

A Study of the Origin of the Ch'i-lin 麒麟 And the Fêng-huang 鳳凰

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I Foreword

It is a well-known fact that there are many accounts of the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 and the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 in the various documents of ancient China. Of the numerous instances, only a few may be cited here. The *Kuo-fêng* 國風 (Odes of Chow and the South) in the *Shih-ching* 詩經 contains the following lines:

The feet of the *lin*!

The noble sons of our prince,

Ah! they are the *lin*!

The forehead of the *lin*!

The noble grandsons of our prince,

Ah! they are the *lin*!

The horn of the *lin*!

The noble kindred of our prince,

Ah! they are the *lin*!⁽¹⁾

The reader is familiar with the passage under Ai Kung 哀公 or the Duke of Ai in the *Tso-chuan* 左傳, which reads "(In the Duke's fourteenth year), in spring, (some) hunting in the west, captured a *lin*."⁽²⁾

(1) James LEGGE, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. IV, Part. I, p. 19. XI, Lin-che-che,

麟之趾, 振振公子, 于嗟麟兮, 麟之定, 振振公姓, 于嗟麟兮, 麟之角, 振振公族, 于嗟麟兮.

(2) 春西狩獲麟.

As to the *fêng-buang*, there are lines in *Shêng-min* 生民 in the *Ta-ya* 大雅 or the Greater Odes of the Kingdom, the Decade of *Shêng-min*, in the *Sbib-ching* 詩經, which reads :

The male and female phoenix fly about,
Their wings rustling,
While they settle in their proper resting place.
Many are your admirable officers, O King,
Ready to be employed by you,
Loving you, the son of Heaven.

The male and female phoenix fly about,
Their wings rustling,
As they soar up to heaven.
Many are your admirable officers, O King,
Waiting for your commands,
And loving the multitudes of the people.

The male and female phoenix give out their notes,
On that lofty ridge.
The dry andras grow,
On those eastern slopes.
They grow luxuriantly;
And harmoniously the notes resound.⁽¹⁾

I-chi 益稷 or the Books of Yu-yih and Tseih in the *Sbu-ching* 書經 says "When the nine parts of the service according to the Emperor's arrangements have all been performed, the male and female phoenix come with their measured gambollings into the court."⁽²⁾

In view of the passage in *Li-yün* 禮運 of the *Li-chi* 禮記, which reads: What are the *ssü ling* 四靈 or the four sacred animals? They are the *lung* 龍, the *kwei* 龜, the *lin* 麟, and the *fêng* 鳳.⁽³⁾

(1) The Chinese Classics, Vol. IV, Part II, pp. 493-494.

鳳凰于飛，翾々其羽，亦集爰止，藹々王多吉士，維君子使，媚于天子。

鳳凰于飛，翾々其羽，亦傳于天，藹々王多吉人，維君子命，媚于庶人。

鳳凰鳴矣，于彼高岡，梧桐生矣，于彼朝陽，萋萋萋萋，誰誰喑喑。

(2) The Chinese Classics, Vol. III, Part I, pp. 87-88.

(3) S. COUVREUR, Li-ki, Tome I, p. 524. "Quels sont les quatre animaux qui donnent des présages? Ce sont la licorne, le phénix, la tortue et le dragon."

The *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 and the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 are included among the animals considered most sacred by the ancient Chinese. That the most complex attributes are ascribed to these sacred animals is evident from the following quotations. The *Êrh-ya-i* 爾雅翼, concerning the *lung* 龍, says "In drawing a dragon, it is conventional to give it a horse's neck and snake's tail, and also three terminations and nine resemblances: by giving it three terminations, it is meant that the neck terminates in the side; that the side terminates in the loin; and the loin terminates in the tail; and by giving it nine resemblances, it is meant that its horns should resemble those of a deer, its head should resemble that of a camel, its eyes those of a demon, its neck that of a snake, its abdomen that of a monster-serpent, its scales those of a fish, its claws the talons of a hawk, the hollows of its feet those of a tiger's paws, and its ears those of a bull. There is an object on its head like a crown called Po-shan."⁽¹⁾ Concerning the sacred tortoise, the same work says: "The sacred tortoise has patterns of five colours, resembling gem and gold; it has the *yin* 陰 at its back and faces the *yang* 陽; the upperside protrudes, shaped after heaven, while the lower side is level, shaped after the earth; its manner of crawling forward suggests a mountain; the successive movement of the four feet is in accordance with the change of the four seasons; the patterned dress is shaped after the twenty-eight constellations. It has a snake's head and a dragon's wings; the left eye-ball embodies the sun, and the right eye-ball the moon. The tortoise attains this state of its virtue in a thousand years' time and pervades the lower circles and the upper. It is possessed of the power of foretelling vicissitudes,—prosperity and adversity, fortune and misfortune. When at rest, it seems easy and peaceful; when in motion, it is conspicuous."⁽²⁾ Concerning the *lin* 麟, it says; "In later times, those who

(1) The *Êrh-ya-i* 爾雅翼, Chap. 28.

世俗畫龍之狀，馬首蛇尾，又有三停九似之說，謂自首至膊，膊至腰，腰至尾，皆相停也，九似者，角似鹿，頭似駝，眼似鬼，項似蛇，腹似蜃，鱗似魚，爪似鷹，掌似虎，耳似牛，頭上有物如博山。

(2) *Ibid.*, Chap. 31. 靈龜文五色，似玉，似金，背陰向陽，上隆象天，下平法地，榮衍象山，四趾轉運應四時，文著象二十八宿，蛇頭龍翹，左精象月，右精象日，千歲之化下氣上通，能知存亡吉凶之變，寧則伸伸如也，動則著矣。

discuss the *lin* always begin with saying that it has feet like those of a horse, of a yellow colour, and with round hoofs, and five horns of which the ends are padded with flesh. It has wings to fly with. It is endowed with benevolence and possessed of righteousness. The sound it makes is ever musical. Its pace is ever regular. Its turnings and returnings are ever marked with regularity. For its gambollings, it carefully chooses the ground and then it stays there. It never treads upon a live worm and never breaks living grass. It never herds with others. It never travels; it never falls into a trap; it always escapes the net."⁽¹⁾ Concerning the *fêng* 鳳, it says: "(As to *fêng* 鳳), there is this saying: Six shapes, and nine qualities.....By six shapes, it is meant that the head is shaped after heaven and it is round; the eyes are shaped after the sun and they are bright; the back is shaped after the moon and it is bent; the wings are shaped after the wind and are free in motion; the legs are shaped after the earth and are square; the tail is shaped after the wood and is of five colours. By nine qualities it is meant that the mouth pertains to the life, and it does not cry without good reason; the heart keeps moderation, and its motion is accurate; the ear is keen and possessed of a high intelligence; the tongue bends and stretches and can modulate the voice; the colour is bright and glossy and crimson indicating fire in the *Wu-hsing* 五行 theory; the talon has a sharp claw expressive of gallantry; the cry when raised may be heard at a distance; the abdomen has door-like pattern indicating its unwillingness to admit unhealthy foods."⁽²⁾ Thus so many different elements are assigned to these animals that it is not easy to decide upon the most fundamental origin.

Of the four sacred animals, however, the *lin* 麟 and the *fêng* 鳳 are very frequently mated in the classics. *Lan-ming-bsün* 覽冥訓 in the *Huai-nan-tzu* 淮南子

(1) 爾雅翼，卷十八，至其後世論鷹者，始曰馬足黃色圓蹄五角，角端有肉，有翼能飛，含仁懷義，音中律呂，行步中規，折還中矩，游必擇土，詳而後處，不履生蟲，不折生草，不羣居，不旅行，不犯陷阱，不罹眾罔。

(2) Ibid. Chap. 13, 有六像九苞之說，(中略)六像頭像天者圓也，目像日者明也，背像月者偃也，翼像風者舒也，足像地者方也，尾像緯者五色具也，九苞口包命者不妄鳴也，心合度者進退精也，耳聽達者居亮明，舌聃伸者能變聲也，彩色光者文采呈也，冠矩朱者南方行也，距銳鉤者武可稱也，音激揚者聲遠聞也，腹文戶者不妄納也。

says "On account of the peace the people enjoyed during the reign of the Emperor Huang-ti 黃帝.....the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 flew about the Imperial court and the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 gambolled the suburbs."⁽¹⁾ *Tsa-shih* 雜事 in the *Hsin-shu* 新書 says "In ancient times when Yü 禹 rose and ascended the throne, the whole people brought themselves to be influenced by the Emperor's virtue. The uncivilized peoples around became obedient. He conquered Ch'ü-sou 渠搜 in the north and propitiated Chiao-chih 交趾 in the south. There were none who did not seek after righteousness. The *lin* 麟 and the *fêng* 鳳 were found in the suburbs."⁽²⁾ *Chiang-ju* 講瑞 in the *Lun-hêng* 論衡 say "Some say that the *fêng-huang* and the *ch'i-lin* are the symbols of a great reign of peace. At the time of a great reign of peace, they will be found."⁽³⁾ Passages of this nature are to be found frequently in ancient records and in most cases these two go together in the phrase (*lin-fêng*) 麟鳳. It is conceivable, therefore, that there must be some close resemblance in their natures, if the two go together in such a phrase. On this account, the present writer will make it his chief aim to take up the *lin* and the *fêng*, the two of the four sacred animals, and to investigate the possibility of tracing the extremely complex attributes to those of some creatures that actually existed, in view of the fact that the former is a sacred creature representing the animals and the latter another representing the birds; and finally, if these attributes should be ascribed to the creatures that really existed in very remote antiquity, to inquire into the processes by which they have developed to be the extremely complex attributes as we find them now. He will now proceed, first taking up the *lin*, and then the *fêng*.

