

**LIU ZHIJI'S *SHITONG*
AND ITS REVIVAL IN MING DYNASTY
— PACING HISTORIOGRAPHY ANEW**

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To my lovely daughter

LIANA

born during this research project

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Abstracts

English

The aim of the present research project was to prove the thesis of a significant break in the tradition of Chinese historiography in late Ming dynasty (1396-1644). This break found its specification in the revival of works which had been neglected and forbidden for several hundred years, especially the so-called *shiping* 史評-literature (literature about discussing and criticizing history and history works). In consequence, the emergence of ever more critical history works or works criticizing history can be observed.

For the investigation of this thesis of a significant change in the field of historiography firstly the main features and progressions of Ming dynasty were sketched—the first part of the dissertation.

To test the thesis of this change in tradition, Liu Zhiji's 劉知幾 (661-721) *Shitong* 史通 (Generalities on Historiography) from Tang dynasty was chosen as a characteristic example of the *shiping*-literature which was rediscovered eight hundred years after its emergence. Therefore, the *Shitong* and the “renaissance” of the *Shitong*—as a peculiarity of on-going processes in this time—was the subject of the second main part and the so-called case study. The aim was to introduce Liu Zhiji's important work and examine the importance and the cause of this “rediscovery” of Liu Zhiji's work. As part of this, it further was an object of the work to translate untranslated parts of the Ming time commentaries into a Western language, as well as statements and comments of Ming time historians concerning the reception of this work. Hence, this part of this research project consists of the translation of important parts of the commentaries—especially the insightful prefaces—and the occupation with the setting and background of the commentaries. The idea behind this concentration on the commentaries of the *Shitong* was always to regard them as specifications of the break in historiographical tradition.

To understand the correlations and influences which contributed to the happenings in the realm of Ming historiography, it was important to understand ongoing

processes in Ming China—particularly in the academic and philosophical realm—before concentrating on historiography.

In the next step the research focused on the important point of the ongoing *gonglun* 公論 debate which tried to find a measure for what is right and wrong. This characteristic of the academic world was then put into the context of historiography. This part on the historiography of Ming China represents the main part of the whole research project. On the basis of many different Ming time history works (like e.g. Zhu Minggao's *Shijiu* 史糾, Shao Bao's *Xueshi* 學史 or Lu Shen's *Chuanyi Lu* 傳疑錄) the changes concerning the development of historiography in Ming China were put into light and exemplified. It was a matter of especially showing symptoms of the discontinuity in the development of Chinese historiography. Hereby, the revival of the *Shitong* as one important example of the *shiping*-category of literature appeared as an expression of this break, new order and public debate in Ming dynasty. The public discourse and the attempt to find a standard measure for what is right and wrong in history writing are the innovative peculiarities of Ming historiography and they were displayed in the main part of the present study. In sum, it was discovered that many critical works about history writing from Ming dynasty give testimony of these characteristics, the significant developments and the break with tradition in Ming dynasty.

Deutsch

Ziel des vorliegenden Forschungsprojektes war es, die These von einem bedeutenden Bruch in der Tradition der chinesischen Geschichtsschreibung in der späten Ming-Dynastie (1396-1644) zu beweisen. Dieser Bruch fand seine Spezifikation in der Wiederbelebung von Werken, die seit mehreren hundert Jahren vernachlässigt und verboten worden waren, vor allem die so genannte *shiping* 史評 -Literatur (Literatur über die Diskussion und Kritik von Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung). Infolgedessen kann die Entstehung immer kritischerer Geschichtswerke oder Werke, die Geschichte kritisieren, beobachtet werden.

Für die Untersuchung dieser These von einer bedeutenden Veränderung auf dem Gebiet der Geschichtsschreibung wurden zunächst die Hauptmerkmale und Entwicklungen der Ming-Dynastie skizziert – der erste Teil der Dissertation.

Um die These von diesem Bruch in der Tradition zu testen, wurde Liu Zhijis 劉知幾 (661-721) *Shitong* 史通 (Leitfaden der Historiographie) aus der Tang-Dynastie als charakteristisches Beispiel für die *shiping*-literatur gewählt, die achthundert Jahre nach ihrer Entdeckung wiederentdeckt wurde. Deshalb war das *Shitong* und die „Renaissance“ des *Shitongs* – als eine Besonderheit der aktuellen Prozesse in dieser Zeit – Gegenstand des zweiten Teils und die sogenannte Fallstudie. Ziel war es, das wichtige Werk von Liu Zhiji vorzustellen und die Bedeutung und die Ursache seiner „Wiederentdeckung“ zu untersuchen. Als Teil davon war es weiterhin Gegenstand der Arbeit, unübersetzte Teile der Ming zeitlichen Kommentare in eine westliche Sprache zu übersetzen, sowie Aussagen und Kommentare von Ming-Historikern über die Rezeption dieses Werkes. Daher besteht dieser Teil dieses Forschungsprojekts aus der Übersetzung wichtiger Teile der Kommentare – vor allem der aufschlussreichen Vorworte – und der Beschäftigung mit dem Hintergrund der Kommentare. Die Idee hinter dieser Konzentration auf die Kommentare des *Shitong* war immer, die Wiederentdeckung als Spezifikationen des Bruchs in der historiographischen Tradition zu betrachten.

Um die Zusammenhänge und Einflüsse zu verstehen, die zu den Ereignissen im Bereich der Ming-Geschichtsschreibung beigetragen haben, war es wichtig, Prozesse in Ming China – vor allem im akademischen und philosophischen Bereich – zu verstehen, bevor man sich der Geschichtsschreibung zu wendet.

Im nächsten Schritt konzentrierte sich die Forschung auf den wichtigen Schwerpunkt der *gonglun* 公論 Debatte, die versucht, ein Maß für richtig und falsch zu finden. Dieses Merkmal der akademischen Welt wurde dann in den Kontext der Geschichtsschreibung gestellt. Dieser Teil über die Geschichtsschreibung von Ming China stellt den Hauptteil des Forschungsprojekts dar. Auf der Basis vieler verschiedener Ming-zeitlicher Geschichtswerke (wie z. B. Zhu Minggaos *Shijiu* 史糾, Shao Baos *Xueshi* 學史 oder Lu Shens *Chuanyi Lu* 傳疑錄) wurden die Veränderungen in der Entwicklung der Geschichtsschreibung in Ming China beleuchtet und veranschaulicht. Es ging darum, besonders die Symptome der Diskontinuität in der Entwicklung der chinesischen Geschichtsschreibung zu zeigen. Dabei erschien die Wiederbelebung des *Shitong* als ein wichtiges Beispiel für die *shiping*-Kategorie der Literatur als Ausdruck dieses Bruchs, der neuen Ordnung und der öffentlichen Debatte in der Ming-Dynastie. Der öffentliche Diskurs und der Versuch, ein Standardmaß für richtig und falsch in der Geschichtsschreibung zu finden, sind die innovativen Besonderheiten der Ming-Geschichtsschreibung; diese wurden im Hauptteil der vorliegenden Studie gezeigt. Zusammenfassend wurde gezeigt, dass viele kritische Werke über Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung Zeugnis über diese Eigenschaften, die bedeutenden Entwicklungen und den Bruch mit der Tradition in der Ming-Dynastie geben.

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List of Abbreviations

- CCL* *The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Chinese Literature (1000 BCE-900CE)*, ed. Wiebke Denecke, Wai-ye Li, and Xiaofei Tian, Oxford: Oxford University Press (Oxford Handbook Series), 2017.
- CHC 7* *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 7: The Ming dynasty, 1368-1644. Part 1*, ed. Frederick W. Mote, and Denis Crispin Twitchett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- CHC 8* *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 8: The Ming dynasty, 1368-1644. Part 2*, ed. Frederick W. Mote, and Denis Crispin Twitchett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- DMB* *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich and Fang Chaoying, 2 vols., New York [et al.]: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- DOTIC* *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, ed. by Charles O. Hucker, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985.
- ECCP* *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, ed. Arthur Hummel, 2 vols., Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943.
- MRXA* *Mingru Xue'an* 明儒學案 (Critical Anthology of Ming Confucianists), by Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲, punctuated and proofread by Shen Zhiying 沈芝盈, 2 vols., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban 中華書局出版, 1985.

PART I: PRELIMINARY KNOWLEDGE

1. Introduction

Glaring and lamentable as are the defects in the traditional technique of Chinese historians, their work has drawn from the very primitiveness of their synthetic method, coupled with an age-long insistence on intellectual integrity, a kind of rugged strength and fundamental reliability which constitute valid claims upon our respect and admiration. No other ancient nation possesses records of its whole past so voluminous, so continuous, or so accurate.¹

China has always produced a vast amount of historiographical works which stood out due to its accomplishments and its limits at the same time. It truly is unique in its long living continuity and its fixed position in Chinese cultural and social life. Due to this tight connection with Chinese thinking, culture and society, it is impossible to single out historical writing from this complex or examine it as an independent entity.² The history of Chinese historiography is long, complex and over a long period of time follows specific rules and characteristics, formed and dictated by the official government. Then, so my thesis, something different happens:

China in Ming dynasty (*Mingchao* 明朝; 1368-1644) saw a break with tradition of imperial China with regard to historiography. After overthrowing the Mongol Yuan dynasty (*Yuanchao* 元朝; 1271-1368), in late imperial China, something new appeared in history writing. Beginning in Song dynasty (*Songchao* 宋朝; 960-1279), more and more historiographical works appeared which were neither categorized as private nor as official. This was intensified in Ming dynasty when unofficial history (*yeshi* 野史) became an important part of history writing. In fact, the crucial characteristic of this time was the mix of official, non-official, *yeshi* and family history—a syncretistic conglomerate of different styles of historiography was the one and only true way of

¹ Charles S. Gardner (1970), *Chinese Traditional Historiography*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, p. 105.

² Edwin G. Pulleyblank and William G. Beasley (1961), "Introduction," in *Historians of China and Japan*, ed. Edwin G. Pulleyblank and William G. Beasley, London: Oxford University Press, pp. 1f.

writing history. This was also due to the fact that literati now perceived themselves as a collective unit, and, hence, incorporated syncretistic thoughts in their work.

The most important and striking characteristic was the growth of historical criticism in the private realm—the *shiping* 史評-category of literature³ was emphasized and elaborated. This was not mere chance; rather, the (negative) developments in official history writing contributed to this phenomenon: The Jingtai-Zhengtong affair⁴ was almost hidden in official history works; and the Yongle 永樂 Emperor (r. 1402-1424) arranged the *shilu* 實錄, the “veritable records,” ad libitum. Due to such examples of unreliability in official history writing, a public dialogue emerged (*gonglun* 公論) about what is right and what is wrong—something very peculiar for Ming dynasty, which had started in Song dynasty and now developed into a wide-spread phenomenon. In this discussion and the attempt to establish a “definite measure”⁵ or “impartial views of social consensus”⁶ for writing history at the end of sixteenth century, more and more Ming historians and scholars recalled critical history works which had been neglected and were excluded from the canon of official writing due to their content being non-compliant with official versions of happenings. Those works which recorded the true facts should be included and made public again—this was supposed to be true historiography.

In the course of this bethinking of former critical works about history and the culminating of the *shiping*-category, the resurgence of Liu Zhiji’s 劉知幾 (661-721)

³ Historical criticism covered critique “(1) on great events in history, (2) method of historical approach, (3) the entire historical work.” Han Yushan (1955), *Elements of Chinese Historiography*, Hollywood (Calif.): Hawley, p. 42.

⁴ When the Zhengtong 正統 Emperor (Emperor Yingzong 明英宗, personal name Zhu Qizhen 朱祁鎮, 1427-1464, r. 1435-1449 and 1457-1464) was captured by the Mongols in 1449, his younger brother Zhu Qiyu 朱祁鈺, the Prince of Cheng 郕王 (Emperor Daizong 明代宗, the Jingtai Emperor 景泰, r. 1449-1457) usurped the throne and—after the return of the Zhengtong Emperor—put him in prison. After the Jingtai Emperor fell ill, the former Zhengtong Emperor returned to the throne. See “Persons in Chinese History—Ming Yingzong 明英宗, the Zhengtong 正統 and Tianshun 天順 Emperor,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Ming/personsmingyingzong.html>, last accessed: October 7th, 2015.

⁵ See chap. 11.5 for Wang Shizhen’s preface to Yuan Wang’s 袁王 *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編; and Achim Mittag (2002), “Was heißt und zu welchem Ende betrieb man historische Kritik in China?,” *Oriens Extremus* 43.1/2, pp. 3-31.

⁶ Edward Ch’ien (1986), *Chiao Hung and the Restructuring of Neo-Confucianism in the Late Ming*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 53.

Shitong 史通—a critical work about the theory of history writing from Tang dynasty (*Tangchao* 唐朝; 618-907)—in Ming dynasty protrudes. I call it the “Renaissance of the *Shitong*.” This assumed renaissance or revival was the starting point of my research. The *Shitong* is regarded as the first theoretical work and a basic guideline for historians on how to write history; as such it represents a revolutionary point of view on history writing. Much has been written about the book itself, but only few (Chinese) scholars concentrated on its revival in Ming dynasty, after being neglected for several hundred years. During my research on currents which contributed to this peculiar revival, I encountered interesting new aspects. Through my research I discovered that, indeed, the revival of the *Shitong* was not at all a single case but stands exemplarily for a break with tradition, which happened in Ming dynasty—a feature which has not yet been made a subject of discussion before. Therefore, I now treat the renaissance of the *Shitong* as a case study to support my thesis of an incision and upheaval in the Ming Dynasty.

Accordingly, the research that will be presented in this work covers the time of Ming dynasty (1368-1644),⁷ starting in the second half of the fifteenth century with the first statements by Ming scholars about the just mentioned *Shitong*, including the commentaries and statements of mid and late Ming and reaching until Zhu Minggao 朱明鎬 (1607-1652) of late Ming and Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 (1610-1695) of late Ming/early Qing time (1644-1912) in an outlook.

In their work *A History of East Asian Civilization*, Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig described the Ming dynasty as “one of the great eras of orderly government and social stability in human history.” They continued: “A total population of around one hundred million, possibly rising toward two hundred million [...] was maintained during 276 years in comparative peace.”⁸ Timothy Brook even named China to be the center of the world in Ming dynasty. Still, he presented “the Ming dynasty as a coherent arc of change from ordered rural self-sufficiency in the early Ming to the decadence of urban-based commerce in the late.”⁹ In any case, the Ming dynasty was a time of changes in

⁷ For a chronological overview over the Ming dynasty, see Appendix II.2.

⁸ Edwin Oldfather Reischauer, John King Fairbank, and Albert M. Craig (1960), *East Asia, vol. 1: The Great Tradition*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, p. 290.

⁹ Timothy Brook (1998a), *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. xvi-xvii.

economic and social as well as in philosophical perspective, while at the same time perpetuating stability.

For the case study of the *Shitong* the commentaries compiled in Ming Dynasty are very important; videlicet these are the *Shitong huiyao* 史通會要 (Excerpts of the *Shitong*) by Lu Shen 陸深, the *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋 (Comments and Explanations of the *Shitong*) by Li Weizhen 李維楨, a commentary with the same title from Guo Kongyan 郭孔延, and the *Shitong xungu* 史通訓詁 (Interpretation and Glossary to the *Shitong*) by Wang Weijian 王維儉. These commentaries have been summarized in the *Shitong tongshi* 史通通釋 (Full Commentary on the *Shitong*) by Pu Qilong 浦起龍 (1679-?) in Qing dynasty. The research of precisely this “rediscovery” of the *Shitong* represents a significant contribution to a better understanding of the history and the whole historical thinking in China. Taking up these Ming time commentaries and this thereby expressed “renaissance” of Liu Zhiji’s work is an extremely exciting project that can provide information on the development of historiography and the influence of philosophical, social and political influences on this development.

In consequence, my aim and questions for the present study are the following: I assume that—as was mentioned before—there was a significant break with the tradition of Chinese historiography which happened in Ming dynasty. This break was caused by the ongoing public debate about what is right and wrong in history writing and found its specification in the revival of works which had been neglected and forbidden for several hundred years. To test my thesis of this change in tradition, I chose Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* from Tang time as a characteristic example of the *shiping*-literature which was rediscovered eight hundred years after its emergence. The *Shitong* is both a theoretical treatise on the writing of historiographies as well as a criticism of hitherto untouchable classics and former history works and incredibly valuable for the research of Chinese history. Nevertheless, this piece of literature remained much unnoticed until the Ming dynasty or was even ridiculed or criticized. In Ming dynasty, however, the opinion about this work changed, and historians paid attention to Liu Zhiji’s compilation.¹⁰

¹⁰ Yang Yanqiu 杨艳秋 (2002), “Liu Zhiji *Shitong* yu Mingdai shixue” 刘知几《史通》与明代史学 (Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* and Ming Time Historiography), *Shixue shi yanjiu* 史学史研究 (Journal of Historiography) (4), p. 48.

