

LIBRARIES AND BOOK - COLLECTING IN CHINA FROM THE EPOCH OF THE FIVE DYNASTIES TO THE END OF CH'ING

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The beginning of libraries and book-collecting in China means the beginning of China's culture and civilization. About four thousand years ago, China already possessed a written language in the form of inscriptions on oracle bones, stone, and metal, which, being done by the scholars of the time as a form of writing, became the earliest kind of written literature known.

In 1899, the 25th year of the reign of Kuang Hsü (光緒), several thousand pieces of inscribed bones and tortoise-shells were excavated on the south bank of the river Huan (洹水) in the district of Anyang (安陽) in northern Honan province. The hieroglyphic writings on these shells were found to be the writings of the Yin (殷) dynasty (also called Shang 商, 1766-1122 B.C.). It was recorded in the *Bamboo Annals* that to the south of the river Huan was the old capital of Emperor P'an Kêng (盤庚: 1401-1373 B.C.) where the ancient tombs of Yin were located. These early writings of the Yin dynasty recorded the different titles of the emperors, from T'ai Chia (太甲) to Wu Ting (武丁), and also revealed the real name of the most celebrated minister I Yin (伊尹) who served under Ch'êng T'ang (成湯), the first emperor of the Yin dynasty. In all probability, we can conclude that these tortoise-shells are the most ancient relics of the Yin dynasty, and that our earliest books are these bones which show that the collection of writings was commenced as early as that time.

An account of the growth of libraries and book-collecting in China from the dim beginnings of Chinese history to the end

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of the T'ang (唐: 620-907) dynasty has appeared in a previous issue of this journal.¹ No attempt is made here to duplicate what has already been admirably said on the subject. In the present article the writer proposes to present a review of the collection of books and the building up of libraries from the epoch of the Five Dynasties (五代) to the end of the Ch'ing (清) dynasty (A.D. 907-1911).²

We have already learned that "from the Ch'in (秦: 249-206 B.C.) dynasty down to the end of the T'ang dynasty, a period of eleven-and-a-half centuries, Chinese books experienced no less than fourteen major bibliothecal catastrophes."³ In spite of the undaunted spirit of the rulers of the various dynasties who had time and again made great efforts for the preservation and transcribing of books, many more serious mishaps happened to Chinese libraries and book-collecting since the invention of printing.

The 10th century, during the rule of the five short dynasties (A.D. 907-960), was a period of anarchy when the Chinese throne became the prize among contending generals. These dynasties followed one another in rapid succession within the brief period of fifty-three years, and none of them exercised control over the whole of China. Not being in a position to offer a united front to aggression from without, the time was most unfavourable for the advancement of culture and education within, and hence the development of libraries at that time was at a standstill.

The event worth recording in this dark age was, however, the invention of the art of block printing by Fêng Tao (馮道), a native of Yingchow (瀛洲), in modern Hopei. The nine classics were for the first time cut in wood, a movement which had the effect of perpetuating literary works of lasting value. Printing was known in the time of the Sui (隋: 589-619) and practised to a limited extent during the T'ang, but the early form of the art of printing was not sufficiently successful to replace the manuscripts.

¹ Wu, K. T., "Libraries and Book-collecting in China before the invention of printing," *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, Vol. V, pp. 237-60, October, 1937.

² For the development of the modern library movement in China since the Republic, refer V. L. Wong, "Library Chronicle" in *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, Vol. VI, p. 369-76, April, 1938.

³ Wu, K. T. *ibid.*, p. 260.

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In A.D. 932, the second year of Chang Hsing (長興), during the reign of Ming Tsung (明宗) of the Later T'ang (後唐: 923-936) dynasty, Fêng Tao memorialized the throne to have the nine classics revised and printed. The proposal was favourably received, and the undertaking was completed in 953. One effect of this new art was the uncovering of copied manuscripts which had hitherto been concealed by the wealthy classes. Works which had been copied out with the greatest care and fine specimens of calligraphy became objects of great interest to book collectors. It really marked the beginning of a period of literary achievements which hastened the growth of libraries at that time.