II The Origin of the *Ch'i-lin* 麒麟

The *lin* 麟 or the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 often mentioned in the various records of ancient China has been variously interpreted by Western scholars, but their views may be roughly classified into the following two groups:

(1) 昔者黃帝治天下...鳳凰翔於庭,麒麟游於郊。

(2) 昔者禹及爲天子,天下化之,蠻夷率服,北發渠搜,南撫交趾,莫不慕義,麟鳳在郊。

(3) 或曰鳳皇麒麟太平之瑞也,太平之際見來到也。

1. views that take the *ch'i-lin* as the giraffe;
2. views that attempt to interpret it otherwise.

As to the first, BRETSCHNEIDER, while suspecting, on the one hand, some relation between the *chi-lin* and the unicorn, refers, on the other hand, to the instance of the Chinese envoys in the 15th century purchasing some giraffes in Western Asia and taking them home; and he, therefore, asserts that the *ch'i-lin* mentioned after that date must refer to the giraffe.⁽¹⁾ KOPSH states that the account of the Mohammedan countries in the west given in the *T'ien-fang-chih-shéng-shih-lu-nien-pu* 天方至聖實錄年譜 contains a passage which may be taken to suggest the identity between the *ch'i-lin* and the giraffe, and also refers to the fact that the pronunciation of *ch'i-lin* resembles the Arabic and Egyptian names for the giraffe.⁽²⁾ DE GROOT quoting passages from the *Shuo-wén* 說文, the *Huai-nau-tzu* 淮南子, and many other records holds that the *ch'i-lin* was the giraffe, and suggests that very probably giraffes were naturally found in ancient China.⁽³⁾ A. FORKE formerly held the same view.⁽⁴⁾ Among the Chinese scholars, CHANG Hung-chao 章鴻釗 definitely identifies the *ch'i-lin* with the giraffe.

These views, though not exclusively referring to the discussions in the ancient records agree in identifying the *ch'i-lin* with the giraffe.

As to the second group of views or the non-giraffe theories, despite the evident fact that some live giraffes were in later days brought over to China as a result of the intercourse between the East and the West, it is quite impossible, on the strength of that alone, to draw a retrospective analogy and assert the identity of the *ch'i-lin* in remote antiquity with the giraffe. It is natural, therefore, that views seeking the origin of the *ch'i-lin* elsewhere, apart from the giraffe, should have arisen. KINGSMILL, seeing that the *ch'i-lin* is an animal with many human

(1) BRETSCHNEIDER, *China Intercourse of Central and Western Asia in the 15th Century*. (The China Review, Vol. V, 1876, p. 172)

(2) H. KOPSH, *The Ki-lin Identified with the Giraffe*. (The China Review, Vol. VI, 1878, p. 277)

(3) DE GROOT, *The Giraffe and the Ki-lin*. (The China Review, Vol. VII, 1879, pp. 72-73)

(4) A. FORKE, *Mu Wang und die Königen von Saba*. (Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen. Jahrgang VII, 1904, pp. 139-141)

elements, insists on the identity of the *ch'i-lin* with the sacred bird Garuda of India.⁽¹⁾ His is a view worth little support as a view, but worthy of attention as an example of interpretation of this nature. Of all the views of this group, the most valuable is that of LAUFER who argues: "The giraffe was not known to the ancient Chinese, contrary to what is assumed by certain sinologues. This erroneous conclusion is based on the fact that when live giraffes were first transported into China in the fifteenth century under the Ming dynasty, they were taken by the Chinese for the Kilin (*k'i-lin*), a fabulous creature of ancient mythology, and by way of reminiscence and poetic retrospection received the name *ch'i-lin*. This, of course does not mean that the ancient native conception of the Ki-lin was based on the giraffe, which in historical time was confined to Africa. In fact, neither the description nor the illustrations of Ki-lin bear the slightest resemblance to a giraffe.....It is clear that the characteristic features of the giraffe which impress every casual observer—the extraordinary height, the long neck, the proportion of fore and hind legs—are not found in the Chinese description of the Ki-lin and that several traits of the latter do not agree with the giraffe. Thus, the voice of the Ki-lin resembles the sound of a bell, and it walks with regular steps. The giraffe, however, has no voice at all."⁽²⁾ Thus he made it clear that the *ch'i-lin* in the classics is not the giraffe. The purpose of LAUFER's book being a study of the giraffe alone, not of the *ch'i-lin*, it is regrettable that he does not give his opinion as to what the *ch'i-lin* in the classics refers to.

There have been thus two interpretations on the identity of the *ch'i-lin* in the classics—the giraffe theory and the non-giraffe theory, but no adequate investigation has yet been made as to the origin of the *ch'i-lin*. This being the case, I shall now proceed to give my opinion on the more probable origin of the creature.

Hereupon, it may be important to find out how the characters *lin* 麟, *ch'i* 麒, and *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 the combination of the two, are used in the classics. As to the

(1) KINGSMILL, *The Giraffe and the Ki-lin*. (The China Review, Vol. VII, pp. 72—73)

(2) Berthold LAUFER, *The Giraffe in History and Art*. (Chicago, 1928, pp. 41—42)

character *lin* 麟, we may go back to the quotation from the *Shih-ching* given at the very opening of this paper, on the feet of the *lin*; the forehead of the *lin*; and the horn of the *lin*. *Li-yün* in the *Li-chi* has this passage: "When the *lin* becomes a domestic animal, all the other animals follow suit; they no more scamper away from men."⁽¹⁾ To cite only a few more instances where the character *lin* 麟 occurs: "The *lin* gambolled about it"⁽²⁾ (*Yüan-tao-hsün* 原道訓 in the *Huai-nan-tzu* 淮南子); "Soaring like a *luan* 鸞, behaving like a *lin* 麟, flying like a *fêng* 鳳, it shoots up like a *lung* 龍" (*Ping-liao-hsün* 兵略訓 in the same book)⁽³⁾; "Jupiter diffuses and incarnates itself into a *lin*" (the *Ch'un-ch'iu-pao-ch'ien-tu* 春秋保乾圖)⁽⁴⁾; "If the green perishes, the *lin* never thrives," (the *Ch'un-ch'iu-yen-kung-tu* 春秋演孔圖)⁽⁵⁾; "When *lins* fight one another, the sun loses its brightness" (Ibid.)⁽⁶⁾; "The *lin*'s hair may be made into a screen" (the *Tung-ming-chi* 洞冥記)⁽⁷⁾. Indeed the instances would be too numerous to be mentioned.

While this term *lin* 麟 is used quite frequently, there are some few cases in which the character *ch'i* 麒 occurs. The most outstanding instance in the passage already quoted in the *Sshuo-wên* 說文, says that *ch'i* 麒 is a *ch'i-lin* 麒麟, a benevolent animal. And there is another passage in the same book under *lin* 麤, which says a female is *lin* 麟. According to this, it is obvious that *ch'i* 麒 is a male, while *lin* 麟 a female. This very view has been taken up by the later writers; as the *Shou-ching* 獸經 definitely declares⁽⁸⁾ *ch'i* 麒 is male; *lin* 麤 female.

Thus the phrase *ch'i-lin* or the combination of the two names is found in the *Ta-tai-li-chi* 大戴禮記, the *Sshuo* 說苑, *Ming-lui* 名類 in *Yu-shih-lan* 有始覽,

(1) 麟以爲畜,故獸不狘。(禮記,禮運), This refers to the passage: The *tao* covers the heaven, supports the earth, goes round in four directions, and branches into eight poles.

