which gave character to the civilization which was developed, if it did not originate in the region which we call China.

Whence came this virile people which at so early a period of the world's history developed such a high form of civilization and which imposed its culture upon the entire eastern half of Asia; which not only gave law, religion, letters, and art to the land we call China, but art and architecture, literature, law and religion to Japan and Korea, and in a large degree also to Manchuria, Mongolia, Burmah, Siam and Annam? And what were they from the standpoint of physical anthropology?

Dr. Frederick Hirth, of Columbia University, rejects the theory of a foreign origin of the Chinese with the statement:

¹ Père Richard, *Comprehensive Geography of the Chinese Empire and Dependencies*; translated into English by M. Kennelly, S. J. Shanghai, 1908, 342.

"Chinese literature contains no record of any kind which might justify us in assuming that the nucleus of the nation may have immigrated from some other part of the world, and the several ingenious theories pointing to Babylonia, Egypt, India, Khotan and other seats of ancient civilization as the starting points of ethnical wanderings must be dismissed as untenable. Whether the Chinese were seated in their later homes from time immemorial, as their own historians assume, or whether they arrived there from abroad, as some foreign scholars have pretended, can not be proved to the satisfaction of historical critics."²

Père Richard, on the other hand, in his *Comprehensive Geography of China*, says:

"The Chinese race is very ancient. According to the oldest records it first occupied the valley of the Yellow River in Kansu, Shensi and Honan. If we wish to solve the problem as to whence it came, indications seem to point to Chaldea or Assyria."³

In another passage he answers his own query as to whether the Chinese had come from the southwest via Burmah, from the north via Siberia, or from the northwest by the valley of the Yellow River by saying:

"In the absence of trustworthy documents we shall follow Chinese traditions according to which the 'Hundred Families' (Po Chia), the black-haired race, came from the West."⁴

Thus it would seem that there is a difference of opinion among sinologues as to what the native traditions affirm.

Dr. L. Wiegner, a Jesuit missionary in China, in his *Textes Historiques*, holds quite another opinion, which I translate as follows:

"The Chinese say nothing of the origin of their race. They have preserved but few traces of their early times. But they have fixed in the drawing of their ancient ideographs a certain number of features of their condition at that time. Since these characters undoubtedly existed in the thirtieth century before the Christian Era, it is to that period that we must carry the paleontological restoration which we would examine. Withered and defective in many points, as is true of everything connected with fossils, nevertheless it has its interest. Most of the vegetable and animal figures in these ancient characters belong to a tropical country. This fact renders improbable the theory, according to which the ancestors of the Chinese coming from the West, crossed the Pamirs and traversed the Tarim Basin to enter finally into the north of China by the upper waters of the Yellow River. It is probable that having come from the region now known

² *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2d ed., VI, 191.

³ Père Richard, *o.c.*, 339.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

as Burmah, they entered China from the southwest, following the route of which the modern steps are Bhamo, Molmein, Yung-chang Fu, Ta-li Fu, Yun-nan Fu, Kuei-yang Fu, Chang-te Fu, and the Tung-ting Lake. It is necessary to represent this entrance not as one far-away migration, but as the gradual extension of a tribe towards the northeast, which remained in touch with its source from which it differentiated itself later by the adoption of its own particular civilization."⁵

Mr. T. W. Kingsmill, an English sinologue, long resident in China, in the *Journal of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, says:

"The original introduction of the arts and civilization of China was due to the Cheos, an Aryan race, who, driven from their original home on the upper Oxus by the encroachment of the Turkish hordes from the north, found refuge after long wanderings in the extreme northwest of China some twelve centuries before our era. . . . The cult, the family law, and the fundamentals of the language itself are essentially Aryan and Aryan of a type not essentially different from the settlers of northern India."⁶

Prof. Terrien De Lacouperie in an introductory chapter to Colquhoun's *Amongst the Shans*, concludes:

"China has received its language (since altered) and the elements of arts, sciences and institutions from the colonies of the Ugro-Altaic Bak families who came from Western Asia some twenty-three centuries B. C. under the conduct of men of high culture acquainted through their neighbors, the Susians, with the civilization which emanated from Babylonia and was modified in its second focus."⁷

Mr. Soothill, an English scholar, author of a translation of the *Analects of Confucius*, says in his introduction to that work:

"The origin of the Chinese, like that of other nations of the earth, is veiled in the mystery of unrecorded aeons Were they one of the many Mongolian tribes which occupied the Far East when Asia was still joined to the continent of America . . . or did they as is generally advocated, some three thousand years before Christ, leave the original habitat of civilized humanity in western Asia in obedience to some great centrifugal movement which drove the tribes of mankind forth from their common center to replenish the earth and subdue it? . . . Let us at any rate accept this as the most reasonable theory."⁸

The Rev. John Ross, D.D., a missionary in China for thirty-eight years, in a posthumous work called *The Origin of the Chinese People*, shows the following attitude:

⁵ Wieger, L. *Textes Historiques*, I, 15-16.

⁶ *J. of the China Branch of the Roy. Asiatic Soc.*, Shanghai, xxxii, No. 1, 1897-98, 19.

⁷ Colquhoun (A. R.) *Amongst the Shans*. N. Y., 1885, Introd. xxix.

⁸ *The Analects of Confucius*. Transl. in Soothill (W. E.), Yokohama, 1910, 1.

"From what is recorded of the mythical ages of the Chow, Chin and Han Dynasties, we are justified in concluding that the Chinese people are autochthonous and their civilization indigenous."⁹

Prof. Herbert A. Giles in a preface to Dr. Ross's work, after lamenting his death, says:

"Dr. Ross would have nothing to do with the fantastic and unsubstantiated theory which traces the civilization of China and particularly her script to the ancient inhabitants of Acadia."¹⁰

And after making the quotation which I have just made above he adds:

"In this important statement I entirely agree with him."¹⁰

There is, then, no lack of opinions upon the subject and no lack of strong language in stating them.

The student of the question at the present day has thus three distinct theories to examine:

1. That the Chinese originated in the Indo-Chinese peninsula and migrated northward into what is now China.
2. That the Chinese race is autochthonous.
3. That the race had its origin in central or western Asia.

The first theory is not without plausibility. (1) In addition to the alleged testimony of the ideograms as pointing to a tropical country as the place of their origin, we are asked to note (2) that the Chinese language is tonal and seems more nearly related to the languages of the Malay Peninsula than to others. (3) The oldest forms of the Chinese language are found to-day in southern China. (4) Chinese is purer in the south and grows more and more corrupt as one approaches the north.

All this would seem to support the theory of a southern origin for the Chinese, but a careful examination throws doubt upon the first statement that the ideograms indicate a tropical origin for the language. The facts mentioned under captions 2, 3, and 4 are also capable of other explanations than those given. With respect to the ideograms we do not know which of them existed so long ago as 3,000 years before Christ. They were not all formed at one period. They grew slowly in

⁹ Ross (Rev. J.) *The Origin of the Chinese People*. Edinburgh and London, 1916, 50.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

number with the experience of the race. In addition it should be said that the earliest ideograms known to us contain pictures not alone of tropical plants and animals but also of those known only in the colder regions of the north, so that the evidence of the ideograms can just as well be quoted in favor of a northern origin for the Chinese. Soothill states correctly that the ideographs for sheep and cattle occur in many root words and indicate a nomadic life as shepherds and herdsmen for the Chinese forefathers. Among those given by Chalfant under the primitives of the Shuo Wen are representations of the following animals: rhinoceros, hare, cobra, bear, swallow, ox, yak, dog, sheep or goat, tiger, pig, elephant, dragon, unicorn, horse, fish, deer, toad, rat and tortoise, and of such vegetables as the melon, bamboo, clover, wheat, grass, hemp, flax, and millet. The San Edict, which dates from about 1122 B.C., mentions the elephant and the willow and apple tree. Inscriptions on bone and tortoise shell, written about the same time as the San Edict, give pictures of the horse, the dragon, the stag, birds, the scorpion, the tiger, and the rat. I submit that these are not especially tropical animals or plants but nearly all of them those of a temperate region.