The research project, therefore, consists of three goals or main sections: Liu Zhiji, the *Shitong* and the “renaissance” of the *Shitong*—as a peculiarity of ongoing processes in Ming dynasty—are supposed to be the subject of the first main part and occupy the position of the so-called case study. Therefore, the first section of this research project consists of the introduction of the case study and the translation of important parts of the commentaries—especially the insightful prefaces—and the occupation with the setting and background of the commentaries. The idea behind this concentration on the commentaries of the *Shitong* is always to regard them as specification of the break in historiographical tradition. To connect the revival of the *Shitong* to the general rediscovery of *shiping*-works, it is necessary to investigate the concrete topics of Ming research. Questions will be:

- What do the prefaces tell about the rediscovery of the *Shitong*?
- How is the *Shitong* evaluated and appraised by the commentators?

The second aim is to disclose one of the main feature of the intellectual world in Ming dynasty, videlicet the “public discourse” or *gonglun* 公論. Over this course, it is important to disclose the different connotation of the term “*gonglun*” as—on the one hand—pointing at an ongoing discourse of what is right and wrong with the aim of establishing “a definite measure” and—on the other hand—at the result of this debate, namely the just mentioned “definite measure.” To my opinion both meanings are valid and complement each other; hence, both are applied in this research.

The third aim is to investigate historiography in Ming dynasty: On the basis of examples of the emerging critical attitude towards former and especially contemporary (official) history writing, the break with tradition will be displayed. Many historians who wrote so-called *shiping*-literature, i.e. works criticizing history writing, stand for the bethinking of this neglected category of literature and, thus, are able to give testimony of this development. Here, it is interesting to examine what exactly is criticized in ancient history works: Sometimes the happenings themselves are questioned, sometimes the depiction of events, so to say the historical perception is reviewed. Intriguing examples are Shao Bao’s 邵寶 *Xueshi* 學史, Zhu Yunming’s 祝允明 *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* 祝子罪知錄 or Zhu Minggao’s 朱明鎬 *Shijiu* 史糾 to name but a few. In the last step, the topics of the “*Shitong*-revival” are put in the context of Ming time currents in historiography; that is to say it is supposed to be exemplified which

problems—examined by Liu Zhiji—find special attention in Ming dynasty and are explicitly highlighted by the scholars which advanced these new features in Ming historiography. Research questions to this part are:

- Which are the new features of historiography in Ming China? How exactly were those new features (e.g. the rediscovery of the *shiping*-category) reflected?
- How did this new critical attitude towards history writing express itself? Who participated in this critical part of Chinese historiography?
- To what extent was the revival of Liu Zhiji's work an expression of Ming time currents, especially currents in Chinese historiography?
- Was it actually a break with tradition which happened in Ming dynasty with regard to the *gonglun*-debate in historiography and the rediscovery of the *Shitong*?

In summary, the aim of my research project is to prove or disprove my thesis about the departure from tradition by taking into account Ming time currents and the rediscovery of a formerly neglected work of the *shiping*-category, namely the *Shitong*, as a characteristic example and case study of those changes.

Concerning the current state of research, it has to be remarked that much has been written about the history of Chinese historiography. To name only a few William Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank (eds., 1961), Timothy Brook (1998), Benjamin Elman (2014), Otto Franke (1925 and 1945), Herbert Franke (1950 and 1961), Wolfgang Franke (1961, 1968 and 1988), Charles Gardener (1970), Han Yushan (1955), Ng On-cho and Q. Edward Wang (2005). Especially, Benjamin Elman, Qian Maowei (1998), Yang Yanqiu (2005), Wolfgang Franke and Achim Mittag (2012) concentrated on Ming time historiography. I take these extraordinary works as assistance but do not try to emulate these authors. Rather than providing a general overview over Ming time history as has been done before, my aim—as mentioned before—is to investigate special features of Ming time historiography.

The specific case of the *Shitong*, however, is subject of only very few studies. The most important work in Western literature is probably Michael Quirin's dissertation *Liu*

Zhiji und das Chunqiu,¹¹ in which he—for the first time—translates important parts of the in *Shitong* into a Western language, namely German. Furthermore, his main focus lies on the research of the critical potential of the work. Although he agrees that Liu Zhiji's work has a revolutionary and critical character—especially concerning the critique of the *Chunqiu*, the sacrosanct “Spring and Autumn Annals” ascribed to Confucius—, he concludes that Liu Zhiji did not break with tradition because he did not offer true criticism towards the *Chunqiu*. Additionally, Byongik Koh already contributed to this area of research over thirty years ago in his dissertation *Zur Werttheorie in der chinesischen Historiographie auf Grund des Shih-t'ung des Liu Chih-chi*¹² in German.

Furthermore, the debate about Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* mostly happened in China, but did so very intensively. Fu Zhenlun¹³ or Ren Jiyu, who analyzed Liu Zhiji's ideas in a social and political way, are only two to be named.¹⁴ Cheng Jianfan 程千帆 in 1980 compiled a commented version of the *Shitong* for reference (*Shitong jianji* 史通箋記 (Notes to the *Shitong*), 1980), the same as Liu Zhili 刘治立 (2005). Gao Rui 高蕊 and Yang Yi 杨溢 (2012) occupied themselves with certain chapters of the *Shitong*, namely the *yanyu* 言语, while Han Yunbo 韩云波 (2001), Li Wenli 黎文丽 (2006), Liu Wei 刘伟 (2011), Ma Tiehao 马铁浩 (2011), Wang Yanhua 王燕华 and Yu Gang 俞钢 (2008), Zhang Sanxi (2001a), Zhang Yue 张越 (2011) or Zhao Jun 赵俊 (2005) concentrated on certain aspects such as the critical value, the value as a literary work as well as general historical ideas and the structure reflected in the *Shitong*, for example.

Moreover, a full translation into English is carried out by Victor C. Xiong under the title: *A Thorough Exploration in Historiography (Shitong 史通) by Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721): Annotated Translation with an Introduction* (University of Washington Press, forthcoming). Unfortunately, this translation—although announced for January 2014—had not yet been published. Still, in 2014, Damien Chaussende published a full

¹¹ Michael Quirin (1987), *Liu Zhiji und das Chunqiu*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

¹² Byongik Koh and Liu Chih-chi (1956), “Zur Werttheorie in der chinesischen Historiographie auf Grund des Shih-t'ung des Liu Chih-chi 661-721,” München: Dissertationen.

¹³ Fu Zhenlun 傅振倫 (1934¹/1956²), *Liu Zhiji Nianpu* 劉知幾年譜, Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan.

¹⁴ Quirin (1987), p. 15.

translation of the inner chapters of the *Shitong* in French, under the title: *Liu Zhiji, Traité de l’Historien parfait. Chapitres intérieurs, Présenté, traduit et annoté par Damien Chaussende* (Paris: les Belles Lettres, 2014).

Likewise, the discussion about the revival of the *Shitong* in Ming dynasty only happened in China, and, furthermore, was very limited. Yang Yanqiu 杨艳秋 researched Ming time historiography (*Mingdai shixue tanyan* 明代史学探研, “Exploration and Study of Ming time Historiography,” 2005) and in this course wrote an article about the *Shitong*-revival (*Liu Zhiji “Shitong” yu mingdai shixue* 刘知几《史通》与明代史学, (Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* and Ming time Historiography, 2002)). Wang Jiachuan 王嘉川 in his *Qingqian “Shitong” xue yanjiu* 清前《史通》学研究 (The History of Research on the *Shitong* before Qing dynasty, 2013) presents the perception of the *Shitong* from Tang to Ming times without further interpreting those occurrences.

After all, there are still many academic voids left. While—as it was shown—the *Shitong* research and the research about Ming dynasty are very vivid, the connection between them has not yet been researched. This void applies not only to the research of the *Shitong*-revival in Ming dynasty, which—by the way—has not yet been paid adequate attention to; this also includes the meaning of the *Shitong*-revival in relation to happenings in Ming time history. The symbolic or deeper meaning of the rediscovery as a sign for the revivification of the *shiping*-literature in Ming dynasty and the developments which led to this evolution have not at all been researched until now. Consequently, this is the point at which I want to start my investigation.

My research project is based on text studies of ancient and modern literature. The initial point of my analysis was Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* and its revival in Ming dynasty. In this regard, concerning the “rediscovery of the *Shitong*,” I evaluated the Ming time commentaries und translated parts of their prefaces. The prefaces are especially interesting because they provide information about the author’s intention for writing this commentary and his view on history writing. In addition to these primary sources, namely the commentaries, I also searched for references to the *Shitong* in other Ming time works concerning history in order to illuminate the perception of the *Shitong*. Therefore, the main works of Ming time scholars, which touch upon the topic of Ming time historiography and its characteristics, served as important primary sources, as well.

The *Shitong* itself and modern commentaries also acted as additional sources for my research project; these also include modern “translations” of the *Shitong* which are secondary source material. Furthermore, many books, articles, and dissertations from China which relate to the topic of Ming time historiography and the *Shitong*-revival were examined and considered.

In this context, my further approach was to get an overview over Ming dynasty currents and especially Ming dynasty historiography in order to connect these to the *Shitong* revival. For this part, I initially analyzed the secondary sources which were mentioned before in the presentation about the current state of research. Comparing and merging these secondary sources and treatises about certain aspects of Ming dynasty, I tried to find a pattern which supports my thesis of a break with tradition in Ming dynasty. While turning to primary sources from Ming dynasty again, it was very interesting to find traces of the so-called *gonglun* 公論-debate, which is directly addressed by Achim Mittag in his article “Was heißt und zu welchem Ende betrieb man historische Kritik in China?” (*Oriens Extremus* 43, 2002). Many influential Ming time historians and scholars devoted themselves to the question about what is right and wrong in history writing, i.e. the *gonglun*-debate. Consequently, works by Ming time scholars which occupy themselves with this question and work including theoretical approaches towards historiography in general are very important sources for this project. Accordingly, I translated parts of these works in order to examine each author’s reply to this question; special attention was also paid to these authors’ concepts of history and history writing. Hereby, I chose to present a wide range of authors and works and not to concentrate on two or three specific works in an in-depth study. The reason for this is—as mentioned—that there are only few studies revealing the uniqueness of the advancement in historiography in Ming dynasty; therefore, I aim at demonstrating that this break in Ming dynasty and these developments were not happenings accredited to two or three single authors but instead embraced a whole generation of important historians of their time. In consequence, my research is not an exhaustive study on each work or scholar but represents an overview of ongoing processes by picking out quite a few examples to confirm my thesis. Nevertheless, each work is worth to be thoroughly studied, an extensive task for which there is no room in this work.

In sum, my method was a textual research concerning the translation of parts of many Ming time history and historiographical works in order to reveal new thoughts and concepts concerning history and history writing, i.e. disclose a break with tradition.

The translations in this study are my own, if not indicated otherwise. The dissertation is written using American English as standard of orthographic and punctuation rules. The transcription into Latin follows the rules of the Hanyu Pinyin system, except for citations. In these cases, other transcription systems (such as Wade-Giles) can occur. Furthermore, as most of the citations and references derive from ancient works, throughout the work traditional Chinese characters (*fantizi* 繁體字) are applied; nevertheless, when citing from modern Chinese sources, the simplified Chinese characters (*jiantizi* 簡體字) are left as they are in the cited work. For the translation of titles in ancient China the terms defined in Charles O. Hucker's *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (1985) are used. The *shiguan* 史館 is translated as History Office, Historiography Office, History Bureau or Bureau of History and refers to the governmental bureau responsible for writing the official standard dynastic histories (*zhengshi* 正史). *Juan* 卷 originally refers to the scrolls of books; but in a modern sense rather refers to “volumes” or even “chapters,” therefore it is often not translated at all. Concerning the mentioned emperors, they are referred to by the name or the name of their reign period, depending on conventions in the respective period of time; dates are given for their reign period. For a list of Ming time emperors, see Appendix I.1.

The presented dissertation follows the development of my research and reflects the way of my thoughts. Therefore, Part I starts with a short introduction of the main features of Chinese historiography, including a general synopsis of features valid for most of the time of Chinese history writing followed by a chronological and sketched overview of the evolution of historiography. It is also a matter of showing ongoing problems and—as a reaction to them—precisely early traces and the evolution of historical criticism, which is the main topic of this research project. Nonetheless, in this part historical criticism is only roughly presented with an outlook to the appearance of “modern” criticism in the Western sense of view. The focal point of this investigation lies on historical criticism in Ming dynasty which occupies a sort of intermediate position in the progress of critical historiography on its way to “modern” criticism, and—which I

suggest—with its revolutionary break contributes greatly to progressing a great step further in this development.

Part II concerns itself with the *Shitong*: At first the author, Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721), is introduced by pointing at his internal rift between his tradition-dictated occupation as official and his “modern” conception of history writing, which contradicts to official perceptions of writing history. The work itself is presented in a summary. According to what has been written about the *Shitong*, here I do not try to analyze the text anew; rather this part aims attention at critical parts of this book relevant for this study. Afterwards, the revival and the reception of the work in Ming dynasty are illuminated by introducing (chronologically) the main editions of and commentaries on the *Shitong*. Partly, translations of the commentaries are presented; especially the prefaces give insight to the authors’ intentions and, furthermore, reflect main processes of Ming time historiography.

Before precisely connecting the rediscovery of Liu Zhiji’s writing—hence, the commentaries on the *Shitong*—to trends of Ming historiography, it was important for me to obtain an overview over general currents and ideas in the social, political and particularly philosophical realm of that time. On these grounds, Part III “The World of Ming China” is dedicated to the presentation of ongoing trends outside historiography which, nevertheless, influenced progress in this respective realm. After broaching general elements of Ming time, social, economic and political tendencies are displayed very shortly and simply put. The ‘History of Ideas’ in regard to philosophical, religious and academic trends appears even more important. As this part does not grant a claim for completeness it is rather to be regarded as an excursion in order to provide hints for possible effects by other realms on the field of historiography.

Over the course of investigating the just mentioned history of ideas of Ming dynasty, a very interesting phenomenon emerged, namely the public debate (*gonglun* 公論). There are actually two levels of this discourse—the general debate originating from philosophical currents and ideas and the derived question about what is right and wrong in history writing. In my opinion the demarcation between these two levels is not very clear due to mutual influences of philosophical and historical ideas; it is therefore crucial to illuminate the former level as well, which I focus on in Part IV. This depiction

and analysis comes together with an outline over tensions of Ming dynasty in general which led to WM Theodore de Bary's label of "a near revolution in thought."

After this crucial depiction of Ming time currents, especially the *gonglun*-debate, Part V takes up the main focus of research, namely historiography in Ming dynasty, and brings together the just acquired knowledge with trends in historiography. In categories of official, critical and theoretical main features of Ming time historiography and the tension developing from these features is depicted. By presenting ideas of different Ming time historians and translating parts of their works, the debate about what is right and wrong is worked out as well as the historical criticism of this time. In order to display the development, these scholars and their works are presented in a chronological order. The last point leads to the final connection with Liu Zhiji's ideas which is addressed in many Ming time history books, too. It is a matter of showing parallels as well as direct references to Liu Zhiji's thoughts and the fact that many of his ideas were seized and further developed. Furthermore, at the end of this part, impulses for further research are given in an outlook by naming further possible currents and changes in Ming dynasty; namely these are mythological elements in history writing, the characteristics of the transition period and the beginning of Qing dynasty and a possible mutual influence of the mission of the Jesuits on history writing in China.

The last part offers a summary and the answers to the main research questions raised in the present study, namely whether there was actually a break with tradition which happened in Ming dynasty taking into account the *gonglun*-debate in historiography and the rediscovery of the *Shitong* and, moreover, the question to what extent the revival of Liu Zhiji's work was an expression of Ming time currents, especially currents in Chinese historiography. With regard to the latter crucial part the changes in Chinese historiography are evaluated and the proofs for the thesis of this research are summarized.

2. The History of Historiography in China

歷史是我們人生的經驗，人生的事業，而事業必有其“持久性”。故凡屬歷史事件，都是一種具有持久性的事件。¹⁵

History is the experience of our lives, it is the occupation of life; moreover, this occupation must possess an “enduring nature.” Therefore, all incidents belonging to history are a kind of incidents possessing an enduring nature.