(2) 麟以之游。(淮南子原道訓)

(3) 鸞舉,麟振,鳳飛,龍騰。(淮南子,兵略訓)

(4) 歲星散爲麟。(春秋保乾圖)

(5) 蒼之滅也,麟不榮。(春秋演孔圖)

(6) 麟鬪則日無光。(同上)

(7) 麟毛爲簾。(洞冥記)

(8) 麒牡麤牝。

in the *Lü-shih-ch'ün-ch'iu* 呂氏春秋; in such *wei-shu* 緯書 as the *Shang-shu-chung-hou* 尚書中候, the *Hsiao-ching-yuan-shen-chi* 孝經援神契, the *Ch'ün-ch'iu-kan-ching-fu* 春秋感精符; and in *Wang-tao* 王道 and in the *Wu-hsing-shun-ni* 五行順逆 in the *Ch'ün-ch'iu-fan-lu* 春秋繁露; and the *Huai-nan-tzu* 淮南子, the *Lun-hêng* 論衡, the *Wu-yüeh-ch'ün-ch'iu* 吳越春秋, the *Shu-i-chi* 述異記 and the *Po-wu-shih* 博物志, and in many other records.⁽¹⁾

Now as we turn to the attributes the ancient Chinese ascribed to the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟, we recall a passage already quoted from the *Ch'ün-ch'iu* 春秋 under the 14th year of Ai Kung 哀公, which reads "Hunting in the west, captured a *lin*"⁽²⁾ and many others in *Lan-ming-bsün* 覽冥訓 in the *Huai-nan-tzu*, in *Tsa-shih* 雜事 in the *Hsin-shu* 新書, in *Chiang-jui* 講瑞 in the *Lun-hêng* 論衡, which seem to declare the *ch'i-lin* as an auspicious animal. Accounts of this kind are also found in the *Pai-hu-t'ung* 白虎通⁽³⁾ and in some *wei-shu* 緯書 such as the *Hsiao-ching-yüan-shên-chi* 孝經援神契 and the *Shang-shu-chung-hou* 尚書中候. Again, in the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書 in the Annals of the Emperor Ming-ti 明帝, under the 11th year of *Yung-p'ing* 永平, under July and August of the 3rd year of *Yen-kuang* 延光; and in the Annals of the Emperor An-ti 安帝, under January, the 4th year of the same era; in the *San-kuo-chih* 三國志 under *Sun-ch'üan-chuan* 孫權傳 of the *Wu-chih* 吳志 under August of the 1st year of *Ch'ih-wu* 赤烏; in the *Chin-shu* 晉書 under December of the 1st year, of *T'ai-shih* 泰始, under the 2nd year of the same era, under February of the 5th year of *Hsien-ning* 咸寧, under April of the 1st year of *T'ai-k'ang* 太康, in the Annals of the Emperor Wu-ti 武帝; and in the *Tsai-chi* 載記 of the Hou-Chao 後趙

(1) From the foregoing you will see that in the classics the animal is generally called *lin* 麇 or *lin* 麟—a common name, with no differentiation as to the genders. However, as the human intellect gradually increased in later days, a differentiation of the sexes is observed. Thus the view as given above has arisen, it may be presumed.

(2) 西狩獲麟.

(3) 天下太平符瑞所以來至者,以爲王者承統理,調和陰陽, . . . 故符瑞並臻,皆應德而至 . . . 則鳳凰翔,鸞鳥舞,麒麟臻. (The reason why an auspicious sign appears during a peaceful reign is that the sovereign superbly reigns and reconciles the yin 陰 and the yang 陽 . . . Auspicious signs appear in succession, all in response to his virtue . . . Thus the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 flies about, the *luan* 鸞 bird circles, and the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 appears.)

the Hòu-Liàng 後涼 and the Nan-Liàng 南涼 dynasty, there are numerous accounts of the *lin*, the *ch'i-lin*, and the white *lin* 白麟 and the green *lin* 蒼麟 that appeared during these periods. These records all suggest the so-called auspice idea that some auspicious animals are born in the reign of a righteous sovereign. Accounts of this nature are also found abundantly in the other histories dated later than those above-mentioned, but they are not enumerated here to avoid confusion.

On the other hand, however, the *ch'i-lin* is considered a benevolent animal. The *Shuo-wên* definitely says "The *ch'i-lin* is a benevolent animal."⁽¹⁾; the *I-lin* 易林 says "The *fêng-huang* is on the left; the *ch'i-lin* on the right; benevolence and sacredness stand facing each other"⁽²⁾; and *Pien-wu* 辨物 in the *Shuo-yüan* 說苑 says "The *ch'i-lin* stands for benevolence and seeks after righteousness."⁽³⁾

The origin of regarding the *ch'i-lin* as a benevolent animal as well as an auspicious animal is not definitely known; but I am tempted to say that the *ch'i-lin* was first made an auspicious animal, and an auspicious animal was considered to appear in the reign of a sovereign of benevolence and virtue; it is probable that later it was ideally made a benevolent animal. As a benevolent ruler hates killing, this probably developed such a thought as "If you cut up an animal and eat its young in the womb, no *ch'i-lin* shall appear"⁽⁴⁾, which is given in the *Lü-shih-ch'ün-ch'iu* 呂氏春秋:

Since this study of the attributes of the *ch'i-lin* and the processes of their development fails to enlighten us as to its origin, we may now turn to the descriptions of its external characteristics.

The first thing we recall concerning its appearance is the passage in *Shih-shou* 釋獸 in the *Êrh-ya* 爾雅, which reads: "The *lin* 麪⁽⁵⁾ has the body of a *chün* 麇—a kind of deer, only slightly smaller in size, and with no horn—and the tail of an ox

(1) 麒麟仁獸也。

(2) 鳳凰在左，麒麟處右，仁聖相遇。

(3) 麒麟...含仁懷義。

(4) 刳獸食胎，則麒麟不來。

(5) As to the character 麪, KUNG Ying-ta 孔穎達 in his notes on the passage entitled 獲麟 (Capturing the *Lin*) under the 14th year of Ai Kung 哀公 in the *Tso-chuan* 左傳, quotes this sentence in the *Êrh-ya* 爾雅 and insists on the identity of 麟 and 麪. This was probably so, not only in the T'ang dynasty, but from remote antiquity.

and one horn."⁽¹⁾ The *Shuo-wên* under *ch'i* 麒 says "The *ch'i-lin* is a benevolent animal; with the body of a *chün* 麋, and the tail of an ox, and one horn."⁽²⁾ The *Cb'un-ch'iu-kan-ching-fu* 春秋感精符 says "The *ch'i-lin* with one horn symbolizes the fact that the whole empire is under one sovereign."⁽³⁾ And the *Fêng-chan-shu* 封禪書 in the *Sbib-chi* 史記 says "In the following year, he built a shrine at Yung 雍 and captured an animal with one horn. It looked like a *lin*. The high officials said, 'Because of your majesty's piety and because you have built this shrine in the suburbs, God has sent this single-horned animal as a reward.' They supposed it to be a *lin*. Thereupon, the five shrines at Yung 雍 were each given an ox to burn as a sacrifice; the lords were awarded pieces of white gold. This was done to commemorate the felicitous sign that had been shown in accordance with the will of heaven."⁽⁴⁾ A similar account is found in *Chiao-ssü-chib* 郊祀志 in the *Cb'ien-ban-shu* 前漢書; and *Chung-chün-chuan* 終軍傳 in the same book says concerning the same affair, "He captured a white *line* with a single horn and five hoofs."⁽⁵⁾

To survey the foregoing discussions, the animal called *lin* 麟 or rarely *ch'i* 麒, or the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 in the ancient records was a felicitous animal, a creature which should appear during the perfect reign of a godly benevolent emperor. So this is the definite characteristic of the *ch'i-lin*. As to its appearance, we are told that it had the body of a *chün* 麋, or *chün* 麋 and the tail of an ox, and one horn.⁽⁶⁾ In our investigation thus far, it has been almost impossible to decide upon the origin of this sacred animal. However, there is one point which we should by no means

(1) 麋身牛尾一角。

(2) 麒麟仁獸，麋身牛尾一角。

(3) 麒麟一角者，明海內共一主也。

(4) 其明年，郊雍，獲一角獸，若麟然，有司曰，陛下肅祗郊祀，上帝報享，錫一角獸，蓋麟云，於是薦五麟，時加一牛以燎，錫諸侯白金，風符應合于天也。

(5) However, 麟 is changed to 麋 in the *Han-shu* 漢書, as WANG Hsien-ch'ien 王先謙 has pointed out.

