AUTHENTICATION STUDIES (辨偽學) METHODOLOGY AND THE POLYMORPHOUS TEXT PARADIGM

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Authenticating early Chinese texts may be a dead art, but the more nuanced authorial paradigm its slow demise has bequeathed us is worth its passing. In traditional Chinese textual criticism the job of authenticating old texts is called *bianwei xue* 辨偽學, or "discerning inauthenticity studies."[1] This practice currently still exists within the field of sinology, but the central assumptions upon which it is predicated have in the past several decades eroded to such a degree that its demise appears to some as a foregone conclusion. In order to authenticate a text, one must first know how it was authored. A common assumption, particularly for the Masters texts that are my concern here, is the norm of a single-author text, completed at a specific time, often the author's death, by the titular master. Given this scenario, authenticating a text was largely seen as a matter of adducing examples of thought or speech congruent with contemporary works presumed reliable or, conversely, detecting anachronisms.

However, this presumptive urtext description of how early texts were authored is not an accurate one for most early Masters texts. It is much more likely that the advice dispensed by the *Zhuzi* 諸子 (Various Masters) was recorded in various formats by various students to suit the needs of various consumers.[2] As we will see below, this account not only fits the facts of what we know about textual transmission, but also explains the "string-of-pericopes" narrative structure of most early Masters texts. This model is not like the more recent "accretion" theory, a modified urtext theory which supposes an "original core" written by the master was later added to by a succession of editors.[3] Rather, in what I call the

1. *Bianwei xue* 辨偽學 is often rendered as "forgery studies" and conceived as dealing with "forged texts," but this translation is too circumscribed for the variety of inauthentic texts discussed in the works of Authentication studies. This will become clear below.

2. Edward Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 260–61.

3. Probably the most famous examples of this are the various attempts to categorize the multiplicitous "thought" of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子; cf. Guan Feng 關鋒, Zhuangzi *zhexue*

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"polymorphous text" paradigm, the acts of authorship and text production are both multiple: one or more authors producing multiple expressions of a single discourse and multiple scribes with various motivations producing multiple versions for multiple recipients each with their own particular goals. Furthermore, all of these actors operated within a general atmosphere of "getting the point across" rather than with later concerns of fidelity to a professional author's "intellectual property."

Textual critics have shown that nearly all ancient Chinese texts can be construed to have problematic authorship in one way or another. Explaining this problematic authorship has been the goal of Authentication studies. An "inauthentic text," traditionally conceived, is one for which the attributed author is not the original, "executive"[4] author of the entire text, or for which the text itself may have problems of integrity. That the attributed author may not be the real author is one enduring problem, particularly since many Masters texts are simply assumed to have been authored by the eponymous master.[5] But even if a text was authored by the master specified in the title, we must be wary of imagining that a single author writing a single text necessarily produces a singular urtext. One author can write several versions of the same text. He may leave behind several works that fall between the first draft and the final draft, with or without the added input of editors. If all of these writings continued to circulate, can we still speak of an urtext? And, of course, if it were the case of a master authoring a text by lecturing to

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taolun ji 莊子哲學討論集 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1961); A.C. Graham, "How Much of *Chuang Tzu* did Chuang Tzu Write?," in *Studies in Classical Chinese Thought*, ed. Henry Rosemont and Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion Thematic Studies* (Chico: CA, 1979), 459–501; Liu Xiaogan 劉笑敢, *Classifying the* Zhuangzi *Chapters* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1994).

4. Harold Love distinguishes four kinds of authorship: precursory (a source upon which a later author draws), executive (the usual sense of the term "author"; whom Love calls "the deviser"), declarative (a "validator" or "sponsor"; this describes the presumed authorship of many early Chinese Masters texts), and revisionary. Love notes that "executive" and "revisionary" are not as categorically distinct as they might appear: "With some misgivings I offer the term revisionary authorship . . . the problem being that revision is not always clearly distinguishable from primary composition." See Harold Love, *Attributing Authorship: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 46.

5. Charles Gardner, remarking on the authorship of early Chinese texts, said: "Few writers of the pre-Han epoch (prior to the second century B.C.E.) are really known to us. Even when a name has been preserved, this is an illusory label, which fails to inform us seriously concerning the personality and motives of the author or of his qualifications for authorship. It is then almost a matter of indifference whether we do or do not attach a personal name to an early text." See Charles Gardner, *Chinese Traditional Historiography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938; rpt. 1961), 23.

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several students taking notes, and these notes evolving into texts that were later collated into a single text, then the problem of authorship becomes exponentially more complex.

This paper is an analysis of methodological innovation in response to changing conceptions of authorship in the field of Authentication studies over the last two millennia. It examines the contributions of seventeen scholars directly relevant to the evolution of Authentication studies methodology. I have divided it into six sections. The first introduces my analytical categories of inauthenticity and the arguments historically used for judging texts as inauthentic. The following five are derived from traditional dynastic chronology. In "Han through Tang Authentication Studies," I introduce all three of the types and six out of seven of the arguments used in Authentication studies as described in the first section. The next section, "Song through Qing Authentication Studies," contains the first explicit outline of methodology given by an Authentication scholar, as well as the first detailed expressions of doubt about the urtext model. In "Republican Era Authentication Studies," the argument from precedence as a dating technique becomes a very contentious issue. The "Modern Authentication Studies" section highlights four scholars who have challenged the methods and results of this field in previous eras, and who have in fact suggested a new paradigm for it, which I call the "polymorphous text" paradigm. The conclusion briefly surveys the recent work of three Western scholars in relation to this paradigm. My aim is to describe the development of this paradigm, whereby early texts are conceived as fluid entities variously constructed from related but disparate pericopes circulating independently or in diverse editions. The scope of my inquiry is not any and all early Chinese texts, but those categories of texts known as the Classics and the Various Masters, often seen as the foundation of Chinese intellectual history.

Types of Inauthentic Texts and Arguments for Inauthenticity

There have been, generally speaking, three kinds of Chinese inauthentic texts and seven kinds of arguments to support such a judgment. My categories for these texts are: 1. "ascribed text," wherein the name of a person who is not the real author has been arrogated to the text, usually to lend prestige; 2. "multiple-author text," wherein only one author is traditionally acknowledged but textual criticism reveals the hands of other authors; and 3. "redacted text," wherein an author relies wholly or mostly on sources of which he is not the author. Examples of all these will be given below. In the history of Authentication studies, scholars

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could identify any particular text as "inauthentic" if they perceived it as belonging to any of these three categories. Different scholars, however, had different criteria, and even the same scholars often did not apply their criteria uniformly.

There are a variety of arguments against authenticity used in Authentication studies, but they usually take one of the following forms: 1. "anachronism," whereby the text records a thing or event that existed or happened after the death of the attributed author; 2. "unworthiness," whereby some or all of the content is deemed unbefitting the attributed author; 3. "incongruity," whereby a portion of the text is adjudged inconsistent with another portion of the same text; 4. "quotational disparity," whereby a passage in the received text does not match its quotation in another text; 5. "precedence," whereby a previously established idea or phrase is used without attribution; 6. "sudden appearance," whereby a text attributed to a certain time period does not appear in the historical record until much later; and 7. "not matching a description," whereby the work in question does not match a description given it in another work.[6] Examples of these will also be given shortly.

The first three arguments, those of anachronism, unworthiness, and incongruity, have been used to describe either the writing style or the content of a text. Furthermore, the argument from anachronism is always "extrinsic," in that a part or the whole of a text is judged anachronistic with regard to other, contemporary writings. Conversely, the argument from incongruity is always "intrinsic," in that a part of the text is judged incongruous with the rest of the same text.[7] The argument from unworthiness can be either extrinsic or intrinsic. The fourth argument, that of quotational disparity, can be divided into arguments of "quotational absence" and "quotational variance." The former refers to the complete lack in the received text of citations found in other texts, and the latter refers to the variation between a citation in other texts and the relevant passage in the received text. Lastly, the argument from precedence also has two forms, that from "intellectual precedence" and that from "quotational precedence." The former refers specifically to ideas, while the latter denotes identical or nearly identical descriptions of things or events. For example, many scholars consider it axiomatic that *wuwei* 無爲 (non-contrivance) is the intellectual property of Laozi 老子. According to the argument from intellectual precedence then, any text using this idea

6. These categories of arguments for inauthenticity are my own, and therefore are not accompanied by technical terms in Chinese. Categorization schemes devised by other scholars are discussed later in the paper.

7. An "extrinsic, incongruous" text would simply be anachronistic.

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must be dated after him.[8] Both forms of the argument from precedence can be construed as plagiarism.[9]

Han through Tang Authentication Studies: Growing Doubts of Single Authorship

It is perhaps not surprising, given his ostensible lack of commitment to a specific orthodoxy and the particular authors that transmit it, that a Syncretist (*Za* 雜) author is the first on record to have noticed authorial anomalies. Liu An 劉安 (179–122), King of Huainan 淮南, orchestrated the writing of the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, in which the idea of an "ascribed text" is first noted:

> 世俗之人多尊古而賤今，故為道者必託之於神農、黃帝而後能入說。
>
> Most common people of this generation venerate the ancient and deprecate the modern, therefore those who fashion teachings must attribute them to Shen Nong or Huang Di, and only then are (they) able to get (their) explanations accepted.[10]

A century later, Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 B.C.E.) noted this same problem of false ascription for several texts while collating and writing synopses for books in the imperial library. He said, for example, of the *Li Mu* "Authored during the time of the six states, (the author) ascribed it to Li Mu. Li Mu was the chief minister of Huang Di." 力牧：六國時所作，託

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8. The argument from precedence is usually, but not always, an argument from anachronism. I separate them because it is possible for two authors to be contemporaneous yet for a later scholar to insist on the possibility of discerning who came up with the idea or phrase first.

9. "Plagiarism" has strong negative connotations that are almost certainly inappropriate to the time when these texts were written. However, I nevertheless use "plagiarism" rather than "borrowing" because most of the scholars in this survey would have intended some negative connotations, as their writings below will make clear.

10. *Huainanzi* 漢淮字 (*Sibu beiyao* 四部備要 ed.), 19.11b. Doubt in the veracity of a text appears even earlier: the *Mengzi* 孟子 "Jin xin xia 盡心下" chapter quotes Meng Ke 孟軻 (390–305) as saying: "It would be better to be without the *Documents* than to entirely believe the *Documents*. (For example), in the 'Martial Completion' (chapter) I use two or three passages only. The good man has no enemies in the world; (therefore) when the best invaded the worst, how could it (say) 'the (spilt) blood floated pestles'?" 盡信《書》，則不如無《書》。吾於'武成'取二三策而已矣。仁人無敵於天下：以至仁伐至不仁，而何其'血之流杵'也. See *Mengzi* (*Sibu beiyao* ed.), 14.2a, or D.C. Lau, trans., *Mencius* (New York: Penguin, 1970), 194. Meng Ke's doubt, however, seems to have sprung more from a desire to rewrite history to fit his didactic enterprise than from detecting philological inconsistencies.

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之力牧。力牧，黃帝相[11] Ascribing authorship to legendary or famous people continued and probably even proliferated when Buddhist literature later became popular in China.[12]

Liu Xiang often merely asserted ascribed authorship, as Liu An did before him, but in other places he advanced two specific arguments to support his assertion. These are what I have called the "argument from anachronistic style" and the "argument from unworthiness." They would go on to be central arguments in the history of Authentication studies. Because these arguments will later become more refined, we should note exactly what Liu Xiang said in order to assess his contribution. The following are the catalog entries for four texts which he said were of ascribed authorship, which judgment seems to be based on anachronistic style:

1. *Da Yu* 大禹: 傳言禹所作，其文似後世語。"Traditionally said to be authored by Yu, its writing seems to be the language of later generations."
2. *Tian Yi* 天乙: 天乙謂湯，其言非殷時，皆依託也。"Tian Yi is said to be Tang, (but) his words are not those of the Yin period, (they) are all ascribed."
3. *Wu Cheng Zi* 務成子: 稱堯問，非古語。"Relating Yao's questions; (it) is not ancient language."

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11. *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1962), 30.1731. See also Liu Xiang's notes for the *Kong Jia pan yu* 孔甲盤盂 at 30.1740, *Shen Nong* 神農 at 30. 1742, and *Yi Yin shuo* 伊尹說, *Shi Kuang* 師曠, *Tian yi* 天乙, and *Huang Di shuo* 黃帝說, all at 30.1744. The "time of the six states" is c. 250 B.C.E., while Huang Di is said to have lived c. 2500 B.C.E. Ban Gu 班固 (32–92) is the author of the *Han shu*, however the content of the "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志—the imperial library catalog—within it derives almost entirely from the *Bie lu* 別錄 (8 B.C.E.) by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 B.C.E.), written a century earlier. Liu Xiang made this collection of abstracts during his twenty-year tenure as imperial librarian, although he died before finishing it. His son Liu Xin 劉歆 (45–23 C.E.) took over his official post after his death, and two years later presented his *Qi lüe* 七略 (6 B.C.E.). The *Qi lüe* is largely an abridgement of the *Bie lu*, and the "Yiwen zhi" is an abridgement of that abridgement. Because the *Bie lu* and *Qi lüe* are both lost, it is impossible to know who wrote precisely what in the extant "Yiwen zhi," but because Liu Xiang worked on the catalog for twenty years, while Liu Xin worked on it for only two, and Ban Gu did little more than edit it, I generally give credit for the contents to Liu Xiang. At the end of his preface to the "Yiwen zhi" (p. 1701), Ban Gu says of Liu Xin's *Qi lüe*: 今刪其要，以備篇籍。"Now (I have) selected its essentials in order to complete (the entries for) text-length and text-name." For more on the origin and structure of this catalog, see Gao Luming 高路明, *Guji mulu yu Zhongguo gudai xueshu yanjiu* 古籍目錄與中國古代學術研究 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji, 1997), 72–77.

