

## THE CULTURAL STATUS OF TORTOISE

(Summary)

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### 1. FOREWORD

Tortoise, among all animals, has had a significant influence on the Chinese culture. In ancient times, the tortoise shells were used for divination. Ancient Chinese characters which were originated more than three thousand years ago have been handed down to the present time by means of tortoise shells. This ancient form of characters is called "Chia Ku Wen" (甲骨文) or oracle bone inscription. Before Chin Dynasty, the tortoise shells were used as currency because they were durable and not easy to get. The tortoise enjoyed a long life and most Chinese people worshipped it for the attainment of longevity. As to its value in the technical and fine arts, in the Dynasties of Chin, Han, Tang and Sung, the form of tortoise was engraved on the brass tripod, the official seal, stone tablet and so on. From the above, it is apparent that the tortoise is valuable in Chinese culture.

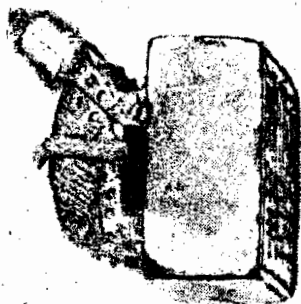
### 2. THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TORTOISE

The tortoises are peaceful by nature and live in a free and easy manner, so they have a long life. Calculating from the figures of its carapace, the tortoise can live as long as three hundred years, undoubtedly the animal of the longest life in the world. Anatomical study of the tortoise indicates that its lung is very long, and contains much air; its action is tardy; and its respiratory functions are not hasty, so its bodily constitution suffers not much waste. Moreover, there are sufficient water and nutriment reserved within its body, and the tortoise eats and drinks usually very few, therefore, it can bear hunger and thirst for a long time. This is another cause of the tortoise's longevity.

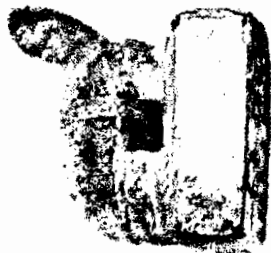
Owing to the hard and solid quality of its shell, the tortoise can well keep its body safe. And its muscles are very strong and powerful. Thus it can enjoy a long life.

### 3. THE RELATION BETWEEN TORTOISE AND ANCIENT CHINESE CHARACTERS

In prehistoric times, some wise man created a kind of picture writing according to the figures of nature, tortoise, birds and so on. It is the commonly called hieroglyphics.—the origin of Chinese characters.



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"Chia Ku Wen": the ancient men, in superstition of supernatural beings, burned tortoise shells for divination of good or ill fortune. In the former part of Shang Dynasty, the bones of cattle and sheep were burned for divination. Down to the latter part of Shang Dynasty, commonly called the Yin Dynasty, as the art of divination was much improved, bones of cattle, and sheep and tortoise shells were all used for divination. The art to divine by means of tortoise shells may be stated in brief as follows: The inside of the tortoise shell was bored and burned, the other side was thus broken and the shape of the word "卜" was formed. After the divination, all affairs, inquired by the diviner, were put down by the side of the sign of "卜" and then engraved. This kind of characters was used specially for recording the divination, so it is called the writings of divination. The so-called "Chia Ku Wen" is the last defined name. All inscriptions on the sacred tortoise shells are records of divination, sacrifice, subjugation, journey, hunting by the rulers of Yin Dynasty and meteorological phenomena, etc. Many historical and geographical records, and accounts of ancient cultures and institutions are found in the "Chia Ku Wen". Furthermore, it made corrections on the remains and mistakes of Hsu, Shen's 許慎 "To Explain Characters." Therefore the "Chia Ku Wen" made a great contribution to Chinese ancient culture. The ancient men utilized the tortoise for transmitting their cultures, because of its characteristics. So the tortoise has a "real value" in the transmission of cultures.

#### 4. THE RELATION BETWEEN TORTOISE AND ECONOMY

Money is the medium of business transactions. In ancient times, cowries or tortoise shells, or beast-skins were used as currency. Later with the progress of civilization, currency was made of metals. Before Chin Dynasty, the tortoise had much value in the economic realm. It was recorded in detail in *Shih huo chih* 食貨志 in the History of the Former Han Dynasty. There are three main reasons for the use of tortoises for ancient coinage: 1. The physical constitution of tortoise is very strong and lasts a long time. 2. In ancient times, especially in the northern part of China, the tortoise was not easy to get. So it was esteemed to be valuable. 3. The tortoise shell can be severed into pieces. On account of these characteristics of the tortoise, the ancient men utilized it to make money for business interchange. So the economic function of the tortoise in the old times was very great indeed.