(6) The characteristic of the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 no doubt consists in being an animal with a single horn. The best-known one-horned animal that exists is the rhinoceros. The rhinoceros generally lacks intelligence, is slow, and powerful; though naturally timid, it grows fierce and attacks other animals once it suspects danger. The rhinoceros and the *ch'i-lin* may be similar in having a single horn, but there is no agreement between the attributes of the rhinoceros and those ascribed to the *ch'i-lin* in the Chinese classics.

overlook—namely, the fact that *lin* 麟 (麤), *ch'i* 麒, *chün* 麇 or *chün* 麋, the characters involved are all constructed upon the basis of 鹿 or deer. Moreover, the *Shou-wên* 說文 under *lin* 麟 says “The *lin* 麟 is a large stag; pertains to 麋 or deer; the pronunciation of 麋 is a combination of the initial sound of *li* 力 and the final sound of *chin* 珍,—namely “*lin*.”⁽¹⁾ This last fact impresses us strongly.

If we digress and study the inscription on the tortoise-shells and the animal-bones found in the Yin 殷 sites, there is the character 麋 as well as the character 麋; and the *Yin-bsü-wên-tzū-lei-pien* 殷墟文字類編 (The Classified Characters of the Yin Ruins) which has been interpreted by Lo Chen-yu 羅振玉 and classified by SHANG Ch'eng-tsu 商承祚, under 麋 says “This character pertains to 麋. It resembles a deer, but its horn differs.”⁽²⁾ Here we cannot deny another close and inseparable connection between *lin* 麟 and *lu* 鹿. Moreover, *Chiang-ju* 講瑞 in the *Lun-hêng* 論衡, says “The *lin* 麟 mentioned in the *Ch'un-ch'iu* 春秋 resembles *chang* 麋. The *lin* 麟 referred to by the Emperor Hsüan-ti 宣帝 means an animal like 鹿 (a deer). 鹿 and 麋 mean one against another twice as large. Their bodies are not alike”⁽³⁾; and insists on a considerable connection between 麟 and 鹿. Though of a later date, there is another passage in the *Wu-hsing-chih* 五行志 in the *Chiu-t'ang-shu* 舊唐書, which says “In November, the 7th year of *Yüan-ho* 元和, in a farm of Wu-an-ch'uan 武安川 in Lung-chou 龍州 a certain felicitous grain happened to grow and a *lin* came and ate it. The *lin* came led by a deer and followed by a large herd of deer.”⁽⁴⁾ This should be considered as a manifestation of an idea of long standing in this form rather than as a romance generated through an association of characters. Therefore, this may be taken as still another instance where some connection between the *lin* and the deer was referred to. The present writer is convinced that he is not wide of the mark in following this view, and will

(1) 麟大牡鹿也,从鹿,麋聲,力珍切。

(2) 此字从麋,似鹿而角異。

(3) 春秋之麟如麋,宣帝之麟言如鹿,鹿與麋小大相倍,體不同也。

(4) 元和七年十一月,龍州武安川會田中嘉禾生,有麟食之,復麟之來,一鹿引之,群鹿隨之。

now proceed to investigate the conception of deer of the ancient Chinese, and also whether or not it contained the elements which might have contributed to develop such a sacred animal as the *ch'i-lin*.

The very first thing we recall is the lines in the *Ta-ya* 大雅 of the *Shih-ching*:

The King was in the marvellous park,
Where the does were lying down,
The does, so sleek and fat;
With the white birds glistening.
The king was by the marvellous pond;—
How full was it of fishes leaping about! (1)

However, it is hardly possible to assert this as an expression of the felicity idea; so we shall leave the question for the present. *Fêng-chan-shu* 封禪書 in the *Shih-chi* 史記 says "In the Imperial court there were white deer. Their skins were made into money. Beginning with this felicitous origin white gold was made."⁽²⁾ Neither is this act of making money of the skin of white deer a definite expression of the felicity idea. But the passage already quoted continues as follows: "In the following year, he built a shrine at Yung 雍 and captured an animal with one horn. It looked like a *lin*. The high officials said, 'Because of your majesty's piety and because you have built this shrine in the suburbs, God has sent this single-horned animal as a reward.' They supposed it to be a *lin*. Thereupon, the five shrines at Yung 雍 were each given an ox to burn as a sacrifice; the lords were awarded pieces of white gold. This was done to commemorate the felicitous sign that had been shown in accordance with the will of heaven."⁽³⁾ This certainly should be con-

(1) 王在靈囿，園鹿攸伏，鳴鹿濯濯，白鳥嚶嚶，王在靈沼，於彼魚躍，(James LEGGE, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. IV, Part II. The second, third and fourth parts of the *Shching*, The Greater Odes of the Kingdom, p. 457. VIII, Ling t'ae, here='does;' not-'does and stags') 麇 was the name for the female of the deer; the male was called 麀. 麇 and 鹿 together, here='does;' not-'does and stags'. Their lying down is mentioned as a proof of their feeling of enjoyment and security.

(2) 天子苑有白鹿，以其皮爲幣，以發瑞應造白金焉。

(3) Note 4, Page 89.

sidered as a definite expression of the felicity idea. There can be no doubt whatever as to the idea that underlies the expression. From what is discussed in this passage, perhaps it may be justly inferred that the preceding section also harbours a similar idea. *Chiao-ssu-chib* 郊祀志 in the *Cb'ien-han-shu* 前漢書, after



Fig. 1.
THE WHITE DEER

recording arrival at Kan-ch'üan 甘泉 with the bronze vessels, goes on to give the coming to Chung-shan 中山, "A yellow cloud appeared and a deer passed by. The Emperor in person shot it, and made it a sacrifice to the temple."⁽¹⁾ Thus it may be inferred that a deer was considered a felicitous animal and had some relation with religious services. Moreover, it is also interesting to notice that one of the five felicitous bas-relief 五瑞圖 of the Later-Han 後漢 dynasty has the figure of a white deer. (Fig. 1)

Besides, the idea of taking a white deer as an expression of felicity is frequently observed in the records of the affairs of the Later-Han dynasty. To cite a few outstanding instances, the *Hou-han-shu* under October, the 17th year of *Chien-ch'u* 建初 in the Annals of the Emperor Chang-ti 章帝 where a hunting in the west is described, a passage reads "A white deer was also captured,"⁽²⁾ and another passage reads "In the era of *Yüan-bo* 元和 white deer appeared in various provinces"⁽³⁾; and under June, the 3rd year of *Yen-kuang* 延光 in the Annals of the Emperor An-ti 安帝, a passage reads "Fu-fêng 扶風 officials reported that a white deer had appeared at Yung 雍. In July (autumn), Ying-chuan 潁川 officials reported that twin-branches 木連理, white deer 白鹿 and *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 had appeared at Yang-chi 陽翟."⁽⁴⁾ It is worth special notice that this last account treats white deer exactly like *ch'i-lin*. Again, where *Fêng-ch'an*

(1) 有黃雲焉，有鹿過，上自射之，因之以祭云。

(2) 又獲白鹿。

(3) 元和中白鹿見郡國。

(4) 扶風言，白鹿見雍，秋七月潁川上言，木連理白鹿麒麟見陽翟。

封禪 in the *Pai-hu-t'ung* 白虎通 says that if a sovereign be supremely virtuous an auspicious sign will appear, a visit of white deer is recorded. Where *Fu-jui-chih* 符瑞志 in *the Sung-shu* 宋書 says "When a sovereign exercises benevolence, and his benevolence is bestowed upon his people, a white deer will appear."⁽¹⁾ There is given an account of white deer appearing as an auspicious sign during the Wei 魏, Chin 晉, and Sung 宋 periods.⁽²⁾

The origin of this idea of regarding the deer as a sacred animal must now be our question, but this cannot be definitely elucidated until an exhaustive study is made. If I am allowed to venture an opinion here, I should say that one reason why this animal came to be adored consisted in its appearance nobler than that of others and also in the fact that it was an object of hunting as a means of livelihood from very remote antiquity.