12. Anonymous Buddhist sutras were routinely ascribed to the historical Buddha. Therefore, when, for example, Dao'an 道安 (312–385) made his *Zongli zhongjing mulu* 綜理眾經目錄 and Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) his *Fojing mulu* 佛經目錄, they felt compelled to set such texts aside in an "Yijing lu 疑經錄" appendix.

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4. *Shen Nong* 神農: 六國時，諸子疾時怠於農業，道耕農事，託之神農。"In the Six states period, the Various Masters were pained that the age was remiss about farming matters; (when they) spoke about planting and farming affairs (they) ascribed it to Shen Nong."[13]

The first three examples are all clearly based on Liu Xiang's philological analyses or intuition, although we unfortunately do not know of what those analyses consisted. The fourth example I include here because I infer that he must have dated the text to what is now called the Warring States period (481–221 B.C.E.) based on the same kind of analysis. Unlike the previous three examples, he here specifies a time period to which he dates the text, just as with the *Li Mu* above. His judgment for all of these examples could have been based on what he perceived as anachronism in intellectual content, vocabulary, grammar, graphic variation, or any combination of these. But even though we do not know his methods, it is clear that Liu Xiang had a keen eye for textual authentication.[14]

The second kind of analysis he used appears somewhat more subjective, though again we do not know exactly what criteria Liu Xiang had in mind when he made his judgment. There are two texts of ascribed authorship based on the argument from "unworthiness":

1. *Yi Yin shuo* 伊尹說: 其語淺薄，似依託也。"Its statements are shallow and superficial and (it) seems to be ascribed."
2. *Shi Kuang* 師曠: 見春秋，其言淺薄，本與此同，似因託之。"See the *Annals*, where his words are shallow and superficial; this text is the same: (it) seems to be based on (the *Annals*) and attributed to him."[15]

Despite being rather subjective, the "argument from unworthiness" will go on to have a long history in Authentication studies. At any rate, here it is clearly a second, specific argument for ascribed authorship. But Liu Xiang did not just adduce arguments for the judgment of ascribed authorship, he also identified a second kind of authorial situation outside of the "one attributed author, one urtext" presumption.

Liu Xiang took another methodological step in Authentication studies when he recognized multiple authorship for texts with only one attributed author. He presented three arguments for this, two of which are

13. *Han shu*, 30.1740, 30.1744, 30.1744, and 30.1742.

14. It might be noticed that Liu Xiang had no such criticisms for any of the texts in the Classics or Ruist categories. Or perhaps he did, but Ban Gu chose not to include them.

15. *Han shu*, 30.1744. It is unclear whether Liu Xiang is referring to style or content here, but it is worth noting that both of these texts are listed in the "Xiao shuo" 小說 sub-section of the Various Masters section.

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the same as those used above in support of his description of ascribed authorship. The first argument is again from implied anachronism:

1. *Tai Gong* 太公: 呂望為周師尚父，本有道者。或有近世又以為太公術者所增加也。 "Lü Wang was Zhou (Imperial) Teacher Shangfu, and was one who originally had a teaching; perhaps there were recently those who also added that which they took to be the arts of the Great Duke."

2. *Yu Zi shuo* 鬻子說: 後世所加。"(It has) that which later generations added."[16]

Liu Xiang says these two texts had later additions, which is of course tantamount to saying they had multiple authors. He offers no explicit argument in support of this assessment, but as he specified some sections were "later," it again seems reasonable to assume that he would have used an argument from anachronism.

Two more arguments supporting multiple authorship appear in Liu Xiang's assessment of the *Liezi* 列子. The *Han shu* 漢書 "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志 note to the *Liezi* does not mention or imply either ascribed authorship or multiple authorship, reading only "Named Yukou; preceded Master Zhuang; Master Zhuang quotes him." 名圄寇，先莊子，莊子稱之[17] But Liu Xiang elsewhere says of Liezi:

> 其學本於黃帝、老子，號曰道家。道家者，秉要執本，清虛無為，及其治身接物，務崇不競，合於六經。而〈穆王〉、〈湯問〉二篇，迂誕恢詭，非君子之言也。至於〈力命〉篇，一推分命；〈楊子〉之篇，唯貴放逸，二義乖背，不似一家之書。
>
> His learning originated with Huang Di and Master Lao and (he) is called a Daoist. Daoists hold to the essential and grasp the origin, (i.e.) emptiness and non-contrivance, and when it comes to ordering (one's) person and dealing with things, (they) stress (their) esteem for non-competitiveness and harmony with the six classics. But the two chapters "King Mu" and "Tang's Questions" are absurd and bizarre and not the sayings of a noble man. Coming to the "Effort and Fate" chapter, (it) consistently advocates individual allotment and fate, and the "Master Yang" chapter only honors indulgence in

16. *Han shu*, 30.1729 and 30.1744. Zhang Shunhui 張舜徽 suggests that the last 15 graphs of the first note are garbled, and should instead read: "或又以近世有為太公術者所增加也." The meaning as I have translated it, however, would remain the same. See Zhang Shunhui 張舜徽 (1911–1992), *Zhang Shunhui ji*: *Zhongguo wenxian xue* 張舜徽集: 中國文獻學 (1982; rpt. Wuhan: Huazhong shifan daxue, 2004), 145.

17. *Han shu*, 30.1730. Other early texts write his given name as "Yukou" 禦寇.

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pleasure; (these) two issues are at odds, and are not like the writings of a single author.[18]

Two of Liu Xiang's criticisms are evident here. The first is a slight elaboration on the "argument from unworthiness." He says two chapters are "absurd and weird and not the sayings of a noble man." Although he does not draw a conclusion from this judgment, I suppose that the two "unworthy" chapters should thereby be considered to be of ascribed authorship. The second is that another two of the eight chapters are unlike each other in ideological content. This is what I call the "argument from incongruity." He does not elaborate whether or not they are both unlike the remainder of the text, or if one of the two chapters is more congruous with the rest of the text but clearly different from the other named chapter. And again, although Liu Xiang does not specifically posit three or four authors for the *Liezi* as a whole, we might nevertheless infer that he considers the *Liezi* to be a multiple-author text. It is evident that Liu Xiang knew that a single text might be the work of various authors from various intellectual backgrounds. That such a conceptual conglomeration should compose a single text might be somewhat more difficult to subscribe to if the text in question came to Liu Xiang as a single entity. But nothing could be further from the truth. He briefly described the process of his collation of the *Liezi* thus:

所校：中書《列子》五篇，臣向謹與長社尉臣參校讎太常書三篇，太史書四篇，臣向書六篇，臣參書二篇。內外書凡二十篇，以校除復重十二篇，定著八篇。中書多，外書少。章亂布在諸篇中。或字誤，以盡為進，以賢為形，如此者眾。及在新書有棧。

That which was collated: the Palace edition of the *Master Lie* in five chapters, which I and Senior-community-commandant Can carefully collated with the edition of the Chamberlain-for-ceremonials in three chapters; the Grand Scribe's edition in four chapters; my edition in six chapters; and minister Can's edition in two chapters. The court and outside editions totaled twenty chapters, and when edited to exclude a redundant twelve chapters, (it was) definitively recorded in eight chapters. (There were) more court editions and fewer outside editions. The sections were disordered and scattered within various chapters. Some graphs were incorrect, (for example) taking "*jin* (to the limit)" as "*jin* (advance)" or taking "*xian* (worthy)"

18. Liu Xiang, Liezi *xinshu mulu* 列子新書目錄, in Yan Kejun 嚴可均 (1762–1843), *Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen* 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文 (1808; Beijing: Zhonghua, 1958, 1999), 333 下-334 上.

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> as "*xing* (shape)"; there were many (mistakes) like this. In the new edition (they) have been eliminated.[19]

"Spelling" errors in texts with graphic scripts present far greater challenges to the collator than do those in texts with alphabetical scripts.[20] Graphic variation aside, however, Liu Xiang collected five considerably different exemplars of the text, varying in length from two to six chapters. None constituted a "complete" text in what would come to have eight chapters. But the most difficult aspect for a collator, as well as the most significant for our purposes here, is that "the sections were disordered and scattered within various chapters." We might well stand in awe of Liu Xiang's genius in sorting it all out. But to simply acknowledge his considerable talents and then move on would be to miss the fact that it was not possible for him to simply "sort it out" and thereby "recover" the "original" shape of the text. As will become clear below, the formation of early Chinese texts was often a fluid affair. Given the evidence presented here of the multiplicitous state of the text as received by Liu Xiang, the *Liezi* most probably never had an "original" form. Liu Xiang created the edition that we know as the "received text."[21]

In sum, Liu Xiang made four concrete contributions to Authentication studies. The first is that he added the category of "multiple authorship" to that of the "ascribed authorship" recognized by Liu An as another type of unacknowledged authorship. He was also the first we know of to adduce arguments in support of these two types of authorship claims. These were the arguments from anachronism, unworthiness, and incongruity. Unfortunately, his *Bie lu* 別錄 has mostly been lost, so we cannot know what else he might have said on this subject.

Ma Rong 馬融 (99–166) was another scholar whom we know was a careful text critic, but whose works are largely lost. Within the history of Authentication studies he is remembered for demonstrating that, although a text may appear to be intact, it may in fact be an incomplete

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19. Liu, Liezi *xinshu mulu*, in Yan, *Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 333 下.

20. See William Boltz, "Textual Criticism *More Sinico*," *Early China* 20 (1995), 393–406.

21. But if Liu Xiang thought parts of the text were problematic, why did he nevertheless include them? Perhaps he acted out of deference to the texts that had come down to him, even though they were clearly in radically different editions. Perhaps the actual redaction was done by his employees and was therefore not his doing and he only read and commented on the final edition. If he knowingly put sections that he perceived to be from different authors together in one edition—perhaps because he thought they belonged to a single tradition or lineage—then why did he specifically comment that some texts had "that which later generations added"? Likewise, if *jia* 家 should be understood in his comments on the *Liezi* as "lineage" rather than "author," why would he put writings from different lineages together in one text?

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reconstruction, or worse, a fabrication. He pointed out that five different quotations of the "Tai shi" 泰誓 chapter of the *Shang shu* 尚書, from five different early texts, do not appear in the received version of the *Shang shu*. The third line of what remains of the preface to his commentary on the *Shang shu* reads: "The 'Great Declaration' was obtained later; (I) note that its writing seems shallow and weak." 太誓後得，案其文似若淺露 He then records the quotes missing from the received text. His final line concludes: "(I) briefly raised (these prior) five examples in order to clarify this;[22] surely (it) can be known." 略擧五事以明之；亦可知也[23] From this it seems clear that Ma Rong is arguing for a later date of authorship for the "Tai shi" chapter.[24] More importantly for this survey, however, his final line implies that, in this case at least, a text that does not contain quotes attributed to it is an inauthentic text.[25] With this brief fragment from his *Shang shu* preface, Ma Rong has added my "quotational absence" argument to the history of Authentication studies.

There is a six-century lacuna between Ma Rong and the next scholar in this analysis of Authentication studies. The political fragmentation and widespread warfare of the Wei-Jin 魏晉 period (265–581) partially explains this. Additionally, some catastrophes were specifically visited upon imperial libraries during this time.[26] This is not to aver that no Authentication studies scholarship was produced during these centuries, but I have been unable to find any advances in methodology that were made then.

Dan Zhu 啖助 (724–770) introduced my third type of inauthentic text in the preface to his Chunqiu *ji zhuan* 春秋集傳, where he writes:

> 《左氏傳》、《國語》，屬綴不倫，序事乖剌，非一人所為。蓋左氏集諸國史以釋《春 秋》，後人謂左氏，便傳著丘明，非也。

22. That is, his contention that it was "obtained later."

23. Ma Rong, Shang shu *zhuan xu* 尚書傳序, in Ma Guohan 馬國翰 (1794–1857), *Yuhan shanfang jiyi shu* 玉函山房輯佚書 (c. 1855; Yangzhou: Guangling, 2004), 393.

24. One explanation of Ma's description is simply that the received text chapter of the "Tai shi" is somewhat inferior in style or content, implying that it was written and added later, and that later still it lost some of its content. But most scholars think he is saying that the "Tai shi" chapter was originally extant in the pre-Qin period, was subsequently lost, and then redacted or forged by an author who was unaware of the prior quotes.

25. A text that has been proven merely to be missing five lines might give us pause to wonder at the logic of thereby describing it as inauthentic. I presume that Ma was struck by the apparent implausibility of a text losing so many lines that just happened to be quoted elsewhere. In any case, this example was taken up by many later Authentication scholars as a powerful method of authentication criticism; cf. Zhang, *Zhongguo wenxian xue*, 145–46.

26. *Sui shu* 隋書 (656; Beijing: Zhonghua, 1973), 49.1298–99.