#### 5. THE RELATION BETWEEN TORTOISE AND FOLK BELIEF

The tortoise, in popular religion and superstition, was regarded as the symbol of long life and a creature of supernatural power.

(A) The psychological effects of the popular belief in the tortoise's longevity.

In ancient times, man, recognizing his life span was shorter than that of the tortoise, expected to follow its example for prolonging his own life. And hence this mental development stirred up the man's belief in the tortoise, some rulers even adopted the tortoise as the symbol of their empires. For example, in northern Wei Dynasty, Emperor Hsiao Wen 孝文帝 used "the sacred tortoise (神龜)" as the title of his reign, symbolizing fortunes of the State.

From Han Dynasty to Sung Dynasty, there were numerous scholars and officers named with the tortoise, such as Chen, Kuei 陳龜, Chu, Kuei 朱龜, etc., of Han Dynasty; Wang, Lin-kuei 王靈龜, Chang, Kuei-ling 張龜靈, etc., of Tang Dynasty; Yang, Yuan-kuei 楊元龜, Ho, Kuei-lin 何龜齡, etc., of Sung Dynasty. They all believed in the tortoise for long life. The Historic Records, Biography of *Kuei tse* 龜策 states: "the old man in the southern part of China propped up his bed-feet with tortoises." In Sung Dynasty, a famous poet, Lu, Yu 陸游, late in his life, built a Tortoise Hall to seek amusement in study and enjoyed an age of eighty five. It is very interesting that the old poet ever propped up the bed-feet with tortoises. Generally speaking, man is fond of living and afraid of death; and in the evening of life, he still looks up to the supernatural spirit of tortoise in hope of increasing the number of his remaining years. From the ethnological viewpoint, the ancient men regarded the tortoise as the symbol of life, and worshiped it as a guardian spirit, namely, individual totem.

(B) Ancient superstition about the tortoise's supernatural power.

The ancient men thought that the tortoise possessed supernatural spirit and could be used to divine good and evil fortune. This mental expression of superstition may be seen in the writings of divination of Shang Dynasty.

The tortoise foretells good and evil fortune, and the mirror reveals the same. These two are all called tortoise mirror (龜鑑), or magic mirror. It is literally called mirror for man. In other words, it is just a standard for administration, the statesmen of old times always urged the rulers to desist from evil with the mirror for man. It is really significant.

(C) The folklore in Taiwan.

In Taiwan, for the celebrations of some festivals and birthday, red cakes are usually made in the shape of the tortoise (紅龜粿). The custom to use "Hung Kuei Kuo" (紅龜粿) as the symbol of life is very popular in Taiwan. "Hung Kuei Kuo" is used for birthday presents and also as offerings to gods. As a man reaches sixty years of age, his relatives or friends should present sixty two pieces of "Hung Kuei Kuo" to him as a birthday greeting. The gift of 62 "Hung Kuei Kuo" indicates a good wish for more years from the age of 60.

With regard to the guardian spirit, it is generally believed that a child is growing to manhood under the protection of the gods. As soon as a child is one year old, the parents will carry the child to the Taoist Queen of Heaven, and worship her with

"Hung Kuei Kuo", praying her to bless the child. The birthday of Yuhwang 玉皇, or the Supreme, a Taoist deity—9th of the first Lunar Month, is the great festival of the year. On this occasion, every family offers "Hung Kuei Kuo" to the Supreme. People believe that by worshipping Yuhwang, they may have the grand perfect blessing from the Supreme. In Taiwan, the fortune-teller divines by means of tortoise shell. Now we can still see this social custom at Lung Shan Temple 龍山寺, in the City of Taipei. In ancient times, the tortoise shell was used only by the official fortune-teller, his duty was to foretell national affairs. In the course of time, this ancient practice came to become a popular custom. So the traditional superstition about the tortoise originally sprang up from its supernatural power to foretell good and ill fortune.

## 6. THE RELATION BETWEEN TORTOISE AND FINE ARTS

Fine arts has two kinds. One is pure fine arts and the other is technical fine arts. The function of the latter depends upon ornament or decoration. In China, from Chin Dynasty to Sung Dynasty, there were many articles of technical fine arts concerned with the tortoise, some of them made of tortoise shells, some made in the form of a tortoise for ornament. For instance, in the Han Dynasty, the knot or ribbon on a seal carved in the shape of a tortoise was designed to be the authoritative mark, or medal. In the Wei Dynasty, a tripod of bronze carved in the form of a tortoise was established as the sign of the throne. In the Tang and Sung Dynasties, the official ceremonial dress was ornamented with a tortoise, symbolic of title and honor. A famous poet of Tang Dynasty, Ho, Chi-chang 賀知章, addicted to drinking, exchanged his honorary title for wine. It is an interesting matter. In the Sung Dynasty, Emperor Tai Tsung ordered the erection of a stone tablet with its base made in the form of a tortoise. The tortoise-base may be regarded as the foundation of a State. Lu Yu, a poet, made himself a hat with a tortoise in memory of the tortoise's longevity. It is also an interesting story.