As for the other facts mentioned as pointing to a southern origin for the Chinese, there is nothing that cannot be just as easily accounted for by assuming that the Chinese came from the north in successive waves in which the later arrivals crowded their relatives who preceded them farther and farther southward, so that the Mon-Khmer, the Shan, Siamese and Burmans, whose languages also are tonal, and the earliest Chinese whose language is said to be purest, would be found far to the south, as in fact they are, while the later comers would be found in the north mingled with various other races who have pressed down upon them from the northeast, and whose languages have modified that of the Chinese.

Prof. Terrien de Lacouperie, in his introductory chapter to Colquhoun's *Amongst the Shans*, writes of the "Cradle of the Shan race" as follows:

"Many non-Chinese tribes within and without the boundaries of southern China, remnants of the non-absorbed non-sinicized parts of larger stocks of several races, driven south-westwards are now scattered over a large area into an undefined number of fragments . . . With the exception of the northern region, which was supplied with a constant renewal of Altaic and Ugro-Finnish blood pouring into the Chinese agglomeration, they formerly composed the native population of China Proper."¹¹

¹¹ Colquhoun, (A. R.) o.c., Introd. xxii.

It is, of course, a well-known fact that, whereas Mandarin Chinese is spoken in northern, central, and western and southwestern China, in the southeastern provinces we have a multitude of dialects all related one to another, much as the Latin tongues of Europe are related to each other. Among these the Cantonese perhaps most nearly resembles the early form of the Chinese. The pressure which scattered these tribes along the southeastern coast of China seems to have come from the northwest.

We also find some of the ancient non-Chinese tribes still living under their own chiefs in the mountainous parts of southwest China. Among these are the Miao, who are mentioned in the *Shu King*, one of the oldest books of China.¹²

Colquhoun, in the volume to which I have referred above, *Amongst the Shans*, says:

"The Kuoi, Por, Samre, Phuong, Sheng, and Pru and their cognate tribes in Cambodia, who all speak tonic languages, are the modern representatives, diversified by subsequent interminglings, of two successive migrations of tribes formerly settled on Chinese soil. They were driven out of Kuangtung and Kuangsi in 215 B. C., but their location formerly was much further north, on the north bank of the Yangtze whence they were driven away by the Shans."¹³

Here, then, we have the Shans driving these earlier inhabitants of China from the Yangtze region into Kuangtung and Kuangsi, whence at a later period (215 B.C.) they were forced still farther south into Cambodia. To-day the Shans themselves are found far to the southwest, in Siam and Burmah. The migrations of population in these parts of China, then, would seem to have been from north to south. Present-day movements, generally speaking, are still in the same direction. Among the inhabitants of Burmah are the Karens, yet the Karens originally dwelt in China, near the Tungting Lake, and according to Colquhoun, it was not until 778 A.D. that they were driven out. There are now in Kueichow Province certain tribes related to them. "The Karens call the Chinese their younger brothers," so Holt S. Hallett tells us in his *Historical Sketch of the Shans*.¹⁴

The Nan Chao, which spread all over south China after 345 A.D., established there a kingdom which in 860 A.D. was known as the Ta-li Kuo. This was a Shan state and was not overthrown until the thir-

¹² *The Shu King*, a Chinese work, "The Classic of History." Transl. in Legge, (J.), *Chinese Classics*, III, London, 1861-72.

¹³ Colquhoun. (A. R.) *o.c.*, 46.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Appendix by Holt S. Hallett, 341.

teenth century A.D., when it was conquered by the Mongols. The Burmese, too, came down from the north and northwest into their present seats. Sir George Scott in his *Handbook of Burmah* says:

"The only tribe in Burmah that is not Indo-Chinese is the Selung or Selon, whose language shows affinities with that of the Tsiam, or Cham, of Cambodia and with that of the Negritos in the Philippines."¹⁵

Grierson, whom Scott quotes as authority, thinks that the earliest inhabitants of Burmah were progenitors of the Australians. The remainder of the population of Burmah are all related. Scott says:

"*The Burmese National History* states that the first king came from the country of the Sakya in northern India, but a majority of modern students do not agree with the chronicle and have it that they came from northwest China."¹⁶

This tradition, however, seems to be easily explained. The handbook continues, saying:

"The probability is that that part of the world (northwest China) was the original home of the Tai and that west of that, that is to say, from eastern Tibet, came the Mon Khmer, perhaps originally displaced by a movement of the Tibeto-Burmans."¹⁷

This seems not improbable if we accept Logan's theory that the original home of the Burmans was on the northern slopes of the Tien Shan, extending eastward across a great part of the Tibetan Plateau to the upper valleys of the Brahmaputra and Irrawaddy. If any physical or political occurrence in that region forced the Tibeto-Burmans to move, they would probably find least resistance in pressing into the lands of the Mon Khmer, who in turn would be forced down the Irrawaddy and Brahmaputra Rivers.

Now the Sakyas were no doubt Aryan, but their subjects for the most part were not. Asoka and his grandson sent missionaries across and along the Himalayas and introduced Buddhism into Tibet. These missionaries would have much to say of Sakyamuni, the Buddha, and of his family and it would be natural for their converts to cherish these accounts. Their descendants long after emigration into what is now Burmah would then be not unlikely to confuse the home of the mis-

¹⁵ Scott (J. G.). *Burma, a Handbook of Practical Information*; with special articles by recognized authorities on Burma. New ed., London, 1911, 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

sionaries and of the Buddha with that of their own ancestors and speak of their first king as coming from the land of the Sakyas.

As the Mon Khmer pressed into the homes of the Selung, or aborigines of Burmah, the latter would be driven to the southern extremity of the land or into the mountains, in both of which places, indeed, we find them.

Subsequently the Tibeto-Burmans, by some strong pressure exerted upon them from the north, were in turn forced down the valley of the Irrawaddy where they were first found about 600 B.C. Later they made their way into Burmah.

We find, then, a succession of waves of migration into Burmah, all coming from the northwest.

1. There came the Mon Khmer, who crowded the Negrito (or mixed tribes) into the mountains or toward the sea and who were followed by—

2. The Tibeto-Burmans, who drove their predecessors into the hills or over the border into Siam, and these Tibeto-Burmans were followed by—

3. The Siamese-Chinese, or Karens, and by the Tai, or Shans.

4. More recently the Chingpaw have followed the trail but have been stopped by the British occupation of Burmah.

The Tibeto-Burmans, we are informed, have left their traces all along the route in affiliated tribes.

The early history of the people of Siam shows similar features. Mr. A. W. Graham in his *Handbook of Siam* says that there is among the mountains of southern Siam a small black people with curly hair, unlike the rest of the population, which he thinks belong to the Negrito race, allied, he believes, to the Andamanese, to certain tribes in Burmah (by which, I presume, he refers to the Selung), and also related to the Negrito of the Philippines. He says they are called "Aborigines of India." I quote from him this further statement:

"It is now the very generally accepted theory that, during the last few thousand years, Siam, and in fact the whole of Further India, has been subjected to periodical flooding by successive waves of humanity, set moving by natural or social upheavals of population far to the north in Central Asia. We may imagine then the Negrito population of Siam or rather of that part of what now constitutes Siam which was then above the sea, leading their primitive existence through countless generations, their condition scarcely advanced beyond that of their celt-wielding fore-runners, until there came down upon them one of these great waves of population which broke them up, thrust them aside into the remoter hills, all but exterminated them, and finally settled itself down in their place.

