The Formation of Chinese Civilization according to Socio-Anthropological Analysis

By Wolfram Eberhard*

I. Traditional approaches to the study of early Chinese history

The problem of the development of basic Chinese institutions can be and has been attacked from many different angles. Let us briefly review the most important approaches:

a) The historical approach. If we leave aside late Chinese sources which tell us the "inventor" of every cultural or social trait and when it was "invented", and if we rely on original and as far as possible primary sources only, our data are quite meager for all periods prior to 750 B.C. More data have recently become accessible in the oracle bone inscriptions of the Shang period. These texts contain a wealth of data which, however, are not yet fully understood; we are not yet able to read and to interpret many inscriptions, not all of them are published, and no up-to-date analysis and summary of work done thus far has been brought forth. This seems to be one of the most urgent tasks of research. But even in the ideal case, we cannot hope to get all the data we want, because of the special character of the texts as oracle texts. Moreover, we can hope for only very limited information on periods earlier than the Shang period from these texts. At the present we believe that the pre-Shang period had not yet developed a script, although they might have had some symbols1.

b) The archeological approach. In spite of magnificent discoveries, archeology in China is just beginning its work. We know that a number of different cultures existed in Shang and pre-Shang time, but the geographical distribution of these cultures (such as the

1 cf. A. Bulling, The Meaning of China's most Ancient Art, Leiden, 1952 and also the studies of C. Hentze.

Note of the editor: The writers of the articles, the book reviews and informations are alone responsible for the opinions expressed.
painted pottery culture or the black pottery culture) is by no means clear. Many more excavations, mainly in Central, Western and Southern China have to be done. In addition, we know how difficult it is even in the Western hemisphere to ascribe an archeological culture to a historically well-known ethnic group. Finally, excavations give good data on material culture; but it is extremely difficult, methodologically, to make inferences on the social structure from such data.

c) The linguistic approach. Here, too, we are only at the first beginnings. In spite of the work done by B. Karlgren, W. Simon, Chao Yüan-jen and others, we have not yet completed the first basic step: we do not yet know Chinese word families, and the rules of derivation of individual words. It is my opinion that only after this has been done will a really fruitful comparison of Chinese with the neighbouring languages be possible. Only then might we be able to decide whether a given word in either Chinese or Tai belongs to a root common to both languages or whether it is a loan word from one of these. In addition, research on the Fang-yen, now under way (P. Serruys), seems to indicate that Chinese literature down to early Chou times contains traces of Chinese dialects, but only very few traces of non-Chinese words, too few to reconstruct such languages. Finally, Shang script contains a fair number of characters which do not reappear in Chou script; the complex structure of some of these characters might very well indicate that Shang language differed strongly, perhaps even basically, from Chou language. Our present inability to define areas of non-Chinese languages on the soil of present China in early periods, or the lack of data for such languages, can hardly be used as an argument to prove that no such languages existed in Shang or Chou times.

d) The physical-anthropological approach. Researches here are still more in their infancy. Preliminary studies done by Shirokogoroff and von Eickstedt seem to indicate that the isolation of different races or sub-races might become possible.

With the exception of the last approach, these views have two points in common: First, they conceive Chinese civilization as marching against a background of receding, passive natives who only occasionally try to resist, and whose actions and reactions have not been objects of study. Second, the representatives of these three approaches begin at the earliest possible period and then work down into later periods. Marxian theories also show these peculiarities.

\footnote{In spite of the advanced stage of Indo-European studies, we have not yet been able to reconstruct the sub-strata languages of Europe.}
II. The socio-anthropological approach

The socio-anthropological approach tries to attack the problem from a different set of propositions.

a) In relation to data: We try to collect all data on ethnic groups regarded in Chinese sources as non-Chinese (the "they-group" against the "we-group") as well as all data on individual cultural traits which are described in the sources as non-Chinese or which show only a limited distribution in the Far East. "Traits" are not only material objects such as tools or other implements, but also religious beliefs, forms of art, social institutions such as the institution of marriage, the form of the family, etc.

b) In relation to method: We start with the periods for which data are most abundant, i.e. the modern or recent period, and then go back into earlier and less richly documented periods. We show the distribution of our ethnic groups and our traits on maps, a separate one for each time period. We assume that descriptions of ethnic groups should be regarded as reliable as long as the contrary cannot be proved. While modern or recent descriptions can often be called "ethnographic" descriptions written for the curious reader, earlier descriptions normally have a definite purpose: they try to describe an ethnic group so that any representative of this group appearing at court to bring tribute can be recognized and impostors be unmasked; and so that in case of war the equipment, size, and political-military organization of the group will be sufficiently known. It was, therefore, in the interest of the Chinese to give accurate, but not complete and exhaustive descriptions.