## 7. FINAL NOTE

This paper to analyzes systematically the characteristics of the tortoise, and arrives at a synthetic judgement from the biological, ethnological and folkway's viewpoints. In a word, recognition should be given to the tortoise for its contribution to human cultures.

# 龜的文化地位

## 何 聯 奎

### 一、綜 說

凡是一種東西，無論是動物植物或礦物，其可供人類社會利用者，必有其「真」的價值。

凡是一種東西，無論是動物植物或礦物，其於民間發生信仰者，必有其「善」的價值。

凡是一種東西，無論是動物植物或礦物，其於藝術發生作用者，必有其「美」的價值。

龜在所有動物中對於中國文化有重大的影響。牠在古代因為牠的甲殼可以供占卜，而與鱗鳳龍合稱為四靈。明、謝在杭所謂：「龜之為物，文采靈異，古人取之以配龍鳳。」就是這個道理。中國三千餘年前之古文字，依託牠的遺體而流傳到現在，即當世所稱的甲骨文。秦以前，因為龜的本質耐久，而又得之不易，所以用之為貨幣。可見龜殼在古代有其經濟的價值。唐、李邕叔云：「龜不傷物，呼吸元氣，於介蟲為長而壽。」世人以在動物中只有龜類可以超過人類的壽命，故奉之以祈延年益壽。漢、唐、宋時人以龜命名者特多。今臺省民間求壽龜之俗頗盛。至於在工藝美術方面，秦、漢、唐、宋之世，或以龜雕飾於印鼻，或以龜鑄刻於銅器，或以龜造形於衣袋，或以龜裝飾於建築。這些工藝品，都有美術上的價值，並與禮教官制上的應用有連帶的關係。吾國古代各階層的人對龜非常崇奉，後世却對之發生厭勝。這種心理的改變，且待另文發表。一般說來，吾國各地，民間相爭相罵，忌用龜字。但是迷信龜靈，問神占卜，尙屬多見。而臺省崇龜求壽的風習，那是一種特殊的現象了。

## 二、龜之生理的特徵

「物競天擇，適者生存。」天地間的動物，在這自然律支配之下，能夠生生不滅，必具有其生存的條件，或則鬪力強，或則智力高，而龜却缺少這些條件。但牠能夠生生不絕，自必具有其與一般不同的特徵。

龜，是一種優閒自在的生物，正因為牠的生活優閒不迫，性情溫和，所以牠能夠長壽。宋、周密云：「天下善養息者，莫如龜；善養威者，莫如虎。」說的很切當。有的在龜的背殼的紋推算起來，竟可活到三百多歲，這是世界上壽命最長的動物。

就龜的生理現象來分析，牠的肺很長，可以涵蓄多量空氣；行動緩慢，呼吸作用不必十分急促，因此體質少受消耗。白居易詩有云：「夜後不聞龜喘息。」龜的養息功夫，委實到家。這是牠高壽的原因之一。因為在牠的體內，貯有充足的水份和營養料，平時飲食不多，可以長時的忍饑耐渴。這又是龜長壽的另一種原因。

龜的身體構造之特徵，就是，牠的身體被包於堅硬的龜甲內，恰如一火柴盒，僅前後兩端開口，頭與前肢，可以由前端伸出，尾與後肢，則由後端伸出。遇敵，則頭尾四肢完全縮入龜甲內，可以確保生命的安全。龜甲有極強的再生力，其體甚至損及三分之一，一二年內仍能恢復。龜甲有背甲與腹甲，互相連合。背甲略向上突起，由上下兩層合成；上層是表皮變形的鱗片，但不像魚鱗那樣相互重疊，却像地平磚那樣互相接砌而成的。中央有十三塊，略呈六角形的較大的鱗片，周緣還有二十五塊較小的鱗片。俗語就以「十三塊六角」作為龜的代名詞。下層，由脊椎骨、肋骨和真皮合成。其構造，與上層的鱗片不同。腹甲平直，也分上下兩層，但形狀與背甲不同。

由於龜是有一極硬質的背甲，能保護牠的身體，肌肉亦很結實有力，牠是能享遐齡的，同時亦難以死亡。馮夢龍：警世通言云：「老龜烹不爛，移禍於枯桑。」老龜二句，是異苑裏的故事。這也可以說明龜的生理之特徵。