Although the deer has the above-said aspect on the one hand, it has on the other hand another specially developed as in the *Shan-hai-ching* 山海經, for its *Nan-shan-ching* 南山經 under Mt. Niu-yang 柵陽之山 gives the name of lu-shu 鹿蜀 to an imaginary animal "like a horse but with a white neck, like a tiger in its figures, but with a red tail." *Hsi-shan-ching* 西山經 under Mt. Kao-t'u 臯塗之山 describes another imaginary animal by saying that it is like a deer in shape, with a white tail, horselegs, human hands, and four horns; and is called ying-ju 嬰如. In Mt. Shih-hu 尸胡之山 of the *Tung-shan-ching* 東山經, a passage describing "Looking North toward Yang-shan 殫山" reads "There is an animal which resembles a *mi* 麋 in appearance, but has eye-balls like those of a fish. The animal is named *Yüan-hu* 嬰胡."⁽³⁾ A passage under Mt. Mai (?) 叢岸之山 in the *Chung-shan-ching* 中山經 reads "There is an animal which resembles a white deer in appearance, but has four horns. It is named fu-chu 夫諸."⁽⁴⁾ All these quotations

(1) 白鹿王者明惠及下則至。

(2) The 白 in the phrase 白鹿 in these instances, as in the case of the white lin 白麟 is only an attempt to express the bright nature of the animals; it goes without saying that the fundamental idea is that of regarding the deer as an auspicious sign.

(3) 有獸焉,其狀如麋,而魚目,名嬰胡。

(4) 有獸焉,其狀如白鹿,而四角,名曰夫諸。

mention mysterious imaginary animals related to the deer. These instances indicate a stage at which the deer developed into a mysterious animal. But is there any single-horned animal related to the deer? *Shih-shou* 釋獸 in the *Êrb-ya* 爾雅 reads: “麋 is a large deer with the tail of an ox and a single horn.”⁽¹⁾ You will see that the *lin* 麟 is not the only animal ideally developed from the deer into an animal with the tail of an ox and a single horn.

When the results of such investigation are compared with the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 represented in the works of art, do we find any inconsistencies between them? A study of the *Ch'i-lin-pei* 麒麟碑 of the Han period (Fig. 2) and the *Lin-fêng-pei* 麟鳳碑 at Shan-yang 山陽 (Fig. 3) indicates that the design of the so-called *ch'i-lin* is a four-legged animal with a single horn, and its body seems to resemble that of a *lu* 鹿 or deer in appearance.⁽²⁾ The alleged *pai-lu* 白鹿 (white deer) in the bas-relief of the five felicitous creatures of the Later-Han period and this above-mentioned design perfectly agree except in the matter of the horn and the tail; a deer and a horse have entirely different hoofs, but in this design the hoofs are definitely cloven, exactly like those of a deer.⁽³⁾

From what we have thus investigated, it is clear that the *ch'i-lin* has attributes developed from a composite of various complex elements; and it may be inferred that the most important element originated from the cult of deer-worship. And as the animal was gradually given, ideally, the attributes of a sacred animal, it became necessary that its attributes should differ from those of the actual deer, and it came to be considered to have a single horn and to have the definite attributes of a sacred animal. And it is probable that at the period when the classics now extant came into being, it was not very well known from what animal the *ch'i-lin* had originated.

(1) 麋大鹿, 牛尾一角。

(2) Some may think that this shape resembles that of a horse. True, the designs of this kind alone fail to give a clear-cut difference between the two. However, the characteristic technique of representing a fine horse during the Han period being that of suggesting remarkable flexibility, it is inconceivable that an animal originating from a horse and treated as a sacred one should have lacked this conspicuous flexibility. Therefore, no relation may be found between this animal and the horse.

(3) Previously a single-hornedness has been given as one of the characteristics of the *ch'i-lin*, but

When the classics came into being, the animal had already been united with the political auspice idea; and this very fact probably made this sacred animal more and more respected since the Han period.

The obvious fact is that various imaginary animals are mentioned in the Chinese writings of remote antiquity. One origin of these imaginary animals surely lay in the cult of animal-worship. One of the chief prototypes of the *ch'i-lin* which existed mythologically in the imagination of the ancient Chinese consisted in the cult of animal-worship directed to the deer, and various other elements were united with it and brought it to its present development.

III The Origin of the *Fêng-huang* 鳳凰

As to the identity of the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 in the Chinese classics, James LEGGE, quoting the following passage from *I-chi* 益稷 in the *Shu-ching* 書經, reading "When the nine parts of the service according to the Emperor's arrangements have all been performed, the *male* and *female phoenix* come with their measured gambolings into the court"⁽²⁾, assumes the *fêng-huang* to be the *male* and *female phoenix*—namely, the *phoenix*. Edouard CHAVANNES, in his *Mémoires historique de Se-ma-Ts'ien* the French translation of the *Shih-chi* 史記, also follows this view adopting for the *fêng-huang* *le phénix mâle et le phénix femelle*. Among modern scholars in China, Mr. CHANG Hung-chao 章鴻釗 in his *San-ling-chieh* 三靈解 also follows this view, arguing that there is some similarity of pronunciation between *fêng-huang* and *phoenix*.

Apart from the view that identifies the *fêng-huang* with the phoenix, A. FORKE advocates the theory that the archaic character for *fêng* 鳳 was *p'êng* 鵬 meaning a

a single horn is not limited to the *ch'i-lin*, for *Shih-shou* 釋獸 in the *Êrh-ya* 爾雅 reads 驪如馬一角 (驪 is like a horse, but has a single horn); and the *Shan-hai-ching* 山海經 enumerates many animals with a single horn. Thus a single horn is not limited to the *ch'i-lin*. It is evident that all the animals of this kind are ideal creations of the ancient Chinese.

(2) 簫韶九成, 鳳凰來儀.

big bird, which may have some relation with the phoenix, but the chief origin of which must surely be the ostrich.⁽¹⁾ Again, H. A. GILES, intimating that he is following Prof. A. NEWTON's view, says that the *fêng* 鳳 was invented by some artist who had seen the peacock, especially the species *Pavo cristatus* which is found in India, and that the attributes of this real bird had been increased in the course of time.⁽²⁾

Such a comparison of the views that have been presented concerning the *fêng-buang* fails to prove their adequacy definitely. We do not know which one to follow. Therefore, as adopted in the previous case of the *ch'i-lin*, we shall again investigate the uses of the characters *fêng* 鳳, *fêng-buang* 鳳皇, and *fêng-buang* 鳳凰, then inquire into the descriptions of its traits and shape, and finally speculate as to the principal elements in its origin.

Shêng-min 生民 of *Ta-ya* 大雅 in the *Shih-ching* 詩經 and *I-chi* 益稷 in the *Shu-ching* 書經 both mention *fêng-buang*; and the instances where the phrase occurs are too many to be cited here.

However, when *fêng-buang* is represented by one character, it is not *huang* 凰, but *fêng* 鳳 only that is used. As is seen in the following instances "The *fêng* 鳳 flies and the *lin* gambolls"⁽³⁾ in *Tsa-shih* 雜事 of the *Hsin-shu* 新書; "The *lin* 麟 and the *fêng* 鳳 appear"⁽⁴⁾ in *Ming-chieh* 明誠 of the *Hsin-yü* 新語; "The family of fowl comprises 360 species, the *fêng* being the head"⁽⁵⁾ in the *Ch'in-ching* 禽經; and "The *fêng* is a sacred bird and is commonly called the king-bird. The character for it 鳳 is composed of 几 and 鳥. Fêng 鳳 rules all the birds."⁽⁶⁾ In contrast with the fact that the *fêng* 鳳 is already explained in the *Sshuo-wên* 說文, the above references serve amply to prove the value of the character 鳳. Sometimes the phrase 鳳皇 *fêng-buang* is used, for instance, the *Han-shu* 漢書 in the edict given in the Annals of the Emperor Chao-ti 昭帝 under February (spring), the 3rd

(1) A. FORKE, *Mu Wang und die Königen von Saba*. (Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen. Jahrgang VII, 1904. SS. 133-136.

(2) H. A. GILES, *Adversaria Sinica*. PP. 9-10.

(3) 鳳麟翔舞.

(4) 麟鳳臻.

(5) 鳥之屬三百六十, 鳳爲之長.

(6) 鳳神鳥也, 俗呼鳥王, 夫文几鳥爲鳳, 鳳總衆鳥者也.

year of *Kan-lu* 甘露, says "Fêng-huang 鳳皇 gather at Hsin-ts'ai 新蔡"⁽¹⁾; and the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書 in the Annals of Ling-ti 靈帝 says "In July (autumn), the 4th year of *Kuang-bo* 光和, Ho-nan 河南 officials reports to the court that a fêng-huang appeared at Hsin-ch'êng 新城 followed by birds of all species."⁽²⁾ In the bas-relief of the Han dynasty the fowl is inscribed 鳳皇 (Fig. 5); the Lin-fêng-peï 麟鳳碑 at Shan-yang 山陽 (Fig. 3) under the bird says "In heaven there is a fabulous bird named fêng-huang 鳳皇."⁽³⁾ It may be considered that the phrase 鳳凰 fêng-huang originated from the phrase 鳳皇 fêng-huang.

