**A Review of *Sinology: The Study of Contemporary China in Europe* by Ali bn Ghanem Al-Hajri**

Sinology is a field of knowledge that deals with the Chinese language, literature, culture, and history. It emerged as a formal European discipline during the 17th and 18th centuries. This was largely triggered by European economic interest in China when European Christian missionaries, especially Jesuits provided rich accounts of the Chinese civilisation. Although 19th-century Sinology became more institutionalised in most Western universities and prominent due to China's economic growth and technological advent in the 21st century, there is still a dearth of literature on the field. Along this line, Ghanem Al-Hajri’s seminal work is an important contribution and addition to the discipline.

The book is divided into nine chapters. The first part of the book traces the evolution of Sinology and contemporary Chinese studies in Portugal and Spain. This includes the two main types of Sinology among Christian missionaries and professionals. Chapter two focuses on bringing out the major contributions of selected Italian missionary scholars of Sinology. They include Michele Ruggien, Matteo Ricci and Charles Orazi, da Castorano. In the professional category, the chapter examines the role of professionals in the development of Sinology, particularly due to its deterioration after World War II. The chapter also assesses the development of Sinology after the 1960s focusing mainly on cultural exchange, increasing demand for Chinese study, political influence, Chinese economic rise, as well as the gradual emergence of specialised centres in contemporary China.

Chapter three provides a general overview of the nature and transformation of Sinology and the study of contemporary China, especially in the Netherlands. This is achieved by bringing out the major contributions of some scholars who professionalised Sinology from the end of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. These scholars were; Gustaaf Schlegal (1840-1903), Jan Jacob Maria de Groof (1854-1921), and J.G.L. Duyvendak (1889-1954). Special attention is also paid to the evolution and contributions of various schools of Sinology, particularly in Leiden, Amsterdam, and Erasmus Rotterdam to mention a few.

The fourth chapter traces the evolution of Sinology centres in France, throwing a little new light on missionary Sinology and its impact on the development of knowledge in China. This is studied through the individual and collective contributions of some scholars such as Arcadio Huang, Louis Le Conte, Joachim Bouvet, Jean-Baptiste Regis, and Seraphin Convreur, among others.

Chapter five examines the Sinology and contemporary Chinese studies in Germany. This includes; the emergence of Chinese studies centres in Berlin, Hamburg, Leipzig, Frankfurt, Munich Bonn, etc. The chapter equally explains some of the major factors that tend to vitiate Chinese studies in Germany due to racial and ideological problems, which led to the banning of some scientific journals and the destruction of infrastructure, especially during World War II. The chapter also studies the changing nature of Sinology after the war years as it began to regain its grounds in Berlin, Munster, Bochum, Wurzburg, Erlangen, etc.

Chapters six and seven focus on Sinology and contemporary Chinese studies in Poland and Sweden. The chapters explain the growing interest in translation and Chinese literature and the establishment of the Department of Sinology in Warsaw and its scientific role. Chapter seven, in particular, traces the early contacts and the establishment of Swedish knowledge about China and the contributions of Swedish scholars to Sinology.

While chapter eight explains the evolution and contribution of Sinology in the United States and the role of its scholars in its upliftment, chapter nine provides the Russian experience. The chapter traces the transformation of Sinology, especially in the era of the Tsarist Russia.

Al-Hajri posits that the study of China changed according to the stage that the country in particular, was going through.