

The Relationship between *Han* of the 20th Century and Shoe Culture, Mainly Woman's Footwear in the 1930's

YAMAUCHI Chiemi

Abstract

This paper will discuss the reality of life and culture of the *Han* Chinese as seen through the filter of their clothing culture. Transitions in culture can be discussed in two ways. One is to study the general historical changes and apply the pattern in these changes to the transitions in culture. The other is to study the cultural changes first and then examine if they can explain the general pattern of the historical changes. The discussion in this paper follows the latter method. The focus of discussion will be placed on the transitions found in the shoe culture of the *Han* Chinese in the 20th century, and consequently on the transitions in women's footwear in the 1930's when the traditional *chanzu* (bound feet) culture of the *Han* women disappeared and western culture started to exert a strong influence on the *Han* Chinese. There have been voluminous studies already done by great scholars on how the *chanzu* culture was originally formed and disappeared, as it had a great deal to do with the shoe history of the *Han* Chinese. It is also well researched how the social life of *Han* women went through transitions with the changes in the *chanzu* culture. Therefore, the discussion in this paper will concentrate on the causes of these transitions with a focus on the *chanzu* culture.