Such a tracing of the uses of the characters does not elucidate the origin of the fêng-huang. If we turn to a study of its traits, we find that it is regarded in the classics as a felicitous bird.

In the first place, the *Tso-chuan* 左傳 under the 22nd year of Duke Chwang, following the section which says "In Spring the people of Ch'in killed the marquis's eldest son, Yu-K'ow, on which the Kung-tze Hwan and Chuen-sun fled to T'se and the latter thence to Loo," says "At an earlier time, the great officer E consulted the tortoise-shell about giving his daughter in marriage to King-chung. His wife sought the meaning of the omen, and said, "It is fortunate; the oracle is."

'The male and female phoenix fly together,
Singing harmoniously with gem-like sounds.'

"The posterity of this scion of the K'wei (surname of the House of Ch'in) will be nourished among the Keang (surname of the House of T'se). In five generations they will be prosperous, and the highest ministers in T'se; in eight, there will be none to compare with them for greatness."⁽⁴⁾ Here the bird is not yet styled the felicitous bird as in later works, but we may say that it is regarded as a pseudo-felicitous fowl. It seems that, by the end of the Chan-kuo 戰國 period and in the Han dynasty, the view which regarded the fêng-huang as a felicitous bird was

(1) 鳳皇集新蔡.

(2) 光和四年秋七月,河南言鳳皇見新城,羣鳥隨之.

(3) 天有奇鳥,名曰鳳皇.

(4) *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. V, Part I, pp. 102-103.

thoroughly established. For instance, the account of the *fêng-huang* flying about the Imperial court and the *ch'i-lin* gambolling in the suburbs during the peaceful reign of the Emperor Huang-ti 黃帝, given in *Lan-ming-hsün* 覽冥訓 of the *Huai-nan-tzu* 淮南子, and already quoted in connection with the study of the *ch'i-lin*; the record of the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 appearing and flying about, given in the *Shih-chi* 史記 under Shun 舜 in the Annals of the Five Emperors, in connection with the passage which says that the whole people were willing to be under the influence of the Emperor Shun; the passage in *Tsa-shih* 雜事 of the *Hsin-shu* 新書 which says that as the eagerness of the Emperors Yao-ti 堯帝 and Shun-ti 舜帝 for governing the empire was enough to affect the whole world and move heaven and earth, the *fêng* 鳳 flew and the *lin* 麟 gambolled in the dominion⁽¹⁾; and the section in *Ming-chieh* 明誠 of the *Hsin-yü* 新語, which says that as Chou-kung 周公 himself observed courtesy and erected shrines for Hou-chi 后稷, the *lin* and the *fêng* appeared and the plants turned verdant, all in response to his virtue⁽²⁾—all embody the thought that in remote antiquity heaven sent some felicitous signs in approbation of the peaceful reign realized through the benevolence of godly sovereigns. The same idea is also prevalent in the *wei-shu* 緯書. To cite a few instances: the *Shang-shu-chung-hou* 尚書中候 says; "When Chou-kung 周公 left the state affairs in the hands of Chêng-wang 成王, and the whole world enjoyed peace and observed courtesy, the *luan* 鸞 and the *fêng* 鳳 appeared"⁽³⁾; and the *Ch'un-ch'iu-wei* 春秋緯 also says "As Huang-ti 黃帝 sat in his palace, a *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 came with a letter in its bill and put it down in front of the Emperor."⁽⁴⁾ Accounts of this kind are quite numerous.

In the Annals of the official histories, mention is often made of the bird as a felicitous sign. For the sake of avoiding confusion, however, we shall quote here a few passages from the *Han-shu* 漢書 alone. The *Ch'ien-han-shu* 前漢書 under the 3rd year of *Shih-yüan* 始元 in the Annals of the Emperor Chao-ti 昭帝

1) 堯舜之誠，感於萬國，動於天地... 鳳麟翔舞下。

2) 周公躬行禮義，郊祀后稷... 臻麟鳳，草木綠化而應。

3) 周公歸政于成王，太平制禮，鸞鳳見。

4) 黃帝坐于扈閣，鳳皇銜書致帝前。

says "In October (winter) *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 gathered at Tung-hai 東海 and an envoy was sent there to consecrate the locality"⁽¹⁾; under the 1st year of *Pen-shih* 本始 in the Annals of the Emperor Hsüan-ti 宣帝, it says "In May (summer) *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 gathered at Chiao-tung 膠東 and Ch'ien-ch'êng 千乘 this being a felicitous sign . . . an amnesty was proclaimed"⁽²⁾; and under May, the 4th year of the same era, it says "*Fêng-huang* 鳳凰 gathered at Pei-hai 北海"⁽³⁾; and under the 2nd year of *Ti-chieh* 地節, it says "In April (summer) *fêng-huang* gathered in Lu 魯 prefecture . . . an amnesty was proclaimed."⁽⁴⁾ A similar record of the felicitous signs which appeared as has been given occurs again under March, the 1st year of *Yüan-k'ang* 元康, January, the 2nd year of *Shên-chüeh* 神爵, February (spring) and November (winter), the 4th year of the same era, March, the 3rd year of *Wu-fêng* 五鳳, and February (spring), the 3rd year of *Kan-lu* 甘露.⁽⁵⁾

It may be quite obvious from these instances that the advent of the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 was a good omen and that the bird was regarded as a felicitous bird.

Therefore, as I said in connection with the *ch'i-lin*, a felicitous sign appeared in the case of the glorious reign of a benevolent sovereign; so the *fêng-huang* was first associated with a benevolent sovereign and later came to be regarded as a benevolent bird. The passage in the *I-lin* 易林 reading "The *fêng-huang* is on the left; the *ch'i-lin* on the right. Benevolence and sacredness stand facing each other"⁽⁶⁾; and the passages in *Wang-hui-chieh* 王會解 in the *Chi-chung-chou-shu* 汲冢周書, reading "The *fêng-huang* is crowned with benevolence and embraces righteousness and holds

(1) 冬十月, 鳳凰集東海, 遣使者祠其處.

(2) 夏五月鳳凰集膠東千乘, 赦天下.

(3) 鳳皇集北海.

(4) 夏四月, 鳳凰集魯郡. . . 大赦天下.

(5) For those who look for more complete references, instances will be cited from the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書 and others: under October (winter), the 17th year of *Chien-wu* 建武 in the Annals of the Emperor *Kuang-wu* 光武 the 2nd year of *Yüan-ho* 元和 in the Annals of the Emperor *Chang-ti* 章帝, February (spring) and October (winter) of the 3rd year of *Yen-kuang* 延光, November of the 1st year of *Chien-ho* 建和 in the Annals of the Emperor *Huan-ti* 桓帝, and July (autumn) of the 4th year of *Kuang-ho* 光和 in the Annals of the Emperor *Ling-ti* 靈帝; a large number of such accounts in the *San-kuo-chih* 三國志, and also in the *Chin-shu* 晉書, and in later works.

(6) 鳳凰在左, 麒麟處右, 仁聖相遇.

truthfulness under its wings; thus it is ascribed to the virtuous.”⁽¹⁾ From these references, it may be guessed that the bird was sometimes regarded as a bird of benevolence. This ascription of benevolence to it may be traced to the fact that a benevolent sovereign was always believed to love the living and growing and to hate brutality. *Ai-kung* 哀公 in the *Hsün-tzu* 荀子 says “His policy of managing the state affairs lay in the love for the living and in the hatred of brutality; consequently, the *fêng-huang* roosted in the woods”;⁽²⁾ and the *Shang-shu-ta-chuan* 尚書大傳 expresses a similar thought when it says “Shun 舜 loved the living and hated brutality; the *fêng-huang* built a nest in his trees.”⁽³⁾ *Pên-ching-hsün* 本經訓 in the *Huai-nan-tzu*, and the *K'ung-tzu-chia-yü* 孔子家語 contain the thought: “If you upset the nest and destroy the eggs, the *fêng-huang* never flies over that town,”⁽⁴⁾ which must have originated from the love of the living and the hatred of brutality.

Should the above inferences involve no glaring error, it would be conceivable that, there being no bird so noble as the *fêng-huang*, despite some similarity between its attributes and those of some other birds, this would naturally have led to the thought that the *fêng-huang* was the king of birds. “Of all the three hundred and sixty creatures with wings, the *fêng-huang* is their head”⁽⁵⁾ in *I-pên-ming* 易本命 of the *Ta-tai-li* 大戴禮; “There are three hundred and sixty species of birds; the *fêng* 鳳 is their head”⁽⁶⁾ in the *Cb'in-ching* 禽經; and “The *fêng* 鳳 is a sacred bird; it is commonly called the king of birds”⁽⁷⁾ in the *P'i-ya* 埤雅—all these would serve to prove my point.