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> The redaction of *Mr. Zuo's Account* and the *State Sayings* are not of one kind and their sequence of events is contradictory: they are not the product of a single person. Probably a Mr. Zuo collected the histories of several states in order to explicate the *Annals*, and later people said it was Mr. Zuo's, and then attached (the name of) Qiuming, but (this) is not so.[27]

Dan Zhu makes two claims here. First he uses the verb *zhui* 綴 (to stitch together) to describe what a certain Mr. Zuo did: collect existing accounts of state activities and redact them together into a new work. He does not provide any arguments for assessing the text as redacted; he may simply have felt that it sounded like a collection of accounts culled from court histories or other sources, with whose contemporary versions he may have been familiar. The second claim is that the *Zuo zhuan* is an ascribed text. That is, it may have been redacted by a certain Mr. Zuo, but he does not think it was by the Zuo Qiuming (c. 450 B.C.E.) to whom the text is traditionally attributed. Again, he does not provide an argument.

The works of Dan Zhu and his student Zhao Kuang 趙匡 (c. 770) are mostly lost, but some of the works of Zhao Kuang's student Lu Zhi 陸質 (d. 806) are extant, and in the preface to one he enlarges upon Dan Zhu's pronouncement quoted above:

> 近代之儒又妄為記錄云丘明以授魯曾申，申傳吳起，起傳其子期，期傳楚鐸椒，椒傳虞卿，卿傳荀況，況傳張蒼，蒼傳賈誼。此乃近世之儒欲尊崇左氏妄為此記。向若傳授分明如此《漢書・張蒼、賈誼及儒林傳》何故不書？則其偽可知也。
>
> Modern Ruists have also recklessly made a record saying (Zuo) Qiuming took (*Mr. Zuo's Annals*) and taught (it) to Zeng Shen (475–405), Shen transmitted (it) to Wu Qi (440–381), Qi transmitted (it) to his son Qi, Qi transmitted (it) to Duo Jiao of Chu, Jiao transmitted (it) to Yu Qing, Qing transmitted (it) to Xun Kuang (310–215), Kuang transmitted (it) to Zhang Cang, and Cang transmitted (it) to Jia Yi (201–169). In this way then modern Ruists wanted to venerate Mr. Zuo and (so) recklessly made this record. But if (it) was transmitted and taught as clearly as this, then why do the *Han History* "Zhang Cang," "Jia Yi," and "Ruist Forest" biographies not record it? Thus its inauthenticity can be known.[28]

It is possible that the final sentence above contains the first technical

27. In Ma, *Yuhan shanfang*, 1511.

28. Lu Zhi 陸質 (d. 806), Chunqiu *ji zhuan zuanli* 春秋集傳纂例 (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 ed.), 146.386.

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use of the term *wei* 偽 (inauthentic), although given the brevity of the context we cannot be certain. More important, however, is Lu Zhi's introduction of a new argument with regard to a particular, nameless "record": the argument from "sudden appearance."[29] A generalized form of this argument, that all ancient texts should be mentioned in the extant, historical record, became quite important in the history of Authentication studies.

Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819) was roughly contemporaneous with Lu Zhi and was perhaps the first specialized Authentication studies scholar, insofar as he is the first to comment specifically and in detail on the problem of dating for a number of early texts. He also makes use of four of the five arguments mentioned so far, excluding that from "quotational disparity," and adds one more of his own. The seven works he discusses are all purportedly pre-Qin Masters texts: the *Liezi*, *Wenzi* 文子, *Lun yu* 論語, *Guiguzi* 鬼谷子, *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋, *Gengcangzi* 亢倉子, and *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子. Let us look at the second of these:

> 《文子》書十二篇，其傳曰老子弟子。其辭時有若可取，其指意皆本老子。然考其書，盖駁書也。其渾而類者少，竊取他書以合之者多。凡孟、管輩數家，皆見剽竊，嶢然而出其類。其意緒文辭，叉牙相抵而不合。不知人之增益之歟？或者衆為聚斂以成其書歟？然觀其往往有可立者，又頗惜之，憫其為之也勞。今刊去謬惡亂雜者，取其似是者，又頗為發其意，藏於家。
>
> The *Master Wen* text in twenty chapters; his account [in the *Han History*] says (he was) a follower of Master Lao. His words sometimes have (that which) might be acceptable, (but) his meaning is all originally from Master Lao. However, (after) examining this text, (I find it) is probably a heterogeneous text. The parts that are unalloyed and of a type are few, (while) the parts that steal from other texts and mix them in are many. Several authors, like Master Meng and Master Guan and their kind, were all plagiarized, and obviously (it) emerged from these kinds (of texts). The thread of its meaning and the wording of its writing are uneven, contradictory, and not harmonious. (I) do not know if it was added to and supplemented by people, or whether it is mostly a pastiche that was made into a book. Still, observing that it often has that which can be sustained, (I) rather cherish it and commiserate with its maker (for his) labor.

29. It might be objected that this "record" lies outside the scope of my inquiry into Classics and Masters texts, but as it was quite likely a preface or postface to the *Zuo zhuan*, I consider it within my range of concern.

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> Now (I) have removed the mistakes and aberrations, retaining that which seems true and which still puts forth his meaning, and (have) stored (it) at home.[30]

Liu Zongyuan opines that the *Wenzi* is either a multiple-author text (i.e., "added to and supplemented") or a redacted text ("a pastiche that was made into a book"). The second argument he offers here is that from incongruity. Often, when scholars use this argument, they do not specify whether it is style or substance or both that is incongruous. Liu Zongyuan, however, specifies both: "The thread of its meaning and the wording of its writing are uneven, contradictory, and not harmonious." But it is his first argument that is original, that of plagiarism.[31] For the charge of plagiarism to be justified in cases dealing with ancient texts, however, one must prove that the texts being borrowed from are indeed earlier *and* that what is being "stolen" actually belonged to the prior author, or that that the two authors could not have independently come up with similar opinions.[32] Liu Zongyuan does not attempt to do this. Liu's charge of "plagiarism" is the sixth of my seven arguments for inauthenticity, which I call the "argument from precedence," and it too will go on to play an important role in Authentication studies.

Song through Qing Authentication Studies: Systematization of the Field

By the end of the Tang, scholars were using six of the seven main arguments I posited for Authentication studies. But their assessments were

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30. Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819), *Liu Zongyuan ji* 柳宗元集 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1979), 109.

31. Liu Zongyuan claims that Wenzi stole from Mengzi and Guanzi. By using this argument he is also implying a date for the *Wenzi* much later than the *Han shu* account (30.1729) would allow. The *Han shu* says Wenzi was a student of Laozi and a contemporary of Kongzi (551–479). But Mengzi (390–305) lived a century and a half later, so how could Wenzi have plagiarized him? Saying Wenzi took from Guanzi (d. 645) would not upset the traditional dating of the former, but at least two scholars prior to Liu Zongyuan had already said that the *Guanzi* 管子 was written later, wholly or in part. See Fu Xuan 傅玄 (217–278), quoted by Liu Shu 劉恕 (1032–1078) in his *Tongjian waiji* 通鑑外紀, and Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574–648) in his Zuo zhuan *zhengyi* 左傳正義. This may be why Liu Zongyuan listed Master Guan *after* Master Meng. That is, he may have thought all three texts were roughly contemporaneous at c. 300 B.C.E.

32. By "actually belonged to the prior author," I mean that what was "stolen" was not in fact "common property," as with a "cultural commonplace." As mentioned above, for the English term "plagiarism" to be justified, the author of the text who appropriated material must be passing that material off as his own, a claim that is difficult to prove with many of these early texts. I discuss these problems further in my "Intertextuality in Early Chinese Masters-Texts: Shared Narratives in *Shi Zi*," *Asia Major* 22.2 (2009), 1–34.

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brief and not very detailed. Scholars from the Song through the Ming were to pursue their investigations much more thoroughly. They also considerably broadened the scope of texts that were critically examined.[33] This section first details the introduction of the last of my seven arguments for inauthenticity, completing the sets of types and arguments historically used in Authentication studies. This section then turns to the first attempt to systematize the nascent, self-conscious field of Authentication studies which, I suggested above, began with Liu Zongyuan.

Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) raised doubts about the authorship of some of the *Yi jing* 易經 commentaries[34] in his brief treatise entitled "Yi *tongzi wen*" 易童子問, the third section of which begins:

> 童子問曰："〈繫辭〉非聖人之作乎？"曰：何獨〈繫辭〉焉，〈文言〉、〈說卦〉而下，皆非聖人之作，而衆說淆亂，亦非一人之言也。昔之學《易》者，雜取以資其講說，而說非一家，是以或同或異，或是或非，其擇而不精，至使害經而惑世也。然有附托聖經，其傳已久，莫得究其所從來而覈其真偽。
>
> A child asked, saying: "Is the *Appended Statements* not the work of the sage?" (I) said: "Why single out the *Appended Statements*? The *Text Sayings*, *Explanation of the Hexagrams*, and others are all not the work of the sage, but (are rather) many sayings mixed together; likewise (they) are not the words of one person. Those who anciently studied the *Changes* miscellaneously took (sayings) to supplement their teachings, and (such) sayings were not of one school. For this reason (they) sometimes agreed and sometimes differed, sometimes were right and sometimes wrong; (some of) their choices were not the best, and (some) even harmed the classic and confused the world. Then (they) were appended and ascribed to the sagely classic; they have already been transmitted for a long time, and none can succeed in investigating their origins or checking their authenticity."[35]

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33. Of the thirteen classics, the *Er ya* 爾雅 and *Zhou li* 周禮, both attributed to Zhou Gong 周公 (r. 1042–1036), as well as the *Zuo zhuan*, attributed to Zuo Qiuming, had already come under suspicion as being authored later than traditionally thought. As we saw above, the *Shang shu*, or at least parts of it, had also been subject to unflattering scrutiny. But in the Song, scholars greatly increased their doubts regarding the provenance of the venerable classics.

34. These early commentaries are collectively called the *Shi yi* 十翼: the *Tuan zhuan* (*Shang xia*) 彖傳 (上下), *Xiang zhuan* (*Shang xia*) 象傳 (上下), *Xici zhuan* (*Shang xia*) 繫辭傳 (上下), *Wen yan* 文言, *Shuo gua* 說掛, *Xu gua* 序掛, and *Za gua* 雜掛.

35. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), *Ouyang Xiu quanji* 歐陽修全集 (Beijing: Zhongguo, 1986), 568. Similar descriptions of heterogeneity are on pp. 430, 563, and 571. I translated "*shengren*" 聖人 as "sage" in the singular, in which case it certainly refers

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Ouyang Xiu does not give an argument here, but later in the same section, he does use the argument from "precedence"[36] and elsewhere uses the existing arguments from "unworthiness" and "sudden appearance."[37] He also introduces a new argument in a different treatise where he says that Kongzi could not have written the part of the *Xici zhuan* 繫辭傳 that describes divination techniques because Kongzi was against divination.[38] I call this the "argument from not matching a description," the seventh and last argument that I noted at the beginning of this paper.[39]

Although he examined the authenticity of over fifty texts, Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551–1602) is better known for placing Authentication studies on a more formal and theoretical footing. His *Sibu zheng'e* 四部正訛 is the first work of its kind to enumerate a list of types of inauthentic texts as well as to lay out guidelines for how to go about analyzing them. His list of twenty-one "situations" (*qingzhuan* 情狀) unfortunately does not distinguish between types of inauthentic texts, the methods by which they were made, and the reasons for doing so. Yet it cannot be faulted for being insufficiently thorough:[40]

1. Prior inauthenticity that everyone knows about 偽作於前代而世率知之者;
2. Recent inauthenticity that most people do not know about 偽作於近代而世反惑之者;
3. Inauthentic by gathering stories about ancient people 掇古人之事而偽者;

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to Kongzi; it could just as well be translated in the plural, but given the following it is clear that Ouyang is arguing against Kongzi's authorship.

36. He notes that the opening lines of the *Wen yan* 文言 are very similar to lines spoken by Mu Jiang 穆姜 in 564 B.C.E., the ninth reign year of her grandson Lu Xiang Gong 魯襄公 (r. 572–542), thirteen years before Kongzi was even born; cf. the *Zhou Yi* and Chunqiu *Zuo zhuan*, both in *Shisan jing zhushu* 十三經注疏, ed. Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) (1816; Beijing: Zhonghua, 1980, 2003), 15 and 1942.

37. Ouyang, *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 571 and 129.

38. See the "*Yi* huowen sanshou 易或問三首" section of the *Jushi ji* 居士集 in Ouyang, *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, 1.129. Kongzi's attitude toward divination has historically been a contested issue, but to Ouyang Xiu and many Authentication scholars after him, this was a clear case of inauthentication based on a description of the purported author that made his authorship impossible.

39. This is one instance of a broad, but relatively obscure, category. Sometimes the "description" will be of the text rather than the author; cf. Karlgren's seventh type, described below.

40. Most of Hu's brief descriptions can only be understood by looking at the examples he provides, therefore what I have written in this list are not translations, but are rather brief explanations based on further reading.