This irresistible tide of humanity was the advance down a'l the rivers of Further India of the tribes which constituted what is conveniently called the Mon-Annam Family, the savage ancestors of the Mon, or Talaing, the Khmer, or Cambodian, and the Annamese, civilized races of yesterday and today, and of a host of lesser tribes which still persist in quasi-barbarism."¹⁸

Graham agrees with Sir George Scott in placing the Tibeto-Burman invasion about 2000 or 3000 years ago and the Mon-Khmer invasion much earlier.

About 2500 years ago, about the same time that the Tibeto-Burmans were pressing down the Irrawaddy; the Laos in southwestern China attacked and subdued some of the Mon-Khmer who had been left behind and drove them into Siam. In after years the Laos became a great power in that part of the world and threatened Chinese supremacy until conquered in the thirteenth century A.D. by Kublai Khan, as said above.

In the appendix to Colquhoun's *Amongst the Shans* is a chapter by Holt S. Hallett devoted to the tribes of Yunnan from which I gather the following conclusions: The Chinese, the Shans, and the Tibeto-Burman families are more closely connected with each other than either of them with the Mon-Khmer family. The Mon-Khmer speaking races appear to have split off at a very remote period from the original stock. They inhabited a large portion of China and Indo-China before the Chinese proper came in.¹⁹ To-day the Shan and the Mon-Khmer speaking races do not extend north of 25 degrees north latitude, but they are found in all the country south of that right down to the sea. It seems probable that all China south of the Yangtze was once inhabited by men speaking languages of this type.²⁰ The inference is that both the Shan and the Mon-Khmer speaking races came out of that part of China lying northeast of Siam and were pressed southwestward by the slow advance of the Chinese, just as the Miao and the Yao of the present day are being pressed into Tonkin by the same cause.²¹

The movement of races, therefore, seems to have been in general from north to south and not vice versa. This belief is strengthened by the fact that the aborigines of the Indo-Chinese peninsula are steadily decreasing in numbers. In 1901 in Burmah there were but 1325 Selungs

¹⁸ Graham (A. W.) *Siam: A Handbook of Practical, Commercial and Political Information*, London, 1912, 99.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 358.

²⁰ Graham (A. W.) *o.c.*, 368.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 364.

reported in the census as against 1628 ten years earlier. There has not been a rapid growth of native races in the south forcing waves of emigration northward, but contrariwise, an invasion of foreign races from the north that has well-nigh destroyed the aboriginal inhabitants of Burmah. The same conditions apparently have obtained in Siam and Cambodia. H. R. Davies in a volume called *Yunnan, the Link between India and the Yangtze* says:

“Whatever the pure Chinese may have been five thousand years ago, it seems historically certain that the Chinese of the present day have grown up out of the gradual welding into one empire of Tartar tribes from the north and of Mon-Khmer, Shan and possibly to some extent of Tibeto-Burman races who were originally in occupation of much of the country that has grown into China.”²²

He also believes that the Cantonese are very probably Shan in blood to a great extent, although they have adopted Chinese customs and ways of thought.²³

If we try to picture to ourselves southeastern Asia in 1100 B.C. we must think of the regions we call Annam, Cambodia, Siam and Burmah and probably a portion of southern China as inhabited, to some extent at least, by a race of small, black, curly-haired savages, who were being driven gradually into the mountains or southward toward the sea by a people distantly related perhaps more to the Hindu than to the Chinese, known as the Mon-Khmer, whose descendants are at the present day scattered in Cambodia, Siam and Burmah, and to whom the Miao of Yunnan are related. We must think of central and western China as peopled at that period by men more nearly related to the Chinese, known as the Lao, or Shan, the progenitors in great degree of the Siamese. Northwest of them we must picture the Tibeto-Burmans as dwelling, relatives of some of the modern Burmese and of the Tibetans, while in the upper valley of the Yellow River there had already settled a people ruled by the Chous, who later were called Chinese, but who evidently were even then a racial conglomerate.

Whence came this Chou people? Evidently they did not come from the south, for, as we have seen, the tide of migration in the southern territories was from north to south and not vice versa, and they were even then pressing southward upon the Shans and other tribes in that region whom to-day they have almost entirely displaced. In the moun-

²² Davies (H. R.) *Yunnan, the Link between India and the Yangtze*. Cambridge, the University Press, 1909, 368-369.

²³ Davies (H. R.) *o.c.*, 379.

tains of Kueichou there are at the present day some 50 tribes of the Miao (some say 70) living mostly under their own chiefs, and having their own language and institutions. These are the descendants of the Miao mentioned in the Shû King as being hostile tribes in the days of Shun, 2300 B.C. They call themselves Meng, which is perhaps the same word as Mong in Burmese and Muang in Siamese, a name which possibly indicates a connection with the Mon-Khmer. Indeed the inhabitants of southern China even to-day are known as Man-tze, especially if a depreciatory epithet is desired. This term is the origin of the name "Manzi" used by Marco Polo in his account of southern China²⁴ and is probably derived from the ancient designation of the Miao and the Mon-Khmer.

In the twelfth century B.C. there were many tribes in China in addition to those which have already been mentioned. Surrounding the kingdom in the Yellow River Valley which was ruled by the Chous, there were the Jung, the Shu, the Chiang, the Mao, the Wei, the Lu, the P'eng, and the P'u west and southwest, and in the north and northeast the six tribes of Red Ti and three of the white, together with the four tribes of I. The eight western tribes assisted the Chous in overthrowing the Shang Dynasty. It seems not unlikely that these were allied by race to the Chous and more distantly to the early Chinese also. The I tribes which were located east of old China in modern Shantung were also no doubt related to the ancient Chinese race, for Mencius tells us that the Emperor Shun was an I.²⁵

On the other hand it seems highly probable that the Ti tribes, who are represented in the Chinese written language by a character compounded with the ideogram for "dog"—intentionally offensive—may have been of an entirely different race. These tribes located in what is now northeastern China were possibly related to the Tunghuse, or Siberians. All these tribes, I and Ti, seemed to have been absorbed by the Chinese. As to the relationship between the Chinese and the Tartar tribes it has been one of almost constant warfare from ancient times. The history of this intercourse suggests that two streams of migration probably met in China and engendered a hostility still unended, which has resulted at one time in the triumph of one race and at another in the triumph of the other.

²⁴ *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, translated and edited by Col. Sir Henry Yule, 3d ed., N. Y., 1903, I, 36; II, 145, and elsewhere.

²⁵ *Mencius*; one of the Chinese classics. Transl. in Legge's *Chinese Classics*, II, London, 1861-72. A later translation by the same author, 1875, London, in *The Life and Works of Mencius*.

The advocates of the theory that the Chinese are autochthonous insist that these tribes, east and west of the ancient kingdom of China, were barbarous and only became civilized as they were gradually absorbed by the Chinese; that the early Chinese evolved a civilization of their own there on the banks of the Yellow River and that it extended thence to the surrounding peoples.

The theory of the autochthonous origin of the Chinese applies evidently more to their culture and to the nation as a political unit rather than to their derivation. No one surely would wish to sustain the hypothesis that the Chinese evolved in China from some separate stock of human ancestors.