## 三、龜與文字之關係

人類發表思想的工具，是語言，而代替語言的符號，就是文字。也可以說，文字是傳播語言的利器，而語言是文字的源泉。文字的起源，必由一種簡單的形體演變而

成。簡單的形體，有記號與圖形兩種。結繩，就是一種記號。在原始時代，以結繩來記事，後來漸漸進化，用圖形作符號。再後來，有人察見鳥獸山川之跡，而有所仿造。所以，這進化的階段，是從結繩與圖畫演化而成。

易繫辭上傳：「河出圖，洛出書，聖人則之。」書·顧命：「河圖在東序。」古人以為圖畫或文字的來源，是宇宙間自然產生的東西，特借道河洛以見於人世。關於這點，有一傳說，以為靈龜貢之於世者。河圖玉版云：「蒼頡為帝，南巡狩，登陽靈之山，臨於元扈洛河之水，靈龜負書，丹甲青文以授之。」孝經：「洛龜囁書，垂萌畫字。」據此說來，以為洛水自能產書，而龜負之以出於世。其說近於荒誕，不足置信。客觀的說，文字決不是自然產生的東西，乃是由自然的啓示而發明。唐張懷瓘書斷云：「頡仰觀奎星圓曲之勢，俯察龜文鳥跡之象，博采衆美，合而為字，是曰古文。」宋·羅泌路史云：「倉頡俯察龜文、鳥羽、山川掌指而創文字。」從此可覘上古聖人觀察自然界、龜、鳥等物的形態，有所悟而作文字。適在那時，龜從洛水出來。就此推究，則為近理。申言之，自然界、龜、鳥等物的形態，乃是倉頡創造文字的憑藉，他的創造，是象形文字，是畫出物的形態後隨體詰詘而成的。這也足為文字起源的定論。

關於甲骨文字：古人迷信鬼神，欲預知後事之休咎，多灼龜以取兆，求神而問卜。商朝前期，是用牛羊的肩胛骨，以火灼之，取那破裂的兆紋。到了商朝後期，平常稱為殷代，卜的方法改進了。用牛骨兼用龜甲，在甲骨的一面（內面）施以鑽鑿，並加火灼之；另一面就破裂而成卜字形狀。卜完之後，把所問的事情，寫在卜兆之旁，寫完又刻，也有刻完之後，又塗飾硃墨的。因為這種文字是專為記貞卜而用的，所以也叫作「貞卜文字」，或叫作「卜辭」。甲骨文字，甲骨文，甲骨學，是最後的定名。（見董作賓：甲骨學五十年）王國維殷虛書契考釋序說：「因甲骨上均刻有古文，稱為殷虛書契，亦謂甲骨文，所刻皆殷先王卜占、祭祀、征伐、行幸、田獵、日、月、風、雨之事，當係太卜之所典守者。」甲骨文對於歷史地理文物制度有不少的闡發；而考訂殘文，稽索逸字，於古文形體上，增加了很多的參證；尤其對於許慎說文的殘闕錯誤，有所糾正。這在吾國文化上的貢獻，確實不小。

甲骨文，自劉鶚印了鐵雲藏龜一書以後，陸續掘得者很多。吾國古時北方沒有



龜，有之，則來自海洋之地，那就是「蠻夷重譯而朝」的貢物，實難得而可貴。古聖人利用龜的特質而傳遞古文化。所以，龜之為用，對於文化的流傳，從史事的判斷，自有其「真」的價值。

#### 四、龜與經濟之關係

管子云：「撻人氏以來，未嘗不以輕重為天下也。」這是說，上古制貨以權輕重，即為用幣的開始。以今語釋之，貨幣，就是商業交易上所用的媒介物。古代，或以介貝，或以龜殼，或以獸皮。文化進步了，就用金屬鑄造。近世交易日繁，力求簡便，於是有了紙幣的發行。這是吾國貨幣演進之最簡單的說明。