As this study of the attributes of the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 hardly enables us to determine its origin, we shall now turn to an enquiry of the descriptions of its out-

(1) 鳳凰者，戴仁抱義掖信，歸有德。

(2) 其政好生而惡殺焉，是以鳳在列樹。

(3) 舜好生惡殺，鳳凰巢其樹。

(4) 覆巢毀卵，則鳳凰不翔其邑。

(5) 有羽之蟲三百六十，而鳳皇爲之長。

(6) 鳥之屬三百六十，鳳爲之長。

(7) 鳳神鳥也，俗呼鳥王。

ward appearance. The first passage we recall is from *Nan-shan-ching* 南山經 in the *Sban-hai-ching* 山海經, which reads "There is a bird named *fêng-huang* 鳳凰; the figure on its head is called virtue; that on the wings righteousness; that on the back courtesy; that on the breast benevolence; and that on the abdomen truthfulness."⁽¹⁾ The *Hai-nei-ching* 海內經 says "The figure on the head of the *fêng-huang* is called virtue; that on the wings obedience; that on the breast benevolence; and that on the back righteousness."⁽²⁾ *Chai-hsiang-shêng* 摘襄聖 in the *Lun-yü-wei* 論語緯, a *wei-shu* 緯書, says "The *fêng* 鳳 has figures: 1. the head is shaped like heaven; 2. the eyes are shaped like the sun; 3. the back is shaped like the moon; 4. the wings are shaped like the wind; 5. the feet are shaped like the earth; 6. the tail is shaped like woof."⁽³⁾ It is easily seen that all these descriptions are coloured by various thoughts, and by no means indicate the original shape. So the present writer has further searched for descriptions which would suggest the original shape of the *fêng-huang*. Now a question of this kind would naturally make it difficult to determine the exact details of the thing by the descriptions in the classics; in such a quest, however, one usually comes by accounts dating from the establishment of the attributes of the *fêng-huang*. The material sought after is found to be extremely scarce. As the result of a further study in defiance of my recurring disappointment, I have found out that the characteristics of the *fêng-huang* consist in its immense size and its beautiful five-coloured plumage. Under October (winter), the 17th year of *Chien-nu* 建武, in the Annals of the Emperor Kuang-wu 光武, the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書 says "The *fêng-huang* was seen at Chung-shan-hsien 中陝縣 in Ying-ch'uan Province 潁川."⁽⁴⁾ According to the *Tung-han-kuan-chi* 東漢觀記 the same incident is referred to as follows: "Five *fêng-huang* eight *ch'ih* and nine *ts'un* in height, with five coloured feathers gathered at Ying-ch'uan 潁川."⁽⁵⁾ It is evident from this that the bird

(1) 有鳥曰鳳凰,首文曰德,翼文曰義,背文曰禮,膺文曰仁,腹文曰信。

(2) 鳳鳥首文曰德,翼文曰順,膺文曰仁,背文曰義。

(3) 鳳有文象,一曰頭象天,二曰目象日,三曰背象月,四曰翼象風,五曰足象地,六曰尾象緯。

(4) 有鳳皇,見於潁川中陝縣。

(5) 鳳凰五,高八尺九寸,毛羽五采,集潁川。

was large-sized and beautiful. And if you study historical materials with some consideration, the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書 under November, the 1st year of *Chien-bo* 建和 in the Annals of the Emperor Huan-ti 桓帝 says "Chi-yin 濟陰 officials reported to the court that a large bird of five colours appeared to the south-east."⁽¹⁾ It is not clear whether accounts of this kind, though often found, refer to the *fêng-huang*. *Sun-liang-chuan* 孫亮傳 in *Wu-chih* 吳志 of the *San-kuo-chih* 三國志 says "In November, the 2nd year of *Chien-hsing* 建興, five large birds were seen at Chun-chên 春申; the next year the era was changed to *Wu-fêng* 五鳳 or five *fêngs*."⁽²⁾ Here the large bird is regarded as the *fêng* 鳳. *Wu-hsing-chih* 五行志 in the *Chin-shu* 晉書 records the same affair as follows: "In November, the 2nd year of *Chien-hsing* 建興, five large birds were seen at Chun-shên 春申, which the Wu 吳 people took to be *fêng-huang*. The following year the era was changed to *Wu-fêng* 五鳳 or five *fêngs*."⁽³⁾ This proves that one characteristic of the *fêng-huang* was its great size. Under the Emperor Wên-ti 文帝 of the Sung dynasty, *Fu-jui-chih* 符瑞志 in the *Sung-shu* 宋書 says "On the *ping-shên* 丙申 day in March, the 14th year of *Yüan-chia* 元嘉, two large birds came to the damson-plum tree in the garden of Wang I 王顓 of Mo-ling 秣陵. They were as large as peacocks with rather long heads and legs and feathers of bright figures in five colours. . . . Wang I-k'ang 王義康 of P'êng-ch'êng 彭城 the Governor of Yang-chou 揚州 reported it to the court. The name of the place called Ying-ch'ang-li 永昌里 where those birds gathered was now changed to *Fêng-huang-li* 鳳凰里 or Fêng-huang village."⁽⁴⁾ Again, the passage in the *T'ang-shu* 唐書 under *Chang-chien-chuan* 張薦傳 reading "He dreamed of a large bird with purple figures alighting in his garden and his grandfather said that he had heard that the bird with five colours and red figures was a *fêng* 鳳"⁽⁵⁾

(1) 濟陰上言,有五色大鳥,見干已。

(2) 建興二年十一月有大鳥五,見於春申,明年改元五鳳。

(3) 建興二年十一月,有大鳥五,見於春申,吳人以爲鳳皇,明年改元五鳳。

(4) 元嘉十四年三月丙申,大鳥二集秣陵民王顓園中李樹上,大如孔雀,頭足小高,毛羽鮮明,文采五色(中略)揚州刺史彭城王義康以聞,改鳥所集永昌里曰鳳凰里。

(5) 夢紫文大鳥,成文,止其庭,大父曰吾聞五色赤文鳳。

shows that the characteristics of the *fêng-huang* were its great size and its beautiful five-coloured feathers.

Moreover, as to the great beauty of the feathers, one may refer to a passage in the *Shuo-wên* reading "The *fêng* 鳳 is a sacred bird of five colours"⁽¹⁾; the passage in *Nan-shan-ching* 南山經 of the *Shan-hai-ching* 山海經 reading "There is a bird which looks like a cock, but is of five colours and figures, the bird is called *fêng-huang*"⁽²⁾; the passage in the *Ta-huang-hsi-ching* 大荒西經 reading "In the country of northern barbarians, there are three kinds of birds of five colours. One is called *huang-niao* 皇鳥; another is called *luan-niao* 鸞鳥, and the other is called *fêng-niao* 鳳鳥,"⁽³⁾ A passage in *Shang-lin* 上林 (Chap. 5) in the *Wai-shih* 外史 by HUANG-Hsien 黃憲 reading "Five-coloured birds gathered at *Shang-lin* 上林 and the king of Ch'in 秦 was delighted and said "My territory was in the west. I have shown no merciful deeds to the peasants of this land. And yet these birds have visited us. I am of the opinion that they are *fêng* 鳳"⁽⁴⁾; and another in *Wu-chih* 吳志 in the *San-kuo-chih* 三國志 reading "In the 1st year of *Ta-yüan* 大元 many birds gathered in the Imperial garden. They looked like hawks, but had long legs, long tails, and five-coloured feathers. The people took them to be *fêng-huang*."⁽⁵⁾ These records must surely contain some colouring and exaggeration in parts, but they usually agree in saying that the beautiful five-coloured birds were regarded as *fêng* 鳳. So it followed that the great size and the beautiful five coloured feathers came to be regarded as the more important characteristics of the *fêng-huang*.