During this period, there were notable examples among the rulers who encouraged and promoted the development of libraries. During the reign of T'ung Kuang (同光) of Chuang Tsung (莊宗) in the Later T'ang dynasty, various ways were suggested to encourage the people to offer their private collections to the state. Rewards were offered. Anybody who offered 300 *chüan* and more would be given an office of Shih Kuan (試官), or probationary official; and every Hsüan Tiao Kuan (選調官), or purchasing officer, who offered 100 *chüan* (卷), would be promoted in official rank. Emperor Chou Shih Tsung (周世宗) of the Later Chou (後周: 950-960) dynasty also encouraged the presentation of books. Discovering that the books collected were full of typographical errors, he appointed thirty Ch'ang Ts'an Kuan (常參官), or officials in attendance, to revise the books, requiring each book revised to be attached with the initials of the editors responsible for the revision.

Among the private collectors of the epoch of the Five Dynasties, Lo Shao-wei (羅紹威), a scholar of the Later Liang (後梁: 907-923) dynasty, was the best known. He collected a library of over 10,000 *chüan* and made his books available for the use of all scholars from all quarters, and it marked the beginning of the development of private libraries in China.

With the establishment of a new dynasty, the Sung (宋: 960-1279), military despotism came to an end. Aside from being a great statesman, the new emperor, Sung T'ai Tsu (宋太祖), was a man of great learning and was fond of study. Although the

libraries of the former dynasties had been destroyed in the revolutionary disorders consequent on change, yet by dint of rewards and encouragements a great portion of the old literature was recovered. Collections were then deposited respectively in the government archives known as the Chao Wen Kuan (昭文館), Chi Hsien Kuan (集賢館), and Shih Kuan (史館), and as an extension to these, another archive named Chuang Wen Yüan (崇文院) was built. The number of books collected at this time almost reached 80,000 *chüan*, from which a selection was made and was deposited in closed stacks known as the Pi Ko (祕閣). Here the emperor spent his studious days and went over the entire collection, and the intimate officers of the guards (侍衛) were also given the privilege of using the books.

During the reign of Chên Tsung (眞宗), two duplicate copies were made of the books of the four main classes in the three archives mentioned above. These were respectively placed in the Lung T'u Ko (龍圖閣) of the Forbidden City and the T'ai Ch'ing Lou (太清樓) in the imperial parks. Books amounting to about 10,000 *chüan* were also deposited both in Yü Chên Tien (玉宸殿) and Szu Mên Tien (四門殿). Owing to the crowded condition of the shelves, the western section of the inner stacks was also made a branch stack of the Pi Ko. Unfortunately a fire which broke out later in the Imperial Palace almost reduced the entire collections in the Chuang Wen Yüan and Pi Ko to ashes. What was saved constituted only a small part of what was collected in the outer part of the Chuang Wen Yüan.

At the time of Jên Tsung (仁宗), the Chuang Wen Yüan was rebuilt. In 1034, the first year of Ching Yu (景祐), due to the imperfect condition of the imperial collections, Chang Kuan (張觀), Li Shu (李淑), Sung Ch'i (宋祁), and Wang Yao-ch'ên (王堯臣), all eminent scholars of the Imperial Academy of Learning, were appointed to examine the books housed in the Imperial Palace. Wang was made the chief compiler and the result was the production of a classified catalogue known as the *Chuang Wen Tsung Mu* (崇文總目), or the general catalogue of the books collected in the Chuang Wen Yüan, which was in 66 *chüan* and listed works of 30,669 *chüan*. During the reign of

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Shên Tsung (神宗), the Chung Wen Yüan was re-named as the Pi Shu Shêng (祕書省), and several Pi Shu Lang (祕書郎), or secretaries, were appointed to look after the transcribing and editing of the imperial collections.

Hui Tsung (徽宗) came to the throne in 1100, and he took pains to secure whatever rare books there were in the private collections and libraries. Anyone who presented books of value to the state were given official positions. Government bureaus were established to look after the replacement of missing books, and copyists were appointed to do copy work. It was at this time that the Chung Wen catalogue was re-named the *Pi Shu Tsung Mu* (祕書總目), of which one copy each was respectively deposited in the Hsüan Ho Tien (宣和殿), the T'ai Ch'ing Lou, and the Pi Ko. The Sung dynasty has been designated a "protracted Augustan age of Chinese literature", and literary achievements may be said to have attained their highest point at this period. The collection of books known at this time contained 6,705 works in 73,877 *chüan*.