Dr. Frederick Hirth, Rev. John Ross, and Prof. Herbert Giles are among those who tell us that we need not try to find any origin for the Chinese people outside the Yellow River Valley in which they were living in the twelfth century B.C. and undoubtedly for a long time before that date. They assure us that they gave up nomadic habits and became settled agriculturists there in an unknown antiquity, so that it is folly to try to find some connection between them and their institutions and the people and institutions of any other part of the world. Dr. Ross' remarks in this connection are significant. He says:

"The Chinese were therefore not a homogeneous race. They were not descended from an unmixed race. Hundreds of barbarian kingdoms, as conquerors or as conquered, came under the molding influence of the tiny Middle Kingdom which was born in and developed from, the northeast corner of Honan."²⁶

He pictures them as settling on the bank of the Yellow River, tilling the soil, adopting laws, developing institutions and inventing various arts, among them that of writing. "All these changes," he declares, "took place in the nucleus formed among the savages in northeast Honan, who were the embryo of the Chinese nation." He admits that the people styled barbarian were of the same race as the Chinese and holds that they were called barbarous because they refused to accept Chinese civilization. Again he says:

"We have traced the cradle of the Chinese people and the origin of the race, but the region of the origin of their Turanian predecessors remains an unknown problem."²⁷

²⁶ Ross (Rev. J.) *o.c.*, 51.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

But even Dr. Ross cannot avoid suggesting a solution of the problem. Although he insists so strongly on the autochthonous character of the Chinese nation, he has this to say of their forbears:

"Investigation of the anthropological facts available leads the student to the inference that north-eastern Europe and the high latitudes of Asia were in the remotest known times inhabited by peoples of the Turanian race. The inhabitants of eastern Asia were of kindred race, with the possible exception of the Hairy Oinos of northern Manchuria From among these (inhabitants of eastern Asia) a small community began on the south bank of the Yellow River to cultivate grain in a crude fashion. This life necessitated a permanent abode and personal possessions. Thus and here was the embryonic beginning of China."²⁸

The principal reason advanced for believing that the Chinese race is autochthonous is that Chinese history contains no record of a migration from other regions and seems to assume that the earliest events of which it takes note occurred in the valley of the Yellow River, near the southern bend toward the east where it is joined by the river Wei.

That Chinese history has nothing to say of any migration of the people from some other part of the world can only be considered evidence of a negative character and, moreover, must be allowed to have very little weight when one remembers that contemporary records have not been preserved of any events of that history for a thousand years or more after such a migration is assumed by some to have taken place.

Exception, too, must be taken to the statement that Chinese history assumes the earliest events of which it preserves record to have occurred in the lower valley of the Yellow River. This is no doubt true for the most part of the record in the *Shu King* or Classic of History, although there is some doubt as to the region over which the Emperor Yao was reigning at the opening of that history, but the earlier incidents of Chinese history to which reference is made by Sze-ma Ch'ien and other writers can not with certainty be said to have had place in that valley. This leads us to a consideration of the fourth theory, that of a western origin for the Chinese race. There are some facts which are difficult of explanation upon the assumption that the Chinese are autochthonous. If, then, we are disposed to look for an origin outside the boundaries of what is known to-day as China, it is evident that since they did not come from the south and can hardly have originated in the east or north, we must look for the cradle of the race in the west.

²⁸ *o.c.* 57

We must at the very beginning refuse to admit Dr. Ross's assumption that the tiny Middle Kingdom, or Chung Kuo, was the sole or principal repository of Chinese culture. Two of the earliest emperors mentioned in the Classics of History are Yao and Shun. They are held in equal reverence by the Chinese as founders of the nation. Yet Mencius tells us that Shun came from the *I* tribe of the east.²⁹ This character *I* is commonly translated by Europeans and Americans as "wild" or "barbarous," but the word itself is a proper name and originally had no such meaning. Such a meaning became attached to it only in later times.

Another hero held up in every Chinese school as a model of virtue, was Wen Wang, or King Wen, the father of the founder of the Chou Dynasty. Mencius says of him that he belonged to the *I* of the west.³⁰ European and American scholars generally translate this passage by "the wild tribes of the west," but, as I have just said, the word *I* does not necessarily mean "wild." Now we are told that Yao passed over his own son and chose Shun to be his successor because held to be the most worthy man in the kingdom. But, if he thus passed over the best men in his own state and selected a man from the *I* tribe, it can only be concluded that even the *I* were not wanting in some degree of civilization. The Canon of Yao tells us that this ancient sovereign gave his two daughters in marriage to Shun after he had chosen the latter to be heir to the throne.³¹ It seems extremely probable, therefore, that we have here something more than the selection of the most worthy man for heir, that there may be here an echo of a conflict resulting in the defeat of Yao and the consolidation of two states strengthened by the marriage of Shun with the two princesses, which may indeed have been one of the conditions of peace.

After the overthrow of the Shang Dynasty in 1122 B.C. by the Chous the acceptability to the whole empire of the Count of the West, afterwards known as King Wu, and particularly the high regard in which his father, King Wen, was held by the people, show that these two men were certainly not "wild" men or "barbarians."

As a matter of history, indeed, it appears that before the accession of his house to the throne of China, and before such a thing was even con-

²⁹ *Mencius*; one of the Chinese classics. Transl. in Legge's *Chinese Classics*, II, London, 1861-72. A later translation by the same author, 1875, London, in *The Life and Works of Mencius*. Book IV, Chap. 1: 1, Li Lou.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Chap. 1: 2, Li Lou.

³¹ *Shu King*. Part I, Chap. 3.

templated, the ruler of the West became noted for his statesmanship. In his own territory, we are told, he formulated laws, introduced the tithing, provided for the care of widows, orphans and the aged, and made the government of his state so superior to that of the Middle Kingdom that the empire naturally turned to him. It is unfortunate that the early translators of the Chinese classics should have attempted to translate the proper name *I* giving it the meaning of "wild." They did not translate the names Jung, Miao, Man and Ti, the names of other tribes mentioned in the same books. It is true that the word *I* has come to mean "uncivilized" or "barbarous," but it seems quite evident that it could not have had that meaning anciently. The writers of the Chou Dynasty would not have used an offensive epithet to describe the ancestors of their ruler and the tribe to which he belonged. Yet these are the writers that tell us that Shun and Wen belonged to the *I*. Mencius, who lived during the Chou Dynasty, looked up with reverence to its founder whom he regarded as one of the civilizers of his race. Dr. Legge, himself, who is chiefly responsible for the translation of the term, found it at times inconvenient and at such times used it as it should always have been used as a proper name. In the *Tribute of Yu* he translates a passage as follows:

"The wild tribes about the Huai brought oyster pearls and fish and baskets full of deep azure and other silken fabrics, checkered and pure white."²²

What the Chinese writer really said was:

"The *I* people of the Huai region brought oyster pearls and fish and baskets filled with silks of deep azure hue, checkered and pure white."

Wild people do not as a rule make fine silk fabrics. When in the same work he speaks of the Miao and the Man he does not feel called upon to translate these proper names.

In another passage, where he describes the division of the territory of China among the various peoples, he finds it incongruous to describe that which was assigned to the *I* as "the territory of the wild tribes," for beyond them he was compelled to locate other tribes who were really less civilized than the *I*, and so he leaves the proper name, *I*, untranslated. In a later translation of a portion of the *Shu King* he is compelled to leave the proper name untranslated in order to avoid misunderstanding. The passage reads:

²² *Shu King*, Part III, Book 1: 5.