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4. Inauthentic by gathering the writings of ancient people 挾古人之文而偽者;
5. Inauthentic by transmitting an ancient person's name 傳古人之名而偽者;
6. Inauthentic by transmitting an ancient doctrine 蹈古事之名而偽者;
7. Inauthentic because the author was afraid to use his real name 憚於自名而偽者;
8. Inauthentic because the author was ashamed to use his real name 恥於自名而偽者;
9. Inauthentic by plagiarism 襲取於人而偽者;
10. Inauthentic by borrowing (a famous author's) name 假重於人而偽者;
11. Inauthentic by imputing authorship to someone in order to harm him 惡其人偽以禍之者;
12. Inauthentic by imputing authorship to someone in order to slander him 惡其人偽以誣之者;
13. Originally authentic but made inauthentic by falsifying authorship 本非偽，人託之而偽者;
14. Originally inauthentic, but with later additions being made extra inauthentic 本偽，人補之而益偽者;
15. (Ostensibly) inauthentic (due to a change of title,) but (really) authentic 偽而非偽者;
16. Authentic but said to be inauthentic 非偽而曰偽者;
17. (Originally) authentic but (after being wholly appropriated by later editors who changed the author and title) now really inauthentic 非偽而實偽者;
18. Untransmitted by prior generations who knew of its inauthenticity and now still untransmitted 當時知其偽而後世弗傳者;
19. (Largely) untransmitted by prior generations who noted its inauthenticity, but transmitted by later generations who did not know this 當時記其偽而後人弗悟者;
20. Originally (authentic and) anonymous, but made inauthentic by later people relying on similarities (between texts) to attribute authorship 本無撰人，後人因近似而偽託者;

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21. Originally (authentic and) with a known author, but made inauthentic by later people relying on (its assumed) loss and mis-attributing authorship 本有撰人，後人因亡逸而偽題者.[41]

While this list did not gain much currency, undoubtedly due to its unwieldiness, Hu Yinglin's advice in eight steps on how to "discern inauthenticity" still holds up quite well today:

> 凡覈偽書之道，覈之《七略》以觀其源；覈之群志，以觀其緒；覈之並世之言，以觀其稱；覈之異世之言，以觀其述；覈之文，以觀其體；覈之事，以觀其時；覈之撰者，以觀其託；覈之傳者，以觀其人。覈玆八者，而古今贋籍亡隱情矣。
>
> In all cases, the way to examine inauthenticity (is to): examine it with the *Seven Summaries* to ascertain its source; examine it with the many (subsequent) catalogs to ascertain its transmission; examine it with contemporary sayings to ascertain its fit; examine it with the sayings of later ages to ascertain its quotations; examine its writing to ascertain its style; examine its events to ascertain its date; examine its author to ascertain to whom it is ascribed; examine its transmitters to ascertain the people (who support it). (If) there is examination of these eight, then ancient and modern forged books will not have hidden aspects.[42]

Qing text scholars are often retrospectively described as *Kaoju xue* 考據學 (Evidential studies) scholars, denoting a shift from philosophy to philology.[43] Song *Daoxue* 道學 (Way studies) and *Lixue* 理學 (Principle studies), both primarily intuitive, slowly gave way, over the course of the Ming, to Qing scholasticism and the *Shixue* 實學 (Practical studies) of antiquarianism and philology. This trend, with its emphasis on detailed proof, increasingly inclined scholars to doubt the methodology used in previous Authentication studies. This would in turn benefit the field enormously.

As we saw above, Dan Zhu specified redaction as a kind of authorship for the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Guo yu*. The traditional account of the authorship of the *Lun yu* is also by redaction, from either the recollection or the notes of Kongzi's disciples and his disciples' disciples. But the notion

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41. Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551–1602), *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢 (1586; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai, 2001), 290–91.

42. Hu, *Shaoshi*, 322.

43. Benjamin Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1982; 2nd edition, Los Angeles: Asia Pacific Institute, UCLA, 2001).

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of singular authorship for most Masters texts still remained axiomatic. Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 (1736–1801) in his *Wenshi tongyi* 文史通義 expanded the scope of possible redactions to a few other Masters texts. A conservative Ruist apologist who scorned the text critical methods of his contemporary Evidential studies scholars, Zhang's assertion is set within the context of his "Gong yan" 公言 chapter. Here the ancient masters are typically portrayed as selfless public servants who cared not a whit for personal literary fame.

> 周衰文弊，諸子爭鳴。蓋在夫子既歿，微言絕而大義之已乖也。然而諸子思以其學易天下，故將以其所謂道者，爭天下之莫可加，而語言文字，未嘗私其所出也。先民舊章，存錄而不為識別者。〈幼官〉、〈弟子〉之篇，〈月令〉、〈土方〉之訓是也。輯其言行，不必盡其身所論述者，管仲之述其身死後事，韓非之載其李斯〈駁議〉是也。《莊子。讓王、漁父》之篇，蘇氏謂之偽託；非偽託也，為莊氏之學者所附益爾。《晏子春秋》，柳氏以謂墨者之言，非以晏子為墨，為墨學者述晏子事以名其書，猶《孟子》之〈告子〉、〈萬章〉名其篇也。《呂氏春秋》，先儒與《淮南鴻烈》之解同稱，蓋謂集衆賓客而為之，不能自命專家，斯固然矣。
>
> The Zhou dynasty declined and civility fell, and the Various Masters contended for fame. This generally transpired after the master had already died, (thus) the transmission of (his) subtle teachings was broken, and (his) great ideas were perverted. Thus the Various Masters thought to change the world by means of their teachings, and therefore took what they called the way and contended for that which cannot be added to,[44] but the words and writings they produced were never taken as private.[45] (Likewise,) old writings of previous folk were preserved and recorded, but not distinguished (by author). The (*Master Guan*'s) "Children's Office" and "Students' (Duties)" chapters, and the (*Ritual Records*'s) "Monthly Ordinances" and the "Earth Method" teachings are examples of this.[46] In compiling their words and actions it was not (thought) necessary to be confined to that which they personally discussed; Guan Zhong's (text's)

44. "That which cannot be added to" is "perfection."

45. That is, no one claimed that what was said or written was their personal property.

46. The title of the first *Guanzi* chapter is problematic; see W. Allyn Rickett, *Guanzi: Political, Economic, and Philosophical Essays from Early China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, 1998), 1.148. I presume the "Di zi" 弟子 cited by Zhang is the "Dizi zhi" 弟子職 chapter in the received text. I do not know the provenance of the "Tu fang" 土方 text, but it seems to be a problematic ascription.

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> narration of events after his death and Han Fei's recording of Li Si's "Refutation Opinion"[47] are examples of this. Mr. Su (Shi) said *Master Zhuang*'s "Abdicating Kingship" and "Old Fisherman" chapters were inauthentic; (they) are not inauthentic, (but) are only that which Mr. Zhuang's students added. Mr. Liu (Zongyuan) took the *Master Yan's Annals* to be the words of a Mohist; it is not that Master Yan was a Mohist, (but rather) one who studied Mohism described Master Yan's affairs and thereby named the text, just like the *Master Meng* has "Master Gao" and "Wan Zhang" as names of its chapters.[48] Prior Ruists spoke of the explications in *Mr. Lü's Annals* and *Huainan's Great Achievement*[49] together, probably thinking (them both) made by many gathered distinguished retainers, (for which reason) it was not possible to name a particular author: this is certain.[50]

Despite the dogmatism and lack of detailed argument, Zhang Xuecheng has articulated an important point, one perhaps not widely recognized even today. Although the Various Masters might ultimately be responsible for the origins of their teachings, when it comes to the texts themselves, quite often "the words and writings they produced were never taken as private." More importantly, he seems to believe that it was rather common that an eponymous text was compiled by said master's students, and thus an anachronism or two should not invalidate the entire text. He also takes the unusual step of refuting previous Authentication scholars. Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) had used the "argument from unworthiness" against the "Rang wang" chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, and said the "Yu fu" chapter was inauthentic because it was disrespectful of Kongzi, unlike the majority of chapters in that text.[51] Liu Zongyuan had suggested that Yanzi himself might have been a Mohist.[52] Zhang Xuecheng thereby has in this short paragraph called into doubt four of the main arguments for inauthenticity as applied to Masters texts: those of anachronism, unworthiness, incongruity, and precedence. Unfortu-

47. This writing is not in the extant *Han Feizi*.

48. That is, the "Gao Zi" and the "Wan Zhang" are writings named after people, but were not written by those people. Likewise, the *Yanzi chunqiu* was written by Mohists, but Yanzi himself was not a Mohist.

49. Now usually called the *Huainanzi* 淮南子.

50. Ye Ying 葉瑛, Wenshi tongyi *jiaozhu* 文史通義校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1985), 170.

51. Su Shi 蘇軾 (*hao* 號: Dongpo 東坡; 1037–1101), *Dongpo quanji* 東坡全集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1987), 15–16.

52. It appears that Zhang is being unfair to Liu here. Liu actually said that he suspected the *Yanzi chunqiu* to have been written by Mohists—just as Zhang thought—but that it was possible that Yanzi himself was a Mohist. Simply reading this passage by Zhang one might get the impression that Liu stated categorically that Yanzi was a Mohist. Cf. Liu, *Liu Zongyuan ji*, 113.

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nately for the history of Authentication studies, he was not inclined to elaborate further.[53]

Republican Era Authentication Studies: Rewriting Methodology

Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929) wrote his *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* 中國歷史研究法 (1921) three years after retiring from a decidedly interesting life in reform politics that saw the end of dynastic rule. He is often praised in later Authentication studies literature for his "systematic" approach to authentication, and in particular for his 12 "research standards (*yanjiu biaozhun* 研究標準)":

1. If unmentioned or unquoted in early times, then suddenly appears: 90% probability of being inauthentic;
2. Although mentioned in early times, then lost, then suddenly re-appears in a different length and with different content: 90% probability of being inauthentic;
3. Whether or not there is an old text, if the received text has an unclear transmission: not easily believable;
4. If transmission is clear but criticism proves ostensible author is incorrect: [no judgment is given here, but I suppose such a text will at least be suspect];
5. If the received text differs from ancient source quotes: certainly inauthentic;
6. If the content is anachronistic with ostensible author dates: all or partially inauthentic;
7. If there appear to be later additions: carefully appraise;
8. If its words are opposite to reality: certainly inauthentic;
9. If there is contradiction between events in two texts: certainly one and maybe both are inauthentic;

53. David Nivison explains Zhang's perception of the masters' authorship thus: "The ancient writer['s] . . . concern was with the preservation and development of what is true and right, not with his own originality." David Nivison, *The Life and Thought of Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng (1738–1801)* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), 129. Nivison implies in this sentence and elsewhere that Zhang thought all Masters texts were not written by their titular "authors." I am not ready to credit Zhang with such a theory. It seems to me, rather, that while he thought *all* Chunqiu-era texts did not have single authors, for Zhanguo texts, he thought some had single authors and some did not.

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10. Every age has its own writing styles: one can use this to discern inauthenticity;

11. Every age has its own situation; if the text situation differs, one can use this to discern inauthenticity;

12. Every age has its own thought, which evolves in definite stages; if the text content differs, one can use this to discern inauthenticity.[54]

This advice is notable for explicitly elucidating Authentication studies methodology. Liang also distinguishes between the first nine as concrete and the latter three as abstract and sees his contribution as emphasizing the latter. Nevertheless, there are some problems in the particulars. The fourth category is rather vague. His judgment in the fifth category would certainly have to be modified in the wake of excavated text variora. The sixth, seventh, and eighth categories appear typologically similar.[55] And the certainty of the judgment for the eighth and ninth categories has inexplicably lost the caution of that of the sixth category.[56] But it was the last three categories, and particularly the twelfth, that interested Liang the most, as we shall see below.

His *Gushu zhenwei ji qi niandai* 古書真偽及其年代 (1927) restates his methodology in a section entitled "Methodology for discerning inauthentic texts and giving evidence for their dates" 辨別偽書及考證年代的方法. This time he cites the eight principles outlined by Hu Yinglin above, then reformulates them under two "systems" (*xitong* 系統): discerning from transmitted accounts (*chuanshou tongxu* 傳授統緒) and discerning from textual content (*wenyi neirong* 文義內容).[57] The first of these is precisely Hu Yinglin's second method, with Liang additionally listing eight things to look for within the traditional catalogs. The second "system" has five

54. *Liang Qichao lunzhu xuancui* 梁啓超論著選粹, ed. Chen Qitai 陳其泰, Lu Shuqing 陸樹慶, and Xu Shu 徐蜀 (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin, 1996), 790–93.

55. For the sixth category, Liang cites the *Guanzi* and the *Shangjun shu* 商君書 as containing anachronisms; for the seventh category he advises caution with the *Shi ji* 史記 because it has later additions; and for the eighth category he pronounces the *Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳 inauthentic for mentioning Buddhist scriptures, which Liang asserts did not enter China until two hundred years later. The situation for all three are the same, although that of the *Shi ji* is much clearer than the others, yet Liang's advice differs, and he is particularly harsh in the third case.

56. Although for the sixth category Liang prudently says anachronism may indicate the text in question is only partially inauthentic, in the eighth and ninth categories he condemns entire texts for only one anachronism or inaccuracy. The anachronism of the example text in category eight is in the previous footnote, while the example of contradiction for category nine is the claim of two Buddhist sutras, the *Niepan jing* 涅盤經 and *Rulengqie jing* 入楞伽經, to both be the Buddha's deathbed sayings. Anti-Buddhist prejudice may have played a role here.

57. Chen, et. al., *Liang Qichao lunzhu xuancui*, 1076.

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categories: discerning from anachronism, plagiarism, being already a lost text, style, and thought. Although all of these had already been cited by prior authors, Liang develops the last two arguments in much more detail than his predecessors.