In 1126, during the reign of Ch'in Tsung (欽宗), most of the imperial collections in the Hsüan Ho Tien were either destroyed or lost when China was invaded by the Tartars. When Kao Tsung (高宗), founder of the Southern Sung (南宋: 1127-1279) dynasty, transferred his capital to Linan (臨安: now Hangchow), he built the Pi Shu Shêng in the Kuo Shih Yüan (國史院), or the state historiographer's office. Every effort was made to restore the lost books and encouragement was given for the offer of books to the state from all quarters. In 1177, the 4th year of Shun Hsi (淳熙), during the reign of Hsiao Tsung (孝宗), Ch'ên Kuei (陳騏), junior keeper of the national archives, was commissioned to be the compiler of a voluminous catalogue in 44,486 *chüan*, to which was later added another catalogue of 14,943 *chüan* compiled by another commission headed by Chang P'an (張攀) in 1220, the 13th year of Chia Ting (嘉定) during the reign of Ning Tsung (甯宗). The bulk of the catalogue gradually grew in size until it was larger than that of the Chung Wen catalogue and consisted of 9,819 works in 119,972 *chüan*.

Book-collecting became the vogue in the Sung dynasty because

of the multiplication of printed books: there were libraries in the different parts of the country in addition to those collected by the state. Since the glorious age of T'ang, the development of libraries in the Sung dynasty had indeed made an enviable record. According to Chinese authorities, it was under the early emperors of the Sung dynasty that printing had attained the highest point of development.

There were numerous private collections in the Sung dynasty. Ssü-ma Kuang (司馬光), a noted statesman and celebrated scholar from Honan, had a well-known library, Tou Shu T'ang (讀書堂), at Loyang (洛陽); Li Kuang-tse (李公擇) housed his collection of books in the Pai Shih An (白石庵), a monastery at the foot of Wu Lao Fêng (五老峯) in Kiangsi; and Yu Mou (尤袤) of Wusih was the owner of Sui Ch'u T'ang (遂初堂), one of the most extensive private libraries ever known to have a catalogue at that time. Sung Tz'ü-tao (宋次道) of Chihli was a famous bibliophile and possessed a great many books the text of which had been carefully verified several times. It was said that so many scholars came to live in the neighbourhood of Ch'un Ming Fan (春明坊), for the convenience of borrowing books from him that house-rents actually went up in consequence. Another man, Ch'ên Chên-sun (陳振孫) of Chekiang, compiled a classified catalogue of the books in his family library with full annotations to each work, and it contributed much toward the science of Chinese bibliography.

The Liao (遼), or Eastern Tartars, were very feeble in the matter of literature, and nothing of importance emanated from them. When Emperor Liao T'ai Tsung (遼太宗) came to power, he carried away with him to the North the libraries, calendar, and stone classics of the Later Chin (後晉: 936-946). During the reign of Hsing Tsung (興宗), an attempt was made to compile the historical works. At the time of Tao Tsung (道宗), orders were given to replace the missing classics in the Chien Wen Ko (乾文閣), and learned ministers were appointed to collate them. An edict was issued in 1062 prohibiting the printing of books by private persons. As a foreign race using a different language, it was not surprising that Chinese studies were uncongenial to their

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nature. Although they invented a written language of their own no books translated or written in it have been found.

In 1117 the Liao were succeeded by the Chin (金), another Tartar race, who, imitating their predecessors, also invented a written language after they had attained sovereign power, and made great efforts to establish a national literature. Chinese scholars received encouragement at their court, and the Chinese classics and some of the histories and philosophical works were translated into their native language, and circulated among their subjects.

When Emperor Chin T'ai Tsu (金太祖) returned to the North, he too brought the libraries and the army of Sung with him. When Chang Tsung (章宗) came to the throne in 1190, orders were given to search for the lost books. He also built a library called Hung Wen Yüan (宏文院) and officials were appointed to translate and copy the classics. In 1201, the first year of T'ai Ho (泰和), a thorough investigation of the family collections was made. Anyone possessing valuable collections and was not willing to present his books to the court was asked to loan them for copying, and was given a reward on the return of the books equal to half of the value of the books thus loaned. In addition, two Pi Shu Lang, or secretaries, were appointed as keepers of the classics. The Liao and Chin came from Outer Mongolia north of the Gobi Desert, but they had been searching for books and were eager to improve their knowledge ever since they had come within the Great Wall.

The Mongols of the Yüan (元: 1280-1367) dynasty, although liberal in their patronage of literature, did not leave to posterity any literary products. During the short period of their supremacy, the arts and sciences began to flourish, and men of talent from the most distant regions were invited to the court. Following the example of Liao and Chin, the first emperor of the Yüan resolved upon the construction of a new script for the Mongol language. The classics and works on history and government were translated into Mongol and written out in this script, some of them having been printed. The new script, however, never became popular, and it was soon superseded by a modified form of it.