"After the conquest of the Shang, the way being open to the nine tribes of the *I* and the eight of the Man, the western tribe of Lu sent as tribute some of their hounds."³³

Thus, then, there were nine different tribes of people called the *I*. Some of them no doubt were more civilized than others and all were probably Chinese tribes, related one to another and heirs of the same culture. Among the *I* were the Shans, who, as we have already seen, are related to the Chinese.

The *I* are represented in the written language by a combination of two characters—"great" and "bow." The Jung on the west were represented by an ideogram composed of the characters for lance (or spear) and scale armor. The one tribe might very well have been called the "Long Bows" and the other the "Mailed Tribe." There is nothing in either character which requires it to be translated as "wild" or "barbarous." As a matter of fact the Chinese have been accustomed, even in very recent years, to designate all foreigners as *I*, which was commonly but not entirely properly translated "barbarians." Europeans and Americans were so styled until provision was made in our treaties forbidding the practice.

Mr. Kingsmill,³⁴ speaking of the origin of the Chous, is of the opinion that they were of the Aryan race. This is seriously open to question. There are, it is true, some Aryan elements to be found in the population of western China. Père Richard, in his *Comprehensive Geograph of China*, says of the Lolos:

"They are Indo-European or Aryan—white-skinned, hook-nosed, brown-haired and blue or gray-eyed. Their eyes are not almond shaped. They have no affinity with the Chinese in language, customs or character."³⁵

He says, moreover, of the Chinese in the province of Szechuen, that they are mixed, that some of them are of the Mongol type and others of the Aryan; that many of them have blue or gray eyes and that some have brown hair.³⁶ But if the Chous were Aryan, they have failed to leave Aryan physical features on the Chinese of north China. Mr. Kingsmill, of course, does not claim that the masses of the Chinese are of Aryan origin. His reasons for claiming an Aryan origin for the Chous are briefly (1) that the cult is Aryan—worship of ancestors; but

³³ *Shu King*, Part V, Book 5:1.

³⁴ *J. China Branch R.A.S.*, Shanghai, xxiv, No. 2, 3.

³⁵ Père Richard. *o.c.*, 342.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 112.

that is found among all races. (2) That the family law is Aryan.³⁷ There are striking resemblances between the family law of the Romans and that of the Chinese, also between the family law of Hammurabi and that of China, but this may have other explanation than that of a common racial origin. (3) That the fundamentals of the Chinese language are essentially Aryan. This is difficult to admit. Kingsmill seeks to explain how a polysyllabic language could become monosyllabic by illustration from the changes which have taken place in English, but the explanation is not very satisfactory.³⁸ (4) That certain astronomical data found among the ancient Chinese are identical with other data found among peoples that are recognized as Aryan. He declares, for instance, that the twenty-eight lunar mansions of the Chinese, which existed in very ancient times, are identical with a similar division found in India and Persia, and that this division originated prior to the Aryan dispersal. The cycle of sixty, according to Mr. Kingsmill, by which the Chinese reckon time, was known in ancient Babylon. Five revolutions of Jupiter around the sun completed the cycle, so that Jupiter in China was and is the year star.³⁹

But, granting that Mr. Kingsmill's claims as to the Aryan origin of the culture of the Chous are established, this would not prove that the Chous, themselves, were Aryan. Neither, of course, would cultural connection with western Asia prove that the race originated there. At most it would create a presumption in favor of such an origin. If, however, there should appear to be other sound reasons for advocating a western origin for the Chinese race, similarity of culture might reasonably be expected, and the proved existence of such similarity would add weight to the argument in support of race relationship. It is for this reason, no doubt, joined with that of our very defective anthropological knowledge of the Chinese, that those who believe in the western origin of the Chinese devote so much attention to the discussion of the subject of the origin of their civilization.

Now, there are, as I believe, other reasons than that of a cultural connection with western Asia for the notion that the Chinese came from the west. One of these is that Chinese early traditions seem to indicate that the birthplace and childhood home of the race was far away to the northwest of the land which afterwards came to be known as China. In this statement I find myself contradicting the assertions of Dr.

³⁷ *J. China Branch R. A. S.*, Shanghai, xxxi, No. 1, 1896-97, 64.

³⁸ *J. China Branch R. A. S.*, Shanghai, xxxi, No. 1, 1896-97, 63.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, xxxii, 20.

Hirth and others, who seem to hold that Chinese tradition assumes the race to have been fixed in its present habitation from time immemorial. I believe they are mistaken in such opinion.

Some European scholars think they see in the Tribute of Yu, one of the sections of the Chinese Classic of History, evidence of a western origin of the race. This work, which is regarded by the Chinese as describing the labors of the Great Yu in reclaiming the land from the overwhelming floods, about 2278 B.C., dates in reality from the period of the Chou Dynasty, subsequent to 1122 B.C., and preserves a geographical and statistical description of the alleged nine provinces of the empire as ruled by Yu the Great. It is, of course, highly improbable that Yu ruled over so extensive a territory. The description is remarkable, however, in that it includes a region which was not a portion of the empire under the Chou Dynasty and had not been under the preceding dynasty,⁴⁰ a region covering portions of the provinces of Szechuen, Shensi, and Kansu, which could only have been ruled by the Chinese in a very early period when the tribes were located far to the west of their later home. Biot, the French savant, found in the Tribute of Yu a history of the progressive extension of a great Chinese colony. Von Richthofen thought he found in it indications of the line of march taken by the Chinese as they came from the west. Prof. Edouard Chavannes fails to see anything of the sort and says:

“For our part, although profiting by all the excellent work of our predecessors, we do not find in the Tribute of Yu any trace of the pretended migration of the Chinese from the west towards the east.”⁴¹

Nevertheless there seems to be good reason to accept von Richthofen's judgment in this matter.

We have in the Tribute of Yu a collection of geographical and statistical data concerning various portions of the empire, gathered in all probability not in any one period but compiled from ancient records. The description mentions the principal mountains and rivers, classifies the soil according to appearance and fertility, and states the revenue in kind from each province. This revenue included the spoils of the chase and the output of the mines as well as the produce of the fields. In this, as has just been stated, there was given an account of a vast region,

⁴⁰ *The Shu King*, a Chinese work, “The Classic of History.” Transl. in Legge's (J.), *Chinese Classics*, III, London, 1861-72, Bk. 1: 9.

⁴¹ *Les Mémoires Historiques de Se-ma Ts'ien*; traduits et annotées par Edouard Chavannes. I, Paris, 1897, 102-103.

known then as Liang Chou, lying to the east and north of what we to-day call Tibet, which had not been a part of the empire for at least a thousand years, perhaps two thousand years, preceding the period in which the record was compiled. Dr. Legge says of it that during the Shang and Chou Dynasties "the greater part of it was considered as wild savage territory, beyond the limits of the Middle Kingdom."⁴² It lay, indeed, to the southwest of Mount Hua, which was the Western Mountain of the time of Yao and Shun (2307-2208 B.C.), that is to say, it marked the western boundary of the empire at that time. The data concerning this region, then, must have been preserved from a time prior to 2300 B.C., probably incised in primitive ideograms on bamboo tablets, and would seem to bear witness to an ancient occupation of that district by the Chinese people. If so, the whole nation must have later abandoned it, for in the time of Yao we find the kingdom according to the received tradition covering but a small territory east and north of the southern bend of the Yellow River.

This inference is supported by other traditions transmitted from ancient times. Some of these relate to the Emperor Huang Ti, i.e., the Yellow Emperor, who is said to have reigned about 2697 B.C.