For the category of style, Liang gives four subcategories: *mingci* 名詞 (proper nouns), *wenti* 文體 (literary style), *wenfa* 文法 (grammar), and *yinyun* 音韻 (rhyme).[58] For the category of thought Liang also gives four subcategories: thought-systems and school transmission 思想系統和傳授家法, the relation between thought and time period 思想和時代的關係, the relation between thought and technical terminology 專門術語和思想的關係, and copying from later scholarship 襲用後代學說. The last simply appears to be plagiarism, so I will not deal with it here.[59] The "relation between thought and technical terminology" is an important method that would go on to play an increasingly important role in dating texts in modern times.[60] This kind of language analysis, similar to the methodological categories of "proper nouns" and "grammar" mentioned above, is still a developing sub-field of Authentication studies, but is more persuasive than some of the other arguments used in prior scholarship.[61]

The first two subcategories of Liang's authentication by "thought" are

58. As an example of the first, he argues the *Xiao jing* 孝經 could not have been written by Kongzi or his student Zengzi 曾子 (505–436) because the term "*jing* 經 (classic)" was not used in book titles in ancient times. For literary style, he points out the *Da Yu* 大禹 was described in the *Han shu* "Yiwen zhi" as being of a later style 其文似後世語, and that Zhao Qi 趙岐 (108–201) edited out several chapters of the *Mengzi* based on style, as Guo Xiang 郭象 (d. 312 C.E.) did with the *Zhuangzi*. For grammar, he cites Cui Shu's 崔述 (1740–1816) argument that the *Zhong yong* 中庸, said to be by Zisi 子思 (483–402), must come after the *Mengzi* based on its use of *xuzi* 虛字 (particles). And for rhyme, he argues the *Laozi* 老子 Chapter Ten must be late because it does not use an ancient rhyme scheme.

59. His examples are: the *Zihuazi* 子華子 must have been written in the Northern Song 北宋 (960–1127) because it often copies from Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–1086) *Zi shuo* 字說, and the *Shen Pei* Shi *shuo* 申培詩說 copies from Zhu Xi's 朱熹 *Mao* Shi *ji zhuan* 毛詩集傳.

60. His example for using this method is the use of the term "*wu hou*" 無厚 in the *Deng Xizi* 鄧析子. Both the *Mozi* 墨子 and the *Zhuangzi* had the specific definition of "without thickness" for this term, but because the *Deng Xizi* uses it to mean "without favor," Liang says it is later. This important category is rather ill-served by Liang's example. He cites one line each from the *Mozi* (actually, he misquotes *Mozi*, mistaking *xu* 序 as *hou* 厚) and the *Zhuangzi* where the meaning of *hou* 厚 is clearly "thickness" and then cites the *Deng Xizi* where the meaning is "favor." To prove his point, however, Liang needs to do much more than merely cite counter-examples; he would need to show that *hou* 厚 as "favor" was not used until a date later than the attributed authorship of the *Deng Xizi*. I also do not see how this term qualifies as "technical terminology."

61. Cf. Yuri Pines, "Lexical Changes in Zhanguo Texts," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 122.4 (2002), 691–705.

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also quite similar to each other.[62] For these two subcategories, which I have subsumed under my own "argument from intellectual precedence," Liang attributes particular ideas to certain authors, declares them more or less authentic, and posits a discernable progression among them. Although I imagine this practice may have been more readily acceptable when dialectical historicism was more prevalent, as we shall see below, it did not retain the persuasive force for others that it did for him.[63]

Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 (1895–1980) is sometimes called the father of the *yigu pai* 疑古派 (Doubting antiquity faction), an unofficial group marked largely by their critical attitude toward the traditional account of Chinese history.[64] Even now, in 2010, Chinese text critics often define themselves and others as being either for or against the conclusions of Gu Jiegang. As a historian, he was most concerned with discerning the authenticity of historical texts like the *Shang shu* and the *Zuo zhuan*. But it was the journal *Gushi bian* 古史辨 (1926–1941), which he started and for which he was the first editor, that was his most influential creation with regard to Authentication studies.

The *Gushi bian* debates did not so much produce new arguments for discerning the authenticity of particular texts as they created a new conceptual framework from which to view them. The traditional view

62. As examples of inauthenticity via "thought-systems and school transmission" he argues that Kongzi could not have authored both the *Lun yu* and the *Xici zhuan* because the former is practical and the latter "mysterious" 有很深的玄學氣味. Similarly, he says the *Yanzi chunqiu* uses sayings of Mozi and therefore must be later than him. Likewise, the Laozi described in the *Li ji* 禮記 "Zengzi wen 曾子問" chapter emphasizes the importance of ritual, but the Laozi in the *Laozi* text denigrates it, therefore they could not have been the same person. As examples of inauthenticity from the "relation between thought and time period," he argues that the *Liezi* uses Buddhist thought, which came later, and that *yin-yang* 陰陽 thought does not appear in early texts: therefore, its use in the *Xi ci* and the *Wen yan* commentaries to the *Yi jing* demonstrate that they are later. He again argues for a later date for the *Laozi* because it criticizes *ren* 仁 (goodness) and *yi* 義 (propriety), which traditional Ruism held were the didactic inventions of Kongzi and Mengzi respectively.

63. Liang explicitly cites Hegel's theory approvingly in Chen, et. al., *Liang Qichao lunzhu xuancui*, 1044.

64. This doubt was arguably first planted in him by his young Peking University teacher, Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962), and the means for resolving the doubt was often to be found in the "double-proof method" 二重證據法 of Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927), a teacher from Tsinghua University. This method proposed the mutual use of both received texts (*zhishang cailiao* 紙上材料) and excavated texts (*dixia cailiao* 地下材料). Wang first proposed this method in 1924. See Sun Dunheng 孙敦恒, *Wang Guowei nianpu xinbian* 王國維年譜新編 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi, 1991), 146. Wang and Gu, however, often seemed to be pursuing opposite agendas. Wang was interested in using archeology to support the traditional account while Gu was primarily engaged in undermining it. See Joey Bonner, *Wang Kuo-wei: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 190.

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of most intellectual histories of the Warring States period, in a nutshell, was that Kongzi redacted the classics, and each of the nine schools of Masters texts derived from nine various Zhou government departments. Gu Jiegang submitted that the classics all slowly evolved over a thousand years and that the many masters all came from different backgrounds and time periods.[65] The traditional dates for the Various Masters were also jettisoned in favor of those proposed in arguments such as Liang Qichao's in placing Laozi after Mengzi. During these years, it seemed that everything regarding ancient history was in flux and that anything was possible.[66]

As Gu Jiegang saw it, the Classics and Masters texts were haphazardly written by various authors during the Zhou. Then in the Han they were edited to suit the rhetorical needs of Han scholars. Then Song scholars rejected Han ends and sought to re-connect with the original intentions of the Zhou and pre-Zhou sages. Then Qing scholars rejected Song methods and results and sought to re-connect with Han scholars, since Han scholars were closest in time to the sages and therefore were the likeliest to know their intentions. Now modern, "doubting antiquity" scholars like Gu had arrived, armed with Western scientific methodology, equipped with recent archeologically excavated texts, and animated by revolutionary May 4th passion. They sought to skip over everything, doubt or at least bracket the existence of sages, and in a complete break with Han, Song, and Qing styles of traditionalism, re-order Zhou tradition itself.[67] This might fairly be called the beginning of modern sinology. But when the rhetorical dust settles, even seventy years later, we are still left with hundreds of early Chinese texts in need of dating via modern critical analysis. As Gu said: "This work must be done sooner or later, and for those of us who read ancient texts in these times of liberated thought, it is a mandate of the age that we cannot decline to pursue." 這個工作是遲

65. See Gu Jiegang in his preface to *Gushi bian* 4 (1933), 11. The idea of a slow evolution and stratification of historical legend was probably first proposed by Cui Shu 崔述 (1740–1816).

66. This situation led directly to another theoretical shift in Gu Jiegang's method. Rather than having a fixed, traditional date for a text, then upon discovering an anachronism having to pronounce all or part of it inauthentic and casting it aside, Gu wanted to subsume Authentication studies under the task of dating: "That which is called 'dating' is simply discerning its attributed time period and placing it in its correct time period. Dating is the end, discerning authenticity is the means." 所謂考年代，也就是辨去其僞託之時代而置之於其真時代中。考年代是目的，辨真僞是手段 *Gushi bian* 4 (1933), 18.

67. *Gushi bian* 4 (1933), 21–22. The difference here between Song and *Gushi bian* scholars is that while Song scholars wanted to directly re-connect with the intentions of the sages, *Gushi bian* scholars wanted to discern the historicity of events in the time of the so-called sages.

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早必做的，而我們在這思想解放的潮流中讀古書，更是義不容辭的時代使命[68] That this "mandate" has not yet been completed is an indication not of sinological lethargy but rather of an increasing awareness of the complexity of textual formation and the concomitant difficulty of dating a "polymorphous text."

The *Gushi bian* debates were largely centered in Beijing but had international repercussions. Arthur Hummel (1884–1975) wrote two reviews of the first volume (1926) that were published in the second volume (1930). Bernhard Karlgren (1889–1978), who had already published one Authentication studies monograph in 1926, came out in 1929 with another.[69] In the latter, he summarizes and then criticizes the methods used in Authentication studies. He said problems to check for in a text when discerning its authenticity have historically included:

1. Anachronism
2. Lack of passages later quoted in other texts
3. Unworthiness
4. Anachronistic writing style
5. Falsely attributed authorship
6. Uneven appearance in the catalogs
7. Varying text lengths recorded in the catalogs
8. Quotation of a forged text
9. Passages from other works
10. Whether or not the grammatical system has peculiarities that could not have been imagined or imitated by a forger

Of these ten, Karlgren said that nos. 1, 2, and 6 were the most useful indicators, that no. 10 should be used when possible, that nos. 7, 8, and 9 should only be used rarely and carefully, and that nos. 3, 4, and 5 should be eliminated. Such candid criticism of methodology is rare in the field, so a brief explanation is in order. Anachronism, Karlgren maintained, was useful for the establishment of a *terminus ante quem non*, a date before which the text could not have been authored. I find it a bit odd that Karlgren was not more circumspect in his judgment here, as

68. *Gushi bian* 4 (1933), 21.

69. Bernhard Karlgren (1889–1978), "On the Authenticity and Nature of the *Tso Chuan*," *Göteborgs högskolas årsskrift* 32.3 (1926); and "The Authenticity of Ancient Chinese Texts," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 1 (1929), 165–83.

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he does not even mention that an anachronism could be a later insertion into a substantially earlier text, a possibility of which he must certainly have been aware. With the following "lack of passages later quoted in other texts" criterion, for example, he acknowledged that it may not be foolproof.[70] Likewise, with the sixth criterion, "uneven appearance in the catalogs," even while positing it as one of the three best kinds of proof, he cautiously wonders aloud: in how many catalogs must a text go unmentioned before one should deem it inauthentic?[71] Thus, even Karlgren's three strongest proofs of inauthenticity are not unproblematic.

The next three criteria, those that should be used rarely and carefully, begin with those that have "varying text lengths recorded in the catalogs." As Karlgren notes, such variation can be accounted for in several innocuous ways, including loss of text or reorganization of chapters. The "quotation of a forged text" criterion he also cautions is a double-edged sword: since early Chinese texts rarely cite another work explicitly, when one passage appears in two texts, it is very difficult to discern who is quoting whom. The ninth criterion, involving texts that contain "passages from other works," is really just a variation of the previous method, the only difference being whether or not the cited text is inauthentic. Although Karlgren does a very good job of exploring this problem, the basic question of who is quoting whom remains.

The three criteria that Karlgren suggests should be discontinued are three that have been central to the history of Authentication studies. The first two, "unworthiness" and "anachronistic writing style," he says are simply too subjective. The second of these can certainly be salvaged, as Karlgren himself more or less does with his tenth criterion, but persuasive analysis of writing style needs to be detailed and verifiable. In the past, this argument usually took the form of a simple pronouncement. The inadequacy of "falsely attributed authorship" Karlgren takes as self-evidently untenable: just because a later editor incorrectly identifies or describes an author is no reason to take the text as spurious. The tenth criterion is one that Karlgren himself pioneered with his work on the *Zuo zhuan*.[72]

Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962) also had doubts regarding the methodology used by some "doubting antiquity" scholars. His 1933 "Pinglun jinren kaoju *Laozi* niandai de fangfa" 評論近人考據老子年代的方法 is a witty rejoinder to Feng Youlan 馮友蘭 (1895–1990), who in 1931 admitted that,

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70. He accepted the inauthenticity of the "Tai shi" chapter of the *Shang shu* because quotes from it in later texts are not found in the received edition, but noted that some people did not, on the same grounds, find the *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 inauthentic.

71. Karlgren, "Authenticity," 167.

72. See n. 69 above.

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although Liang Qichao's dating of the *Laozi* used question-begging (*gai ci* 丐辭) evidence, he would nevertheless continue to use that evidence.[73] In this article, Hu Shi first defines "question-begging" and then goes on to demonstrate how three arguments for a late *Laozi* date are thereby disqualified. These arguments are:

1. Prior to Kongzi there was no private[74] authorship;
2. Prior to Mengzi private authorship was in dialogue form;
3. Prior to the Warring States period, literary style for classics[75] was complicated.