The historian Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895-1990), one of the most important historians of the twentieth century, in this statement very clearly displays the significance of history as being “the experience of our lives” and, thus, being a very important part of humans’ lives. Thereby, he reflects a traditional Chinese view on the meaning of history and, in this course, of history writing or historiography. It is inseparably connected to Chinese culture, Chinese thinking and to the lives of every Chinese. For this reason, some very striking and continuing features of Chinese historiography stand out and will shortly be introduced in the next subchapters.

In order to understand the base on which the entire research and discussion about Ming time historiography is founded, it is necessary to display the main features of Chinese historiography which prevailed more or less throughout the ages, and, consequently, also influenced and shaped the developments of Ming dynasty. Afterwards, a brief survey through the history of Chinese historiography follows, beginning at the pre-imperial period and preceding until Song dynasty. However, this survey does not claim to be comprehensive, but rather is intended to delimit the striking developments of Ming historiography from developments in other periods of time.

2.1 Features of Chinese Historiography

Continuity

The well-known Chinese-American historian Yu Yingshi 余英時 (b. 1930), who was a student of Qian Mu 錢穆, considered one of the greatest historians, at the New Asia

¹⁵ Qian Mu 錢穆 (2011), *Zhongguo Lishi jingshen* 中國歷史精神 (The Spirit of Chinese History), Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, p. 8.

College in Hong Kong, formulated two qualities of history writing in China: The first one is the fact that it has already existed for a long time. The other fact is its continuous tradition without any breaks. Instead, it was constantly enhanced by innovations, new theories and methods—despite continuous moral views. This continuous endurance is accentuated and highlighted as the most particular attribute by many other scholars as well, such as Han Yu-Shan or the before cited Qian Mu, who attributes an “enduring nature” (*chijiu xing* 持久性) to history as the occupation of life. Han Yushan, likewise, stresses the peculiarity of history for the Chinese and its enduring nature in his famous book *Elements of Chinese Historiography*:¹⁶

The significance given to history by the Chinese people from the beginning until now is unique. It is the characteristic of the Chinese not only that they have endured, but that they have consciously endured. Their experience of continuity has demanded both the methods of historiography and interpretive thought.¹⁷

Yang Lien-Sheng agrees with Qian Mu’s attitude towards the meaning of history, the persistence of the Chinese and the way of writing history as being connected. If we ask about the reason why and the way how Chinese historiography was written the way it was, for him continuity is the answer to both of these questions. Yang specifically depicts the function of this very continuity: Continuity served many purposes, with legitimation leading the way. Especially after a new dynasty had been established, it was important to show a benevolent attitude towards the precedent dynasty out of gratitude and out of the will to build a relation with devotees of the last dynasty. Particularly historians who still were faithful followers of the overthrown dynasty could not decline the offer to follow their duty and write the history of “their” dynasty. Such a behavior of showing gratitude would transfer the *zhengtong* 正統- (correct governing)

¹⁶ K. C. Chang (1981), “Archaeology and Chinese Historiography,” *World Archaeology* 13.2, p. 156; Arthur F. Wright and John W. Hall (1962), “Historians of China and Japan,” *The American Historical Review* 67.4, p. 979; Han Yushan (1955); and Qian Mu (2011). For further information on Yu Yingshi’s conception of history, see Yu Yingshi (1976), *Lishi yu sixiang* 歷史與思想 (History and Thought), Taipei: Lianjing 聯經 Press; on this part, see especially p. 172.

¹⁷ Han Yushan (1955), p. 1.

principle onto the new dynasty. Therefore, continuity in the writing of historiography not only acted as legitimation but also as justification of the coup d'état.¹⁸

Morality and Historia Magistra Vitae

The second major—and for researchers from the West maybe most striking—feature of Chinese historiography is its claim to serve a moral purpose.

有人問中國的文化精神是什麼呢？我認為中國文化精神，應稱為“道德的精神”。中國歷史乃由道德精神所形成，中國文化亦然。¹⁹

Someone may ask: What is China's cultural spirit? I think the spirit of Chinese culture should be called “the spirit of morality.” Chinese history is formed by morality and spirit, and Chinese culture is like this, too.

As Qian Mu illustrates, morality is “China's cultural spirit,” the essence of China's culture and China's history. Therefore, it plays a crucial role in history writing, as well. Accordingly, the (moral) values which were transmitted through incidents in history were the main focus of historiography. In this context, Arthur F. Wright offers a common explanation for the importance of history writing in China: “The successes and failures of the past provide sure guidance for one's own time.” Furthermore, he reflects the Confucian tradition where the past should be studied as “a repository of relevant experience.” Another aspect of the importance of history writing—according to Wright—was the condition that it complemented the classics, which were supposed to be guidelines, as being the practical demonstration of these guidelines to be true. “To add to the historical record was to participate in the great work the sages had begun, and to study history was to understand in clusters of concrete instances how men had fared when they lived in accord with or in defiance of the moral injunctions of the Classics.”²⁰

Although it underwent some changes, history writing remained a moral activity. This moral aspect of history and history writing derives from the Chinese “philosophy”

¹⁸ Yang Lien-Sheng (1961), “The Organization of Chinese Official Historiography. Principles and Methods of the Standard Histories from the T'ang through the Ming Dynasty,” in: William G. Beasley und E.G Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University Press, pp. 46ff.

¹⁹ Qian Mu (2011), p. 124.

²⁰ Arthur F. Wright (1963), “On the Uses of Generalization in the Study of Chinese History,” in Louis Gottschalk (ed.), *Generalizations in the Writing of History*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 37f; K. C. Chang (1981), pp. 156f.

and “world outlook.” Everything happening was seen as being the ministry and action of spiritual forces, which all is predetermined by the ethic law of the cosmic order, the “will of heaven.” Drifting off this way would cause major danger, misery, catastrophes. For Chinese people beyond this cosmic order there is nothing, while this cosmic order is inseparably connected with universalism as the origin of historical consideration. The well-known Chinese scholar Liang Qichao 梁啟超,²¹ as well, stated that China in its political thinking always started with the entire human race, and world peace as ultimate goal, nation and family regarded only as secondary point of attention. Of course, this attitude contributed to and influenced the historians’ view on happenings. For Confucians, the earthen world is the part of the world where the culture of humans rules; the history of the humans is a history of people who peter out into the unlimited. It has to be said that exactly this just described universalism, which should help historians understand the concept of human kind, actually moved them off the way by veiling the diversity of the nature given national contingencies and their forming powers.²²

The aspiration of showing morality in historical thinking entails another aspect, which was already touched upon before. Chinese historical thinking is very distinct because it shows the interest in keeping the past in memory for evaluation of the present and advice for the future—*historia magistra vitae*.²³ This characteristic is to be found throughout the history of China and is deeply rooted in Chinese civilization. The purpose of observing incidents in the past is, thus, to detect the universal laws of the world in order to apply them for the judgment of history and present. These principles, which are recognized through history—better to say through concrete examples in history—, guide the people and the cosmic activities. Therefore, history represents a

²¹ Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) was a leading scholar of a new generation in late Qing dynasty, emerging after the Opium Wars. Together with Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927), another important reformer, he initiated the “Hundred Days’ Reform” (*Wuxu bianfa* 戊戌變法) in 1898. Besides his efforts and achievement in the realms of journalism and politics, he is regarded as the founder of modern Chinese historiography, whose principles he formulated in his work “New History” (*Xin shixue* 新史學). For more information on Liang Qichao, see, for example, Hao Chang (1971), *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.

²² Otto Franke (1945), *Der Sinn der chinesischen Geschichtsschreibung*, Peking: Deutschland-Institut (Sinologische Arbeiten, 3), pp. 110f.

²³ “History is the life’s teacher.” This expression derives from Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Oratore*, vol. II, 36. The original says the following: “History is indeed the witness of the times, the light of truth, the life of memory, the teacher of life, the messenger of antiquity...” (*Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis...*). *De Oratore*, by Marcus Tullius Cicero, libri tres, erklärt von Dr. Gustav Sorof, Berlin: Weidmann, 1875, liber secundus, pp. 27f.

considerable indication for how to manage politics and society in the present as well as in the future. Therewith, the substantial importance of history in Chinese society becomes apparent. Writing history contributes to the development of a better posterity and to the final realization of the ideal Confucian order in the present and future.²⁴

Independence, Recording Facts and Appropriate Concealing

[...] [D]ie Erhaltung der Geschichte ist überhaupt Staatsangelegenheit in China, die Fürsten bekommen ihre eigene Lebensbeschreibung nicht zu sehen, und die Geschichtsschreiber sind in ihrer Erzählung unbeschränkt.
(Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel about history in China)²⁵

History is seen as description of what was right and wrong in the past and, hence, can be accepted for the future as well. It was believed that lectures about morality would become obvious only through the record of historical facts. Because of its attempt to show moral guiding principles, it does not conform to political or ideological trends. This demand of supplying moral guidance as its main principle presupposed its “enduring nature” and independence from any kind of political interference. Conversely, it has always been very important to write true history, so that the cardinal principles of the human life are revealed.²⁶

Accordingly, historiography in China must be seen as almost completely separate from history itself. It has its own life and is independent from dynastic or institutional changes. Since the beginning of the Confucian orthodoxy it has been an independent realm with an analogous institutional frame to the administrative institutions; however, its independence already existed before the times of the rise of Confucianism. Therefore, it is not to be called Confucian historiography, although, evidently, Confucianism influenced some feature of history writing.²⁷

²⁴ Q. Edward Wang (2007), “Is There a Chinese Mode of Historical Thinking? A Cross-Cultural Analysis,” *History and Theory* 46.2, pp. 203, 205; Michael Quirin (1999), “Schwachtes Zentrum, schwache Peripherie? Einführende Bemerkungen zur chinesischen kritischen Tradition und ihrer Erforschung,” *Minima sinica* 2, p. 30; Huang Junjie (2007), “The Defining Character of Chinese Historical Thinking,” *History and Theory* 46.2, pp. 184, 187; Wright, Hall (1962), p. 979.

²⁵ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (2015), “Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte,” in Nordrhein-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften und Künste, and Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (eds.) (2015), *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel—Gesammelte Werke*, Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag (Nachschriften zu dem Kolleg des Wintersemesters 1822/23; Bd. 27.1), p. 106.

²⁶ K. C. Chang (1981), p. 157; Wright, Hall (1962), p. 979.

²⁷ K. C. Chang (1981), pp. 156f; Quirin (1999), p. 29.

The implied independence of historiography also involves another characteristic or requirement. In regard to the way of writing history, there are two principles and problems to be considered: The first one concerns the demand of trustful and objective recording which stands in contrast to ethical partiality or—moderately—the appropriate concealing (*hui* 諱). The second problem to be considered represents the principle of praise and blame being influenced by the joint appraisal of historical events and so on. Truthful recording can be traced back to the tradition of the *Zuozhuan*,²⁸ which postulated it until self-immolation, because historians were responsible for writing about everything under heaven for future generations. Therefore, historians were supposed to be independent, as well. This tradition was called *shiquan* 史權, “authority of history.” The fear of historians to be punished by the emperor for criticizing him or his actions should be banned by not allowing the emperor to read his own *qijuzhu* 起居注 (Diaries of Activity and Repose). But, of course, the historians’ independency often was violated by the emperor; many records were, indeed, first to be approved by the emperor before being published.²⁹

An often cited example is the story of Cui Shu 崔杼 who in 546 BC assassinated his ruler, the Duke Xiang of the state of Lu 魯 (*Lu Xiang gong* 魯襄公, 575-542 BC), and afterwards executed all the historians who reported this in the official records one after the other. Here, one can detect that historians also functioned as the personification of conscience. They devoted themselves to recording the truth without paying attention to the danger of saying the truth. In addition, this incident exemplifies that the words of a historian were taken seriously and paid attention to, which represents a danger for evil people who misbehave like in the case of Cui Shu.³⁰

As mentioned, in contrast to the truthful recording stands the appropriate concealing (*hui* 諱). This practice was already common in antiquity, which can be seen

²⁸ I.e. the tradition of the *Zuozhuan*. The *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (*Zuo* commentary) is—besides the *Gongyang zhuan* and the *Guliang zhuan*—a commentary to the *Chunqiu* written by Zuo Qiuming 左丘明, probably the Warring States Period (*Zhan guo* 戰國, fifth century BC-221 BC). It is a very important interpretation of the *Chunqiu*. See “The *Chunqiu-Zuozhuan* 春秋左傳 ‘Spring and Autumn Annals and the Tradition or Commentary of Zuo Qiuming,’ *Gongyangzhuan* 公羊傳 ‘The Commentary of Gongyang,’ *Guliangzhuan* 穀梁傳 ‘The Commentary of Guliang,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/chunqiuazuozhuan.html>, last accessed: July 22nd, 2015.

²⁹ Yang Lien-Sheng (1961), pp. 49f.

³⁰ K. C. Chang (1981), pp. 156f; Huang Junjie (2007), p. 181.

in the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* commentaries of the *Chunqiu* 春秋.³¹ Thereby, commentators of Confucius' works expose that Confucius himself deliberately omitted mistakes made by, for example, high esteemed persons or close relatives. In fact, such a way of writing—according to Chinese thinking—does not at all contradict truthful recording, but is a reflection of the Confucian system of ethics. Therefore, not surprisingly *hui* appears in every kind of historical writing, e.g. *guoshi* 國史 (National or dynastic history), official records or even private accounts.³²

This way of writing history also included that—whether the historian applied truthful recoding, appropriate concealing or praise and blame—only true facts should be written down. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the great German philosopher, said in 1822 in a lecture about the philosophy of world history that “history among the Chinese comprehends the bare and definite facts, without any opinion or reasoning upon them.” (“[...] die Geschichte der Chinesen nur die ganz bestimmten Facta in sich, ohne alles Urtheil und Raisonement [beschreibt]”)³³ Obviously, this statement does not entirely correspond to the method of praise and blame. One could rather argue that in Chinese historiography, facts and opinions should strictly and clearly be distinguishable from each other. Nevertheless, the most important feature in this context is the demand for historians to be independent and write independently. According to Otto Franke, Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086; see chap. 2.2) said about the historian's duties:

Nicht nach eigenem Gutdünken oder eigener Neigung manches als überflüssig fortzulassen, anderes als wichtig und bestimmend hervorzuheben, ist mir Gesetz geworden, sondern ich habe nur das berücksichtigt, was Bedeutung hat für Gedeihen und Verderben der

³¹ *Chunqiu* 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals of the State of Lu), allegedly written by Confucius; chronicle of the state of Lu, covers the period 722-481 BC; one of the Five Classics of Chinese literature. The *Gongyang zhuan* is a commentary to the *Chunqiu*, written by Gongyang Gao 公羊高; the same as the *Guliang zhuan* by Guliang Chi 穀梁赤. See “The *Chunqiu-Zuozhuan* 春秋左傳 ‘Spring and Autumn Annals and the Tradition or Commentary of Zuo Qiuming,’ *Gongyangzhuan* 公羊傳 ‘The Commentary of Gongyang,’ *Guliangzhuan* 穀梁傳 ‘The Commentary of Guliang,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/chunqiuazuozhuan.html>, last accessed: July 22nd, 2015.

³² Yang Lien-sheng (1961), p. 51.

³³ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1848), *Lectures on the Philosophy*, trans. J. Sibree, London: Henry G. Bohn, 1861, p. 142. Original from: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1848), *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, ed. Eduard Gans, coll. Dr. Karl Hegel, Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, p. 166.

Staaten, was bestimmend ist für Wohl und Unheil der Völker, damit das Gute als Vorbild und das Böse als Warnung diene.³⁴

Concrete Examples vs. Generalizations

The peculiarity of Chinese historiography is that it does not provide general descriptions but focusses on concrete case studies. The biographies of eminent persons represent an example of this characteristic. These biographies concerned all kinds of people: from emperors and ministers down to merchants. There are only two main features of generalizations, according to Arthur F. Wright, though: Historical writing in China tended to generalize regularities like observations concerning the cyclical decline of dynasties or the correlation between the wealth of a dynasty and its length of duration. Another kind of general remarks is to be found in terms like “*zhongguo* 中國” which contains the implicit meaning of “superiority” and “centrality.”³⁵ This correlates with another omnipresent characteristic which is revealed by the historiography of China: the sinocentric worldview. This worldview is solidified by the continuity of Chinese history because—as it has such a long tradition— everything that can be learned out of history must already be existent in Chinese history; this is the firm Chinese assumption.³⁶

Homo Historiens

The Chinese is—so to say—a “homo historiens,” which—according to Huang Chun-Chieh—implies that “to be human in China, to a very large extent, is to be historical, which means to live up to the paradigmatic past.” Chinese people shape history and at the same time are shaped by history. This means that a human in China lives his life according to a “paradigmatic past” which circulates around the *Dao* (*dao* 道). Thereby, historical thinking is determined by concrete and analogue thinking as a correspondence with the past and a sifting out of its meaning. Likewise, emperors always referred to the past for legitimation for a coup d’état or as guiding principle for “good governance.” Moreover, more than once history served for the legalization of wars and revolutions in politics and culture; and legal cases were decided by reference to the past, to precedents. History in China is highly—maybe a lot more than in West—determined by political

³⁴ Otto Franke (1945), p. 107.