Chinese texts practically always classify a given tribe as belonging to a larger group. This is sometimes done by stating that their "customs and mores" are the same as those of another tribe, sometimes by saying that they "belong" to the other group. The sources often propose general terms, such as "Yüeh" for whole groups of tribes. In such cases we see indeed that the cultures of individual tribes regarded as belonging to a larger group are, as far as described, really similar to one another. We therefore group such tribes together. We assume that such Chinese classifications have an operational value which should be explored, while admitting that we do not have better criteria allowing us to propose a different classification.

In case the text mentions that two tribes speak the same or a related language, we face a more serious problem. While comparative data indicate that linguistic differences often coincide with cultural differences, the reverse is less often true, although some European anthropologists are more positive on this point. In the absence of better criteria, we put such cases into the same group if the
cultural data indicate cultural similarity. We are aware, however, that such a procedure is precarious.

The same procedure is used with cultural traits — we start with the recent period and then go back into the earlier and earliest periods. For the periods prior to the Chou dynasty, data become quite scanty. Here some auxiliary methods may profitably be used. Granet and Haloun have shown that legends which occur in late Chou texts are connected with certain clans. Both assume, and we follow them, that such legends, as well as other clan-bound traditions, represent some of perhaps the earliest cultural traits of such social groups. Haloun and later researchers have shown that clans can easily be located geographically by their traditions, by their names or by geographical terms. This allows us to reach by interpolation a period earlier than our written documents, which, in some parts of northern China goes back as far as 2000 B.C., or perhaps even farther.

c) In regard to theory: We assume that the culture and/or social structure of an ethnic group is not a box full of matches, but rather a body of interrelated and interacting nerves and muscles3. On the basis of this assumption as well as on the basis of comparisons with other, more fully-known civilizations of comparable type, we dare to attempt certain reconstructions and interpolations of the culture of these ethnic units; thus we may speak of a “slash and burn culture” although a number of important elements which have to be present to justify the use of the term are not reported in the data. When analyzing individual, locally distributed cultural traits, too, we try to link one trait to one or several others on the basis of our assumption. We can, then, also study such traits, about which we have less complete data as to their distribution and their age. Once we succeed in finding whole clusters of such traits (“chains”), we may, likewise on the basis of anthropological theories and the comparative method, again proceed to reconstruction and interpolation.

Applying this method through all its stages, it becomes possible to combine on a map or a set of maps the results of the study of ethnic groups with the results of the study of traits and to connect the traits with ethnic groups. Thus a complex picture of “local cultures” emerges.

Chinese data on tribes abound from Han times on; before the Han period, data are meager and usually contain not much more than information on the geographical distribution of a tribe at a given

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3 If we use the term “culture”, we do not of course mean an abstract, as J. Prusek (in Archiv Orientalni, vol. 12, 1953, pp. 35-92) seems to think, but mean a living body of human beings with certain material and non-material cultural traits and a certain social structure.
time. Moreover, the tribal names differ greatly from the later names. The reason for this seems to be that in the North and Northwest of present day China, probably as a result of contacts with the "high Chinese" culture, tribes began to be grouped together in form of federations from late Chan-kuo times (ca. 300 B.C.) on; thus we hear suddenly of Hsiung-nu, know that this was a federation of many tribes, but do not know the names of all participant tribes. Only later texts occasionally give one or the other tribal name. Thus tribal names disappear and names of federations appear.

But even if these difficulties of identification can be surmounted, data on tribes become exceedingly sparse in early Chou and Shang times. Here the data on cultural traits are helpful.