During the reign of Shih Tsu (世祖), the Hung Wen Yüan was changed into the Ching Chi So (經籍所), or depositories for

the classics. The classics depository at Pingyang (平陽) in Chekiang was moved to the metropolitan capital at Peking. It included various editions of all the books collected from the different districts south of the Yangtze and also those collected in the Pi Shu Shêng at Linan. Orders were also given to send the printed books from Hangchow and other places to Peking. During the reign of Wen Tsung (文宗), I Lin K'u (藝林庫), or literary depositories, were established for the sole purpose of collecting and storing books.

Among the private collectors, Chuang Liao-t'ang (莊蓼塘) of Sungkiang had a library of 80,000 *chüan* which was not classified according to the usual system of four main classes but according to ten specific heads: classics, history, philosophy, belles-lettres, geology, topography, medicine, art, politics and fiction, which were designated by the ten characters of the ten heavenly stems. I Tsan (倪瓚), a famous artist and recluse, popularly known as the recluse of Wusih (無錫高士), was the owner of Ch'ing Pi Ko (清秘閣), one of the most well-known private libraries of the Yüan dynasty. He refused to enter public life and devoted his fortune to the collecting of old books and pictures.

Under the rule of the Ming (明: 1368-1643), every effort was made for the collecting of books, and the collections of this period far outnumber those of the previous dynasties, T'ang and Sung. In 1368, the first year of Emperor Hung Wu (洪武), the founder of the Ming dynasty, the great general Hsü Ta (徐達) entered the capital of Yüan and gathered all the books and documents in the Yüan imperial library and moved the entire collection to Nanking, the new capital. Edicts were also issued all over the country to secure books to be added to the imperial collections, and the offices of Pi Shu Chien (秘書監), or keepers of national archives, were created to look after the national collections.

When Emperor Ch'êng Tsu (成祖) moved his capital back to Peking in 1421, he also transported in ten boats a hundred cases of books which were later housed in the Wen Yüan Ko (文淵閣), the depository at Peking. In order to facilitate the use of this collection, a catalogue was ordered to be made in the year 1441 under the supervision of Yang Shih-ch'i (楊士奇), an eminent scholar from Kiangsi. Finding that the books at the Wen Yüan Ko were in-

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complete, Chêng Hsi (鄭錫), the President of the Board of Rites (禮部尚書), was appointed to select competent persons having knowledge of books to go out to the countryside to search among the masses, offering great prices for the replacement of valuable books. The ultimate result was that the collection at the Wen Yüan Ko reached over 20,000 works in about 1,000,000 *chüan*, of which thirty per cent were printed copies and seventy per cent original manuscripts. These were placed in the eastern and western palaces, the Kuang Han (廣寒) and Ch'ing Shu (清暑) for the personal use of the emperor. At the time of Ying Tsung (英宗), a catalogue of the collections in the eastern palace was compiled by Yang Shih-ch'i, which alone contained over 43,200 books.

During the reign of Yung Lo (永樂), Yao Kuang-hsiao (姚廣孝), a native of Kiangsu, was appointed from the Board of Rites to head a commission of scholars which produced the gigantic encyclopaedia of the Ming dynasty known as the *Yung Lo Ta Tien* (永樂大典). The whole work formed one of the most prodigious literary projects in Chinese history.

The contents of the *Yung Lo Ta Tien* included classics, history, philosophy, belles-lettres, and other subjects, also astronomy, topography, divination, medicine, and Buddhism, etc. The arrangement of the work was not according to subject but followed the order of the rhymes of words contained in the book. This enormous work contained 22,937 *chüan* in 11,995 books. The structure and contents of the books are interesting. The size of each separate book is one-and-two-fifths of a foot long and nine-and-a-half inches wide. The body of the book is on standard paper trimmed with red silk. The text was done in fine writing of the pattern style with Chinese ink, and the punctuation and notes were written in red ink. The outside cover of the book is in yellow silk. From the point of view of contents, the work is indeed a huge encyclopaedia of the age. As far as appearance is concerned, it is a fine example of the most beautiful work ever produced.