³⁵ K. C. Chang (1981), p. 157.

³⁶ K. C. Chang (1981), p. 158.

and moral aspects. It always aimed towards a formation of the present in the light of an idealized antiquity.³⁷

The great historian Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895-1990) once stated that “national history awakens the soul of a nation,” because “history is the whole experience of our life, the whole life past. We can understand our life by referring ourselves to history. History can thus allow us to appropriately project our life into the future.”³⁸ We can be humans because we think and act in a historical way.³⁹ Qian Mu replies to the question “So, what is history?” (歷史是什麼呢?) the following:

我們可以說，歷史是我們全部的人生，就是全部人生的“經驗”。歷史本身，就是我們人生整個已往的經驗。至於這經驗，這已往的人生，經我們用文字記載，或因種種關係，保存有許多從前遺下的東西，使我們後代人，可以根據這些來瞭解，來回頭認識已往的經驗，已往的人生，這叫做“歷史材料”與“歷史記載”。我們憑這些材料和記載，來反看已往歷史的本身；再憑這樣所得，來預測我們的將來，這叫做“歷史知識”。⁴⁰

We can say that history, in fact, is human life; history is our whole life, precisely the experience of our whole lives. History per se namely is the experience of the whole past of our lives. As for this experience, it is the life of this past. We use scripture to record it, or on the basis of all kinds of matters, we preserve many things which were left behind in the past. It causes that our later generations can—based on this—understand it and later recognize the experience of the past, the life of the past. This is known as historical material and accounts. Leaning on this material and accounts, we, in reverse, see the history of the past per se. By leaning on such kind [of historical accounts] we can forecast our future. This is known as historical knowledge and insight. Therefore, history should be divided into three parts, namely: one being the history per se, one being

³⁷ Huang Junjie (2007), pp. 180, 184ff.

³⁸ Huang (2007), p. 181. These words originally derive from Qian Mu’s work *Zhongguo lishi jingshen* 中國歷史精神 (The Spirit of Chinese History), p. 6.

³⁹ Huang Junjie (2007), pp. 181, 184.

⁴⁰ Qian Mu (2011), p. 6.

the historical material, and one being the historical knowledge which we require.

To sum it up: The meaning of historical writing itself was researched extensively. It is the historical insight. This insight is gained through the phantasy of historians, which is always validated by reality. It is utopistic to expect a totally impartial record about history; this is simply not possible. But objectivity must always be endeavored and seen as something elevated. Accordingly, one feature of historiography is the concentration not on concrete examples—this must not be mistaken for a simple stringing together of facts—, but, rather, the detection of the universal concepts and ideas in life as ultimate goal.⁴¹

2.2 Methods in and Chronology of Chinese Historiography

[...] [D]ie Geschichte also ist eine Geschichte des Kaisers und seines Hauses. diß sind die Hauptmomente der chinesischen Geschichte.
(Georg Friedrich Hegel)⁴²

Chinese history has always been written by officials and for officials. It was supposed to be used as a guideline for dealing with bureaucratic matters. At first it focused on cosmology, rituals and portents, then switched to a focus on a more practical application by describing administrative details such as taxes, law and justice or the organization of officials. This shift is recognizable by the development of the Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史).⁴³ The thematic treatises in this *zhengshi* severely suffer from monotony and stereotypy due to consisting of excerpts and other texts just chronologically placed next to each other. Analyses or reflections are not to be found in these kinds of official texts.⁴⁴

The just mentioned Standard Histories belong to one type of historical writing; altogether three categories can be distinguished: The first one being the official

⁴¹ Otto Franke (1945), pp. 96-99.

⁴² Hegel (2015), p. 112.

⁴³ The Standard Histories basically use the *jizhuanti* 紀傳體, the biographical style; still, chronological aspects are also taken into account. This form of history writing was officially approved. The expression *zhengshi* was used in the *Sui Shu* 隋書 (dated 636) for the first time. Han (1955), pp. 40f.

⁴⁴ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 5

historical records (*guoshi* 國史); the second representing the unofficial or private historiography (*yeshi* 野史); and the third being the family records (*jiashi* 家史). The first two continuously influenced and enriched each other, which led to a great amount of research methods, judgment standards, and styles of presentation. Many writers switched from one realm to the other—meaning they first wrote privately and then became an official court historian or the other way around.⁴⁵

It is well known that no people on earth possesses so voluminous a record of their past as the Chinese. The sum of recorded particulars for the two and a half millenniums of “formal” history writing is incalculable. To translate the twenty-five standard histories would require forty-five million English words, and this would represent only a minute fraction of the total record.⁴⁶

At first perhaps the historical writing was initiated out of the desire to attach a chronology to events in life. Things to be recorded were extraordinary and meaningful events like natural catastrophes (floods, draughts, earthquakes etc.), epidemics, administrative policies, lists of levy taxes and so on. Later on, emperors promoted the recording of their deeds to present them to posterity. At this time, it was already common to record things for reference in the future.⁴⁷

For the chronology of Chinese historiography, Ssu-yü Teng proposed a classification into four phases: In the first period beginning in the old times and reaching until the second century AD, the formation of history writing happened, including the establishment of the two styles of writing, namely the biographic-thematic *jizhuanti* 紀傳體 style⁴⁸ and the annalistic *biannianti* 編年體 style.⁴⁹ The second

⁴⁵ Mittag (2002), p. 22; Wright, Hall (1962), p. 979.

⁴⁶ Wright (1963), p. 37.

⁴⁷ Otto Franke (1945), pp. 99f.

⁴⁸ *Jizhuanti* 紀傳體, the composite or biographical style, is a style of history writing based on biographies; the model is Sima Qian's *Shiji*. One typical example are the Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史).

⁴⁹ The *biannianti* 編年體 or annalistic style (“Arrangement under Years”) was derived from the chronological records of the Zhou kings (Zhou dynasty, *Zhouchao* 周朝 1046-256 BC), and therefore, it is the oldest pattern of Chinese historical writing. Events and facts are listed in a strict chronological order year by year, month by month, day by day. The interrelation and possible connections of events are not taken into account at all. Typical works written in this style are the veritable records (*shilu* 實錄). See

developmental phase of history writing and—at the same time—the golden age of historiography was the second until the thirteenth century AD. Especially in the time of the Southern Song dynasty (*Nan Song* 南宋; 1127-1279), history writing was appreciated a lot. Teng goes on labelling the time from 1280 until 1900 to be a time of decay in history writing. Only at the end of the nineteenth century the writing of history blossomed again. This assumed phase categorization is reasoned by an awakening self-consciousness of historiography in the time of the Southern and Northern dynasties (*Nanbeichao* 南北朝; 420-589), which increased up to the establishment of the Bureau of History in the eighth century. The decline of the art of history writing results—according to Teng—exactly from the installation of this office because in the Bureau nobody would feel responsible for the consistence of works and personal and individual skills and ingenuity were not being promoted.⁵⁰

It becomes apparent that historiography in the time of Ming dynasty formerly was regarded as being in decay and as not generating characteristics relevant for the development of historiography in China.

Pre-Imperial Historiography

The first chroniclers can already be found in Zhou dynasty (*Zhouchao* 周朝; 1046-256 BC) when they were high cult officials. Besides keeping the imperial records, they worked as astrologers, fortuneteller and priests as well. Their main duty was to observe nature, that means to watch the occurrences in nature, in the cosmos and in the sky, to determine and fix the calendar and beneficial days for important actions. Another crucial duty was to accomplish all the necessary obligations to honor the forefathers. From ancient compilations on rituals, we know that the emperor had at least two chroniclers: one on his left who would write down the deeds of the emperor, and one on his right who would inscribe the emperor's speeches. The appointment of archivists was common at princes' or dukes' courts as well; in these cases, the archivist also occupied the position of controlling the prince's or duke's actions. From this the chronicler gradually became the master of decision about the rightfulness or wrongfulness of

Wolfgang Franke (1968), *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, p. 29.

⁵⁰ Ssu-yü Teng (1949), "Chinese Historiography in the Last Fifty Years," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 8.2, pp. 131f; Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 6.

governmental acts and the archivist's office became the moral judge even over the emperor and his actions. Not only because of their significant role in the religious and social life of ancient Chinese were they held in high esteem, but also because they were the only ones with writing skills. The archivists' records (like oracle inscriptions, genealogies, contracts or other kinds of documents) were kept in the ancestral temples—this was the beginning of Chinese historiography. Those inscriptions held a very important position and were meant as judgments for eternity—an opinion which determined Chinese historiography for a very long time.⁵¹

A characteristic of Chinese history writing is the concentration on the first millennium BC in comparison to times thereafter, which entails an assessment of Chinese history by using ancient texts only—except the works concerning just one single dynasty. According to P. van der Loon, precise and critical Chinese historiography can firstly be found in Song dynasty, while the historical works of Zhou and Han times must be regarded as poor writings in concern of historical accuracy, which also derives from the unsatisfactory body of source material.⁵²

The origin of the first chronicles of Chinese history can be traced back to records of truth tellers. The roots of historical works are dereferenced to 1300 BC. The *Shiji* 史記⁵³ speaks about scribes for recording the history having already existed in the year 753 BC in the state of Qin (*Qinguo* 秦國, ninth century until 221 BC). But the fact that at that time the Qin state had been established only shortly before implies the existence of earlier accounts and scribes in other states of this time. The *Shiji* mentions *zhi* 志 annals and *shi* 氏 genealogies, which were still available at the time of the composition of the *Shiji* and served as its sources.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Otto Franke (1945), pp. 101ff.

⁵² P. van der Loon (1961), “The Ancient Chinese Chronicles and the Growth of Historical Ideals,” in: William G. Beasley und E.G Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University Press, p. 24.

⁵³ The *Shiji* 史記 (Scribe's Records; formerly *Taishi gongshu* 太史公書, Records of the Grand Historian) was finished 109 BC by the official historian Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145/135 BC-86 BC)—his father Sima Tan 司馬談 (ca. 165 BC-110 BC) had begun to work on these records. The work covers the period from the sage Yellow Emperor until Sima Qian's time, about 2500 years, and is regarded to be the model of the 25 Standard histories (*zhengshi* 正史). For more information on the *Shiji*, see “Chinese Literature—*Shiji* 史記,” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://chinaKnowledge.de), <http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html>, last accessed: June 28th, 2017.

⁵⁴ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), pp. 2f; P. van der Loon (1961), pp. 24f.

The problem of the historians of ancient times was their affiliation to the emperor or the fate of the dynasty. They were dependent on the benevolence of the emperor; since the ninth century BC chroniclers were not allowed to criticize sovereigns in any way, which—of course—brought along falsification of accounts or, at least, extenuations. Parallel to the written records, oral accounts and oral tradition were popular as sources of history, but it is not known when they were recorded. Possibly, there were certain officials for noting these oral accounts.⁵⁵

The only history works from pre-imperial China “assumed to be authentic” are the “Spring and Autumn Annals of the State of Lu” (*Chunqiu*, see p. 19, FN 31; ascribed to Confucius) and the “Bamboo Annals” (*Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年).⁵⁶ Confucius in his *Chunqiu* did what was supposed to become a specific character of Chinese historical writing: He attributed an ethical aim to historical writing, namely by propagating the method of “praise and blame” (*baobian* 褒貶). Even if he admits this fact as appearing in the terminology of the *Chunqiu*, P. van der Loon, though, believes that ancient Chinese historiography never had the aim of judging what is right or wrong; rather such implying and moralizing statements were added later on or just read into certain text passages.⁵⁷ But—as mentioned—the *Chunqiu* was different because it already belonged to another time and was written under different conditions. In fact, it was a textbook of political ethics, where questions about authenticity did not play an important role or, at least, were not to be mentioned because of the developing moralizing attitude towards history. The reasons for this emergence of moralizing interpretation of history on the one hand and the rational interpretation of formerly ritually characterized historiographical accounts on the other hand can be speculated about. The decline of Zhou dynasty, the rise of the nobility who searched for models in the past implicating a euphemizing of old myths, and the ascent of many philosophical schools, which

⁵⁵ Otto Franke (1945), p. 104; van der Loon (1961), p. 26.

⁵⁶ The Bamboo Annals (*Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年), also named *Jizhong shu* 汲冢書 “Book from the Tomb of Jixian 汲縣,” is a chronicle from Wei 魏 dynasty (403-225 BC) of the Warring States period (*Zhanguo* 戰國; fifth century BC-221 BC), which depicts the history from the Xia 夏 dynasty (seventeenth to fifteenth century BC) until the Warring States period. For more information on the Bamboo Annals, see “Chinese Literature—*Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年, the Bamboo Annals,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zhushujinian.html>, last accessed: June 28th, 2017.

⁵⁷ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 2; van der Loon (1961), pp. 25f.

emerged out of territorial fragmentation—they all contributed to the evolution of history from pure chronological sequences to a peculiar position in the Chinese moral system.⁵⁸

In this context, it is noteworthy to mention the strict separation between actual facts and their evaluation, as was touched upon in the features of historiography. In the case of the *Chunqiu* a division between the text itself and its commentary is always present, which influenced later historiographical undertakings, as well. The authors' opinion is never to be mixed with the concrete facts; hence, praise and blame are to be mentioned in the epilogue, not in the text itself.⁵⁹

When talking about the *Chunqiu* in this context, one has to keep in mind that the *Chunqiu* never claimed to be a historical record. Rather, Confucius only summarized parts of the *Shujing* 書經 about the Zhou emperors and chronicles of the state of Lu 魯 (*Luguo*, ca. 1042-249 BC; part of today's Shandong province), in which he lived. It was merely a conglomerate of poor accounts of events, sometimes even of inferior meaning. Its high reputation as historiographical work stands in contrast to its actual form. Consequently, the *Chunqiu* is not a historical record, but only is supposed to show examples of concepts such as the operating of the *Tiandao* 天道, the way of heaven.⁶⁰

Actually, the sources of pre-imperial historical writing appear to be much more diverse than in later times: For example, family genealogies served as sources; furthermore, stories and legends from feudal states, which often were pithy but very vivid, were used as source material and—in the case of the *Chunqiu*—later on were collected in the *Zuo* commentary (*Zuozhuan* 左傳) of the *Chunqiu*. The rich information about the Zhou period derived from many different annals of the states in the time from the eighth to the fifth century BC. Next to political goals, which are expressed in these records, the *Zuozhuan* also gives account of philosophical ideas about moralizing or cosmological speculations, while using written sources as well as oral tradition. The *Zuo* commentary belongs to an important time in Chinese historiography and was the stimulus for many Chinese historians in later times. Besides this method of using different accounts from feudal states like the *Zuozhuan* did, it was also very common to

⁵⁸ Van der Loon (1961), pp. 27ff.

⁵⁹ Van der Loon (1961), p. 29.

⁶⁰ Otto Franke (1945), p. 103.

cite from historical precedents in philosophical discussions to persuade the discussion partners. Consequently, many tales about historical persons and events emerged and found their way into history.⁶¹

Imperial Historiography—the Shiji and the Hanshu

The beginning of the imperial time in China saw a dramatic change in the culture of history writing. Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145-90 BC) was the first to write a comprehensive historical work, the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian). He as well held a post as chronicler and astrologer, although the latter duty did not have the important role as it had before. The *Shiji* was a historical account—begun by Sima Tan 司馬談 (165-110 BC), his father—tracing history from ancient times until the contemporary period. In a way, his writing appeared to be an assemblage of former traditions: Although it was revolutionary in its whole composition, it still showed some elements of former chronicle styles. Instead of an autocratic account of interpreting natural phenomena in the favor of the state, it tried to detect an ultimate law which systematically forms events on the principle of cause and effect. The *Shiji* served as prototype of China's Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史) up to the twentieth century. Besides historical facts it also contains treatises about governmental relevant topics, such as the calendar, hydrography, political economy and so forth. Remarkable is the detailed given information which seem to be obtained from oral sources, as well. While Sima Qian sometimes indeed doubts parts of the sources, he mainly echoes the sources without scrutinizing them. This is only one characteristic which gives account about the struggle between ancient and new standards and ways of thinking. While the chronicles of the emperors, the annals, appear as prosaic accounts without any judgments—leaving it to the reader himself to interpret history—, the biographies show up as lively reports about men's actions and the moral which can be drawn out of them for future actions. The revolutionary significance of the *Shiji* is obvious, but so is the certainty that the time was not ripe for such ideas: Sima Qian was sent to jail and the *Shiji* was published only many years later because Sima Qian's judgments were still feared long after the genesis of the *Shiji*. Nevertheless, for more than one thousand years the *Shiji* was regarded the

⁶¹ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), pp. 2f; van der Loon (1961), p. 26.

guideline for historiographical works.⁶² Starting with Sima Qian's work, a general style of historical works was developed consisting of three main parts: annals, biographies and treatises. Gradually, the dealing with sources became more precise and non-verified sources were left out; moreover, only official sources were taken into account, which resulted in historical works in the style of political White Papers^{63, 64}.