Often we know from the description of the tribes, that a given trait which in our sources is mentioned as a trait with a narrowly circumscribed geographical distribution, was originally a trait typical of a local culture. In other cases, a given trait can be associated with a given local culture for reasons of the inner structure of that local culture. Thus, by studying such traits, we can in a number of cases infer that a given local culture existed before the Shang time, i.e. before the invention of writing and thus before the earliest reports on non-Chinese tribes.

The more we reach back into earliest history, the more data on traits belonging to the spiritual culture take prominence, such as data on special beliefs, local deities, myths, legends. We can, for instance, start out with the distribution of the horse, the main centers of horse-trade, of horse-breeding, of the horse-drawn cart, parts of the cart, etc. But all this will not take us further back than the Chou period, if we stick to texts and disregard (for the moment) archeology. But if we then start to study the distribution of legends and myths which are connected with horse, wagon and its equipment, such as legends about the first domesticator of the horse, his clan and the home of his clan, the hero who is credited with the invention of the chariot and his clan's home, towns which were created by divine horses, places where supernatural horses appeared, horse-deities, etc., we find these traits almost always closely connected with certain clans; and the places where these legends are supposed to

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4 It seems that already the earliest federations, such as the Yüeh-chih, Tung-hu or Hsiung-nu, regrouped the tribes which had formed the federation into pseudo-tribal military units; such military units can and often did become real ("secondary") tribes after the breakdown of the federation. The military units got names which differ from the ancient tribal names. This, too, may explain the difference in names before the Ch'in and after the Ch'in period. The classical example of such formations and reformations is the early history of the Ch'i-tan.
have taken place, or the places where the cults are performed are also the areas in which, according to other traditions or to place-names, the same clans had their earliest settlements. Some of these clans are known as clans in Shang times, but others are regarded by tradition as earlier. If we do not have good reasons to reject such traditions, we have to accept them. Thus we occasionally reach periods before 2000 B.C. The limit to which we can go back historically is different in different parts of China; in the north it may be the third millennium B.C., while in parts of the South we can often hardly go farther back than T'ang time (ca. 7th cent. A.D.).

This process of reconstruction implies as a basic assumption that ethnic units do not migrate — as long as we have no data on migrations.

As soon as this work is done, data on circa one thousand tribes can be seen to fall in some nineteen "cultures" which can be traced back with more (in the North) or less (in the South) probability down to the time of or before the beginning of written data.

Work on another level can start from this point on. It becomes possible to reduce the number of "local cultures", as they emerge on the basis of Chinese classification, because some of these "local cultures" exhibit practically the same cultural inventory and differ only in geographical location; others differ only in time, i.e. a "culture" is given a certain general term in an early time, and another one in a later time. Such cases are limited to the South.

At the same time it is obvious that these "local cultures" are not "basic cultures" in the sense of some anthropologists, but rather in themselves fairly complex cultures exhibiting a long past development. Thus the local cultures in the North are cattle, sheep, or horse-breeders at the time which we can reach by our method, i.e. before 1500 B.C. If recent reports that a mounted horse has been excavated at the site of the Shang capital, are correct, the art of riding the horse seems to have been known at that time, as our findings also seemed to indicate. This does not necessarily mean that cavalry was

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6 In a number of cases, individual clans of ethnic units (tribes, etc.) can be studied and their relation to clans which in Chinese texts occur as "Chinese" clans can be shown. In some such cases, it then becomes possible to trace components of an ethnic unit further back than the whole unit, and to reach a period before the Shang time.

8 Details on the data, the application of the method and the preliminary results can be found in my Kultur und Siedlung der Randvölker Chinas (Leiden, 1942); Lokalkulturen im alten China (Leiden and Peking, 1943, 2 vols.); Zur Frage der ethnologischen Untersuchung von Hochkulturen in Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., vol. 72, 1940, no. 1–3, p. 1–11. An attempt to apply the method to Central Asia in my "Die Kultur der alten zentral- und westasiatischen Völker nach chinesischen Quellen", in Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., vol. 73, 1943, p. 215–275.
already used in warfare at such an early time; it is quite possible that
the traditional accounts are correct according to which the Chinese
learned the use of the horse in warfare from their nomadic neighbors
as late as the 4th century B.C. But in view of these findings, it
might seem wise to leave the question open as to when the northern
neighbors of China changed from animal breeders with subsidiary
agriculture into pure horse-nomads. The date of 800—700 B.C. with
is often mentioned today, seems to me to be rather late.