龜之為用，在秦以前，有其經濟的地位與價值。說文云：「古者，貨貝而寶龜。」史記平準書云：「造銀錫為白金，以為天用，莫如龍，地用莫如馬，人用莫如龜。」漢書食貨志云：「貨，謂布、帛、及金、刀、龜貝。」通志云：「虞夏之幣，金為三品，或黃或白或赤，或錢，或紙，或刀，或龜貝。及至秦中，一國之幣為三等。而珠玉龜貝銀錫之屬，為器飾寶藏，不為幣。」漢書食貨志也說，秦并天下，凡龜貝皆不為幣。可知秦以前皆用龜為幣。這一事實，甚為明確。易云：「或錫之十朋之龜。」所謂十朋者，就是說，所錫之龜，價值十朋，即是二十貝。梁任公氏以為：「龜之所以適於為幣材者：（一）因其質經久不壞，（二）因其得之甚難，（三）因其可以割裂也。以其得之較貝為難，故可高其值。以與貝相權，亦以此故。其用，不能如貝之廣。其可以割裂，雖便於貝，然經割裂，則其價必損。古代用龜幣，以金龜為之者固多，但割裂之者亦不少。」梁氏又以為：「光緒二十五年，河南湯陰縣屬之古牖里城，有龜板數千枚出土，皆槩有象形文字，為福山王懿榮所得，推定為殷代文字，而莫審其所用。此殆古代之龜幣也。牖里出土之物，似為古代人民所窖積，如後世之藏鏹。其所鑿之文字，或所有者自為標識，如今銀塊之有鑿印，期票之有裏書也。此說若信，則古代龜幣之盛行，可以概見。」（見中國文化史）。古人利用龜的特質而製為物品貨幣，流通市面，作為交換。所以，龜之為用，對於古經濟有其不可磨滅的價值。

#### 五、龜與宗教迷信之關係

龜在宗教迷信方面，具有生命的特徵與靈驗的象徵。吾國古今人對之發生信仰審

龜與迷信靈龜的二種心理。「信龜之遐壽，祈福佑以增年。」這是信仰壽龜心理之註解。「迷龜之靈異，求占卜而決疑。」這是迷信靈龜心理之註解。

### 1. 關於信仰壽龜的心理之表現

龜具有生理上的特徵，在動物界中有其優越的地位。抱朴子論仙云：「有生必死，而龜長存焉。」人們以龜類超過人類的壽命，總想效其道而增自身的壽齡。因此就高壽之一觀念，而對龜引起信仰的心理。不獨此也，並因此心理的發展，進一步的以龜象徵國家或羣體的命運。這種心理的具體表現。略舉例以明之：

(一)唐襄州胡延慶得一龜，以丹漆書其腹曰：「天子萬萬年。」以進之。鳳閣侍郎李昭德以刀刮之，並盡，奏請付法。則天曰：此非惡心也，捨而勿問。（見唐·張鷟：朝野僉載）。

(二)世傳一尾龜百齡，此龜速見隋唐興。（見箋註王荆公詩：同王澹賢良賦龜得升字。）

(三)北魏孝明帝以神龜紀年。

明乎以上三例，可知古人以龜慶國運的昌隆與國祚的綿延。

(四)漢、唐、宋、數代的名士政要，以龜命名者，屢見不少。如漢之陳龜、朱龜、劉龜等，唐之王靈龜、崔從龜、薛元龜、張龜齡、彭龜年、李龜年、白龜（白居易之侄）、陸龜蒙、王龜年、劉崇龜、胡元龜等。宋之楊元龜、呂龜圖、呂龜祥、何龜齡、王龜齡、劉崇龜、王元龜、范從龜、張龜壽、黃龜年等，大都是崇龜以益壽。史記龜策傳云：「南方老人，用龜支牀足。」陸放翁晚年築龜堂，讀書為樂，得享八十五高壽。此翁曾用龜支牀，亦一趣事，有詩云：「楠枯倒斃雖無用，龜老撐牀故有靈。」大凡是好生惡死，到老來，還想慕龜之靈，支持殘年。以龜支牀足，就是此意。姑以個人圖騰之遺義釋之，即是說，個人本身以龜為生命的象徵，奉之為呵護神，而保其生命。古人以龜命名者，可就此民族學觀點來解釋。現在臺灣民間有諺稱阿龜，阿壽者，尚存有這種遺意。

### 2. 關於迷信神龜的心理之表現

爾雅釋魚：「一曰神龜。」疏：「禮統云：神龜之象，上圓法天，下方法地，背上有盤法丘山，玄文交錯，以成列宿，長尺二寸，明吉凶，不言而信者，是也。」史

記龜策傳所謂「玉靈」，就是神龜。古人以龜能卜吉凶為人生禍福之所關，國家安危之所繫，故以神奉之，因而發生迷信的心理。這種心理的表現，略舉例以明之：

(一)「古者，大龜藏之府庫為寶，國有大事，則告廟而卜焉。世世用之。」（見明、謝肇淛：五雜俎）

(二)「古者，諸侯立國，皆有守龜，藏之太廟，與寶玉並重。目老成人曰，國之著祭。」（見翟翹：通俗編）。著祭，猶言著龜。

易繫辭云：「探頤索隱，鈎深致遠，以定天下之吉凶，成天下之亹亹者，莫大乎龜。」古人迷信鬼神，崇拜精靈，把猶疑不決的國家大事，去問靈顯之神，這叫做卜。著所以筮，龜所以卜，都是神物。王荊公詩云：「昔人寶龜為神物，奉事搞骨尤兢兢。」這種迷信心理，見之於商殷時代甲骨卜辭者，殆不勝枚舉。