The history of the copies prepared is also interesting. The original was kept in a depository in Nanking. During the reign of Shih Tsung (世宗), Chang Chü-chêng (張居正), a native of

Hupei, was commissioned to prepare two transcriptions of this work to be deposited in Peking, one in the Wen Yüan Ko and the other in the Huang Shih Cheng (皇史宬), or the library of the imperial historiographers. At the time of the fall of the Ming dynasty, two sets, including the original, perished by fire. The third imperfect set, with 2,422 *chüan* missing, remained intact in the Han-lin college until the time of the Boxer trouble.

During the reign of Chêng Tê (正德) of Emperor Wu Tsung (武宗), Hu I (胡頤), Liu Wei (劉偉), and Li Chi-hsien (李繼先) were commissioned to make an inventory of the books in the palace libraries and to replace those that were imperfect and incomplete. During the reign of Chia Ching (嘉靖) of Emperor Shih Tsung, the Imperial Academy of Learning at Nanking ordered the purchase of the rare editions of the two dynastic histories, Liao and Chin, and completed the revision of the twenty-one dynastic histories. During the reign of Wan Li (萬曆), Chiao Hung (焦茲), a scholar from Kiangsu, revised the existing records of the country and also compiled a catalogue of the classical works. Book-collecting under the Ming was carried out on a most extensive scale. Wood engraving also attained to a high degree of excellence, and remaining specimens of that dynasty are greatly prized as works of art.

Among the private libraries of Ming, Chêng Chi's (鄭澗) Yü Shu Lou (御書樓) of P'ukiang (浦江), which contained over 80,000 *chüan*, and Mao Tzu-chin's (毛子晉) Chi Ku Ko (汲古閣) of Changshu, which contained 84,000 books, were the best known. Next in order of size and importance were Huang Chü-chung's (黃居中) Ch'ien Ch'ing T'ang (千頃堂) in Nanking, Yang T'ieh-yai's (楊鐵崖) Wan Chüan Lou (萬卷樓) and Niu Shih-ch'i's (鈕石溪) Shih Hsüeh Lou (世學樓) in Shao-hsing, and Ho Liang-chun's (何良俊) Ch'ing Sên Ko (清森閣) in Sungkiang, the latter containing 40,000 *chüan*. Fan Ch'in's (范欽) Tien I Ko (天一閣) of Ningpo also contained over 50,000 *chüan* and enjoyed a good name in Kiangnan as being the best known of private libraries in the country during the four hundred years from Ming to Ch'ing.

Fan Ch'in's Tien I Ko in Ningpo was established during the

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reign of Chia Ching and contained a large portion of the books formerly collected by the Feng (豐氏) family. Most of the books collected were in manuscript form. The entire building was a typical example of fine Chinese library architecture. It was a fire-proof building built of bricks and tiles, and no wood of any kind was used in the construction. There were six rooms connected together with book-cases serving as natural partitions. The name of the library was taken from the Chinese quotation *Tien I Shêng Shui, Ti Liu Cheng Chih* (天一生水地六成之), meaning that heaven stands for water, earth for fire, and that water could overcome fire. The building was surrounded on almost all sides by artificial ponds. The surroundings were most picturesque, and the equipment inside pleasing. Rigid rules were adopted by the library authorities governing its use, and admission to the building was difficult to obtain. No readers were allowed to enter the rooms at night, and smoking was strictly prohibited inside the building. Unless all the descendants of the same family wished it, the doors of the library were not opened. The library remains today as one of the most notable private libraries that ever existed, but it is not open to the public.

On the other hand, Mao Tzu-chin's Chi Ku Ko in Changshu is an example of a much used private library. The library contained a rich collection of books, totalling about 84,000 volumes, and admission was granted to all readers from outside. It was said that those who came to use this library rode in wagons which when lined up would extend for twenty *li* (里). Mao was fond of engraving blocks, and he printed a considerable number of books from these blocks. The books he printed were all rare volumes. Though he was not very strict in the choice of editions, he included an extensive collection of the existing works. This paved the way for the multiplication of books and it became a fashion of the time to cut blocks for printing purposes. It was also of great service to the literary class. The rare and valuable editions of Sung and Yüan were differentiated from others by the addition of different shaped seals. For those books which were not procurable and available in any way, copies known as *Ying Sung Chao* (影宋鈔) were made by selected penmen from rubb-

ings. The style of writing, the kind of paper, and the seal used all imitated the best style of Sung block printed books. Even now, Mao manuscripts are still considered the best examples and most rare of the kind to be found in the country.