The second important work for Chinese historiography is Ban Gu's 班固 (32-92 AD) *Hanshu* 漢書, which was the first work concentrating on only one dynasty, namely the Han dynasty (*Hanchao* 漢朝; 206 BC-220 AD). The formation of this text consists of two parts, the beginning of its emergence as a private work and its continued writing under official guidance.⁶⁵ The following development can be characterized as being a conglomerate of private initiatives and official supervision. Ban Gu, for example, had begun to write his significant work as a private historian but was appointed an official historian in the meantime, whereby the *Hanshu* developed into an officially supervised project. His appointment as official historian in the first century AD also marked the beginning of a progress which culminated in the establishment of the Bureau of Historiography in the seventh century. Many historical texts originated from the time of the splitting of China after the fall of the Later or Eastern Han (*Houhan* 後漢, 25-220 AD), but only a few survived in their original shape. It was also this period that firstly recognized history as being an independent discipline. This notion derived from a newly occurred self-awareness of literature of all kinds, including historical writing.⁶⁶

Another innovation of this period was the official appointment of scholars as historians. The truth tellers who occupied the post of chroniclers before were set aside. That means they proceeded to entrusted particular—and specialized—historians with the recording of historical facts.⁶⁷

⁶² Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 3; Otto Franke (1945), pp. 104f; van der Loon (1961), pp. 29f.

⁶³ White Papers are used in governmental issues, and are supposed to present governmental policies and invite to share opinions on it.

⁶⁴ Van der Loon (1961), p. 30.

⁶⁵ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 3.

⁶⁶ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 3; A. F. P. Hulswé (1961), "Notes on the Historiography of the Han Period," in William G. Beasley und E.G Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University Press, p. 43.

⁶⁷ Hulswé (1961), p. 43.

Historiography in Tang—The Beginning of Official Historiography

For the next thousand years, the *Shiji* and the dynastic frame, which was established in the *Hanshu*, were considered to be the correct and only way of writing history. Consequently, nobody tried to compose a comparably comprehensive work. After the reunification of China under the Sui (*Suichao* 隋朝, 581-618) and then the Tang dynasty (*Tangchao* 唐朝, 618-907) new impulses for the development of Chinese historiography developed. In the times of Emperor Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (r. 626-649) and his descendants, many historical works were officially mandated, edited and commented. He had recognized the contemporary validity of historical events, he desired to uncover the history of the past and was conscious of the need to record events happening in his time for the future. On that account, it is hardly surprising that exactly in this time Liu Zhiji composed his *Shitong*.⁶⁸

The main transformation in Tang dynasty represented the shift from only one compiler of a historical work—in the past this one author could also be a private scholar like in the cases of the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu* or the *Houhanshu* 後漢書⁶⁹—to collective compilations like the *Jinshu* 晉書⁷⁰ under the patronage of Emperor Taizong; tradition has it that Taizong himself contributed to the composition of the *Jinshu*. This collaborative compilation by a historiographer's commission—directed by the *jianxiu guoshi* 檢修國史 (supervisor of national history), the chancellor—marked a turning point in Chinese historiography and was obeyed, e.g., in the successive Standard Histories, thenceforward. The Bureau of Historiography (*shiguan* 史館), as this commission was called, had been established in 629 and actually only consisted of three

⁶⁸ Rafe de Crespigny (1975), "Universal Histories," in Donald Daniel Leslie et al. (eds.), *Essays on the Sources for Chinese History. Dedicated to Charles Patrick Fitzgerald by the Department of Far Eastern History, Australian National University Columbia*, Columbia: University of South Carolina, p. 64; On-cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang (2005), *Mirroring the Past. The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China*, Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 108f.

⁶⁹ The *Houhanshu* 後漢書 (Book of the Later Han) was compiled by Fan Ye (398-445) and covers the years 6 to 189 AD. For more information, see "Chinese Literature— *Houhanshu* 後漢書," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/houhanshu.html>, last accessed: June 28th, 2017.

⁷⁰ The *Jinshu* 晉書 (Book of Jin) was compiled by an official commission at the Tang court. It covers the history of Jin dynasty (265-420) and the Sixteen Kingdoms (*Shiliu guo* 十六國, 304-439). For more information, see "Chinese Literature—*Jinshu* 晉書," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/jinshu.html>, last accessed: June 28th, 2017.

to four staff writers, so called *xiuzhuan* 修撰—if they occupied other official positions as well—or *zhiguan* 治官—if they only worked in the *shiguan*. Furthermore, there were assistants (*lingshi* 領史, lit. “commanded historians”) and secretaries working in the History Office. The main duty of the *shiguan* was to control and keep the court diaries about the actions and words by the emperor, the so called diaries of activity and repose (*qijuzhu* 起居注), which were the main source and the collected material to form a daily calendar of each year, the so called daily records (*rili* 日曆). Together with other sources, e.g. collected materials from the provinces, memorials or edicts, the historiographers transformed the *qijuzhu* and the *rili* into a chronological arrangement in order to compose the veritable records (*shilu* 實錄) after the death of an emperor; out of them, the National Histories (*guoshi* 國史) were compiled. After the end of the particular dynasty, all this information was collected and merged into a Standard History (*zhengshi* 正史) by the following dynasty—eight of which were written in the first century of Tang dynasty. For Standard Histories in the *jizhuanti* 紀傳體 style in general, there were two basic components: the basic annals (*benji* 本紀) and the biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳), which could also contain accounts about foreign persons. Additionally, often treatises (*zhi* 志) and—rather rarely—tables (*biao* 表) were taken into account. Evidently, many styles of official recording were developed and established in this time, especially accounts of the activities of the court: the administrative reports of the chief ministers and their subordinates of the current dynasty (*shizhengji* 時政記) or the already mentioned diaries of activity and repose or the daily records (*rili* 日曆). Although the Tang dynasty was the first to systematically arrange these records, diaries, for example, were already known in the early first millennium BC and were handed down since early Han dynasty.⁷¹

To sum up, for the time of the Tang dynasty, the pivot characteristic—concerning historiography—is that official history writing was not in any case something which lay in the hands of a single person or even a private person anymore; indeed, this was

⁷¹ Koh, Liu (1956), p. 35; Ng, Wang (2005), pp. 109, 112, 115; Han (1955), p. 44; Denis Crispin Twitchett and Howard L. Goodman (1986), *A Handbook for T'ang History*, Princeton: Chinese Linguistics Project, p. 22; Yang Lien-sheng (1961), p. 45.

already forbidden in Sui dynasty. The best example is the *Jiutangshu* 舊唐書⁷² which was being compiled by many different persons in offices, bureaus and private study rooms over many years. Still, it has been made clear that the system of official history writing was not yet complete and homogenous.⁷³

This ongoing formalization and bureaucratization was enhanced by Confucians insofar as they preached the recording of true facts and the moralization of them; but this moralizing not only included the praising and criticizing (*baobian* 褒貶) of facts, but also appropriate concealment (*hui* 諱). For historians, this bureaucratization meant pressure not only from Confucianism, but also—politically—from influential families, court cliques and from the emperors themselves. Historical writing gradually developed from a vivid literary genre into a formalized and uninspiring text form without any space for interpretation or personal annotations. While the basic annals—due to their character as precise reports about successes of a dynasty—were carefully edited and tended to be rather prosaic, the formerly descriptive biographies also turned into formalistic texts full of stereotypes and topoi because of the increasing number of eminent persons to write about. Official historiography was written by and for officials only.⁷⁴

Despite these unfavorable circumstances, historians—particularly private historians—never lost their critical mind and motivation; Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (see PART II) was only the first one of his time to express this desire for an innovative historiography free from political and social necessities. As Arthur F. Wright and John W. Hall stated while referring to Pulleyblank’s study on Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* 史通 which will elaborately be addressed in the next part of the present study:

Severe and sometimes pedantic as his judgments are, many of the attitude that are characteristic of the private tradition of Chinese historiography shine through: skepticism toward all written evidence of

⁷² The *Jiutangshu* 舊唐書 (The Old Book of Tang), a history work of the Tang dynasty, was written in the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms Period (*Wudai shiguo* 五代十國, 907-960/979). For more information on the *Jiutangshu*, see “Chinese Literature—*Jiutangshu* 舊唐書,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/jiutangshu.html>, last accessed: June 29th, 2017.

⁷³ Twitchett, Goodman (1986), p. 21; Ng, Wang (2005), p. 108.

⁷⁴ Wright, Hall (1962), p. 980; Twitchett, Goodman (1986), p. 22.

the past; impatience with dynastic periodization; a desire for vividness as well as accuracy in the reconstruction of the past; contempt for those who gave in to political pressures and wrote with a “crooked brush” (ch’ü-pi) a love of the past for its own sake.⁷⁵

Liu Zhiji’s son, Liu Zhi 劉秩 (fl. eighth century), committed himself to history theory, as well, and was one of the idealistically motivated private historians. He invented the private encyclopedic institutional works and compiled a collection of Chinese political treatises named *Zhengdian* 政典 (Governmental Institutions). He was followed by Du You 杜佑 (735-812) who—under the impression of the rebellion of An Lushan⁷⁶ shortly beforehand—wrote the *Tongdian* 通典 (Comprehensive Statutes)⁷⁷ in order to better understand the circumstances contributing to this catastrophe. Another work of the same category was Su Mian’s 蘇冕 (734-805) *Huiyao* 會要, which was later combined by Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982) with the *Xu Huiyao* 續會要 by Yang Shaofu 楊紹復 (fl. 916) to the known *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要 (Collection of Important Documents).⁷⁸

Although this official style of historical writing restricted the literary elaboration of historians, it also has to be seen as remarkable novelty in Chinese historiography. Especially the promotion of Standard Histories appears as a very interesting undertaking. In these highly esteemed records the (Confucian) contradiction between a truthful account and appropriate adjustment including praising and blaming becomes obvious.⁷⁹ Another factor to be considered are the mutual influence and interference which this new style of historiography had: Not only were the historians pressured by groups of

⁷⁵ Wright, Hall (1962), pp. 981f.

⁷⁶ The Rebellion of An Lushan 安祿山 and Shi Siming 史思明 (*An Shi zhiluan* 安史之亂) was an uprising by An Lushan and later Shi Siming from 755 until 763 which erupted the Tang dynasty. In consequence, the Tang court lost control over large parts of its territory and the economy was heavily disordered. For more information, see “Chinese History—Tang Period Event History,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Tang/tang-event.html#anlushan>, last accessed: June 29th, 2017.

⁷⁷ *Tongdian* 通典 (Comprehensive Statutes), a work which covers all different kinds of topics, e.g. food, examination, government offices, rites, music, military and so on. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Tongdian* 通典,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/tongdian.html>, last accessed: June 29th, 2017.

⁷⁸ Edwin G. Pulleyblank (1961), “Chinese Historical Criticism: Liu Chih-chi and Ssuma-Kuang,” in William G. Beasley und E.G Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University Press, pp. 151f.

⁷⁹ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 4.

interest, but also the emperor; especially Emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 626-649), for example, did not dare to speak openly in front of the diary keepers anymore. In a way, historians thereby even influenced the emperor's decisions; thus, they also had some sort of power, as it was their duty to help the emperor to become immortal through history—of course, by granting them a good reputation. The guidelines for truthful recording also affected the emperor and empowered the Bureau of Historiography to be a relentless institution of veritable writing—in theory at least.⁸⁰

In the course of Tang dynasty, history and historiography developed into an independent and autonomous realm used for pragmatic and socio-political application. Learning from history for their own government was a crucial characteristic of the Tang emperors' thinking. At the end of the Taizong era, the Bureau of History had already become the most important office in the Chinese governmental system and had reached a sophisticated quality of work. In short, in Tang dynasty, the status of history was generally raised.⁸¹

Historiography of Song and Yuan Dynasties

The Song dynasty (*Songchao* 宋朝, 960-1279) distinguishes itself by having uttered the very eminent work *Zizhi Tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government). The author of this extraordinary work was the conservative state official Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086), who lived in the eleventh century and was a prominent opponent of Wang Anshi.⁸² In 294 volumes, it gives an account of the events from 403 BC to 959 AD and, thus, is regarded as of equal value as Sima Qian's *Shiji*. The *Comprehensive Mirror* is arranged strictly chronologically without caring about categories and—surprisingly—composed by Sima Guang as a private person only.⁸³

⁸⁰ Ng, Wang (2005), pp. 111f.

⁸¹ Ng, Wang (2005), pp. 117, 120.

⁸² Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086), *zi* 字: Jiefu 介甫, from Linchuan 臨川 (today's region of Fuzhou 撫州, Jiangxi), was chancellor and a Chinese economist in Song dynasty; he wanted to implement major reforms in the state. For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Wang Anshi 王安石,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/personswanganshi.html>, last accessed: June 29th, 2017.

⁸³ Pulleyblank (1961), p. 152; Achim Mittag (2012), “Chinese Official Historical Writing under the Ming and Qing,” in Daniel Woolf, José Rabasa, Masayuki Sato and Edoardo Tortarolo (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing. Volume 3: 1400-1800*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 24.

Like Liu Zhiji, Sima Guang was influenced by the *Zuozhuan* and its tradition and was a very passionate historian, as well. But in contradiction to Liu Zhiji's *Shitong*, which stressed the theory, Sima Guang understood to connect theory with practical application. His thinking was focused on pragmatism, actuality and realism. He followed the aim of arranging knowledge for practical employment and—in contrast to Liu Zhiji and many others—he was officially allowed to do so and to write his *Comprehensive Mirror*. The *Zizhi Tongjian* represented a novelty in regard to the circumstances of its compilation. Instead of being written by the Bureau of History the *Comprehensive Mirror* was free from the compulsions of official writing and initiated a new era of independent writing. Achim Mittag postulates “five major currents” which characterized this new era: (1) an extension of private historiography, (2) increased historical criticism including scrutinizing, discussing and reflecting historical sources and the past, (3) the accumulation of local gazetteers (*fangzhi* 方志), (4) the emergence of new forms of literature like historical novels (*yanyi* 演義), and (5) a changing perception of norms and values which is associated with “emphasizing ethical motives behind human action.”⁸⁴

After the time of Sima Guang, historical criticism of Song dynasty was characterized by commentaries of former history works; no new compositions or compilations were produced. Still, this time can be called very fruitful for the Chinese intellectual world; the study of the classics and philosophy gained more importance. The historians and philosophers Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296) and Hu Sanxing 胡三省 (1230-1287) belong to the most influential personalities of this period, to name but a few. A historiography in harmony with the dominant Neo-Confucian⁸⁵ thought can be

⁸⁴ Pulleyblank (1961), p. 153; Mittag (2012), pp. 24ff.