Clearly, each of these predicates, when followed by the conclusion "therefore the *Laozi* is a Warring States text written after the *Mengzi*," begs the question. The first two examples above are analogous to my argument from intellectual precedence, which he called the *sixiang xitong* 思想系統 (system of thought) or *sixiang xiansuo* 思想線索 (line of thought) argument.[76] Admitting that he had used this argument himself in the past, he admonishes others to recognize it as a double-edged sword that should not be used in academia.[77]

The second type of argument that Hu Shi examined was "literary composition." Karlgren had already pronounced this argument "too subjective" in 1929, but Hu Shi goes on to analyze two specific types: style (*wenti* 文體, *shoubi* 手筆, or *zitai* 姿態) and technical vocabulary/proper nouns (*shuyu* 術語/*mingci* 名詞). He ably demonstrates that both are either rather subjective or very tricky, and refutes both kinds

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73. Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962), "Pinglun jinren kaoju *Laozi* niandai de fangfa" 評論近人考據老子年代的方法 in *Zhexue luncong* 哲學論叢 1 (1933); translated as "A Criticism of Some Recent Methods Used in Dating Lao Tzu" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 2.3/4 (1937), 373–97; rpt. in *Gushi bian* 6 (1938), 387–410. It is followed in *Gushi bian* 6 by Feng Youlan's reply, pp. 410–17. This dialogue between Hu and Feng is contextualized by Edward Shaughnessy in "The Guodian Manuscripts and Their Place in Twentieth-Century Historiography on the *Laozi*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65.2 (2005), 417–57.

74. That is, as distinct from government-sponsored.

75. That is, as distinct from commentary. "Classics" here has a wider application than the thirteen classics.

76. Hu, "Pinglun jinren," in *Gushi bian* 6 (1938), 390.

77. As above, where Liang Qichao argued that Laozi must be later than Mengzi because both used *ren yi* 仁義 (goodness and propriety) pedagogically and Mengzi had invented the topic, so too do Hu Shi and Gu Jiegang use the same method. They both noted that the *Lun yu* advocated *wuwei er zhi* 無爲而治 (ruling without contrivance) and since this is a well known Laozi trope, Hu Shi concluded that this "proves" Laozi's priority while Gu Jiegang concluded precisely the opposite.

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of arguments given by Liang Qichao and Gu Jiegang.[78] He admits that the argument from anachronistic technical vocabulary and/or proper nouns can be effective, but cautions that it requires careful and impartial research before such claims can be made. In the end, Hu Shi very much encouraged the "doubting antiquity" spirit of the *Gushi bian* debates, and said that he was here only playing the "*advocatus diaboli*." In the absence of more scholarship in this area, he counseled a suspension of judgment. Although Hu Shi was certainly not alone in his doubt of some "doubting antiquity" scholars' authentication or dating methodology, it appears in retrospect that such doubt was against the tide of the times.

Zhang Xincheng 張心澂 (b. 1887), at any rate, was certainly not convinced by Hu Shi's doubt. He says in the introduction to the revised edition that he published his *Weishu tongkao* 偽書通考 as a direct result of reading the first issue of the *Gushi bian*. This work is a reference book covering 1,104 texts and is almost entirely composed of selected opinions of prior Authentication scholars, including most of those discussed in this article. Compiled over the course of a single year, Zhang's opinion mainly comes through in terse judgments that accompany each book title: "inauthentic," "suspected inauthentic," "contains later additions," etc. His preface also provides a summary of much prior scholarship in the form of several "systematizing" lists.[79]

The *Weishu tongkao* is an admirable work of editing, but is itself a bit of an anachronism. Although useful as a reference work, Zhang's own terse pronouncements of "inauthentic" or "suspected inauthentic" make little sense in light of Gu Jiegang's assertion that to discern the inauthenticity of a text was to date it. Furthermore, although clearly familiar with the various methodologies for authenticating a text, he does not tell us which method(s) he used to arrive at his conclusions. And, although he noted Karlgren's admonition to do away with such arguments as that from "unworthiness," he nevertheless includes them. Finally, his conclu-

78. Hu Shi's specific answer to Liang Qichao's assertion that Mengzi was the first to discuss "*ren yi*" 仁義 (goodness and propriety) was to point out that this phrase appears more than once in the *Zuo zhuan*. See Hu, "Pinglun jinren," in *Gushi bian* 6 (1938), 400.

79. He lists four reasons why one should discern inauthenticity; nine types of inauthentic texts; nine methods of making inauthentic texts; twelve reasons for making inauthentic texts; six ways that inauthentic texts are discovered; four reasons why inauthentic texts may have been produced; six rules that the Authentication scholar must abide by; four lists of eight, two, eight, and ten methods for authentication; and six conditions under which authentication must be carried out. The list that I am most interested in here, methodology, is in fact four lists: the one given by Hu Yinglin, the two given by Liang Qichao, and the one given by Bernhard Karlgren. All of these have already been mentioned above.

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sions are not very consistent. For example, he describes the *Yuzi* 鬻子 as "inauthentic" (*wei* 偽) because it includes a personal name that he says was not common until the Warring States period, and therefore cannot be a Western Zhou text. But the very next text in his book, the *Laozi*, he describes only as having "unclear authorship and date" 撰人及時代不明, even though he claims it has several anachronisms of its own.[80] For other texts, this admission merited the label of "inauthentic," so why the largesse here? In the end, given the number of texts treated and the inclusiveness of cited scholars, it is nevertheless a good preliminary source for investigating authenticity but, despite its date of publication, it remains a pre-*Gushi bian* historical compendium.[81]

Modern Authentication Studies: A New Paradigm

Yu Jiaxi 余嘉錫 (1883–1955), on the other hand, had clearly absorbed some of the recent advances in methodology mentioned above. In discussing the *Liu tao* 六韜, for example, he says: "Texts authored by ancient people are not always brilliant; certainly there was sometimes shallow and crude writing (in them). The nine schools and hundred authors came forth from different places; therefore the techniques they used were different." 古人著書，不皆精粹，淺陋之處，固所時有。九流百家，所出既異，故操術不同[82] Furthermore, he never pronounces a text "authentic," "inauthentic," or the like: rather, when analyzing, he concentrates on dating the text.

Yu Jiaxi emphasized the problem of early Chinese authorship in his *Gushu tongli* 古書通例.[83] Although multiple authorship was recognized as far back as Liu Xiang, this possibility was often overlooked in the history of Authentication studies. Yu Jiaxi explored some of the authorial permutations prevalent in early texts. His work gives a great many examples for several different kinds of possibilities which he summarizes in his preface thus:

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80. Zhang Xincheng, *Weishu tongkao* 偽書通考 (1939; rev. ed., Shanghai: Shangwu, 1957), 781–801. The "personal name" mentioned here is "Qi daifu 七大夫" (p. 784).

81. The other main reference work for Authentication studies is, of course, that by Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724–1805), Siku quanshu *zongmu* 四庫全書總目 (1782; rpt. ed., Beijing: Zhonghua, 1965, 1981, 1995).

82. Yu Jiaxi 余嘉錫 (1883–1955), *Siku tiyao bianzheng* 四庫提要辨證 (Beijing: Kexue, 1954; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1980; rpt., Kunming: Yunnan renmin, 2004), 500.

83. Yu Jiaxi, *Gushu tongli* 古書通例 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1985; rpt. in *Mulu xue fawei han* Gushu tongli 目錄學發微含《古書通例》, Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue, 2004). It was not published in his lifetime.

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然古書本不出自一人，或竹帛著自後師，或記叙成於衆手，或編次於諸侯之客，或定著於寫書之官。

But ancient texts were not produced by one person: some were written on bamboo and silk by later teachers, some were narratives compiled by many people, some were arranged by the retainers of the various lords, and some were given final form by the government writing office.[84]

He also considers some of the vagaries of textual transmission that can thwart standard arguments in Authentication studies methodology. These include: examples of early texts that were not listed in early catalogs; the practice of naming a text not after its author but after the main character in the text; the fact that many early texts had no original titles; and the incidence of a text having other texts assimilated into it, or of a text being broken down into constituent sections which were then circulated independently. As an example of assimilation, he suggests that the reason why the *Guiguzi* does not appear in the *Han shu* "Yiwen zhi" is because at that time it was a part of the *Suzi* 蘇子.[85] Yu does not express a specific desire to revise the methodology of Authentication studies, but this is precisely what the variety of authorship and transmission problems that he discusses in this monograph leads the reader to do.

Not long after Yu's death, a series of archeological discoveries brought a new focus to Authentication studies.[86] These finds galvanized early China scholars and provided the means to rebuild the ancient history that

84. Yu, *Gushu tongli*, 174.

85. Yu, *Gushu tongli*, 211–13.

86. Although the history of recently excavated Warring States, Qin, and Han texts is far too long to describe here, the 1972 excavations of two tombs at Yinqueshan 銀雀山 uncovered some early texts with transmitted counterparts and was thus particularly significant for Authentication studies. These included parts of the *Sunzi bingfa* 孫子兵法, *Sun Bin bingfa* 孫臏兵法, *Weiliaozi* 尉繚子, *Liu tao*, *Yanzi*, and *Guanzi*. The archeological report was published in *Wenwu* 文物 1974.2. See also Robin D.S. Yates, "The Yin-Yang Texts from Yinqueshan," *Early China* 19 (1994), 75–144. Several more were soon to come, including finds at Dingzhou 定州 in 1973, Mawangdui 馬王堆 also in 1973, Shuanggudui 雙古堆 in 1977, Wangjiatai 王家台 in 1993, Guodian 郭店 in 1993, and the acquisitions made by the Shanghai museum in 1994. A brief introduction to excavated texts can be found in Pian Yuqian 駢宇騫 and Duan Shuan 段書安, *Ben shiji yilai chutu jianbo gaishu* 本世紀以來出土簡帛概述 (Taibei: Wanjuanlou, 1999). Some excavations discovered texts without received counterparts, and these are also of great use to Authentication studies. Some may in fact be parts of works recorded in the catalogs but since lost. See Li Xueqin 李學勤, "Jingmen Guodian Chu jian zhong de *Zisizi*" 荊門郭店楚簡中的《子思子》, *Wenwu tiandi* 文物天地, 1998.2; rpt. in *Chongxie xueshu shi* 重寫學術史 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu, 2001), 7–12.

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the "doubting antiquity" scholars had sought to tear down. Li Xueqin 李學勤 published his "Chongxin gujia Zhongguo gudai wenming" 重新估價中國古代文明 in 1982.[87] Here he locates the problems in Authentication studies methodology primarily with the "new text" scholars of the late Qing:

> 今文學派提倡辨偽，也是有很重大的貢獻的，不過他們的辨偽有時過了頭，造成了不少"冤、假、錯案"，需要糾正平反。
>
> "New text" scholars advocated (textual) authentication, and made some important contributions, but their authentication was sometimes excessive, creating not a few "wronged, framed, and misjudged" cases, which must be rectified and redressed.[88]

The specific "old text" version of the *Zuo zhuan* he said had already been exonerated by the likes of Karlgren, and the *Zhou li* 周禮 had already proven indispensable for understanding several bronze inscriptions, but Li Xueqin's concern with inauthentic texts was much broader than just the handful of "old text" books that Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) had railed against.[89] In a statement that could very well serve as a summary of the genesis of this article, he wrote:

> 辨偽有時會過了頭，每每是由於對古書的形成傳流沒有足够的理解。在印刷術發明以前，我國的書都是用簡帛抄寫甚至依靠口傳的，經過若干時代的流傳，編次的變化，文句的更改，後世詞語的羼入，都是可能的，或者是不可避免的。不能由於發現了這一類現象，就斥為偽書。
>
> Some of the errors in Authentication (studies) are often caused by an inadequate understanding of the formation and transmission of ancient texts. Prior to the discovery of print technology, our country's texts were all copied onto bamboo and silk and even orally transmitted, handed down through several ages; rearrangement, rephrasing, and the interpolation of later words are all either pos-

87. Li Xueqin, "Chongxin gujia Zhongguo gudai wenming" 重新估價中國古代文明, *Renwen zazhi* 人文雜誌 supplementary publication *Xian-Qin shi lunwen ji* 先秦史論文集, 1982; rpt. in Li Xueqin, *Li Xueqin ji* 李學勤集 (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu, 1989), 15–27, and Li Xueqin, *Dangdai xuezhe zixuan wenku: Li Xueqin juan* 當代學者自選文庫：李學勤卷 (Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu, 1999), 1–14. Hereafter, the *Li Xueqin juan* pagination is used.

88. Li, "Chongxin gujia Zhongguo gudai wenming," 11.

89. Kang Youwei, *Xinxue weijing kao* 新學偽經考 (1891; rpt. ed., Beijing: Wenhua xueshe, 1931; rpt. edited and with notes by Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書, Beijing: Sanlian, 1998).