Other collectors of Ming included Huang Li-chou (黃梨洲) of Chekiang, who, having acquired the personal library of his ancestors began to read over his entire collection. Not satisfied with his own books, he borrowed and copied from other libraries which included Niu Shih-ch'i's Shih Hsüeh Lou, Huang Chü-chung's Ch'ien Ch'ing T'ang, Chi Ch'êng-yeh's (祁承業) Tan Shêng T'ang (澹生堂) of Shanying (山陰), and Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's (錢謙益) Chiang Yün Lou (絳雲樓) in Changshu. During his late years, he devoted much of his time to the collecting of books. He also copied extensively from Fan's Tien I Ko, Chêng's (鄭氏) Ts'ung Kuei T'ang (叢桂堂) in Anhwei, Ts'ao Jung's (曹溶) Ching T'i T'ang (靜惕堂) in Chekiang, and Hsü Chien-hsüeh's (徐乾學) Chuan Shih Lou (傳是樓) in Kunshan. As a result, the books collected by Huang numbered several thousand *chüan* of manuscripts alone, besides many thousand *chüan* of books previously acquired and others acquired from time to time. Huang's library thus became one of the most voluminous collections in the early part of the Ming dynasty.

During the closing years of Ming and the opening years of the Ch'ing dynasty, Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's Chiang Yün Lou in Changshu contained a very rich collection of books. Not only did he acquire the personal libraries of Liu Tsü-wei's (劉子威) Fei Ts'a Ko (匪載閣) and Ch'ien Kung-fu's (錢功夫) Hsuan Ch'ing Shih (懸罄室) in Soochow, Yang Wu-ch'uan's (楊五川) Ch'i Kuei Shan Fang (七檜山房) and Chao Ju-shih's (趙汝師) Mai Wang Kuan (脈望館) in Changshu, but he also paid high prices for old books amounting to over a million *chüan*. The size of his library was therefore the first among all libraries in Kiangnan and almost equalled that of the palace collections. During middle-age he purchased Fu Shui Shan Fang (拂水山房) and made shelves in the walls. Late in life, he lived in Hung Tou Shan Chuang (紅豆山莊) and built Chiang Yün Lou for the safe keeping of his entire collection of books.

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Under the Ch'ing (清: 1644-1911) dynasty, literary studies were especially encouraged, and not a few scholars of profound attainments and independent views contributed towards the enrichment of the national literature by their contributions. The Manchus, descended from the Chin Tartars, had for several centuries abandoned the written character used by their ancestors, and some years before they attained the empire, an adaptation of the Mongol script was completed for the Manchu language. Several of the ruling princes had been most munificent patrons of the arts and sciences, and through their instigation a large portion of the Chinese literature had been translated into the Manchu language. Magnificent editions of the native productions of former ages were issued, and many new works published under imperial patronage.

In the course of time, the emperors of Ch'ing had built up rich collections of books, and during the reigns of K'ang Hsi (康熙) and Chien Lung (乾隆), the size of the imperial collections was increased by further searches made. In the Chao Jên Tien (昭仁殿), situated east of the Chien Ch'ing Kung (乾清宮), the entire collection of Sung, Chin, and Ming editions was stored, and the name of Tien Lu Lin Lang (天祿琳琅) was bestowed upon the collection by Emperor Chien Lung. Effort was also being made to systematize the entire collection and orders were given to the officials in attendance to compile a catalogue. The different editions of books included in this famous set were differentiated by the different kinds of book-covers used: brocade for the Sung and Chin editions, green silk for the Yüan editions, and brown silk for the Ming editions. For the love of antiques and the extensiveness of his reading, Chien Lung was not surpassed by any of the former sovereigns, not even by the emperors Chên Kuan (貞觀) and K'ai Yüan (開元) of T'ang, and Yung Lo of Ming.

In 1772, the 37th year of Chien Lung, the compilation of a descriptive catalogue of the *Szu K'u Chüan Shu* (四庫全書), or the 'Four-treasure Library,' under a special commission headed by Chi Yün (紀昀) of the Han-lin college, was set to work. After nearly ten years, the first copy of the catalogue was completed, and it contained 3,440 separate works comprising upwards of 168,000 books. In all, seven copies of the same work were made and were

