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	Autore	Standaert N.
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	Sommario/riassunto	The European view on history was shaken to its foundations when missionaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries discovered that Chinese history was older than European and Biblical history. With an analysis of the Chinese, Manchu and European sources on ancient Chinese history, this essay proposes an early case of "intercultural historiography," in which historical texts of different cultures are interwoven. It focusses on the ways Chinese and European authors interpreted stories about marvellous births by the concubines of Emperor Ku. These stories have been the object of a wide variety of interpretations in Chinese texts, each of them representing a different historical genre. They are excellent case-studies to illustrate how the Chinese hermeneutic strategies shaped the diversity of interpretations given by Europeans.