Anthropological research has indicated that the domestication of
animals and the transition to an animal-breeding culture took place,
at least in the case of the horse, not too long before the emergence
of a horse-breeding culture in our area. At a still earlier time, there-
fore, these cultures must have presented a different form; they
were, according to one group of anthropologists, hunters, according
to others, agriculturists. We find hints to support both points of view,
but these hints are not clear enough to permit a decision in favor
of one or the other theory.

It is also entirely possible that due to the inadequacy of data,
we have, following the Chinese, put two different cultures into one
group merely because they were quite similar to one another in
some main points. We know, for instance, that tribes of the Yüeh-
chih federation lived in the Northwest of China; but some data7
seem to indicate that at one time members of this group lived
as far to the East as Southern and Central Shansi. Linguists tell
us that at least some of the Yüeh-chih tribes spoke an Indo-European
language at some time, and they would therefore expect to find a
Yüeh-chih culture. We cannot isolate such a culture; but elements
which may have been culture traits of Yüeh-chih tribes are included
in what we have called the Northwest culture8 and other elements
appear in what we have called the Western culture9. Recently
attempts have been made to isolate these elements and to work
towards the isolation of a Yüeh-chih culture10. This can, theoretically,
be done by applying our method to the area of Central and Western
Asia, and then comparing the results with the results of analysis
of data in China11.

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7 First mentioned by G. Haloun. Other data are mentioned in my Lokal-
kulturen im alten China, Leiden, 1943, Vol. I passim, without open refe-
rence to the Yüeh-chih.

8 Also called "proto-Turcic"; see below for explanation.

9 Also called "proto-Tibetan"; see below for explanation.

10 The work done by F. Kussmaul, "Frühe Nomadenkulturen in Inner-

11 Although linguists generally regard the Yüeh-chih as a group speaking
an Indo-european language, H. W. Haussig ("Theophylakts Exkurs über die
skythischen Völker", Byzantion, vol. 23, 1953, pp. 275—463), in analyzing
It is at this point that the results of linguistic, physical-anthropological and archeological research should be taken up and tested against the model we tried to construct. It seems to me, on the basis of such preliminary and inadequate data as are available at the moment, that the areas of distribution of certain large language groups such as Tungusic\(^{12}\), Turkic, Mongoloid, Tai et al., agree to an astonishingly high degree with the areas of distribution of certain of our "local cultures". If we have, therefore, sometimes applied a linguistic name to one of our "cultures", we have not started from the assumption that each distinct culture must have its distinct language, but rather from the observation that the areas of linguistic and cultural distribution seem to be almost identical. Of course, we never mean that all tribes which culturally belong to the "Northern culture" spoke Mongoloid languages, even if we, in order to avoid such colorless names, sometimes called this culture "Proto-Mongoloid"\(^{13}\). But we believe that we have some right to assume that languages belonging to a Mongoloid language stock were spoken in this cultural area. The present stage of archeological and physical-anthropological research makes integration of their results into our model still more difficult than the integration of linguistic research. We observe, for instance, that the center of the distribution of painted pottery covers roughly the area of distribution of the Western culture (or "Proto-Tibetan"); and that certain of the pottery forms of the grey ceramic seem to have parallels in the North-Eastern ("Proto-Tungus") culture. But in the absence of excavations in so many areas of China, any such identification may prove premature.

III. The emergence of "Chinese" culture

If the results of the work done thus far are mapped out, we find to our surprise that the "local cultures" overlap one another and some tribal names, has raised some doubt; we might assume that at least some tribes of the federation spoke other languages. This complicates our problem still further.

\(^{12}\) K. Jettmar ("Zum Problem der tungusischen Urheimat", in Wiener Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte und Linguistik, vol. 9, 1952, p. 484—511) has tried to show the difficulties which exist in this specific problem, and has made proposals to revise the conclusions reached by our theory on the basis of results drawn from other, mainly archeological material.