凡人得鳥獸之一形者，皆貴。其貴，莫貴如龜龍。唐、盧昭鄰指賈侍御史云：「君升堂入室，踐龜字以長驅。藏翼蓄鱗，展龍圖以高視。」唐詩紀事：『崔液上五言詩，其兄湜歎曰：海子，吾家龜龍也（海子，液小字。）樓鑰詩云：崔家兄弟列清要，海子況復稱龜龍。』這是古名士引龜龍以自況，可說是相人迷信之一例。又有以龍鳳為貴相者：漢末時，司馬徽語劉備，以諸葛亮為伏龍，龐統為鳳雛。唐太宗四歲，有書生見之曰：「龍鳳之姿，天日之表，其年幾冠，必能濟世安民」。見唐書太宗紀。後世以龍鳳命名者，甚多。元、明以後，以龜命名者漸少。清王士禛池北偶談云：「麟、鳳、龜、龍、並稱四靈。漢、唐、宋以來，取龜字命名者，不可勝紀。至明，遂以為諱，殊不可解。」我以為這是由於厭勝之故。宋、淳化三年，太宗御書孝經，勒之碑陰，龜飾厥趺，龍蜿其顏。（見王應麟：玉海）。這是發之於迷信心理與美術觀念，在建築裝飾上，以龜龍配合，表示一個象徵的高貴之形態。

龜所以卜而知休咎，鑑所以照而別美惡，故凡足以為修治之助者，叫作龜鑑。這是有心人以龜之神靈，啓示做人做事的法則，是很有意義的。宋司馬溫公家訓：「積金以遺子孫，子孫未必能守。積書以遺子孫，子孫未必能讀。不如積陰德於冥冥之中，以為子孫長久之計。此先賢之格言，乃後人之龜鑑」。包拯以魏鄭公三疏置之座右，以為龜鑑。陸游以龜鑑諷勸孝宗。李及之撰次唐史有益治體者，為君臣龜鑑。這不啻是一部從政典要。宋人輯冊府元龜一書，說是：「綜貫百家，羽翼治道，洋洋灑灑，

固藝苑之鴻寶也。」這書以元龜取名，用意如出一轍。總之，龜之為物，在民族迷信心理作用方面，也有其「真」「善」的價值。

關於龜的特性，可供做人做事參考者，顯引胡適博士的話來說一番。胡博士在生前一次講演中，贊成「絕頂聰明的人，走笨幹的路。」他以朱熹所說的：「寧詳毋略，寧下毋高，寧淺毋深，寧拙毋巧」為這條笨幹的路作註腳；並以龜免賽跑的故事，說明：「凡是歷史上有大成就的人，都是有兔子的天才，加上烏龜的功力的。」他勉勵他的學生：「沒有兔子的天才，就該學烏龜的功夫。萬不得已，學烏龜的功夫，總比學睡覺的兔子強得多。」胡博士這些饒有趣味性的話，對一般而言，就是做人做事都要踏實的意思。

又有時人說：創一業，謀一事，開始的時候很難難，有了成規，循是以進，就容易成功。所以，世人喻成事之難易，有「烏龜爬門檻，黃河開閘板。」二語。這話，是說創業之始，其所遭遇的困難，如烏龜的爬門檻，爬過門檻，就順流而下，有如黃河開閘。這也形容的很確當。

### 3. 臺灣民間信仰之習俗

臺灣歲時喜慶，常以紅麪和米粉或麪製成紅龜，以為吉兆。清、丁紹儀東瀛識略云：「遇喜慶時，以紅麪和米粉或麪，範如龜形，炊熟相貽，即以龜稱。澎湖則製成紅雞，為祀神之敬，殆取龜鶴齡長意，而訛為雞。內地人諱言龜，臺人不忌。」劉家謀海音詩云：「耗費糜殮百口糧，如山狼籍不堪償，傷財翻被居財誤，浪說紅龜是吉祥。按：臺語，龜若居，取居財之意。」紅龜之流行於臺灣頗久，而民間用紅龜以求壽之風甚盛。