As is evident from what has been discussed thus far, the bird is in some cases given simply as the *fêng* 鳳, and in other cases, the *fêng-huang* 鳳皇, or the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰, but the *Ch'i-ching* 禽經 by CHANG Hua 張華 definitely gives *fêng* as

(1) 鳳神鳥五采備。

(2) 有鳥焉，其狀如雞，五采而文，名鳳凰。

(3) 北狄之國，有五彩鳥三，名曰一皇鳥，一曰鸞鳥，一曰鳳鳥。

(4) 有五色鳥，集于上林，秦王喜而問曰，寡人享西土之祿，未有功德於敝邑之百姓，而致禽，寡人以爲鳳也。

(5) 大元元年有鳥，集苑中，似鷹高足長尾，羽五色，咸以爲鳳凰。

male and *huang* as female. *Féng* 鳳 was the original character and *huang* 凰 the one developed later incidentally; but the two came to be employed separately for the male and the female. Similar instances have recently been given by Mr. Lo Chen-yü 羅振玉 from the inscriptions on the tortoise-shells and animal-bones of the Yin ruins 殷墟. A few examples may be seen in 𩇑, 𩇒, 𩇓, and 𩇔; they would suggest their very remote origin and also the value placed on their feathers and wings. The *Shuo-wén* 說文 gives the character 鳳 as 𩇑, and 𩇒 as the more archaic form and a hieroglyph, and also as another archaic form 𩇓. It is obvious that this last character 𩇓 is *p'êng* 鵬 meaning a gigantic bird; and the passage in the *Chuang-tzu* 莊子 reading "How many thousand miles it extends it is not known",⁽¹⁾ must be a fantastic exaggeration resulting from the fact that the *p'êng* 鵬 was regarded as a gigantic bird. If viewed in this light, the characters for this mean a large bird, but the inscriptions on the bronze vases and vessels give for it 𩇔. According to the *Kanji-keifu-kôgi* 漢字系譜講義 (Lecture on the Analytical System of Chinese Characters) in the *Kanji-shôkai* 漢字詳解 (Interpretation of Chinese Characters), by Mr. TAKATA Chûshû 高田忠周 "In my opinion, 朋 was a long tailed bird, and was originally formed 𩇔."⁽²⁾ Thus it is evident that the tail and the feathers had attracted attention. When these characters are thus studied, we know that 鵬 closely connected with the character 鳳 implied 大鳥 a gigantic bird and the characters 𩇔 𩇒 indicate the value placed upon the feathers and wings. We cannot be wide of the mark in saying that what made the feathers and wings valued was their beauty, which shows that the original meaning of the character was also a large bird with the feathers and wings which were beautiful. Thus the investigation of the characters has shown complete agreement with the description in the classics.

Now what can be the actual bird which should satisfy the above-mentioned

(1) 大不知其幾千里。

(2) *Kanji-shôkai*, p. 340.

conditions—large and beautiful? The one that comes first to our minds is the peacock; however, as it is not the only one of the kind, we may proceed to investigate how this bird is represented in the various relics. The first thing to be mentioned is the *fêng* 鳳 in the bas-relief of the Fêng-pei 鳳碑 (Fig. 4) alleged to be of the Later-Han 後漢 dynasty—a form to be considered quite important.⁽¹⁾ The other one which looks extremely like this *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 is the fabulous bird decorating the monument to Ch'ên-fu-chün 沈府君 in Ch'ü 渠 prefecture Ssü-chuan



Fig. 6. THE FABULOUS BIRD DECORATING THE MONUMENT TO CH'ÊN-FU-CHÜN

四川 province. (Fig. 6) This, however, because the bird overhangs a tortoise and a snake, should be regarded as *Chu-niao* 朱鳥 and *Hsüan-wu* 玄武, as OMURA has

(1) Mr. OMURA Seigai 大村西崖 in his *Shina-bijutsushi* 支那美術史, *The History of Chinese Art*; *Chôso-hen* 雕塑篇 Section of Sculpture, p. 45 says that among the prints Mr. Hayasaki Tenshin 早崎天真 there is one entitled Fêng-pei 鳳碑 (5.13 shaku in height and 2.53 shaku in width). It is not certain whether this made a pair with the Lin-pei 麟碑, but the shape of the fêng is excellent. When it was found is not known. The inscription is much obliterated, but towards the end the characters I-ssü-ch'un 乙巳春 are legible. I am of the opinion that it dates from the 1st year of Yüan-hsing 元興 in the reign of the Emperor Ho-ti 和帝.

pointed out. OSVALD SIREN regards this as le phénix (fong).⁽¹⁾ The question of the relationship between the *fêng* and the *chu-niao* 朱鳥 I am not going to discuss in the present paper, but suffice it to say here that I am of the opinion that the bird represented in the upper part of the monument to Ch'ên-fu-chün 沈府君 must throw considerable light upon the question of the *fêng* and that I want to call attention only to the fabulousness of the bird in question. However, the shape of this kind is so coloured by an imaginative element, exactly as in the case of the accounts of the bird in the classics, that we find it too far developed to enable us to determine its origin.

Now the relief CHAVANNES gives as a phénix under No. 165 in his "*Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale*" has the characters 鳳皇 (*fêng-huang*) distinctly inscribed (Fig. 5); and the passage under the bird, on the Lin-Fêng-Pei 麟鳳碑, at Shan-yang 山陽 (Fig. 3), of the Han dynasty, which reads "In heaven there is a sacred bird; it is called *fêng-huang* 鳳皇."⁽²⁾ These two should serve as valuable material in determining the shape the Han people ascribed to the *fêng-huang*. As we compare the two figures, the former, though too crude in its technique to enable us to determine its exact shape, has a crest on its head and a very long tail; while the latter is rather exact in its technique and at a glance reminds us of the peacock (*Pavo Cristatus*). Only the combination of the two would cause us to infer that they are the representations of the so-called peacock. My study of these two relics has thus led me to consider that the so-called peacock 孔雀 formed at least an important element of the prototype of the *fêng-huang*. Moreover, this by no means conflicts with the great size and the beautiful feathers and wings of the *fêng-huang*—the element which we have been observing thus far. On the contrary, in my opinion, because of the very fact that the so-called peacock 孔雀

(1) Histoire des arts anciens de la Chine, III, La Sculpture de l'époque Han à l'époque Ming, PL. 11, 13.

(2) 天有奇鳥,名曰鳳皇.

the four gods for the four sides of the fireplace of the Han dynasty reproduced in the *Ku-ming-ch'i-t'u-lu* 古明器圖錄 by Lo Chen-yu 羅振玉 (Fig. 8), and also the bird on the bas-relief of Tai-shih-miao 泰室廟 of the Han Dynasty, (Fig. 9)—



Fig. 8. THE CHU-NIAO DECORATING THE CLAY FIREPLACES, THE HAN DYNASTY

they are all peacocks. So it follows that the peacock had been well-known to the ancient Chinese.

To begin with, the peacock (the species scientifically called *Pavo Cristatus*) was found in India proper and in several countries to the north, and the species called *Pavo Muticus* in Indo-China regions, Java, etc., and they had probably been domesticated since very ancient times. Indo-China being a region adjoining China, it is quite natural that the peacock was familiar to the ancient Chinese. GILES has interpreted the *fêng* as the peacock as already referred to. I agree with him, but I wish it to be understood that I do so only after making the above investigation. It is inferred that though the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 has been given various attributes and has been coloured variously in later days, yet the most fundamental origin of it was that the peacock was a large bird and had feathers and wings unrivalled by other birds. In other words, on account of the beauty of the feathers and the wings the peacock was recognized by all people as such a rare and fine bird that it was adored until it finally came to be deemed a sign of felicity and a bird of benevolence, because a sign of felicity always appeared during the reign of a benevolent sovereign; and to it was added a new attribute of loving the living, and finally it came to be regarded as the king of birds; more and more complex natures were ascribed to it, until it became the *fêng-huang* 鳳凰 with the fully developed attributes and shape we find in the ancient classics.



Fig. 2.
THE CH'U-LIN PEI



Fig. 4.
THE FÈNG PEI

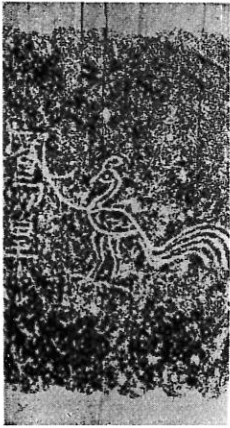


Fig. 5.
THE FÈNG-HUANG
IN THE BAS-RELIEF



Fig. 3.
THE LIN-FÈNG PEI
AT SHAN-YANG



Fig. 9.
A FRAGMENT OF
THE BAS-RELIEF

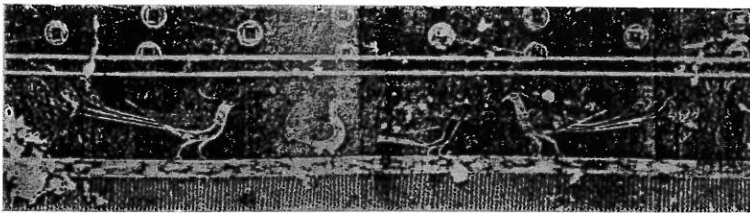


Fig. 7.
THE BAS-RELIEF AT HSIAO-TANG-SHAN