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sibilities or inevitabilities. One cannot upon the detection of this kind of phenomenon simply denounce them as inauthentic.[90]

Five years later, in 1987, Li Xueqin went on to elaborate some of the aforementioned possibilities in textual transmission that research on excavated texts had revealed. Although he said the list was not complete, he cited the following ten:

1. Lost (佚失無存): two kinds: those listed and those not listed in the catalogs;
2. Title lost, but actually extant (名亡實存): e.g., a text subsumed within a larger text;
3. Part of received text (為今本一部): e.g., a part that was edited out of the received text;
4. Later additions (後人增廣): e.g., Ruist sayings collections that increased in size over time;
5. Later changes (後人修改): some texts perhaps changed due to oral transmission;
6. Re-edited (經過重編): e.g., various hexagram orders in various editions of the *Zhou Yi*;
7. Sections combined (合編成卷): e.g., different texts written on one piece of silk as one book;
8. Single sections separately transmitted (篇章單行): book chapters transmitted separately;
9. Various editions combined (異本並存): different versions of one text transmitted together;
10. Changes in wording (改換文字): the ancients copied books for personal use, not for historic preservation, and often replaced difficult words with easier ones.[91]

90. Li, "Chongxin gujia Zhongguo gudai wenming," 12. Li Xueqin goes on to cite the *Wenzi* as an example of a text previously considered inauthentic then proven to be authentic. The 1973 Dingzhou find turned up a text clearly related to, yet still quite different from, the transmitted text. See *Wenwu* 1981.8 and 1995.12, as well as Charles Le Blanc, *Le* Wen zi: *À la Lumière de l'Histoire et de l'Archéologie* (Montréal: Université de Montréal, 2000). Given that even an "authentic" *Wenzi* appears to many scholars to be completely derived from the *Huainanzi*, the question of authenticity for this particular Masters text is far from settled with the Han manuscript unearthed at Dingzhou.

91. Li Xueqin, "Dui gushu de fansi 對古書的反思," Fudan daxue lishi xi 复旦大學歷史系, *Zhongguo chuantong wenhua de zai guji* 中國傳統文化的再估計 (Shanghai:

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Li Xueqin does not discuss the ramifications of these possibilities for Authentication studies methodology, but all clearly emphasize the importance of textual transmission for text formation. His main contribution to Authentication studies was to question the methods heretofore used by demonstrating the impact that archeology has had upon the field. His criticism most often comes in three forms. First, non-textual artifacts often support the authenticity of a text suspected of being inauthentic.[92] Second, finding an excavated version datable to a period earlier than expected can at least partially acquit texts previously considered inauthentic. These two avenues, however, have so far been possible in only a few cases. Third, most broadly and most importantly for this paper, is that evidence supplied by excavated texts overturns assumptions used in Authentication studies argumentation. Such evidence can come in several forms, from personal or place names, to paraphrased or exact quotes, to ideas or practices that were previously thought not to exist at a given time, but which excavated texts prove did.

Five more years later, in 1992, Li Xueqin again expressed his doubt in Authentication studies methodology in a conference talk entitled "Zouchu yigu shidai" 走出疑古時代.[93] While he discussed all three of the above-mentioned criticisms, he also broadened the target of his criticism. As quoted above, Li Xueqin's 1982 article specifies the excessive zeal of late Qing "new text" scholarship as the locus of the problem, and towards the end also says: "We claim that critical research of ancient texts opposes a blind belief in antiquity and also opposes a blind doubt of antiquity" 我們主张批判地研究古代文獻，反對一味信古，也反對一味疑古.[94] In the 1987 article cited above, he reiterates this claim:

> 對古書形成和傳流的新認識，使我們知道，我國古代大多數典籍是很難用"真"、"偽"二字來判斷的。在辯偽方面，清代學者做出了很大貢獻，但是也有不足之處，其一些局限性延續到現在還有影響。今天要進一步探究中國古代文化，應當從這些局限中超脫出來。

Shanghai renmin, 1987); rpt. in Li Xueqin, *Jianbo yiji yu xueshu shi* 簡帛佚籍與學術史 (Taibei: Shibao wenhua, 1994; rpt. Nanchang: Jiangxi jiaoyu, 2001), 29–32.

92. For example, he suggested that bronze fish excavated from tombs datable to the Chunqiu period (770–481) support the authenticity of the *Yi li* 儀禮 insofar as it describes these artifacts as coming from that period.

93. Li Xueqin, "Zouchu yigu shidai," *Zouchu yigu shidai* 走出疑古时代 (1994; rev. 2nd ed., Shenyang: Liaoning daxue, 1997), 1–19.

94. Li, "Chongxin gujia Zhongguo gudai wenming," 12. If Li Xueqin is here implying Gu Jiegang and the *Gushi bian* debates with his use of the term "*yigu*" 疑古 (doubting antiquity), then his characterization of them as "blindly" doubting antiquity is more strongly worded than elsewhere.

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> Recognizing the formation and transmission of ancient texts allows us to know that a great many of our country's classics are difficult to judge as "authentic" or "inauthentic." Regarding authentication, Qing scholars produced great contributions, but also had areas of deficiency, and a few of these limitations continue to have influence today. Today (we) should advance the exploration of ancient Chinese culture, and should overcome these limitations.[95]

In the 1992 article however, as the title might suggest, he specifically includes the *Gushi bian* debates as part of the *yigu sichao* 疑古思潮 (doubting antiquity thought) from which he wants to emerge.[96] This may seem obvious, given that the *Gushi bian* debates and "doubting antiquity" are practically synonymous, but given the specificity with which he previously targeted Qing "new text" factionalism, it was a definite shift in rhetoric. Although, or perhaps because, he nowhere mentions Gu Jiegang, the slogan of "emerging from the doubting antiquity period" created a minor stir in the field.[97] But the "debate" is mostly over rhetoric and not over anything substantial.[98]

In the end, Li Xueqin is doing nothing more with these articles than underlining and demonstrating Wang Guowei's 王國維 (1877–1927)

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95. Li, "Dui gushu de fansi," 32.

96. Li, "Zouchu yigu shidai," 9. On p. 16 however, his target is once again Qing "new text" factionalism.

97. On the one hand, Gu Jiegang's student Liu Qiyu 劉起釪 wrote an ardent defense of what he took to be an attack on his teacher in "Guanyu 'Zouchu yigu shidai' wenti" 關於'走出疑古時代'問題 in *Chuantong wenhua yu xiandaihua* 傳統文化與現代化 1995.4. On the other hand, Li Xueqin's co-worker on the government project to date the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties (夏商周斷代工程), Song Jian 宋健, fell only just short of calling anyone who might doubt traditional Chinese history a traitor to his country. See his "Chaoyue yigu, zouchu mimang" 超越疑古、走出迷茫, *Hebei shifan daxue xuebao: Shehui kexue ban* 河北師範大學學報: 社会科學版 19.4 (Oct. 1996), 1–8. Both of these articles, plus Li Xueqin's 1994 article, as well as two others, have been translated into English in the "Doubting of the 'Doubting of Antiquity'" issue of *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 34.2 (Winter 2002–3). A good article that correctly locates the "debate" in attitude rather than methodology is one by Yanaka Shin'ichi 谷中信一, "Shin shutsudo shiryō no hatsugen to Gikoshugi no yuku-e" 新出土資料的發現與疑古主義的行方, *Chūgoku shutsudo shiryō kenkyū* 中國出土資料研究 2 (1998), 150–66.

98. Broadening his target yet again, Li Xueqin in 1997 redefined "doubting antiquity" as a historical phenomenon in three phases: first as Song scholars doubting Han scholars, second as Qing scholars doubting Song scholars, and third as the *Gushi bian* debates of the 1920's and 1930's; see Li, *Zouchu yigu shidai*, 343. One problem with discerning whom Li is arguing against is simply that the phrase "doubting antiquity" can refer both generally to those who doubt antiquity as well as specifically to the *Gushi bian* debates of the 1920's and 1930's. Li means the former, while his detractors take him to mean the latter.

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"double proof method" of fifty years prior.[99] No one disagrees with this method. Song and Qing "doubters" did not have the opportunity to even know about it and *Gushi bian* era scholars clearly endorsed it. Nevertheless, for implementing this method with regard to Authentication studies on early Chinese texts, perhaps no one has made a broader contribution than Li Xueqin.

Zheng Liangshu 鄭良樹 in 1984 compiled an Authentication studies reference book that supported Li Xueqin's aim in a coincidence reminiscent of the 1939 Zhang Xincheng text that supported Gu Jiegang's aim. His *Xu* Weishu tongkao 續偽書通考 was a pointed rebuttal of the "inauthentic" status of one hundred and twenty-five of the 1,104 texts on which Zhang Xincheng compiled authentication opinions. Whereas Zhang gathered his opinions from two thousand years of prior scholarship, Zheng confined himself to the most recent thirty years. The differences are striking, both in complexity of argumentation, as well as implicit willingness to rely on Han accounts. Two years later, he published a monograph on Authentication studies entitled *Guji bianwei xue* 古籍辨偽學.[100] Here he elaborates his thoughts on the difference between pre- and post-liberation (i.e., 1949) Authentication studies scholarship. Unlike Li Xueqin, who emphasized the continuing influence of Qing "new text" scholarship and the importance of excavated texts, Zheng proclaimed the end of Qing and Republican "doubting authenticity" and the importance of new methodology. After reminding us of Hu Shi's rebuttal of other *Gushi bian*-era scholars on the dating of the *Laozi*, he states:

> 當古史辨派從四十年代結束之後，踏入五十年代，特別是晚近一、二十年，古籍辨偽學似乎有朝轉另一個新的趨勢—平實、嚴密及謹慎。
>
> After the conclusion of the "doubting antiquity" school in the 1940's, from the 1950's, and especially in the last ten or twenty years, Authentication studies on ancient texts seems to have turned in a new and different direction—fair, serious, and careful.[101]

More specifically, Zheng Liangshu asserted that Authentication scholars in the last thirty years were bringing a more unbiased attitude, stricter methods, more cautious judgments, and more detailed arguments to their scholarship. He gives examples for all of these, but particularly takes

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99. See n. 64 above.

100. Zheng Liangshu 鄭良樹, *Guji bianwei xue* 古籍辨偽學 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng, 1986). Chapter Eight of this work now serves as the preface for later reprints of his *Xu* Weishu tongkao 續僞書通考 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng, 1984).

101. Zheng, *Guji bianwei xue*, 209.

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Kang Youwei, Gu Jiegang, and others to task for drawing conclusions on what he sees as too little evidence. On the one hand, Zheng is certainly more ready to take Sima Qian 司馬遷 and Liu Xiang at their word than many prior scholars, which makes him more of a traditionalist. But on the other hand, he attaches due importance to the language-based analyses that Bernhard Karlgren pioneered, a decidedly modern approach.[102] Additionally, he clearly eschews big-picture proclamations in favor of detail-oriented scholarship. Methodologically speaking, he explicitly relies on the approach of Liang Qichao, although he does criticize several traditional arguments as either insufficiently reliable or prone to misuse. And as for final judgments, he avers: "To assert only as much as can be proved is perhaps the most appropriate method." 有多少證據，說多少分的話，也許是最妥當的辦法[103] More theoretical speculation, however, is offered by the last scholar in my analysis.

Li Ling 李零 also criticizes Authentication studies methodology, but in a very different way from that of Zheng Liangshu. Whereas Zheng provided examples of extant texts to expose the shortcomings of the traditional arguments taken at face value, Li problematizes these methods by challenging the assumptions that lay behind them. Zheng's work follows and expands on the work of Hu Shi, while Li follows and expands on the work of Yu Jiaxi, using conclusions drawn from analyses of excavated texts not available to the latter. In his "Chutu faxian yu gushu niandai de zairenshi" 出土發現與古書年代的再認識, he considers ancient text formation and gives eight conclusions in which echoes of Yu Jiaxi's prior work are clearly discernable:

1. Ancient texts do not list the author 古書不題撰人, and ancient people really had no definite conception of authorship;
2. Many ancient texts have no title, but some are named for type, patronym, number of sections, or number of graphs 古書多無大題，而以種類名、氏名及篇數、字數稱之;
3. Ancient texts were often just circulating individual chapters and sometimes the chapter title itself simply became the book title 古書多以單篇流行，篇題本身就是書題;
4. Ancient texts with more chapters usually have the nature of compilations 篇數較多的古書 多帶有叢編性質;

102. Specifically, he highlights the work of Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 (1909–1992) in his Liezi *jishi* 列子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1979; rpt. 1997), and several articles by Zhang Yiren 張以仁 on the *Guo yu* and *Zuo zhuan* that appeared in *Lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 歷史語言研究所集刊.

103. Zheng, *Guji bianwei xue*, 224.

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5. Ancient texts were often split apart and brought together haphazardly 古書往往分合無定; this is especially clear in the cases of excavated texts having transmitted counterparts;

6. Ancient texts were often put in order by later people 古書多經後人整理, but the process was much more complicated than this sounds: from intellectual fermentation, to the writing of notes from oral teaching, to the ordering of these notes into sentences and sections, to dividing them into chapters and possibly giving them titles, and to collecting the chapters into a text;

7. Ancient texts were often added to and embellished by later editors 古書多經後人附益和增飾; such additions were usually the mainstay of authentication methods;

8. Ancient authors intentionally privileged meaning over doctrine and doctrine over wording 古人著書之義強調 "意" 勝於 "言", "言" 勝於 "筆"; from the great differences in citation and transmission, it is clear that the texts themselves were mere ciphers for the relay of doctrine and, more tenuously, the ways of the masters themselves.[104]

In summary, he states: "According to the preceding it is not difficult to see that most of the traditional standards used by Authentication studies to decide authenticity and inauthenticity cannot stand" 據上所述，我們不難看出，傳統辨偽學所定判別真偽的標準大多不能成立[105] Li Ling's observations on textual formation encompass both the problems of authorship and early transmission. The distinctions of "ascribed text," "multiple-author text," and "redacted text" all seem to dissolve into a hazy, convoluted, and drawn-out process. This is precisely the image that he wants to convey:

> 早期的古書多由 "斷片"（即零章碎句）而構成，隨時所作，既以行世，常常缺乏統一的結構，因此排列組合的可能性很大，添油加醋的改造也很多，分合無定，存佚無常。作者的自由度比較大，讀者的自由度也比較大。這使它的年代構成變得非常複雜。

104. Li Ling 李零, "Chutu faxian yu gushu niandai de zairenshi" 出土發現與古書年代的再認識, *Jiuzhou xuekan* 九州學刊 3.1 (1988), 105–36; rpt. in *Li Ling zixuan ji* 李零自選集 (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue, 1998), 27–31. Li Ling acknowledges Yu Jiaxi's work in *Gushu tongli* as foundational to this list on p.27.

