

## NOTES

### THE VALUE OF CHINESE MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY

....."Although quite undependable as history, these stories are of importance, partly because they appear again and again in literature, mythology and religion, and partly because by some Chinese and Westerners the more prominent figures are seriously taken as historical personages. For example, the Yellow Emperor occupies a prominent place in Taoism, and at least one recent attempt has been made to begin Chinese chronology with his accession. It is just possible, moreover, that some of the stories will eventually be found to have a basis in actual fact."

K.S.Latourette "The Chinese: Their History and Culture" Vol. I p.37

"With the collapse of the elaborate chronological frame-work of antiquity goes the alluring concept of an ancient golden age and of a vast unified empire under the sway of beneficent rulers, which haunted Chinese history and dominated Confucian political theory for more than two thousand years. Gone is that beautiful picture of emperors who rose to power by sheer merit, who ruled by ~~virtu~~ virtuous example rather than by force, and who voluntarily relinquished the throne when they discovered others more competent and virtuous than themselves. These were the kind of kings the philosophers wanted the warring straps to be, but most assuredly they were not the kind of kings that ruled in China in the twenty-eighth century before Christ. Likewise the picture of a vast empire under one united rule, did express a long unrealized ambition that was finally achieved by Ch'in Shih-huang in 256 B.C. but it was never once realised previous to his day, except in the imagination of philosophic historians."

Arthur W. Hummel in American Historical Review  
Vol. XXXIV July 1929 pp.719-720

(Dr. Hummel who is in charge of the Chinese Section of the Library of Congress, Washington D.C. read this paper entitled "What Chinese Historians are doing to their own History" before the American Historical Association at their meeting in Indianapolis Dec. 31st 1928)

### HUANG TI (The Yellow Emperor)

"Huang Ti (the Yellow Emperor) is credited with fighting