⁸⁵ The Neo-Confucianism (*Lixue* 理學, “Teachings of the Order”) was a renaissance of the Confucianism in Song dynasty; the best-known representatives were Zhu Xi and the brothers Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107; also called Master Yichuan 伊川先生). Zhu Xi's 朱熹 (1130-1200) Neo-Confucianism was developed in Song dynasty and advocated the existence of one single source for all phenomena, the universal order (*li* 理); hence, it was also called *lixue* 理學 (Teachings of the Order). Other crucial concepts of Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism were *qi* 氣, the “vital force” and the sum of the *li* being the *Taiji* 太極, the “Great Ultimate.” Zhu Xi propagated the study of the Four Books, namely the *Daxue* (Great Learning; a chapter of the Classic of the Rites (*Liji* 禮記)), the *Zhongyong* 中庸 (Doctrine of the Mean), the *Lunyu* 論語 (Analects of Confucius) and the *Mencius* (*Mengzi* 孟子). See “Chinese Literature—Neo-Confucianism,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/neoconfucianism.html>, last accessed: August 5th, 2016.

seen as a characteristic of this time, which manifested itself in personalities like Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007-1072) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) and their works. It was a new intellectual movement. The emergence of precursors of the *kaozheng* 考證-method (“search for evidence;” see chap. 13) also appeared in this time due to the former mentioned developments, although this method was fully developed only at the end of Ming and mostly in Qing dynasties.⁸⁶

The Yuan dynasty (*Yuanchao* 元朝, 1271-1368) continued this trend: Private historiography flourished amongst other things because the Mongols did not have the power to control its dissemination. Indeed, there were even cases of public writings which propagated the loyalty to Song dynasty. Thereby, the style of such private writings did not distinguish itself from official works because normally their authors were officials or scholars themselves. The one distinctive characteristic of Yuan dynasty historiography is the appearance of Buddhist history writing, which was the first category to be different from the widespread and officially accepted Confucian conception.⁸⁷ The problem of Yuan history writing was that—in contradiction to Song times—Neo-Confucian thoughts had a rather restrictive function due to the development of Neo-Confucianism into an authoritarian system of thought. This is proved by the nature of the *lunzan* 論讚 (discussions and appraisals) of the Standard Histories in those times which rather evolved into laudations than true discussions. It was not welcomed to hear the opinion of an individual; rather, the “impartial” consensus of this time should be depicted. The assumption of complete objectivity is perhaps the most crucial mistake in the historiography of this time.⁸⁸ After this bland development (or stagnation) of historiography in Yuan dynasty, the extraordinary break in Ming dynasty followed which will be approached in PART V.

2.3 Problems and Ongoing Characteristics of Chinese Historiography

During the course of history, there appeared manifold problems permeating the realm of history writing. The problem for the chronicler was always to make the right selection,

⁸⁶ Pulleyblank (1961), p. 159; Yang Lien-sheng (1961), pp. 52f.

⁸⁷ Pulleyblank, Beasley (1961), p. 6.

⁸⁸ Yang Lien-sheng (1961), pp. 52f.

to separate necessary from unnecessary information. The *Shiji* is a very good example for methodological weaknesses which can be traced in many ancient historical works. It is compiled using the biographical or thematic style (*jizhuanti* 紀傳體), which means that all the events are arranged in the order of the emperors reigning years, often leading to the splitting of correlating events due to a change of the emperor. Only in the twelfth century such deficiencies were detected and improved. Yuan Shu 袁樞 (1131-1205), a disciple of Sima Guang, arranged the dynastic histories in a new order and with that made processes clearer while remaining faithful to the original wording as much as possible. The so established style was called *benmo* 本末 (origin and end) and distinguished itself from the former shape in that it was not a continuing description of events. In this time, Sima Guang held on to the order of the years (chronologically), but Yuan Shu, in contrast, was guided by the objects or topics.⁸⁹

Although the style of writing changed into a more plausible—so to say “modern”—way of recording, the essence of Chinese historical writing constantly remained the same over centuries: Nobody ever tried to change or wanted to get rid of the religious-ethical heritage of the past. The cosmic thinking with its moral laws obtained a dogmatic character with the spreading of the Confucian thought. Especially in the twelfth century during this development of new historical writing styles, the Confucianism was pushed by Zhu Xi’s teachings and put forward to a total revival of Confucian ethics, called the Neo-Confucianism (see p. 35, FN 85).⁹⁰

Meanwhile, the core of the Chinese—so to say pragmatic—historiography also never really changed. The law of cause and effect and its practical application were the basis of historical writing, the authoritarian standard. This had already been employed by Sima Qian and the historians of the middle ages. The pushing force was the recognition of true and false relations to models and emperors’ regulations, which determined the orientation towards the good and evil. These examples were believed to proclaim the absolute truth like the classics themselves. The historian’s ethical bondages dictated him to describe everything as a mirror to the true events so as to give the present people the chance to disclose their forefathers’ fate and reason for their own happiness or unhappiness. Even Zhu Xi was not able to re-introduce the system of

⁸⁹ Otto Franke (1945), pp. 107f.

⁹⁰ Otto Franke (1945), p. 108.

“praise and blame” again because the deep respect towards the ancient times was already firmly fixed in Chinese mind. What the Chinese expected from history was an explanation for happenings of the past and guidance for the future.⁹¹

In addition to these general problems of Chinese historical writing, Han Yu-Shan in his *Elements of Chinese Historiography* very precisely names problematic structures of history works: the confusion of names,⁹² “lack of time-saving devices” such as indices and bibliographies, the problem of inaccuracies concerning time data and the selection of documents, problems of the size of sources because of China’s tremendous amount of written material, the problem of over-simplification, the problem of over-objectivity,⁹³ the problem of interpolation and deletion—intentional and unintentional—, and the problem of established patterns.⁹⁴ Furthermore, the official or Standard Histories focused on administrative and institutional aspects of persons and events; they just recorded what the metropolitan bureaucracy was able to know, which led to a rather partial view on occurrences. Generally, only in times of multi-state government were there different sources which could be compared and scrutinized; also documents from diplomatic relationships with different nations could be consulted for reference. On the other hand, for example in the case of peasant rebellions, they are only passed on by governmental official reports while the rebels themselves did not possess documentations.⁹⁵

These problematic characteristics of Chinese historiography pervade through many hundred years of history writing. They were criticized nearly as much as they were obeyed to. The crucial point relevant to the research in this work is that there were scholars who questioned these features and even gave suggestions of alternative ways of

⁹¹ Otto Franke (1945), pp. 108f.

⁹² Every person in Chinese history had several names: First the “milk” name *ruming* 乳名, then the “book” name, *shuming* 書名 when one enters schools, and last—but not least—the “courtesy” name, *zi* 字; sometimes even a second courtesy name, *hao* 號. Han (1955), pp. 14f.

⁹³ This means that the ideal was an “impartial narration of events,” hence, any kind of interpretation was regarded subjective and partial. Han (1955), p. 24.

⁹⁴ This points at the known method of only being allowed to do creative work after being able to copy masterpieces. Furthermore, it also includes the patterns concerning history writing and its structure. Han (1955), pp. 30f. For all the points, see Han (1955), pp. 13-33.

⁹⁵ Herbert Franke (1961), “Some Aspects of Chinese Private Historiography in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries,” in William G. Beasley und E.G Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University Press, p. 115.

proceeding. This mostly happened in the realm of private historiography. However, private historiography in China can only be defined through the degree of independence from official bureaucracy. The ideal historian would be a scholar free from any affiliation to bureaucracy. The problem would be that all scholars—already because of their education—were determined by Confucian ideas and, hence, it is questionable whether fundamental issues would be handled differently. Therefore, Herbert Franke suggests taking into account Buddhist accounts for further research because such accounts have a different ideological background and, therefore, have another perspective on things. However this topic will not be elaborated in this study. But, to sum up, a clear distinction between private and official historiography in China is simply not possible; there is only a possibility to identify the degree of “official infiltration or influence.”⁹⁶

2.4 Historical Criticism

As in the present study the main focus lies on the research of works in the realm of historical criticism, it is worth to describe the development of this feature more in detail. It is even more important to do so in contrast to the already displayed problems with historiography due to its tight connection to the government and governmental defaults. Therefore, the difficulty in the emergence and persistence of historical criticism is obvious; anyhow, a critical attitude towards (official) history writing, as was mentioned, was indeed present in Chinese history.

As presented in previous chapters, China has had a historical tradition as long as the West or even longer. According to Herbert Butterfield and John Plumb, one difference between these two ways of history writing is that Chinese historiography was distracted by its focus on including or stressing the moral principles of teaching. For the named scholars, this is evidence for the non-existence of a complete conception of history; simply the critical sense towards historical sources was missing. Only at the beginning of the twentieth century such a critical attitude was evoked by the historian Liang Qichao from late Qing to early Republican times.⁹⁷ Michael Quirin, instead,

⁹⁶ Herbert Franke (1961), pp. 115f.

⁹⁷ Q. Edward Wang (2007), p. 203. For further information on Liang Qichao, see p. 16, FN 21 and Q. Edward Wang (2007), pp. 203f.

believed that one must not assume the non-existence of revolutionary historical changes of a structural kind. Indeed, there were many changes, and China had a long tradition of critical philology and historical studies. One could even speak of many different traditions in ancient China, which formed a polychrome atmosphere.⁹⁸

In the field of historiography, there are studies to critical ancillary disciplines, which culminate in Qing dynasty (*Qingchao* 清朝; 1644-1912). Furthermore, there has always existed historical criticism (*shiping* 史評)⁹⁹ encompassing two different dimensions: a political-philosophical dimension and a historiographical-theoretical dimension. Confucian historians thereby always reflected the action in the light of the canonical classics. However, classics like the *Chunqiu* or the *Shujing* 書經¹⁰⁰ rather had archaic characteristics and served as poor chronicles due to their irrelevant narratives; from Han dynasty on these works could only be understood in combination with their commentaries.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, one can detect traces of criticism in the modern sense. Indeed, Chinese history abounds with many examples of critical views,—as Pulleyblank states—it represents the entire Chinese historiography.¹⁰² *Shiping* (lit. “weighing in the realm of history”) is the crucial term for historical criticism. This appellation had been known for a long time and established as a literary category at least since Song dynasty. Some scholars even suggest regarding the known comments in the *Zuozhuan* (“the noble person remarks,” *junzi yue* 君子曰) as historical criticism because these parts depict the first emergence of an independent judging voice—so to say the beginning of historical criticism. Later on, it was Sima Qian in his *Shiji* and Ban Gu in his *Hanshu* who founded the *shiping* tradition by including historical discussions (*shilun* 史論).¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Quirin (1999), p. 4, 12f.

⁹⁹ Historical criticism covered critique “(1) on great events in history, (2) method of historical approach, (3) the entire historical work.” Han (1955), p. 42.

¹⁰⁰ *Shujing* 書經 (Book of Documents), also known as *Shangshu* 尚書, one of the Five ancient Confucian Classics. It is an assemblage of rhetorical speeches by rulers and important officials from ancient times until mid of Western Zhou times 西周 (eleventh century BC-770 BC). See “Chinese Literature—*Shangshu* 尚書 or *Shujing* 書經,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/shangshu.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰¹ Quirin (1999), pp. 30f.

¹⁰² Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 135f.

¹⁰³ Mittag (2002), pp. 3f, 16.

These *shilun* also illustrate the occurrence of the Chinese principle of “praise and blame” which is a recurring theme in Chinese historiography. The point was to reveal the moral side and moral consequences for humans of each event in history, even though this meant a distortion of facts—this is supported by Confucius himself.¹⁰⁴

The tradition of Chinese historical writing is full of examples in which writers express critical views on ideological or even imperial issues, which displays a certain independent thinking. Nevertheless, there was a strong connection between historiography and the state, which influenced the development and appearance of historical criticism, as well. As mentioned previously, the principle of *historia magistra vitae* was applied, which included a focus on a moral teaching of history, so to say the tolerated falsification of facts. Anyhow, this feature did not prevent asking for criteria of truth, so to say critique; this demand for seeking the truth and criticizing can be found indirectly through inquiries.¹⁰⁵

In fact, there are two kinds of historical criticism: *kaoshi* 考史 “investigations about history”, and *lunshi* 論史 “discussion about history.” The latter can be traced back to the former mentioned *Zuozhuan*, a commentary of the *Chunqiu* written by Zuo Qiuming (see p. 19, FN 28), and the prefaces and appreciation of *Shiji* and *Hanshu*. A further advance of the development of history discussions were the 39 “discussions” in the *Chronicle of Early Han Dynasty* (*Hanji* 漢記) by Xun Yue 荀悅 (148-209) which constituted “historical essays” as a firm genre, which attained full maturity in Song dynasty. The evolution of the category of *kaoshi* is ascribed to Confucius as well, in particular to his debate about the customs and traditions of the Xia (*Xiachao* 夏朝, 2070-1600 BC) and Shang dynasties (*Shangchao* 商朝; eighteenth until twelfth centuries BC), which were only described insufficiently. Confucius already named and shamed the fragmentary style of writing which missed many important parts of history. Mencius, furthermore, criticized chapters of the *Shujing*, and Liu Zhiji then criticized

¹⁰⁴ Mittag (2002), p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Mittag (2002), pp. 5, 8.

the *Chunqiu*.¹⁰⁶ The climax is considered to be Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian*, respectively the text-critical apparatus *kaoyi* 考異.¹⁰⁷

The historical criticism derived from the former mentioned principle of praise and blame, which—together with the feature of *hui* (appropriate concealing)—also included the possibility of omitting negative facts about dignified personalities. Although praise and blame are indicators of the authority of historiography, still one predominantly finds verses of praise in the evaluative parts of history works. These sections in the Standard Histories were called *lunzan* 論贊 (discussion or laudation) and were to be found at the end of a chapter. They are introduced with phrases such as *shichen yue* 史臣曰 (“the historian says”), *zan yue* 讚曰 (“the laudation states”) or *lun yue* 論曰 (“the discussion tells”). Those sections and phrases are continually found in history works since Han dynasty, but have only been properly applied since Song dynasty.¹⁰⁸

Hsu Kwan-san aptly remarked regarding historical criticism in China:

In short, Chinese historiography, contrary to a general but wrong supposition in Western academic circles, has not only a long critical tradition of two thousand years or more but its pattern of evolution since the sixth century had been similar in several significant respects to its modern counterpart in the West.¹⁰⁹

In order to highlight the “pattern of evolution” of Chinese history writing and its similarity to “modern counterpart[s] in the West,” in the following one of the most significant works in the Chinese tradition of critical historiography will be presented, namely the *Shitong* 史通 (Generalities on History) by the Tang time scholar Liu Zhiji 劉知幾.

¹⁰⁶ The critique by Liu Zhiji on the *Chunqiu* is not indisputable. The already mentioned work by Michael Quirin focused on this very question whether Liu truly criticized the *Chunqiu* or not. See Quirin (1987).

¹⁰⁷ Mittag (2002), pp. 20f.

¹⁰⁸ Yang Lien-sheng (1961), p. 52.

¹⁰⁹ Hsu Kwan-San (1983), “The Chinese Critical Tradition,” *The Historical Journal* 26.2, p. 446.

PART II: LIU ZHIJI AND THE *SHITONG*

論文則《文心雕龍》，評史則《史通》，二書不可不觀，實有益於後學。¹¹⁰

For discussing literature just [read] the *Wenxin diaolong*, for criticizing history just [read] the *Shitong*, these two books cannot be not looked at, in fact they are very profitable in later studies. (Ascribed to Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅, 1045-1105)

The object of this citation is the *Shitong* 史通 (“Generalities on History,” “All About Historiography” or “Comprehensive Perspective on Historiography”) by the Tang time scholar Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721). The revival of this work in Ming dynasty provides a characteristic case study to strengthen the thesis of a break with tradition in Ming time historiography presented in this work. As Liu Zhiji’s work ranks among the *shiping*-literature—it can be found in the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Books of the Four Storehouses) listed in the first place of the *shiping* category¹¹¹—it is a characteristic

¹¹⁰ *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故, by Wang Weijian 王惟儉, in Guo Kongyan 郭孔延, Wang Weijian 王惟儉, Huang Shulin 黃叔琳 (2006), *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋, *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故, *Shitong xungupu* 史通訓故補, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, p. 247.

¹¹¹ The *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Books of the Four Storehouses) is the most comprehensive work in Chinese literature which was begun in 1773 on orders of Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 (r. 1735-1796) and took ten years to be completed by a special bureau, the *Siku quanshu guan* 四庫全書館. It contains “3,503 books in 79,337 *juan* [...], distributed over 36,304 thread-bound volumes (*ce* 冊).” For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 ‘Complete Books of the Four Storehouses,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/sikuquanshu.html>, last accessed: July 3rd, 2017.