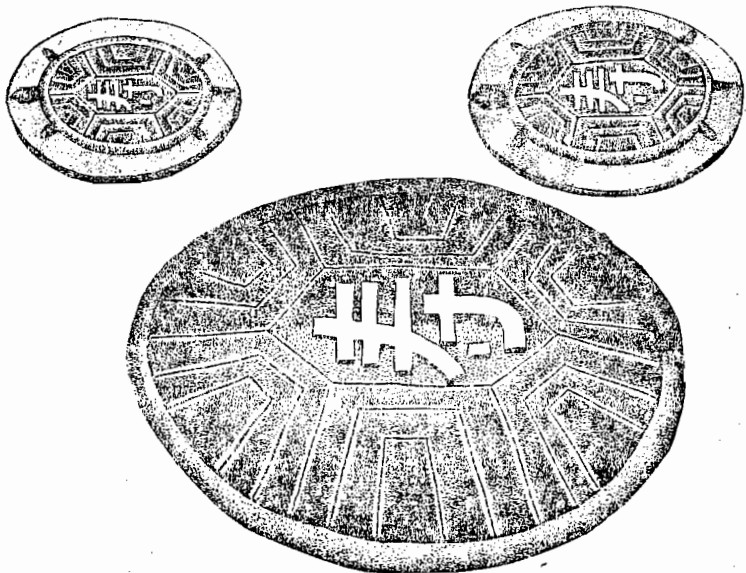
現在紅龜的製法，是用麪粉或米粉做的，外表染着紅顏色。用麪粉做的，較大，是腰子形，拱背。用米粉做的，較小，是用模子在標面上印着龜紋。前者，俗稱麪姑（姑，諧音龜）。後者，俗稱米姑。此外，還有一種，是用七、八樣雜碎的菜做餡子而包製的，俗稱菜姑。這三種物品，通稱之為紅龜標，簡稱為紅龜。

紅龜，是禮品，也是祭品。用之於喜慶方面，則為禮品；用之於祀神方面，則為祭品。臺省人做壽，年屆花甲，親友送禮，得送紅龜六十二個；年到古稀，得送紅龜七十二個，以示依歲數而增壽數的祝意。紀念過世老人的，也送紅龜為禮，以三年為

限，這是民俗所謂「冥壽」。

民間崇信神明，認為小兒長成，有賴乎神明的保護。尤常托庇於註生娘娘，七娘媽，媽祖，觀音，床母的護佑。所以，在嬰兒滿四月與週歲，遇上述神明生日拜拜時，由父母備香燭紅龜抱小兒到寺廟燒香，祈求保佑。

每逢農曆正月初九日，為最高神天公的誕辰，這是新春的第一個大節日，家家製紅龜粿而祀之。紅龜粿外染紅色，打龜甲印，以象徵人的長壽。拜天公的前夕，各家老少必須守壽到午夜。拜天公，即所以祈平安，祝人壽。「天有好生之德」，春天能給萬物以發育生長的機會，凡此天道自然的啓示，引起人類對於人生和宇宙關係的認識，奉之為天神，為獨尊的最高神。俗以天公為玉皇上帝，有生成保育萬物之德，為超人類祖先的上帝，特用紅龜敬奉。



插圖一：紅龜粿

又清明節，亦稱中華民族掃墓節，有踏青掃墓的習俗。各家男女於清明節日或於清明前後擇定吉日，備牲饌、紅龜，上墳祭掃。這是發人子孝思不匱之念。以紅龜供奉，也不外是慎終追遠祈福增壽的原意。

本省有的地方，每逢農曆八月十三日起，男女老幼，紛紛到福德宮，向土地公前求一壽龜回家。有的地方，以紅龜供奉關公。有的地方，以紅龜供奉法主公。尚有還願的紅龜，做得很大，有的大至數十斤，甚至達數百斤之重。一切所求的，莫非在添福壽，保平安。

臺灣民間迷信甚雜，一塊岩石生得奇特，以為有神；一株樹木長的古老，以為有神；颱風有風神；打雷有雷神；龜有龜神，蛇有蛇神。對於這些自然現象，動物、植物、礦物，好像都有神靈而敬畏之。

社會上日常所見的術士，如堪輿師，看日師、算命師、卜卦師等都是。他們各以相地、相面、相手、推命、擇吉、測字、預言為專業。卜卦師，為人預測將來的休咎吉凶。有的用米卜、有的用鳥卜、最普通的用龜甲卜。龜甲，在古代，為宮廷中官方卜卦人所使用。卜人的職責，在預測國家大事。由於時代的推移，龜卜之風，相沿而成為民間習俗，其迷信心理的作用，在預測個人的吉凶休咎。