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kept in seven depositories specially built for the purpose. The first copy was housed in Wen Yüan Ko at the back of the Imperial Palace in Peking which was built after the plan of Fan's Tien I Ko of Ningpo. Three other copies which were finished later were respectively placed in the Wen Yüan Ko (文源閣) at Yüan Ming Yüan (圓明園) outside the capital, the Wen Ching Ko (文津閣) at Jehol (熱河), a famous summer resort, and the Wen Su Ko (文溯閣) at the former Mukden palace. For the benefit of the private collectors along the Yangtze valley who had made generous contributions to the enlargement of the Imperial Library, Chien Lung also caused three more sets of this voluminous work to be made. These three sets were housed in three different places, namely, Wen Tsung Ko (文宗閣) at Chin Shan Sze (金山寺) in Chinkiang, Wen Hui Ko (文匯閣) at Ta Kuan T'ang (大觀堂) in Yangchow, and Wen Lan Ko (文瀾閣) by the side of Ku Shan (孤山), West Lake, Hangchow. To these three later depositories, admission was permitted to all readers. The scholars of the Kiangsu and Chekiang provinces were thereby given the privilege of consulting the literary treasures which had been assembled in a convenient form.

During the reign of Hsien Feng (咸豐), the Wen Yüan Ko set of Szu K'u Chüan Shu was burned when the allied forces of Great Britain and France captured Peking and set Yüan Ming Yüan on fire at the close of the Arrow War in 1860. The two sets preserved in the Wen Hui Ko at Yangchow and the Wen Tsung Ko at Chinkiang were also burned at the time of the Boxer trouble. What was left then were the Wen Yüan Ko set in the Imperial Palace of Peking and the Wen Lan Ko set in Hangchow. After the establishment of the Chinese Republic, the Wen Ching Ko set, formerly kept at Jehol, was removed to the Metropolitan Library (京師圖書館) in Peking, later known as the National Library of Peiping (國立北平圖書館). Part of the collection kept at the Wen Lan Ko at Hangchow was also lost in the Taiping Rebellion, but due to the untiring efforts of Ting Ping (丁丙), a native of Hangchow, the missing books were copied and replaced, and the whole collection was later deposited in the Chekiang Provincial Library (浙江省立圖書館).

Libraries and Book-Collecting in China

During the reign of Kuang Hsü, Chang Chih-tung (張之洞), a noted scholar and a high official, published his famous work, *Shu Mu Ta Wen* (書目答問), or a guide to Chinese bibliography. This book classifies all works into five classes, with *T'sung Shu* (叢書), or Repositories, as an additional class to the fourfold class, viz., classics, history, philosophy, and belles-lettres, which marked the beginning of a new system of classification for Chinese books. In 1905, the 31st year of Kuang Hsü, a library was established in the province of Hunan, which also marked the beginning of the use of the term "Library" in China. Libraries were later successively established in Tientsin, Nanking and other cities. In the reign of Hsuan Tung (宣統), imperial edicts were issued for the establishment of libraries in the provinces. Thus we see plans were gradually made for the establishment of libraries in Paotingfu, Shantung, Honan, Shensi, Chekiang, Kiangsu, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kirin, and other places.

Private libraries during the Ch'ing dynasty were numerous. It was said that the books collected in Mao Tzu-chin's Chi Ku Ko in Changshu originally belonged to Hsü Chien-hsüeh's Chan Shih Lou in Kunshan. Others said that the books belonged to Huang P'ei-lieh's (黃丕烈) Pai Sung I Ch'an Lou (百宋一廬樓) in Soochow. Huang was known as the most noted bibliophile of the whole Ch'ing period and had the best collection of rare books. Still others said that they belonged to Wang Shih-chuang's (汪士鐘) I Yün Ching Shê (藝芸精舍) in Changchow (長洲) in present-day Soochow. During the last years of the reign of Tao Kuang (道光), Yü Sung-nien (郁松年) of Shanghai, a well-known collector of classics, and owner of I Chia T'ang (宜稼堂), Yang I-tsêng (楊以增) of Shantung and owner of Hai Yüan Ko (海源閣) at Liaoch'êng (聊城), and Ch'ü Yung (瞿鏞) of Kiangsu, owner of T'ieh Chin T'ung Chien Lou (鐵琴洞劍樓) at Changshu, all acquired the collections originally belonging to I Yün Ching Shê. Chou Chung-lien's (周仲鏈) Shui Yüeh Ting (水月亭) in Changsha, Yüan Yu-k'ai's (袁又愷) Wu Yen Lou (五硯樓) and Ku Pao-chung's (顧抱冲) Hsiao Tuh Shu Tui (小讀書堆) in Soochow were also noted for their collection of rare books.

