

hunting methods she had found interesting ethnographic parallels from the American Great Plains.

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PRE-CHOU CHRONOLOGY: HISTORY VS. NUMEROLOGY IN HSIA, SHANG, AND CHOU

ABSTRACT:

(Ed. Note: This paper was an adaptation of Section X of my article "The Dates of Western Chou," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 43.2[1983]:482-580. In the article, this section is titled "Numerological Postscript," and occupies pp. 556-566.)

As now revised, this section (with related earlier sections of the article) represents my arguments that pre-Conquest dates in the present Bamboo Annals ([Chin-pen] Chu-shu chi-nien) that are relevant to the beginning of Chou are partly historical and partly numerological. I argue that most of the dates that have historical validity have been distorted in two independent revisions of the original chronicle that were later combined. The first, in the 8th century B.C., moved Chou family dates back 12 years, and indirectly generated the Conquest date 1050. The second, in the late 6th century B.C., moved Shang dates (after Wu Ting) back 6 years, so that in this revision the Conquest was redated from 1045 to 1051. Both dates appear, in different places, in the present Bamboo Annals. This analysis results from my research in October of 1982, dating the Brundage rhinoceros tsun inscription, and thereby proving that the Bamboo Annals' date IIII for Ti Yi is exactly 6 years early.

But certain important dates surviving in the Annals are numerological constructs. For example, 1558, the Annals' first year of Shang, is just 500 years before 1058, the actual first year originally claimed for the Chou "Mandate." 2076, the Annals' date for Yao's appointment of Shun as his chief minister and successor, is just 500 years before 1576, the actual date (discovered by David Pankenier) of the conjunction of planets that must have been taken as conferring Heaven's "Mandate" (or the equivalent) on Shang. Most striking is the date 2145, the first date in the Annals and the first year of the legendary Emperor Yao, in whose government the divine Hou Chi, founding ancestor of the Chou house, was minister of agriculture in commonly received mythology. Wu Wang's great grandfather Tan Fu, posthumously honored as the first of the Chou line of kings, is said in the present Annals to have been recognized as the "Duke of Chou" by the Shang king Wu Yi in 1157. Since pre-Conquest Chou dates in the Annals are 12 years early, the date in the original chronicle must have been 1145, just 1,000 years after Yao, and just 100 years before 1045, shown in my article to be the date of the Chou Conquest.