\(^{13}\) We know a "Mongol" language definitely only since shortly before the Mongol dynasty in the 13th century, as we know a "Turkish" language definitely only since the Kök-Turk inscriptions. Nobody would suggest that these languages originated in these periods. Both language groups show a remarkable conservatism. Both seem to be basically related, but the degree to which they differ from one another is so great that the differentiation must have started many centuries, if not millenia, before the first documentary remains of these languages. "Proto" means, therefore, only some stage of the language group earlier than the first documentary proof.
cover the whole area of China, leaving no empty room for "the Chinese".

Observations in present-day Southeast Asia and other parts of the world show that cultures can very well overlap: one group may specialize in hunting and occupy the hills, while another, agricultural group, may live in the plains and valleys. Animal-breeders may also share the same area with hunters and/or with agriculturists.

But what about the "Chinese"?

Earlier theories presented them as the original inhabitants of a larger area comprising the western part of the great plain of the Wei valley, or as immigrants from some Western country into this area, in which they either propagated their imported culture or developed by their innate genius the culture which they then propagated in all directions, assimilating or destroying all "barbarians" living around them. Where and who are these "Chinese"?

We propose to introduce here some assumptions taken from anthropology and sociology. We know that new cultures can arise out of an interaction of members of different cultures. In some cases, the integrating factor is an ideology, in others some other factor or factors. Modern examples known to all of us are Israel, Pakistan, and the United States. In the first two cases the integrating factor is religion, although closer investigation shows that in the case of Israel this is true only in a very general sense\(^{14}\). In all these cases, we have (or will have very soon) new cultures which differ clearly in a good number of traits from any other existing culture. They comprise men of different languages, and different civilizations, which merged (or are merging) into a new unit\(^{15}\). We know that such processes are almost an every-day occurrence among animal-breeding nomadic cultures. It is, therefore, not necessary to assume that "Chinese" existed at all times, just as no Pakistani, Israeli, and Americans existed before a given time.

We know that none of the so-called "high civilizations" was ethnically, linguistically and culturally uniform. They all were highly stratified societies, in which the top stratum, a minority, differed markedly from the lower strata in their cultural and spiritual traits and often also in their physical appearance. Many, but not all theorists\(^{16}\) assume that processes of “superstratification" produced this

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\(^{14}\) I am referring to the differences in cult between Sefardim, Ashkenazi and "Oriental" Jews.

\(^{15}\) See W. Mühlmann, “Colluvies gentium” in *Studium Generale*, vol. 3, 1950, no. 10, pp. 572–6. The concept of "ethnos" as developed by S. M. Shirokogoroff, in *Ethnical unit & Milieu, a Summary of the Ethnos*, Shanghai, 1924, and later works, is very useful here.

\(^{16}\) Marxian theorists strongly reject this concept.
situation: the elite had an animal-breeding, or more specifically cattle- or horse-breeding nomadic culture\textsuperscript{17} and by way of conquest or peaceful acculturation\textsuperscript{18} set themselves up as rulers or developed into rulers over the other, usually agricultural group\textsuperscript{19} and changed from producers to administrators. If the area, thus organized under this new elite, is large, “feudal” administration will emerge\textsuperscript{20}. Aside from such “primary” processes of superstratification, “secondary” or marginal processes will start along the borders of a primary area under the influence of the primary area\textsuperscript{21}. We are well aware of the difficulties of this theory\textsuperscript{22}. But as theories are “statements that may possibly provide valid explanations”\textsuperscript{23} and their function is “to suggest problems, to provide categories for organizing data”\textsuperscript{24}, and because to use an unproved theory “does not mean that the investigator has prejudged the issue”\textsuperscript{25}, we feel justified in experimenting with this theory.

None of the “local cultures” which we have tried to delineate geographically and to describe culturally can be labelled a “high civilization” according to the usual definitions. Although indications exist that in at least some of the northern local cultures social stratification was developing, no organized state with a system of administration covering a larger area seems to have existed. No cities existed, although village settlement in compact form had been known for a long time. No system of writing which could be used for purposes of an administration had yet been developed. With the Shang dynasty we have a “high civilization” with all those and more elements. It seems possible that before that the Hsia had a “high civilization” with all or most of these elements, but today our facts con-

\textsuperscript{17} “Sea-conquerors” or “sea-nomads” have been added to these. We follow here mainly the theories of R. Thurnwald.