## 六、龜與工藝美術之關係

美術，可分純粹美術和工藝美術兩種。純粹美術，是全出於性靈的表現；工藝美術，其作用在於裝飾。龜在美術方面，即和工藝美術有關。自漢迄宋，在官印的頂端刻一隻龜，作為威信的標記，這叫做龜紐；在印鼻上繫一條紫帶，這叫做龜綬。史記蔡澤傳：「懷黃金之印，結紫綬於腰。」漢書百家公卿表：「相國丞相，皆秦官，紫綬。」金印紫綬，簡稱金紫，就是龜綬。漢代對西域各國常把這東西當作禮物，而對國內官員當作獎品。唐、韓偓詩有云：「聲名赫赫文章士，金紫雍容富貴身。」即指此。後漢書宦者傳：「自曹騰說梁冀竟立昏弱，魏武因之遂遷龜鼎。（注：龜鼎，國之守器，以喻帝位。）」這是漢代把龜應用到銅器上作為裝飾。唐時，官之章服，凡五品以上，製龜以為佩飾，這就是龜袋。故把龜作飾物的龜袋，即是一種官徽。凡三品以上，龜袋飾以金，簡稱金龜。自號四明狂客的賀知章，在長安紫極宮一見李白，呼為謫仙人，就把身上佩着的官徽——金龜解下來，換了酒，狂飲取樂。此公晚節綻放，一至於此！因而連想到晉代阮遙集，終日縱酣，嘗以金貂換酒，古今傳為趣話。歐陽修有謝金龜賜之文。陸放翁有拜金龜賜之詩，詩云：「豈知吮拜金龜賜，却是霜

霽雪鬢時。」可知金龜之賜，至宋未廢。宋代又有把龜殼作為帽飾。如葛延之訪蘇東坡於儋耳，以親製龜冠獻之。陸放翁以龜殼作冠，有詩云：「紫樽恰受三升醞，龜尾新裁二寸冠。」即詠此。此外，有應用到石刻上的，叫做龜趺，又有應用到刺繡上的，叫做龜紗。凡此種種，固有其「美」的價值，但與古代官制禮教有密切的關係。昔日本民間以龜製的工藝品作為親友間餽贈的禮物，現僅用之於賀婚和祝壽。

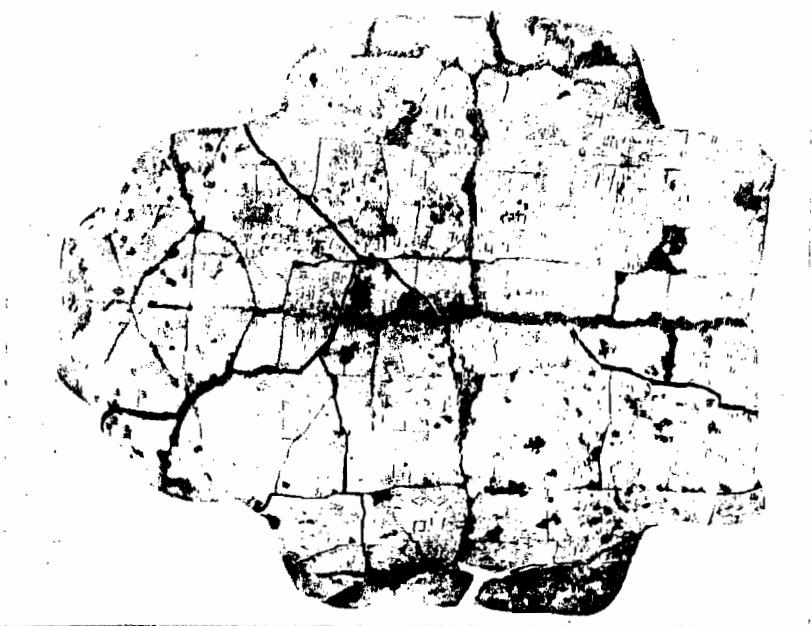
## 七、結 語

古人稱龍鳳龜麟為四靈，是把這些動物看作祥瑞之物，細細去研究，是很有趣味的。本文，乃就生物學、民族學、民俗學的觀點，把龜作一較有系統的分析，予以綜合的判斷，則龜在人類文化上應有其地位。由於生物學家的研究，認定龜天賦有神秘的導航裝備。它航行究竟以什麼東西為方向準繩？這還有待乎科學家的研究。一旦研究有結果，對於海洋導航方面，必有莫大裨助。將來讓科學家們寫一篇「龜的科學地位」吧。酷暑中，信手寫來，容有欠周，請讀者多多指教！

民國五十二年八月十五日



上  
圖



下  
圖