While the *Shu King*, or Classic of History, begins its record with the reign of Yao, 2356 B.C., Sze-ma Ch'ien, who is called the Herodotus of China, commences his monumental work, the *Shih Chi*, with that of Huang Ti, or about 2700 B. C. The latter's name was Hsuan Yuan, "Huang Ti" being simply his title. One tradition declares that he was born in the prefecture of Kai-feng, in Honan (about 250 miles east of the southern bend of the Yellow River). Another, which seems to be more reliable, places his birth in Ch'in Chou, Kansu, about 600 miles west of Kai-feng, near the headwaters of the Wei River. I have said that this is the more reliable tradition; I should probably have done better to say "less inaccurate," for while several traditions associate the name of Huang Ti with the province of Kansu, he was perhaps born beyond the western boundary of China. In the *Mu T'ien Tzu Chuang* there is an account of a visit paid by King Mu to the Wang Mu of the West (commonly translated "the Western Fairy Queen") in 986 B.C. It is said that on the fifty-third day of his journey he passed a former palace of Huang Ti on the Red River in Kansu,⁴³ a thousand miles northwest of the traditional capital of the Emperor Yao.

⁴² *The Shu-King*, Bk. 1: 9.

⁴³ de Lacouperie (Terrien) *Western Origin of the Early Chinese Civilization*. London, 1894, 265; also Chavannes, *Les Mémoires Historiques*, v, 1905, 482.

But it is in the *Shan Hai King* more than in any other work that we find legends relating to the early history of the Chinese people. It is of about the same age as the *Tribute of Yu*, mentioned above, and is as old as the early years of the Chou Dynasty, that is to say, it was written not later than 1122 B.C., and may have been written much earlier. It contains the earliest traditions of the race. The book has been much discredited because of the many marvels of which it speaks, but it is not surprising to find a work dating from the twelfth century B.C. containing tales of the marvelous, and the existence of such tales ought not to be allowed to lessen the value of the evidence which the work gives to the circulation at that early period of certain traditions regarding the regions occupied by the Chinese forefathers.

Wylie in his *Notes on Chinese Literature* says of it:

"This . . . compilation has long been looked upon with distrust; but some scholars of great ability have recently investigated its contents, and come to the conclusion that it is at least as old as the Chow Dynasty, and probably of date even anterior to that period."⁴⁴

In a region beyond the Western Sea and in a "corner of the wilderness beyond the North-western Sea" are located many of the incidents related in the legends of the founders of the Chinese nation. Some consider the Kokonor to be the Western Sea, and this seems reasonable; others think the Aral is meant, and others still the Caspian.⁴⁵ It is in that far region toward central Asia that it locates the wonder working of Fu-hsi and his sister, Nu-Kua;⁴⁶ there that human society was first established, there that the people were taught to plow and sow by Shen-nung,⁴⁷ and there, we are told, "on the north side of Mount Ch'ung one does not dare to shoot an arrow towards the west, because there is the grave mound of Hsuan-yuan, i.e., the Emperor, Huang Ti." This is called the land of Hsuan-yuan.⁴⁸ This would locate the cradle of the race at least as far west as Chinese Turkestan, and might require it to be placed much farther west in central Asia. Quite a number of references are made to Huang Ti and his grandsons in connection with

⁴⁴ 1, 35.

⁴⁵ Giles (H. A.) *A Chinese-English Dictionary*, pub. by Bernard Quaritch, Lond., Shanghai, etc. 1892; under *Hai*.

⁴⁶ *The Shan Hai King*, or "Classic of the Hills and Seas," a Chinese work of great antiquity. No transl. has come under the notice of the writer, Bk. 16.

⁴⁷ Giles' *Chinese-English Dictionary*, under "*Hai*."

⁴⁸ *Shan Hai King*, Bk. 7.

these distant regions.⁴⁹ All this, of course, is legendary. These tales are nothing more than oral traditions handed down from generation to generation and at last about the twelfth century B.C. committed to writing, but they seem to establish beyond question that at that early period the Chinese story-tellers looked to the northwest for the home of their heroes and demigods. The very fact that the *Shan Hai King*, or Classics of Mountains and Seas, which purports to tell all about the mountains and seas of China and neighboring countries, devotes such a disproportionate amount of space to the northwestern regions, is of itself of considerable significance.

The tales themselves, strange and incredible as they are, bear witness to the importance which those far-away regions had in the estimate of those dwellers in the lower valley of the Yellow River. Fancy grew busy with these race memories. There were lands up there among the "moving sands"⁵⁰ and beyond the "western desert,"⁵¹ inhabited by curious creatures, half human, half animal; creatures with human heads and serpent bodies.⁵² There were men whose eyes were in their breasts and mouths at their navels.⁵³ There was also a kingdom of women,⁵⁴ and not far away another of husbands⁵⁵—echoes, almost, of similar stories told by Herodotus and concerning the Amazons, Scyths and tribes of northern Russia and northwestern Asia. There was also somewhere in that region a land of "white men."⁵⁶ There was a country where men are not counted old under 800 years of age.⁵⁷ There, too, is the paradise of the Western Royal Mother or Fairy Queen.⁵⁸ Originally this was nothing more than a description of some western land whose name the Chinese attempted to transliterate by using characters pronounced "wang-mu," but since they chose to use the "wang" meaning "royal" and the "mu" meaning "mother," fancy began to weave beautiful legends about a fairy queen, and so we are permitted to read of the happy subjects of that queen who feed upon the eggs of the mythical bird, the phoenix, and drink sweet dew, and

⁴⁹ Ibid., Bks. 7 and 16.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Bk. 16.

⁵¹ Ibid., Bk. 16.

⁵² Ibid., Commentary.

⁵³ Ibid., Bk. 7.

⁵⁴ Ibid., Bks. 7 and 16.

⁵⁵ Ibid., Bk. 7.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., Bk. 16.

⁵⁸ Ibid., Bks. 7 and 16, frequently.

whose every wish once uttered is immediately gratified.⁵⁹ We are told of the Lake of Gems and the Peach of Immortality,⁶⁰ and learn how a few favored monarchs have been permitted to visit that fairy queen and partake of the elixir of life. In other words, all the important myths and legends, all the earliest traditions of the Chinese, and all their oldest fairy tales speak of this wonderland beyond the Western Sea. Does not this of itself suggest that it is there that we should look for the childhood home of this ancient people?

This theory, that the Chinese originated in part at least in central Asia, accords very well with what little we know of the movements of peoples in central and eastern Asia in ancient times. The dark-skinned, curly-headed aborigines of central and southern China were forced into the Indo-Chinese Peninsula by the pressure of other tribes moving upon them from the north. These ethnic movements not only followed the courses of the Brahmaputra and the Irrawaddy, but pushed down the valley of the Yellow River as well. The earliest immigrants into this valley were driven eastward by those coming later until, on reaching the coast, the current was deflected either to the north or the south. Little headway was made, however, toward the north or the northeast. There the Chinese met with strong resistance. Indeed, at times they have been driven back by incursions of Tartar hordes from that quarter. The line of least resistance was toward the south, and the tribes that were not absorbed by the incoming conquerors, as were the *I*, to which Shun belonged, were gradually pressed southward, as happened to the Miao and the Shans. This would seem to explain the movements of Huang Ti and other early leaders of the Chinese.

When we find the name of Huang Ti associated with a number of places in the far northwest and also with widely separated places in Kansu, and are told that subsequently, according to tradition, his capital was located near Hsuan-hua Fu,⁶¹ about 125 miles northwest of the site of the present city of Peking, we seem to be justified in assuming with Prof. Terrien de Lacouperie that Huang Ti was a leader of a band of immigrants. Such a migration would have taken place about 2700 B.C.