\textsuperscript{18} R. Thurnwald has stressed this point. Peaceful acculturation would, mainly, take place in areas in which two different cultures overlap. See above.

\textsuperscript{19} Recently A. Rüstow (Ortsbestimmung der Gegenwart, vol. 1. Erlenbach-Zürich, 1950) has tried to refine this theory by classifying different possibilities of superstratification.

\textsuperscript{20} With “feudal” we do not mean an economic system. We accept the narrow definition as held by H. Maspero (in Révue de l’Institut de Sociologie, Bruxelles, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 3—36) and many others, which stresses the contractual character.


\textsuperscript{22} Which become obvious when an attempt is made to apply them to the pre-columbian American high civilizations.

\textsuperscript{23} The Social Sciences in Historical Study, Social Science Council, Bulletin no. 64, New York, 1954, p. 91.

\textsuperscript{24} I. c., p. 26.

\textsuperscript{25} I. c., p. 27.
cerning the Hsia are still too meager to substantiate such a claim. If we accept the new chronology\(^{26}\), the Shang dynasty may have begun around 1500 B.C. and the Hsia may have had its origin around 1800 B.C.

This would mean that down to approximately 2000 B.C. we find only our "local cultures", and approximately 1800 B.C. the high civilization begins. In archeological terms, it would seem to mean that high civilization begins roughly after the end of the painted pottery period in the Wei basin and further east\(^{27}\); the black, polished pottery existed at a time when a high civilization had already developed, but its main center may have been and remained outside the area in which this civilization grew (i.e. in the East and South of it).

The centuries between 2000 and 1500 B.C. were a period of great change in Western Asia; this was roughly the time in which nomadic tribes with horses and war-chariots conquered the Near East and created new states. Most of these groups were Indo-Europeans or tribal groups led by an Indo-European-speaking tribe. As Indo-European groups\(^{28}\) are found in later periods in Kansu, and as some indications point to small settlements still further to the east, opening even the possibility of connecting the Hsia with these groups, the hypothesis could be made that this group gave the impulse to the creation of the Chinese high civilization by superimposing itself over one or several of the local cultures. Hypotheses of this or related types have recently been developed (or at least work has been done in the direction of such hypotheses) by G. Haloun, L. Bachhofer and others.

Others, led by O. Spengler\(^{29}\), omit reference to the language and/or culture of the conquerors, and stress the role of the war-chariot. The war-chariot, invented in Western Asia in a transition zone between cattle- or horse-breeder and sedentary village- or even town-living agriculturists, was accepted in a kind of chain reaction by one nomadic tribe after the other, so that members of one of the nomadic local

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\(^{26}\) Which puts the end of the Shang at ca. 1050 B.C. It can be astronomically proved that the traditional chronology is the work of calculations made with Han-time astronomical formulas, and therefore not based upon safe traditions (see W. Eberhard, "Der Beginn der Chou-Zeit", in Sinica, vol. 8, 1938, pp. 182—188).

\(^{27}\) Assuming with some archeologists that it continued into far later periods in the Tibetan-Kansu area.

\(^{28}\) If the theory that the Yüeh-chih were Indo-Europeans or their leading tribe was Indo-European is accepted. Otherwise one would have to refer to the Tocharians, mentioned in still later sources.