105. Li, "Chutu faxian," 31. In a neat reminder of the fungibility of even modern texts, not only did the publishers of the 1998 reprint change the graphs from traditional to simplified, but the author made an unremarked revision of the word "*dao* 道 (practice)" in the eighth conclusion to the "*yi* 意 (meaning)" there now.

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我的印象，戰國秦漢的古書好像氣體，種類和篇卷構成同後世差距很大；隋唐古書好像液體，雖然還不太穩定，但種類和構成漸趨統一；宋以來的古書則是固體，一切定型，變化多属謄寫或翻刻之誤。再加上古書印行不廣，私藏和官藏一直是兩個渠道，書名和篇卷構成也時有變化，如果光從志著錄以斷真偽存佚，是非常困難的。

Most ancient texts were formed from fragments (separate sections and loose sentences), written at various times, and when circulated often lacked a unified form; because of this the possibilities of rearrangement and recombination were great, and embellishments also were many; splitting apart or joining together was haphazard, and survival or loss was transient. The degree of freedom for an author was relatively great, as was the degree of freedom for a reader. This causes the dating of its formation to become very complicated. My impression is that Warring States, Qin, and Han texts are like gases, with the formation of typology and text length very different from later ages; Sui and Tang texts are like liquids: although not very stable, typology and form are becoming unified; and texts since the Song are like solids, completely finalized, with most changes due to errors in copying or carving printing blocks. Add to this (the fact) that ancient texts were not widely circulated, that private and official collections were always two separate channels (for textual transmission), and that titles and number of sections sometimes changed: if one judged authenticity only from being recorded in the standard history literature records, then this would be very difficult.[106]

Li Ling thus leaves us with the image of a "gaseous text," which I have been calling a "polymorphous text:" one that has coalesced through the manipulation of many hands and possibly over many centuries.[107]

106. Li Ling, *Jianbo gushu yu xueshu yuanliu* 簡帛古書與學術源流 (Beijing: Sanlian, 2004), 198. This conception of early Chinese text formation is evident in Li Ling's examination of the *Sunzi* 孫子. Although he had at his disposal several editions, including an excavated text from the Han, a Dunhuang text from the Wei-Jin period, and lengthy Tang collectanea quotations, he does not present a collated edition in an attempt to recover an "original" text. Rather, he presents them consecutively, as an evolving subject, and, contrary to those who believed that an early excavated text vindicated the views of those who would date the text traditionally to the general Sun Wu 孫武 of Wu 吳 (c. 500 B.C.E.), he said: "The 'personal authorship theory' goes against (the facts of) ancient text formation" '親著說' 是違反古書體例的. See Li Ling, Sunzi *guben yanjiu*《孫子》古本研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue, 1995), 205.

107. I use the metaphor of a "polymorphous text" not only to summarize Li Ling's description here, but also in conscious contradistinction to some other metaphors previ-

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The impact of this paradigm on Authentication studies is profound. Not only can it subsume all other types of inauthentic texts—ascribed, multiple-author, and redacted—within itself, it also has the potential to ameliorate all the arguments used to judge an early text as inauthentic. For example, in the argument from precedence, both the "quotational precedence" form used by Liu Zongyuan and the "line of thought" form used by Liang Qichao are not the strong proofs they are sometimes made out to be. Li Ling notes:

> …喜歡分析年代的學者，他們老想從 "誰抄誰" 來定早晚。但我們不應忘記的是，當時的 "你抄我，我抄你" 可能並沒有早晚，因為這些 "談資" 很可能是 "資源共享"，來自同一個 "資料庫"。
>
> . . . scholars who like to date (texts) have usually thought to use "who is copying whom" to fix earlier and later (dates). But we should not forget that at that time, "you copy me (or) I copy you" perhaps really had no earlier or later because these "oral sources" were very possibly "common sources" coming from the same "source reservoir."[108]

The "polymorphous text" paradigm was first thoroughly examined by Yu Jiaxi and his conclusions were substantiated with evidence from excavated texts by Li Xueqin and Li Ling. This paradigm does not, of course, abrogate the field of Authentication studies at one stroke. But it is the greatest challenge to the field in all the years since its inception. At present this subject lies largely buried in the wake of excitement created by research on excavated texts. Nevertheless, some recent considerations of textual authenticity are quite nuanced.[109] Others seem to be unaware of what I have described here as the current state of the field.[110] Western

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ously used; for example, Gu Jiegang's *cenglei zaocheng* 層累造成 "layered construction" as applied to textual formation, Bruce Brooks' "accreted" *Lun yu* text, and Carine Defoort's "core" *Shizi* text. These descriptions imply that once a part of the received text has been "established," it can only be added to and not removed. My "polymorphous text" category, following Yu and Li, does not recognize any part of an early text as "settled." See Gu Jiegang, "Yu Qian Xuantong lun gushi shu" 與錢玄同論古史書, in *Dushu zazhi* 讀書雜誌 9 (1923); E. Bruce and A. Taeko Brooks, *The Original Analects: Sayings of Confucius and His Successors* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); and Carine Defoort, "Ruling the World with Words: The Idea of *Zhengming* in the *Shizi*," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 73 (2001), 217–42.

108. Li, *Jianbo gushu yu xueshu yuanliu*, 204n3.

109. For example, *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*, ed. Michael Loewe (Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China, 1993).

110. Some specialized Authentication studies texts have been published since 1988, when Li Ling published his "Chutu faxian" article, but while acknowledging the importance of excavated texts, they mostly seem not to have realized the implications of the work of Yu Jiaxi, Li Xueqin, and Li Ling on methodology. See, for example, *Zhongguo*

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sinologists doing text criticism on early Chinese texts present a mixed picture. For several scholars, the central aim of text criticism remains the construction of a critical text and variora are considered in order to see which is earliest, that is, closest to an "urtext."

Conclusion: A Brief Look at the Current Situation in the West

Paul Thompson, Harold Roth, and William Boltz are three of the better known sinologists who work on early Chinese text criticism and text reconstruction. In 1979, Thompson began his reconstruction and critical edition of the *Shenzi* 慎子 with the sentence: "Sinology in this century has not risen to the recurrent challenge to rectify texts."[111] To "rectify" texts was, of course, to try and find the "urtext." In a 2000 publication on the excavated *Laozi*, he provided a collated edition of one chapter of that text "to illustrate some of the problems faced during the first stage of the process of textual criticism. . . ."[112] He does not here specify what the last stage of the process of textual criticism is, but the implication still seems to be a critical edition approximating an "urtext."

In 1992, Harold Roth published a work on the textual history of the *Huainanzi* as a precursor to a critical edition.[113] The aim of this critical edition, as with Thompson, was "to reconstruct the most authentic version possible of the original readings of the text."[114] But in the same 2000 publication on the *Laozi* as the one just mentioned, he said that "the text

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weishu zongkao 中國僞書綜考, ed. Deng Ruiquan 鄧瑞全 and Wang Guanying 王冠英 (Hefei: Huangshan, 1998), a reference book that simply adds another hundred texts to the 1104 of Zhang Xincheng; *Zhongguo weishu daguan* 中國僞書大觀, ed. Yu Zhaopeng 俞兆鵬 (Nanchang: Jiangxi jiaoyu, 1998), a reference book that largely re-states the cases against 186 of Zhang Xincheng's 1104; and Liu Jianguo 劉建國, *Xian-Qin weishu bianzheng* 先秦僞書辨正 (Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin, 2004), a work in the vein of Zheng Liangshu's, which argues for the authenticity of forty-nine pre-Qin texts.

111. Paul Thompson, *The* Shen Tzu *Fragments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), xvii.

112. Paul Thompson, "On the Formal Treatment of Textual Testimony," in *The Guodian* Laozi*: Proceedings of the International Conference, Dartmouth College, May 1998*, ed. Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams (Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China, 2000), 89.

113. Harold Roth, *The Textual History of the* Huai-nan Tzu (Ann Arbor: The Association for Asian Studies, 1992). A critical edition has not yet been published. However, Roth has contributed to a complete English translation of the *Huainanzi*, *The Huainanzi: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China/Liu An, King of Huainan*, trans. and ed. John S. Major, Sarah A. Queen, Andrew Seth Meyer, and Harold D. Roth, with contributions by Michael Puett and Judson Murray (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

114. Roth, *The Textual History of the* Huai-nan Tzu, 2.

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of the *Laozi* was in a state of flux at the time that the Guodian parallels were written down suggests that the work may not have been written at one point in time as an integral and complete text."[115] Building on the theory of Michael LaFargue that some "passages in the received *Laozi* were built up from small distinct units," Roth postulates that this text is an example "of a distinct literary genre of anonymous verse," and is "a unique collection of separate units of verse that may very well have been transmitted orally in these units for a considerable period of time before being assembled and written down."[116] Roth's "source text" model is not quite the same as the "polymorphous text" model, however, because he does not consider the sources to be actual texts. With the "polymorphous text" paradigm, the Guodian *Laozi* manuscripts are acceptable as three independently composed texts in their own right that could have existed before, after, or simultaneously with the longer compilation known to us now as the *Laozi*.

William Boltz clearly subscribed to the traditional Western paradigm of text criticism for the *Laozi* in 1984.[117] It appears he still held this view in 2000 when, after noting four variora in Chapter 41 of the *Laozi*, he said: "The problem for the textual critic is here, as it often is, to choose a preferred version among several possibilities. . . ."[118] A few lines later he refers to the "original" version of the *Laozi*, without considering the possibility that there never was an original text, only a number of versions that perhaps existed simultaneously. But by 2005, Boltz seems to have accepted LaFargue's idea of how the *Laozi* evolved. He described the narrative units, or "building blocks," from which he argues many early Chinese texts were redacted, and concludes: ". . . lengthy, literary or essay-like texts, authored by a single writer, in the way we typically think of a text in the modern world, do not reflect the norm for early China but were, at best, the exception."[119]

Like Roth, he seems to have abandoned not the idea of an urtext, but rather the idea of a single urtext author. Both describe an urtext edited from prior sources. Thus, as with Roth's "source text" model, Boltz says "the Guodian material is not properly called the *Laozi* in any meaning-

115. Harold Roth, "Some Methodological Issues in the Study of the Guodian *Laozi* Parallels," in Allan and Williams, *The Guodian* Laozi, 81.

116. Roth, "Some Methodological Issues," 75 and 83; Roth credits Michael LaFargue, *The Tao of the Tao Te Ching* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), on p. 75.

117. William Boltz, "Textual Criticism and the Ma wang tui *Lao tzu*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44.1 (1984), 185–224.

118. William Boltz, "The Study of Early Chinese Manuscripts: Methodological Preliminaries," in *The Guodian* Laozi,, ed. Allan and Williams, 46.

119. William Boltz, "The Composite Nature of Early Chinese Texts," in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Martin Kern (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 59.

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ful sense but is rather a collection of textual units some of which have subsequently been brought together by unknown editors or compilers to constitute the text that has been transmitted as the *Laozi*."[120]

However, in another article published in 2005, Boltz sounds like he may conclusively have abandoned the urtext paradigm. He asks, regarding the *Laozi* and early Chinese texts in general, if we should not recognize multiple versions of the same text, "allowing the traditional understanding of the received text to stand and yet establishing alternative readings of the seemingly same text . . . ?"[121] A few sentences later he addresses the theoretical underpinnings of this position, asking: "In what sense can we, in fact, even talk about an 'original' text and an 'author'?"[122] In this article, Boltz has repudiated not only the traditional idea of a single author, but perhaps also the autograph, from which all variation constitutes "error." He concludes by wondering if, instead of pursuing the "original" reading, we should now try "to determine how those changes might have arisen . . . as they evolved over time and how as a consequence the variant version of the text tells us something about its context that we might otherwise not know?"[123]

The "polymorphous text" paradigm is relatively new and, although it is certainly not universally accepted, it does appear to be gaining ground in scholarly circles. My intention in this article was to construct a theoretical history for it. The implications of this paradigm for how we perceive the interactions among early Chinese masters and "their" texts are far-reaching, especially those texts that have heretofore been disregarded as "inauthentic." It is true that this paradigm may complicate our efforts to see precisely how these masters were in dialogue with one another as persons. But a more accurate—i.e., fuzzier—conception of the texts that were circulated among the Various Masters will hopefully yield richer insights into the interplay of ideas within them.

120. Boltz, "The Composite Nature of Early Chinese Texts," 59–60.

121. William Boltz, "Reading the Early *Laotzyy* 老子," *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* 56.3 (2005), 213.

122. Boltz, "Reading the Early *Laotzyy* 老子," 213–14.

123. Boltz, "Reading the Early *Laotzyy* 老子," 230.

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