The *shiping* 史評-category about historical critique is a sub-category in the *shibu* 史部 (historiography)-section of the *Siku quanshu*. This category originates from Song dynasty, and the *Shitong* was the initial point for the implementation of this section (see chap. 4.4). The *shiping*-section of the *Siku quanshu* consists of critical works on historiography and of critiques on historical events. It contains about 24 works, namely the *Shitong* 史通 (Tang), *Shitong tongshi* 史通通釋 (Qing), *Tangjian* 唐鑑 (Song), *Tangshi lunduan* 唐史論斷 (Song), *Tangshu zhibi* 唐書直筆 (Song), *Tongjian wenyi* 通鑑問疑 (Northern Song), *Sanguo zashi* 三國雜事 (Northern Song), *Jingwo guanjian* 經幄管見 (Song), *Sheshi suibi* 涉史隨筆 (Song), *Liuchao tongjian boyi* 六朝通鑑博議 (Song), *Song dashiji jiangyi* 宋大事記講義 (Song), *Lianghan biji* 兩漢筆記 (Song), *Jiuwen zhengwu* 舊聞證誤 (Song), *Tongjian dawen* 通鑑答問 (Song), *Lidai mingxian quelun* 歷代名賢確論 (Song), *Lidai tonglüe* 歷代通略 (Yuan), *Shiqi shizuan gujin tongyao* 十七史纂古今通要 (Yuan), *Xueshi* 學史 (Ming; see chap. 11.1), *Shijiu* 史糾 (Ming; see chap. 11.9), *Yupi zizhi tongjian gangmu* 御批資治通鑑綱目 (Song, extended in Qing), *Pingjian chanyao* 評鑿闡要 (Qing), *Qinding gujin chu'er jinjian* 欽定古今儲貳金鑑 (Qing).

example of the revival of this literature genre, and together with its extensive commentaries and the references about it, prominently illustrates the development of concepts of history writing in Ming dynasty. The *Shitong* was the first work ever in Chinese history writing which occupied itself only with the theory of history writing and the studies of historiography. Furthermore, it dared to question classical Confucian works, which formerly were considered almost sacrosanct works. This critical attitude towards traditional ideas, paradigms and patterns of thought—that can be regarded as very innovative in terms of its time—and its historiographical approach—that makes Liu Zhiji a forerunner for the modern science of history—are two aspects of the *Shitong* which make it a most valuable source in Chinese history.

Nevertheless, the compilation did not achieve the condign attention in Tang dynasty. This was partly due to the fact that it was compiled as a private work out of Liu Zhiji's frustration over official governmental history writing and partly due to its pioneering but controversial content; therefore, it seemingly disappeared. Hence, besides its importance for the development of history writing and its revolutionary character, Liu Zhiji's compilation was not paid attention to in the times of its genesis. Only in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) it came to new glory.

3. The Author Liu Zhiji 劉知幾

According to On-cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang, Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721) can be referred to as the greatest critic of official historiography. Of course, many others followed what he had begun.¹¹² Liu Zhiji, *zi* 字: Zixuan 子玄, originated from an old family that even claimed to descend from the royal family of the Han dynasty (*Hanchao* 漢朝; 206 BC-220 AD). Although this contestation cannot be proved, it is for sure that his ancestors served as officials under the Northern Wei dynasty (*Bei Wei* 北魏; 386-534) in the sixth century AD; moreover, there are traces of an affiliation to history writing in his family: A distant relative named Liu Yuzhi was a famous scholar at the beginning of the Tang dynasty and even contributed to the National History of the dynasty. By any means, Liu Zhiji was aware of his aristocratic origin and looked down

¹¹² Ng, Wang (2005), p. 133.

on colleagues who lacked such noble ancestorship. This background seems to be one of the reasons for his enthusiasm towards genealogy.¹¹³ Probably his father, Liu Zangqi 劉藏器, had the most considerable influence on Liu Zhiji, as he—being a litterateur and official—seems to have been discussing about the compilation of the *Shitong* with his son. His father taught him history and the classics and made Liu Zhiji read the *Guwen shangshu* 古文尚書.¹¹⁴ This fact implicates his rationalist view on historical matters, as the Old Text school—which favored the *Guwen Shangshu*—saw the Confucian classics as historiographical works rather than as containing a deeper meaning and being an advice for the rulers’ behavior, which then would result in “a celestial response.” However, his studies not often resulted in being beaten for having difficulties. Nonetheless, he showed keenness in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 and was very talented in studying this text, but also studied many other history works. At the age of 17 he was already familiar with most of the classical history works. What fascinated him most, was the *modus operandi* of continuities and changes and successive events in the course of history.¹¹⁵

To follow his passion for history, it was compulsory to pursue an official career. He had to suspend his studies of history to prepare for the official examinations and, in fact, received his *jinshi* degree¹¹⁶ in the year 680. His first position was to the post of the registrar of Huojia 獲嘉 county in Henan, which he held until 695, probably until 699. It is known that in this position he often handed in memorials to get attention from

¹¹³ While working in the History Office, he privately compiled the “Family History of the Liu Clan” (*Liushi jiashi* 劉氏家史) and the “Study of the Genealogy of the Liu Clan” (*Liushi pukao* 劉氏譜考). See Pulleyblank (1961), p. 139. Furthermore, he suggested to integrate “monographs of noble clans” (*shizuzhi* 世族志) as a new genre to the Standard Histories. See Ng, Wang (2005), p. 124.

¹¹⁴ The *Guwen Shangshu* is a specific version of the Book of Documents (*shangshu* 尚書), belonging to the Old Texts which were found in the former residence of Confucius in Qufu in the last half of the second century (Han dynasty). According to the Old Text school “the Confucian Classics were seen as historiographical material and not as an advice for the reform of society or government (as the New Text school saw them). Old text interpreters also refrained from seeking a deeper meaning behind each single word, as the new text interpreters did. Likewise, old text philosophers did not see a direct correlation between human and especially the ruler’s behavior and a Celestial response in the shape of omens and portents.” See “Confucian Classics,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/classics.html>, last accessed: July 15th, 2015.

¹¹⁵ Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 136f; Ng, Wang (2005), p. 124; Koh, Liu (1956), p. 7; “Confucian Classics,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/classics.html>, last accessed: July 15th, 2015.

¹¹⁶ For further information on the *jinshi* degree and on the examination system in general, see chap. 6.2.2 of the presented study.

authorities. Although his name eventually became known wider, he remained in this official post in the province. The convenience of his job was much spare time which he employed to follow his interests. At that time, he already had the ambition to write a comprehensive history work, but did not dare to do it out of fear for being ridiculed. Therefore, he remained secluded because of his skeptical view towards traditional literature works and the classics. Nonetheless, his reputation grew and he was appointed to a post at the court of a prince in 699. He was employed to help write the *Sanjiao zhuying* 三教珠英 (Gems and Blossoms of the Three Doctrines), an encyclopedia and collection of poetry about Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism sponsored by Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705). Two years later the compilation was completed and Liu was employed as Assistant Secretary of the Writing Office (*zhuzuo zuolang* 著作左郎). Until the end of his life he remained in this or other positions in the Editorial Service (*zhuzuo ju* 著作局) of the Palace Library (*mishu sheng* 秘書省), later in the Historiography Office (*shiguan* 史館) and wrote official history.¹¹⁷

Liu Zhiji, of course, was not the only one having revolutionary ideas about history writing and, therefore, he easily found companions in the capital. Xu Jian 徐堅,¹¹⁸ for example, worked together with him on the compilation of the former mentioned encyclopedia, and Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749)¹¹⁹ was Liu's colleague in writing the

¹¹⁷ Koh, Liu (1956), p. 7; Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 136-139.

¹¹⁸ Xu Jian 徐堅 (659-729), *zi* 字: Yuangu 元固, from Changxing 长兴, Hunan, was a Tang official—with *jinshi* degree—who held office under Empress Wu Zetian and the Emperors Zhongzong, Juanzong and Xuanzong. Xu was well-read in the Confucian classics and knew about laws and institutions. He was one of the compilers of the *Tang liudian* 唐六典 and himself wrote the *Xintangshu Yiwenzhi* 新唐書藝文志 in thirty *juan* and the *Chuxueji* 初學記. See Huo Songlin 霍松林, Xu Zongwen 徐宗文 (1996), *Cifu da cidian* 辭賦大辭典 (A Dictionary of the *Cifu*), Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe 江苏古籍出版社, p. 349. As it is said in this preface, Xu Jian highly appreciated and defended the *Shitong*.

¹¹⁹ Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749), from Kaifeng, Henan province, was a historian of Tang dynasty—working in the Bureau of History together with Liu Zhiji—and the tutor of the crown prince. He was involved in many projects, such as the veritable records of Empress Wu, Emperor Zhongzong and Emperor Ruizong, and also composed private history works where he emphasized brevity and conciseness. His *Zhenguan Zhengyao* 貞觀政要 (Essentials about Politics from the Zhenguan Reign (627-649)) is considered a model “frank discourse between a strong emperor and worthy ministers.” Jennifer W. Jay (1998), “Wu Jing [Wu Ching] (670-749),” in Daniel R. Woolf (ed.), *A Global Encyclopedia of Historical Writing*, New York and London: Garland Publishing (Garland Reference Library of Humanities, 1809), vol. 2, p. 973. For more information on his work, see “Chinese Literature—*Zhenguan Zhengyao* 貞觀政要,” at ChinaKnowledge.de, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zhenguanzhengyao.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2017.

National History (*guoshi* 國史). Because the following years were politically troubled,¹²⁰ the time was not favorable for impartial and innovative history writing. Instead, scholars were supposed to join the History Office and write official history as it was dictated by the court. In 706, Liu remained in Luoyang while the court moved to Chang'an, but had to follow in 708, as well, to join the History Bureau. After many requests to be released from his post and to be permitted to return to Luoyang, he was able to “flee” from his duties in 710. This was the time, when he was able to finish his *Shitong*. In the next years he again worked in the History Office under Emperor Ruizong 睿宗 (r. 710-712) and Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712-756), but nothing is known about whether his attitude towards the History Office and official historiography had changed. He became Left Grand Councilor (*zuo sanqi changshi* 左散騎常侍, a Senior Compiler in the History Office); in 715, he was appointed Viscount of Juchao 居巢 county, which indicates that he worked his way up the ladder notwithstanding his compiling of such an explosive work as the *Shitong*. Liu's career only ended, when he tried to intervene as his son was accused of having committed a crime.¹²¹ Unfortunately, although Liu Zhiji wrote and compiled many books throughout his life, only the *Shitong*, the *Liushi jiashi* 劉氏家史 (Family History of the Liu Clan) and the *Liushi pukao* 劉氏譜考 (Study of the Genealogy of the Liu Clan) survived.¹²²

Liu's autobiography in the *Shitong* indicates that his ideas were detached from conventional Confucian thinking. For example, he highly appreciated non-Confucian works as the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (Masters from Hainan), from Western or Former Han dynasty (206 BC-8 AD)—which is extensively influenced by Daoist thoughts—, the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年 (Bamboo Annals) from Wei 魏 dynasty (403-225 BC)—which detected many data in the highly appraised *Shiji* 史記 by Sima Qian 司馬遷 as being

¹²⁰ In 690, Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705) had founded her own Zhou 周 dynasty replacing the Tang dynasty and had become the first and only woman to rule the Chinese empire. In 705, then her dynasty was overthrown and Emperor Zhongzong 中宗 (r. 684 and 705-710) “was restored to the throne.” See Mark Edward Lewis (2009), *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty*, Cambridge (Mass.) and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press (History of Imperial China, ed. Timothy Brook), pp. 34, 36f.

¹²¹ Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 139f.

¹²² Koh, Liu (1956), p. 8.

wrong—, the *Shanhaijing* 山海經 (Classic of the Mountains and Seas)¹²³—also including many Daoist ideas—, and others. All these heterodox works and compilations had an influence on Liu’s thoughts and caused him to question the official Confucian orthodoxy. The commentator Pu Qilong 浦起龍 (1679-1762), who compiled an annotated edition of the *Shitong* in Qing dynasty (namely the *Shitong tongshi* 史通通釋), remarked only having understood the character and meaning of the *Shitong* after reading it many times. He even certified Liu Zhiji to include Daoist elements; this is a legitimate assumption, for Daoism also gained some influence at the Tang court in this time and, as was mentioned, Liu was affected by these tendencies as well. However, Liu Zhiji was indeed a Confucianist, although his thinking appears very liberal and receptive; he had an open mind about non-canonical sources as long as he could presume their correctness.¹²⁴ This attitude appears to be very modern and anticipates processes which gained momentum only some hundred years later.

3.1 Liu Zhiji—The Official

凡所著述，嘗欲行其舊議。而當時同作諸士及監修貴臣，每與其鑿枘相違，齟齬難入。故其所載削，皆與俗浮沈。雖自謂依違苟從，然猶大為史官所嫉。嗟乎！雖任當其職，而吾道不行；見用於時，而美志不遂。鬱怏孤憤，無以寄懷。必寢而不言，嘿而無述，又恐沒世之後，誰知予者。故退而私撰《史通》，以見其志。(《Shitong 史通, neipian 內篇 juan 卷 10, Zixu 自叙, chap. 36》)¹²⁵

¹²³ Traditionally the authorship of the *Shanhaijing* is attributed to the legendary Emperor Yu 禹, the founder of Xia dynasty; modern research assumes the Warring States period as time of origin. The content of the *Shanhaijing* concern geography, especially the description of mountains. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Shanhaijing* 山海經 ‘The Classic of Mountains and Seas,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/shanhaijing.html>, last accessed: June 29th, 2017.

¹²⁴ Byongik Koh (1957), “Zur Wertetheorie in der chinesischen Historiographie auf Grund des Shih-T’ung des Liu Chih-Chi (661-721),” *Oriens Extremus* 4.1, pp. 40f.

¹²⁵ *Shitong* 史通 (Generalities on History), by Liu Zhiji 刘知幾, ed. by Pu Qilong 浦起龍, Lu Simian 吕思勉, Li Yongqi 李永圻 et al., Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008, pp. 205f.

Concerning all my editorial work, I then wished to apply my ideas to it; but all the scholars acting as my colleagues and noble Ministers responsible for overseeing were incompatibly in disagreement with me, so that the disagreement made it hard to confirm with. Therefore, for the works I published [I had no choice] but to let me float in this [vulgar] current. Though I called myself to follow equivocally and indifferently, yet I was greatly hated by these official-historians. Alas!¹²⁶

While holding the right position, I was unable to do what I wanted to do; while delighted with the appointment, I could not achieve my grand goal. I became depressed and frustrated myself, unable to express my true feelings. When I would be locked in silence and cease to write, I feared nobody would understand me after my death. I therefore decided to resign from the position and wrote the Comprehensive Perspective on Historiography on my own so that I could realize my calling.¹²⁷

Liu Zhiji's relation to his official post in the Bureau of Historiography was very ambivalent. Nevertheless, after entering the Bureau at the very old age of 41 in the year 702, he followed this career until his death in 721—for twenty years. During this time, he was involved in the compilation of the Tang National History (*guoshi* 國史) in 80 *juan* in the Chang'an 長安 reign period (701-705) and in 705 in the compilation of the *Wu Zetian shilu* 武則天實錄 (The Veritable Records of Empress Wu) in 30 *juan*.¹²⁸

In 708, he wrote a letter of resignation¹²⁹ to Xiao Zhizhong 蕭至忠 (d. 713; *Huangmen shilang* 黃門侍郎, “Vice Director of the Chancellery”) and formulated five points which for him rendered impossible to continue working as official historian. Firstly, in former times history had been written only by one person; at the times of Liu, a panel of many historians together compiled history works, while only looking over

¹²⁶ Translation inspired by Damien Chaussende's French translation. See Damien Chaussende (2014), *Liu Zhiji, Traité de l'Historien parfait. Chapitres intérieurs, Présenté, traduit et annoté par Damien Chaussende*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, pp. 270f.

¹²⁷ Ng, Wang (2005), p. 122. Parts of translation inspired by Damien Chaussende's French translation. See Chaussende (2014), pp. 270f.

¹²⁸ Yang Lien-sheng (1961), p. 54; Koh (1957), pp. 7f.

¹²⁹ The letter of resignation is included in the *Shitong* in the last chapter called *Wushi* 忤時 (Against the Times) together with a short introduction and a short postscript. See *Shitong* 史通, pp. 436-440. For a complete translation of the letter, see William Hung (1969), “A T'ang Historiographer's Letter of Resignation,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 29, pp. 5-52.

each other's shoulders without daring to write something on their own. Secondly, writing history in Han times was much easier than in Tang because in former times historians used to receive governmental records, while in Tang they had to find the material and sources by their own. Furthermore, thirdly, the Tang History Office was located in the Palace due to secrecy reasons, but—according to Liu Zhiji—historians were wandering around and telling about every praise and blame. The fourth critique concerned the status of the historian himself who in former times used to be an independent authority but under the Tang historians did not know anymore whether to follow supervisor number one or supervisor number two due to miscommunication. His final point criticized the general management of history writing, which should comprise general principles of compiling as well as the delegation of duties. Unfortunately, the contemporary handling promoted wasting of time and shirking duties.¹³⁰

3.2 Liu Zhiji—The Historian

Liu Zhiji is considered a very important intellectual in the realm of history. Tirelessly, he pleaded in favor of the critical evaluation of sources, an impartial reconstruction of history and truthful recording, while opposing any kind of decoration, deformation or falsification. He established inevitable norms for history writing, and he himself was anxious to follow them as well. He was a true believer in impartiality “always seeing the flaws in what he admired and the good points in what he disliked.” In consequence, Liu even criticized his highly appraised *Zuozhuan*.¹³¹

The main points of his “history philosophy” were the characteristics of the *liangshi* 良史 (the good historian). A good historian—according to Liu Zhiji—had to possess *cai* 才 (ability), *xue* 學 (scholarship or learning), and *shi* 識 (power of perception or insight). Concurrently, Liu compassionated that there were only few persons who united these characteristics; hence, good historians were very rare as well. A historian who only possesses *xue* was to be regarded as a merchant who does not know how to handle money. A historian who only possesses *cai* was to be seen as carpenter without tools.