cultures in the north of China could venture to conquer and to subjugate the area and people of one or several agrarian cultures in China. While the one hypothesis implies a migration of a group through Asia, the other one implies only the migration of a complex of cultural traits. Both imply a thorough change of existing nomadic cultures, from relatively peaceful “marginal nomads” to “warrior-nomads”. Here is a point at which it seems possible to integrate O. Lattimore’s theories into the others. The animal-breeding local cultures in the North of China all seem to have had some “supplementary” agriculture. This might indicate that, in accordance with Lattimore’s explanation, earlier, predominantly agricultural cultures in a marginal area began to specialize in animal husbandry, but it may also be an independent development of hunters into animal-breeders who took over elements of agriculture from some neighbors. Final decision in favor of one or another theory may become easier once we know more about the geographic origin of cultivated plants, especially grains. But we do know that some tribes gave up agriculture as late as the Han period, and this change was clearly connected with a change into a warrior-nomadic culture which supplemented its animal food supply by periodic raids which brought vegetable supplementary foods and textiles. Technically, such a transformation into a warrior-nomadic culture necessitates quick means of transportation, i.e. either chariots or the art of riding on horseback in organized mass attacks. As some scholars believe that the use of the riding-horse in war was not known to the nomadic cultures before the Chou period, while we know that the chariot was known in Shang times, it is conceivable that one of the nomadic local cultures changed into a warrior-nomadic, aggressive culture using chariots at a period before the beginning of the Shang; invention of riding in war could then be a second, later transformation which soon came to be commonly accepted among nomads who then for the most part gave up the chariot.

Use of the chariot and the horse naturally necessitates a developed craftsmanship and use of metals. We know that nomads do not practice these crafts themselves, but have the necessary parts made by professional craftsmen. It seems possible to assume the existence of nomadic craftsmen groups, as we find in later times travelling blacksmith tribes. It would seem easiest to assume that bronze, too, was brought into the Far East by the same process. In this case, the nomadic group would have been equipped with two new technical inventions.

30 The direction which research in this field will probably take can be seen in C. Sauer, Agricultural Origins and Dispersals, New York, 1952.

31 We believe, therefore, in the possibility of migrations of small groups...
While in conditions of symbiosis, both groups may occupy the same area but retain their economic systems, in cases of conquest the conquerors give their economic activities up to devote their time to administration and exploitation of the conquered area.

As a foreign minority their leaders settle in defensible burghs or fortresses, surrounded by their bondsmen (tribal folk) and their craftsmen, who live in a defensible, walled area in individual quarters, i.e. in a city. For the purpose of administering and exploiting a larger area, the leading families of the conquerors disperse over the whole area, everywhere creating fortified cities, and an over-all organization which is called feudal.

This whole picture of development is, as was already stated, highly speculative, but it serves to explain the typical city since the Shang period, planned, with its burgh in the center; it explains the feudal structure of Shang and Chou society, and the formation of a high civilization in the midst of "local cultures". 

32 The classical example in modern times is Yunnan in the Far East, and parts of East Africa.

33 R. Thurnwald and others before and after him developed the idea that groups which specialized in exploiting and domineering animals easily transferred these skills to other human beings. Incidentally, whoever has lived among nomads will understand this theory better.

34 We have no proofs that the nomads in question had the dome-shaped "round tent" or even the "black tent" in the period before 500 B.C. On the other hand we know of many nomadic groups (often "transhumants") which live in solid stone or mud buildings surrounded by walls (to keep the animals together) in winter in the plains and live in tents or twig huts during the summer in the high mountains. It is easy to conceive of such groups changing over to more or less permanent city settlement (even Chou and Ch'in rulers still made periodic trips which can easily be regarded as a survival of earlier habits). This form of transhumance in Central Asia has been described by A. Werth and others (references in my Conquerors and Rulers, Leiden, 1952, p. 8); for Kansu/Tibet data can be found in H. D. Scholz, Formen der ländlichen Siedlung in China, unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, Bonn, 1949, pp. 69—70.
The processes might be summarized as follows:

a) Local cultures in China until c. 2000 B.C.

b) Transformation of one or several of the animal-breeding local cultures in the north into (chariot-equipped) warrior-nomads with knowledge of bronze. Whether this group immigrated from Western Asia, or whether the technological knowledge was transmitted from the West by migrating craftsmen clans or tribes, cannot be established.

c) A series of small-scale conquests by the new group of agrarian local cultures in Shanxi and adjacent easterly areas, the border area between mountains and the plains. This may have produced the first small states, such as the states ascribed to half-legendary leaders such as Yao or Shun, and the Hsia state.