Some 350 years later, we find one of the successors of Huang Ti, the Emperor Yao, established on the north bank of the Yellow River,

⁵⁹ Ibid., Bk. 16.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ *Les Mémoires Historiques de Se-ma Ts'ien*, traduits et annotées par Edouard Chavannes, 1, Paris, 1897, p. 29, note 2.

about 400 miles south of Hsuan-hua.⁶² Shun, who followed Yao upon the throne, evidently belonged to a tribe that had come east in an earlier migration and which had settled in what is now the promontory of Shantung. These two states, ruled by Yao and Shun, were eventually consolidated, as we have seen.

While Shun ruled the land a feudal lord, named Shang, came into prominence. His seat was far to the west of Shun's capital, in the valley of the Wei River, near the modern city of Hsi-an Fu,⁶³ in Shensi. His descendants, however, by some cause unknown to us, were made to migrate eastward on the south side of the Yellow River to the borders of modern Shantung, a distance of 400 or 500 miles from their old home, for when the Shangs in 1766 B.C. attacked and overthrew the Hsia Dynasty, it was from this latter place that they led their armies.

In the meantime new tribes had appeared upon the western horizon. The ancient seat of the Shangs had become the home of the Chous. In 1122 B.C. these newcomers in their turn made a bid for the mastery. Forming a federation of eight western tribes,⁶⁴ they attacked the Shangs and wrenched the empire from them. • These indications, although they are few and faint, nevertheless seem to justify us in believing that in northern China there was anciently a steady movement of population from the west toward the east.

Perhaps the most ardent advocate of the western origin both of the civilization of the Chinese and of the race itself has up to the present been Prof. Terrien de Lacouperie. He was while he lived indefatigable in collecting from all quarters evidence bearing upon the problem. His presentation of the case, however, has not always been happy, and the theory has suffered somewhat in consequence. It is difficult at times to separate his facts from his guesses. Some of his identifications, such as that of Shennung with Sargon,⁶⁵ seem too fanciful for acceptance. His argument for an Elamite origin of the Chinese forefathers, who were said not to belong to the yellow race, and to have had blue eyes wanting in obliqueness, is not at all convincing.⁶⁶ There is, however, a grea

⁶² The traditional capital of Yao was near P'ing-Yang Shansi. Legge casts doubt on the accuracy of this tradition. *Vide* preface to his translation of the *Shu King*, Part I, Canon of Yao.

⁶³ *Vide* Legge's Preface to his translation of the *Shu King*, Part IV, Bk. I, "The Speech of Thang."

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Part V, Bk. II, 1 and note.

⁶⁵ de Lacouperie, *o.c.*, 318 and note 1313 on 322.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 318.

deal of valuable material brought to the knowledge of the student in his *Western Origin of Early Chinese Civilization*. He endeavors from the data collected to reconstruct the probable route of Huang Ti from ancient Elam to the Yellow River Valley.⁶⁷ Without accepting entirely his suggestions with respect to that assumed migration, we believe he is right in looking upon Huang Ti as the leader of a band of immigrants who first settled in southwest Kansu and afterwards moved to the mouth of the Wei River and thence to the vicinity of modern Hsuanhua Fu,⁶⁸ and to that extent the writer has adopted his views. We believe, too, that his argument is sound for the use of the phrase, "Bak Sing," as a tribal designation, the name in fact of the tribes led by Huang Ti into China and later gathered into a small state in southern Shansi.⁶⁹

These words in modern Pekingese are pronounced "pai hsing," and "po hsing," in Nankingese, "pe sing" or "be sing," and in Cantonese "pak sing" or "bak sing." Literally they mean "the hundred surnames." One of the textbooks studied in Chinese schools is called "the Pai Chia Hsing," or "The Hundred Family Surnames." The book, however, contains many more than a hundred surnames. There are several hundred, indeed, and altogether there are some thousands of surnames among the Chinese, and de Lacouperie's belief that the words were not intended to be taken in their ordinary meanings but constitute the name of a people seems well founded. In the oldest books of the Chinese these words are used to describe the subjects of the emperors. They are usually translated "the people," and to this day "the people" in China are known as the "pai hsing," or in Cantonese as the "pak sing." "The Bak Tribes" is in fact a very proper translation. De Lacouperie's theory is that the Bak tribes came from central or western Asia and left their name upon many places en route, such as Baku, Bactria, etc. This is decidedly uncertain, but perhaps not very unreasonable. We must bear in mind, however, that there were many migrations of related tribes both before and after the Baks. Among those that preceded were the *I* tribes, one of which we know as the Shan; while among those that followed we have the Chous, who in 1200 B.C. moving from the same general direction as the Baks brought with them into China a higher degree of culture than was possessed by their predecessors and introduced many new ideas, laws and inven-

⁶⁷ Ibid., 316-337.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 329 and note 1359 on 331.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 302-306.

tions. The Chous at first contended with the Baks as the latter had previously contended with the Ti and the Miao. Finally the Chous conquered and the Baks were amalgamated with them.

The acceptance of this theory of a central Asian origin for the Chinese people enables us to give a very satisfactory explanation of the striking similarity between the language of ancient China and that of the Sumerians and the still more striking similarity between the ideographic symbols of the two peoples.

Prof. C. J. Ball, Lecturer in Assyriology in Oxford University, called attention to this at the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists, held in London in September, 1892. At that time the ideograms with which the Chinese writing was compared were supposed to be Accadian. It has since been learned that there were two races in the Euphrates Valley in that ancient period, the Accadians and the Sumerians, and that the ideographic symbols belonged to the latter. In 1892, however, Professor Ball read a paper on "Accadian Affinities" in which he endeavored to show that a connection existed between the Chinese and the Accadian, which he called "the oldest of known languages." In this paper he said:⁷⁰

"Five thousand years before our era it (Accadia) possessed a system of writing which the earliest documents prove to have been of pictorial origin The earliest Accadian inscriptions, whose date can be fixed with some approach to certainty, are considerably later than the times of Naram-Sin and Sargon. The most important are those of Gudea, discovered at Tell-Loh by de Sarzec. The probable date of that sovereign is about 2,800 B.C. a date which curiously coincides with that of Fuh-hi, one of the traditional founders of Chinese civilization, and reputed inventor of the arts of writing, numbers and divination (2,852 B.C.). A glance at these venerable monuments at once reveals the fact that the writing out of which the cuneiform characters of Babylon, Assyria and other countries were developed was originally disposed in vertical columns exactly like the writing of China; and that the symbols which have been laid down on their sides in the derived script, must be raised again from left to right if we would gain a just conception of their original form and pictorial significance. . . . The purpose of this paper is to show that the progress of special inquiry must, if regard be had to facts and not to preconceptions, in the long run, convince the learned world of the truth of the theory that the Chinese writing had a western origin, and that the Chinese language is the nearest living representative of the ancient Accadian."

For the word "Accadian" in the above quotation we ought now to substitute "Sumerian."

⁷⁰ *Transactions Ninth International Congress Orientalists*, London, 1893, 677-678.

In a later work, published in 1913, entitled *Chinese and Sumerian*, Dr. Ball gives a list of 108 ideograms in Sumerian, with which he identifies certain old forms of Chinese. No one, it seems to me, who is unbiased, can study these two lists carefully without being convinced that they have a common origin. In the same volume Dr. Ball publishes a vocabulary of more than a thousand words from the Sumerian which he shows to be substantially identical in sounds and meanings with the Chinese equivalents. It is, of course, understood that after a separation of ages even words that have had a common origin will have become modified in pronunciation and that in some cases definitions also will be changed. But the changes which have taken place in these words of the Sumerian and Chinese languages, of supposedly common origin, are, or seem to be, in accord with philological laws, and just such as have been found taking place in other languages.