During the early years of the reign of T'ang Shih (同治), the books belonging to I Chia T'ang were lost and went to the hands of others. One lot went into the possession of Ting Jih-ch'ang's (丁日昌) Ch'in Ching Chai (持靜齋) in Fengshun (豐順), another lot went to the private library of an expectant magistrate of Kiangsu, some went to Mo Yu-chih (莫友芝) of Tushan (獨山), Kweichow, while the rest, consisting of about 48,000 volumes of fine editions, all went to Lu Hsin-yüan's (陸心源) Pai Sung Lou (皕宋樓) at Kucian (歸安), Chekiang. After obtaining the rare editions of I Chia T'ang, Lu also bought Yen Yüan-chao's (嚴元照) Fang Chiao T'ang (芳椒堂) and Ch'ên Chêng-chih's (陳徵芝) Tai Ching T'ang (帶經堂) in Foochow.

Besides the above, there were many other private libraries in the time of K'ang Hsi, among which Ts'ao Jung's Ching T'i T'ang of Chekiang was known as a circulating library for old books. Ts'ao was the author of a notable work on Chinese library science known as *Liu Tung Ku Shu Yo* (流通古書約) which discusses a scheme for the circulation of old books. Others included Sun Tui-ku's (孫退谷) Wan Chüan Lou (萬卷樓) in Peking, Chin Hsing-yao's (金星軺) Wen Jui Lou (文瑞樓) and Chu I-chên's (朱彝尊) Pao Shu Ting (曝書亭) in Chiahhsing, Lu Wen-ch'ao's (盧文弨) Pao Ching T'ang (抱經堂) in Shaohsing, Yüan Yüan's (阮元) Wen Hsüan Lou (文選樓) in Yangchow, Ting Ping's (丁丙) Pa Ch'ien Chüan Lou (八千卷樓) in Hangchow, and Miu Hsiao-shan's (繆筱珊) I Feng T'ang (藝風堂) in Changchow.

All the above mentioned libraries, however, emphasized the preservation of the books rather than their use. After Lu's death, his famous library Pai Sung Lou was sold by his son in 1907 to Baron Iwasaki of Japan for \$118,000. The books collected by Ting Ping in his Pa Ch'ien Chüan Lou were also sold to the Kiangnan Library (江南圖書館) at Nanking, later known as the Kiangsu First Provincial Library (江蘇省立第一圖書館). The only ones remaining intact and complete are Yang's Hai Yüan Ko in the north and Ch'ü's T'ieh Chin T'ung Chien Lou in the south, which, together with Lu's Pai Sung Lou and Ting's Pa Ch'ien Chüan Lou, are known as the four greatest libraries in Kiangnan after the Taiping Rebellion.

Libraries and Book-Collecting in China

In the winter of 1928, the 17th year of the Chinese Republic, it was rumoured that part of the valuable collection contained in the Hai Yüan Ko library was sold. As a result of a bandit raid, a portion of the books was later brought to Tientsin and meant to be sold to the Japanese, but through the wise efforts of the Shantung Provincial Government, the whole collection was finally bought by the Provincial Library for safe preservation there. From the 1930 report of the Librarian, Wang Hsien-t'ang (王獻唐), it is much to our regret to learn, however, that what remains at present are all cheap books, the fine part having been lost in the bandit raids and through subsequent removal to Tientsin by Yang Chin-fu (楊敬夫), one of the descendants of the Yang family.

From the above account, we see that the history of libraries and book-collecting in China during the one thousand and five hundred odd years from the Epoch of Five Dynasties to the end of Ch'ing is not without its colourful splendour. The patronage of the ruling houses and the devotion to literary works by the masses had helped to save many of the valuable books that would otherwise have been lost. But the sad point is that while realizing the value and importance of libraries, the rulers of the various dynasties had not come to understand the importance of popularizing the idea of libraries all over the country. No encouragement was therefore made for the opening to the public of government collections and the various private libraries. Thus the three imperial libraries at Chinkiang, Yangchow, and Hangchow established by Emperor Chien Lung were open only to officials and scholars of the ruling class. Except the libraries of Lo Shao-wei of the Five Dynasties, Sung Tz'ü-tao of Sung, and Mao Tzu-chin of Ming, the only emphasis laid on libraries was on the preservation of the books, rather than on their actual use. Not only has this prevented the wide spread of national culture and popular education among the populace, it has also retarded the general intellectual development and cultural progress of the nation as a whole.