When should we call this new high culture "Chinese"? This seems to be a matter of personal preference or a matter of definition. Decision is made more difficult because Chinese have always referred to themselves as people of a given dynasty and have had no real name for themselves; a given dynasty may very well be non-Chinese. A better criterion would be to test in-group feeling by studying the first occurrence of a term for "barbarians", i.e. outsiders whose culture is regarded by the in-group as different and low. No systematic study of such terms has yet been made. They occur in the Shu-ching, but I do not know whether they also occur in Shang inscriptions.

One could, again, work from the later period toward the earlier: there can be no doubt that Chou culture was "Chinese", i.e. that it contained all the elements which remained typical for Chinese. This included, among other characteristics, the existence of a leading elite. It can be shown that most members of the elite of the Han period claimed to stem from noble families of the Chou period, i.e. branches of the families of the Chou conquerors. There is no doubt that the Chou came into power by exactly the type of conquest that has been described, that they felt different from the conquered whom they called Yin people, that their leaders dispersed over all North China in new, walled cities. There is no doubt that their language is the direct ancestor of present day Chinese.

There seem to be some points of doubt in the case of the Shang: we are not yet absolutely sure whether their language was the direct ancestor of later Chinese, although their script certainly was. We

35 "Hua-Hsia" ("The flowery Hsia?") seems to refer to the dynasty; "Chung-yüan" and "Chung-kuo" (Central plain and Central Country) seem to refer to religio-magical concepts of a world surrounded by four sacred mountains.

36 This does not mean that classical Chinese was the original language of the Chou conquerors. They seem to have spoken a non-Chinese language (Proto-Turkic? Proto-Mongol? Proto-Tibetan? or several of those?) some centuries before the conquest.
do not know whether and to what extent their elite was integrated into the Chou elite\textsuperscript{37}; on the other hand, we know that the Chou transplanted a great number of Shang settlers from the conquered capital to a place which later became the ritual capital of the Chou (the city of Lo), treating them there as a lower class. In all other respects, the Shang seem closely related enough to be called "Chinese". As for the pre-Shang, we do not possess data to make any decision.

Thus, in effect, we would agree to use the designation "Chinese" starting with the time of the formation of a state with walled cities\textsuperscript{38}, and an aristocracy which came into power by one or repeated superstratifications over agrarian settlers, i. e., a high civilization. The earlier cultures of nomads, agrarians (high and simple agrarians of many types), hunters and gatherers would have to be called by names other than "Chinese".

This would be, in general terms, the picture of the emergence of Chinese civilization resulting from a socio-anthropological approach. It is obvious that such a one-sided approach cannot be final: the results of research of all other fields will first have to be incorporated, and this will definitely modify the picture. Some research in this direction has already lead to some new propositions. But even in the field of social anthropology much work remains to be done, too much to be done by one single man. We have tried to show some of the most blatant lacunae; many more exist. The data have by no means been exhausted — their exploitation has hardly begun. But the value of a synthesis does not depend upon the substantiation of details by special detailed research\textsuperscript{39}. It is hoped that the point of view which we have tried to set forth may serve as a frame of reference for the present situation: "as the present changes, so does the meaning we see in the past\textsuperscript{40}.">

**Synopsis**

Das Entstehen der chinesischen Kultur in sozialanthropologischer Analyse

Die Entwicklung der grundlegenden chinesischen Institutionen ist von verschiedenen Seiten her untersucht worden: von der Historie und

\textsuperscript{37} Hu Shih, in his article "Ju shuo" (trans. by W. Franke in Sinica-Sonderausgabe, 1935, p. 141 f.) tries to show how the Shang elite lost status in the Chou period and developed into teachers and scholars. This theory has recently been rejected by some Chinese scholars.

\textsuperscript{38} For the development of the city see W. Eberhard, "Data on the Structure of the Chinese City in the pre-industrial Period", Economic Development and Cultural Change, Chicago 1956 April, pp. 253—268.


\textsuperscript{40} The Social Sciences in Historical Study, Soc. Science Research Council, Bulletin 64.

Towards a Classification of Labour

By Franz Baermann Steiner

Labour, in the broadest possible sense, is associated with or conceived as a kind of subdivision of a still broader category concerning which the sociologist often exhibits signs of uneasiness, and towards...