The proposed derivation of the Chinese written language from the ancient Sumerian is, however, emphatically rejected by Mr. E. H. Parker in his philological essay, prefixed to Giles's *Chinese-English Dictionary*. He says:

"So far as I can see, there is no evidence to show that the Chinese script was invented or developed otherwise than from within, just so much so as the Egyptian script; and nothing worthy of serious consideration has been adduced to connect it with Egyptian, Akkadian, or any other early form of writing."⁷¹

Dr. Hirth says of the suggested connection of the Chinese people with those of western Asia:

"Anthropological arguments seem to contradict the idea of any connection with Babylonians, Egyptians, Assyrians, or Indians. The earliest hieroglyphics of the Chinese ascribed by them to the Shang Dynasty (second millenium B.C.) betray the Mongol character of the nation that invented them by the decided obliquity of the human eye wherever it appears in an ideograph. In a pair of eyes as shown in the most ancient pictorial or sculptural representations in the West, the four corners may be connected by a horizontal straight line whereas lines drawn through the eyes of one of the oldest Chinese hieroglyphics cross each other at a sharp angle . . . This does not seem to speak for racial consanguinity any more than the well-known curled heads and bearded faces of Assyrian sculptures as compared to the straight haired and almost beardless Chinese."⁷²

On the other hand L. W. King in his *History of Sumer and Akkad* says:

⁷¹ Giles' Dictionary, Intro., xix.

⁷² *Encycl. Brit.*, 11th ed., vi, 191.

"The racial affinity of the Sumerians is problematical. The *obliquely-set eyes* of figures in early reliefs suggested the theory of a Mongol origin and the Chinese origin of Sumerian roots and the Cuneiform character."⁷³

He adds that this "is too improbable to need detailed refutation." He shows his misunderstanding of the theory, however, which does not propose a Chinese origin for cuneiform but rather a Sumerian origin for the Chinese character. But his statement that figures in early Accadian sculptures have obliquely-set eyes at least removes the objection of Dr. Hirth that the obliquely-set eyes of the Chinese make consanguinity with the Accadians impossible.

It is not necessary, of course, to assume the identity of the two peoples in order to account for similarity of language, but the existence of a Turanian element in the population of the Euphrates Valley in ancient times renders it highly probable that there may be a relationship. It does seem possible, at any rate, that the two languages may have had a related origin and that the two people also may be akin. Assuming this for the moment to be true, where shall we look for the common source of the two languages and the probable common home of the two peoples? And what could have occurred to cause such a wide separation?

Pumpelly's *Explorations in Turkestan*, being an account of his expedition to that region in 1903 and 1904, and the account of his second expedition in 1904, together with the facts adduced in Ellsworth Huntington's *Pulse of Asia*, bring to our notice important facts with regard to great climatic changes that have taken place in central Asia and that have converted a great inland sea and a region of moist climate and fertile soil into an arid desert. The explorations of Aurel Stein farther east have uncovered the buried cities of Khotan. The whole region is described as including six basins, covering a vast territory, 3,000 miles from east to west and 1,600 from north to south.⁷⁴

The earliest remains unearthed at Anau, on the oasis of Merv, by the Pumpelly Expedition, according to the estimate of Ulrich Duerst of the University of Berne, are put at 8250 B.C.⁷⁵

Professor Pumpelly believes that the oases of central Asia are the fountain of Western Asiatic culture.⁷⁶ He might have added that even more probably they are the fountain of eastern Asiatic culture. I think that the evidence will support this statement.

⁷³ King (L. W.) *A History of Sumer and Akkad*. Lond., 1910, 54.

⁷⁴ Huntington (E.) *The Pulse of Asia*. Boston and N. Y., 1907, 356.

⁷⁵ Pumpelly (R.) *Explorations in Turkestan, Expedition of 1904*. Carnegie Inst. of Wash., publ. 73, 1908, 437.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 357.

The region, so we are told, was isolated from Europe, though this seems doubtful, and from Africa from the glacial period onward, and the culture of the people there was evolved in complete independence. But owing to climatic changes the people eventually were compelled to emigrate. This we know in fact has occurred in recent times and is still going on. We have a number of Chinese accounts of attempts at various times to colonize certain of these regions which afterwards had to be abandoned.⁷⁷ From these basins of central Asia men have been forced by the progressive desiccation of the region to migrate at different periods from one place after another. These people moved, some to the west, some to the north, others to the east. Now we learn from Jastrow's *Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria* that the Sumerians very possibly entered the Euphrates Valley from the mountainous regions east or northeast of Babylonia.⁷⁸ We learn still more. Here is what Jastrow says upon the question: "Who were the Sumerians?"

"We know that they were not Semites; their features as depicted on the monuments reveal a Turanian type, but the term, Turanian, is too vague to furnish a definite clue."⁷⁹

It does not seem improbable, then, that the changes taking place in central Asia which were driving the inhabitants of that region to seek homes elsewhere may have been the direct or indirect cause that forced the Sumerians to move into the valley of the Euphrates.

We are told, moreover, by Jastrow, in his *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*⁸⁰ that the Sumerians were more highly civilized than the Semites whom they met in that valley; that the Sumerians conquered these Semites and that the Sumerian script became the written language of the conquered and the origin of the cuneiform. He tells us that the early population of the Euphrates Valley was mixed in character, that by the side of the Semites we find a Turanian race clearly depicted on the monuments and demarcated by their physiognomies and by differences of costume from the Semitic population.⁸¹ In his

⁷⁷ Huntington, 219; 266-267.

⁷⁸ Jastrow (M.) *The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria*, Phil. and Lond., 1915, 106-107. See also *Sumer and Akkad.*, by L. W. King, Appendix I.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁸¹ *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*, by Morris Jastrow, N. Y., 1914, 9-10; also King's *Sumer and Akkad*, 348; also Jastrow's *Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria*, 106.

later work, "The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria" (p. 107), he admits that there is some doubt whether the Sumerians found the Semites already in Babylonia when they arrived there, but that the evidence favors this view and indicates that when the Sumerians swept down upon the Semites they imposed upon them such culture as they had brought with them.

We have, then, the facts that various Chinese tribes appear to have come in to what is now China from some region to the northwest of that country, and that the Sumerians appear to have come into the Euphrates Valley from some place to the northeast of Babylonia; that the Sumerians were apparently of the Turanian race, and that their language and their script are strikingly like those of the ancient Chinese; and that extensive changes in the climate of Central Asia have driven out at different periods great numbers of the inhabitants who have migrated in various directions. It does not seem at all improbable then that the Chinese forefathers and the ancestors of the Sumerians may have been related and may have migrated from neighboring regions, the Chinese toward the east and the Sumerians toward the west.

There remain many mounds in Central Asia which have never been explored. Is it too much to hope that in the not far distant future explorations there may uncover inscriptions in a primitive hieroglyphic writing which will prove to be the parent, both of the Sumerian and of the Chinese; and that other conclusive evidence, the foremost place among which may not unlikely be reserved to the skeletal remains, may establish a definite relationship between the two peoples?

Aside or together with the great problem of the origin of the Chinese range themselves the scarcely less important anthropological problems of the possible presence, quantity and derivation of "white" blood in the Chinese; and of the relation to the Chinese of those highly interesting tribes which skirt much of the northern and western borders of the Chinese territory and which bear such close physical resemblances to the American Indians.