¹³⁰ Yang Lien-sheng (1961), p. 54; Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 139f; Koh (1957), p. 7.

¹³¹ Hsu (1983), p. 436; Ng, Wang (2005), p. xv.

史有三長：才、學、識，世罕兼之，故史者少。夫有學無才，猶愚賈操金不能殖貨；有才無學，猶巧匠無榘杵斧斤，弗能成室。善惡必書，使驕君賊臣知懼，此為無可加者。¹³²

A historian has three characteristics: ability, learning and insight; in the world it is very rare to find all these three together. Therefore, there are few historians. If one has learning but no ability, he is just like a merchant handling money without knowing how to increase it. If one has ability but no learning, he is just like a craftsman without tools and not able to complete his work unit. [As a good historian] one has to write down good and evil and through that cause the arrogant monarchs and deceitful servants to get to know fear; on the account of this nothing can be added.

Liu Zhiji's influence on Song historians becomes apparent through catchphrases, which are cited by many Ming historians, too: For example, Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007-1072) always praised "Do not conceal!" and "Write as it was!"¹³³ Sima Guang (1019-1086) proclaimed "no misrepresentation" and "maximum impartiality;"¹³⁴ Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162) declared "to record real facts."¹³⁵ They all appreciated the historical empiricism like it was postulated in the *Shitong* and disprized superstitious astrology and the five phases (*wuxing* 五行).¹³⁶

However, Liu had to cope with many critics who accused him of being inconsequent in as much as, e.g., that Liu criticized many antique history works which, indeed, were written by just one person. Already in Tang dynasty this controversy raised critical voices. Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061)¹³⁷ from Song dynasty described Liu in

¹³² *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 132, *liezhuan* 57, Liu Zixuan [Liu Zhiji], vol. 15, p. 4522.

¹³³ Hsu (1983), p. 440; from Ouyang Xiu's 歐陽脩 *Jushi ji* 居士集 (Collected Writings of a Retired Scholar), vol. xvii.

¹³⁴ Hsu (1983), p. 440; from Sima Guang's 司馬光 *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government), vol. cxix.

¹³⁵ Hsu (1983), p. 440; from Zheng Qiao's 鄭樵 *Tongzhi* 通志 (Comprehensive Treatise), chapters *Tianwen lüexu* 天文略序, *Zaixiang lüexu* 災祥略序 and *Tongzhi zongxu* 通志總序.

¹³⁶ Hsu (1983), pp. 439f.

¹³⁷ Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061), *zi* 字: Zijing 子京, was a Chinese official, historian and poet of Song dynasty. He is "famous for his encyclopedic knowledge that he had accumulated by his studies of the Confucian Classics, historiographic writings and the books of the 'hundred masters' (*baijia* 百家)." See "Chinese Literature—*Song Jingwengong biji* 宋景文公筆記 'Brush Notes of Master Song,'" at

his biography in the *Xintangshu* 新唐書 (New History of the Tang Dynasty; 1060) as follows: “He was skillful in scolding the old, but clumsy in applying his own [history writing].” (*gonghe guren zhuo yu yongyi* 工訶古人拙於用己¹³⁸). This accusation appeared frequently in the dispute about Liu Zhiji and his historical criticism.¹³⁹

Nevertheless, Liu Zhiji carefully analyzed not only single compilations but tried to survey the whole historical tradition contradicting the involvement of myths and fables. Liu critically investigated the verisimilitude of the *Chunqiu*, Sima Qian’s *Shiji* and Ban Gu’s *Hanshu* and found many inconsistencies. Furthermore, he held in high esteem local chronicles and dismissed miscellaneous reports because the most important aspect about sources was to proof their reliable origin and not to rely on uncertain transmission. In addition, he supported all his claims with many examples, which makes his study even more valuable.¹⁴⁰ Rens Bod summarized Liu’s intentions in his book *A New History of the Humanities: The Search for Principles and Patterns from Antiquity to the Present* as follows:

According to Liu Zhiji a historian must first and foremost remain as objective as possible. He must not base assessments on moral positions or other value judgments. He should moreover be skeptical about every theory. Proof is the only thing that counts, and when describing an event, the historian must give an overall picture that is obtained from *all possible sources*. In Liu Zhiji’s opinion all factors—cultural, social, and economic—have to be taken into account and their presentation needs to be detached and unprejudiced.¹⁴¹

ChinaKnowledge.de, http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Novels/biji_book.html, last accessed: July 27th, 2016.

¹³⁸ *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 卷 132, *liezhuan* 列傳 57, vol. 15, p. 4542.

¹³⁹ Koh (1957), p. 40.

¹⁴⁰ Ng, Wang (2005), p. xvii; Koh (1957), p. 34.

¹⁴¹ Rens Bod (2013), *A New History of the Humanities: The Search of the Principles and Patterns from Antiquity to the Present*, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 100.

4. The *Shitong* 史通

是用職思其憂，不遑啟處。嘗以載削餘暇，商榷史篇，下筆不休，遂盈筐篋。於是區分類聚，編而次之。(Shitong yuanxu 史通原序)¹⁴²

Therefore, I considered my duty as such a grief and worked tirelessly. While filling a position of recording and editing [history books], I had some leisure time. I occupied myself with discussing history works and endlessly wrote down [my opinion about them], so that boxes were filled [with these manuscripts]. Thereupon, I classified them, assembled them in categories and organized them in this [book; i.e. the *Shitong*].

(Liu Zhiji in the preface of the *Shitong* about the origin of his work)

4.1 Precedents of the *Shitong*

When Liu Zhiji started to write his meaningful work, history works had already achieved to represent a considerable genre of literature; historical writing was held in high esteem. It has to be kept in mind that in Tang dynasty already fifteen annals (i.e. Standard Histories) existed which precisely shows the importance ascribed to historiography from the official side. Even more striking is the total number of historical text; for example, in the literature catalogue of the *Suishu* 隋書 (Book of Sui; 656) altogether 817 historical works are listed with 13,263 *juan*, which depicts the eminence of historical compilations at the time.¹⁴³

This fact also represents an example for the development of historical writing becoming a sovereign genre independent from classical works, which it used to belong to in former times. Generally three categories were distinguished: the canonical works (*jing* 經), writings by non-canonical authors (*zi* 子) and collected compositions written by single authors (*ji* 集); now a new category was added, namely the category of historical works (*shi* 史) which—together with the aforementioned categories—constituted the four divisions of literature (*sibu* 四部) in Chinese history. In the Sui

¹⁴² *Shitong* 史通, *Shitong yuanxu* 史通原序, p. 1. For a complete translation, see Damien Chaussende (2014), pp. 2f.

¹⁴³ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 1f.

catalogue, 13 additional departments of literature were distinguished, e.g. official annals, chronological history, recordings of imperial speeches and activities and so forth. But a striking fact is the non-existence of a *shiping* 史評-section, a section for historical criticism.¹⁴⁴ This occurrence derives from the fact that the *Shitong* was in fact the first composition concentrating on the examination and critical evaluation of history works, the first *shiping*-work. Only after the emergence of Liu Zhiji's work a genre of historical criticism (*shiping*) was established and included in the imperial catalogue of literature (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書). In effect, it was in the twelfth century that Zhao Gongwu 兆公武 (ca. 1105-1180) arranged writings with discussions about history and historiography not in the *ji* 集 (collected miscellaneous writings) but in the *shi* 史-category in his *Junzhai dushizhi* 郡齋讀書志 (Explanatory Bibliography of Junzhai; 1151). As a matter of fact, this arrangement, i.e. the category *shiping*, only became firmly established in Qing dynasty in the *Siku quanshu* and its descriptive catalogue, the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Explanatory Catalogue to the Complete Books of the Four Storehouses) from 1782.¹⁴⁵

Although there were many historical compilations before the *Shitong*, this work was the first one to concentrate on the examination and critique of historical writings and the theory of historical writing. However, the *Shitong* as a critical composition towards historical writing had some precedents: One of Liu Zhiji's methodological forefathers of whom there are still writings available is Liu Xiang 劉向 (79/77-8/6

¹⁴⁴ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 1f.

¹⁴⁵ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 2f; Q. Edward Wang, Franz L. Fillafer, Georg G. Iggers (2007), *The Many Faces of Clio: Cross-cultural Approaches to Historiography, Essays in Honor of Georg G. Iggers*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, p. 265.

The *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Explanatory Catalogue to the Complete Books of the Four Storehouses) was planned as a descriptive catalogue to the *Siku quanshu* providing meta-information about the texts and the categories themselves of the latter work such as the origin of a specific text or the method of selection in a specific category. In the end, the *Zongmu tiyao* contained information about 6,793 books, while there are only 3,461 books included in the *Siku quanshu* collectaneum. See “Chinese literature— *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/sikuquanshuzongmutiyao.html>, last accessed: July 3rd, 2017.

The *shiping*-category (*shiping lei* 史評類) of the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 contains abstracts of 122 works; among others, abstracts of the *Shitong*, the *Shitong tongshi*, the *Xueshi* (see chap. 11.1), the *Shijiu* (see chap. 11.9)—all in *juan* 88—, the *Shitong huiyao*, the *Shitong pingshi*, the *Shitong xungu*, the *Shitong xungu pu* (for all, see chap. 5)—all in *juan* 89. See *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 88-90, *shibu* 史部 44-46, *shiping lei* 史評類, vol 17, pp. 72-115.

BC)¹⁴⁶ who compiled two works including discussions about the stories contained, namely the *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 (Strategies of the Warring States)¹⁴⁷ and the *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 (The Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Yan).¹⁴⁸ Yet, these discussions appear rather as moral evaluations than as historical assessments in any sense. Moreover, there exist discourses about the *Shiji*, for example debates by Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BC-18 AD) in his *Fayan* 法言 (Model Sayings), by Wang Chong 王充 (27-97 AD) in his *Lunheng* 論衡 (“Critical Essays” or “Discourses Weighed in Balance”), and one by Ban Biao 班彪 (3-54 AD) from Han dynasty.¹⁴⁹ Especially Wang Chong and his *Lunheng* can be seen as a precedent of the *Shitong* because the author here criticized the “belief in magic and omens” and the assumption of a metaphysical origin of objects; furthermore, it was only due to Liu Zhiji that the importance of Wang Chong’s work was recognized. Liu adapted and improved the essentials of the historical criticism, that is to say the spirit of skepticism, the devotion to seek the truth, the techniques of doing so and the challenging of authorities.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, there was the Wei and Jin historian Zhang Fu 張輔 (d. 305)¹⁵¹ who did a comparison between the *Shiji* and the *Hanshu*. His parameters, thus, appear very superficial: He characterized

¹⁴⁶ Liu Xiang 劉向 (79/77-8/6 BC), *zi* 字: Zizheng 子政, was a historian from Former Han dynasty (206-8 BC). His sparsely transmitted works were collected in Ming dynasty by Zhang Pu 張溥 in his compilation *Han Wei Liuchao baimingjia ji* 漢魏六朝百三名家集. See “Persons in Chinese History—Liu Xiang 劉向,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsliuxiang.html>, last accessed: July 14th, 2016. For more information, see Marc Hermann, Weiping Huang, Henriette Pleiger, Thomas Zimmer (2011), *Biographisches Handbuch chinesischer Schriftsteller: Leben und Werke*, Berlin: De Gruyter (Geschichte der chinesischen Literatur, ed. Wolfgang Kubin, 9), p. 165.

¹⁴⁷ The *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 (Stratagems of the Warring States) is a compilation of stories and debates from the Warring States period (fifth century-221 BC) by Liu Xiang. See “*Zhanguo ce* 戰國策,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zhanguo.html>, last accessed: July 14th, 2016.

¹⁴⁸ The *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 (Spring and Autumn of Master Yan) is a compilation of anecdotes about minister Yan Ying 晏嬰 (d. 500 BC) of the state of Qi 齊 by Han time scholar Liu Xiang. See “*Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/yanzichunqiu.html>, last accessed: July 14th, 2016.

¹⁴⁹ Koh, Liu (1956), p. 4; Koh (1957), pp. 2f.

¹⁵⁰ Hsu (1983), p. 434.

¹⁵¹ Zhang Fu 張輔 (d. 305) most important work was the *Mingshi youlie lun* 名士優劣論 (Disquisition on good and bad among famous scholars). See David R Knechtges and Taiping Chang (eds.) (2014), *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese Literature: A Reference Guide*, Leiden: Brill, vol. 3, pp. 2136ff.

Ban Gu as unskilled historiographer for he needed 800,000 characters to describe 200 years of history, while Sima Qian only used 500,000 characters for 3000 years; it is obvious that such a quantitative analysis is inappropriate to validate a historical work. Contemporary to Zhang Fu, Qiao Zhou 譙周 (201-270)¹⁵² criticized Sima Qian in his *Gushi kao* 古史考 (Study of the Ancient History) for having drawn on non-Confucian works as sources. Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445), the famous author of the *Houhanshu* 後漢書, even evaluated, approved and praised this work in his *Songshu* 宋書¹⁵³ of the Liu-Song 劉宋 dynasty (420-479). Yet, all these texts were rather short commentaries and treatises including criticisms on historical writings.¹⁵⁴

Other influences came from Pei Songzhi 裴松之 (371-451)¹⁵⁵ of Eastern Jin dynasty (*Dong Jin* 東晉, 317-420) and Liu Xie 劉勰 (465-532), who was the author of the first critical history and treatise about the techniques and theories of literary styles, namely the *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 (The Literary Mind and the Carving of the Dragons);¹⁵⁶ and postulated not to write something if you are in doubt about it. His *Wenxin diaolong* can be considered a systematical and critical examination of the theory of stylistic forms—the first critique to historical works. In this work, Liu Xie discusses

¹⁵² Qiao Zhou 譙周 (201-270) was a politician and scholar. The works of this Wei-Jin scholar are, among others: the *Gushi kao* 古史考 (Investigation of Ancient History), the *Shuben ji* 蜀本紀 (Basic Annals of Shu), the *Wujing ranfou lun* 五經然否論 (Disquisition on What is Right and Wrong in the Five Classics), the *Sanbaji* 三巴記 (Notes on the Three Ba Commanderies), the *Chouguo lun* 仇國論 (Disquisition on Enemy States), or the *Faxun* 法訓 (Exemplary instructions). See Meng Mo 蒙默 (1989), *Sichuan gudai shigao* 四川古代史稿, Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe 四川人民出版社, p. 157.

¹⁵³ Fan Ye's *Songshu* 宋書 about the Liu-Song time is not to be mixed up with the *Songshu* 宋書 (History of the[Liu-]Song dynasty) by Shen Yue 沈約 (441-513), one of the 25 Standard Histories, or the *Songshi* 宋史, the history of Song dynasty (960-1297).

¹⁵⁴ Koh (1957), p. 4; Koh, Liu (1956), p. 4.

¹⁵⁵ Pei Songzhi 裴松之 (371-451), among other things, became famous for his annotation of the *Sanguozhi* 三國志 (Records of the Three Kingdoms, third century BC); other works by him include: *Jinji* 晉紀 (History of Jin), *Peishi jiazhuan* 裴氏家傳 (Biographies of the Pei Family), *Jizhu sangfu jingzhuan* 集注喪服經傳 (Concentrating on Classics on Mourning Apparels and their Commentaries). See Shanghai shifan daxue, *Zhongguo shixueshi yanjiushi* 上海师范大学, 中国史学史研究室 (eds.) (1980), *Zhongguo shixue shilun ji* 中国史学史论集, Shanghai renmin chubanshe 上海人民出版社, p. 325.

¹⁵⁶ The *Wenxin diaolong* covers ten *juan* with fifty chapters which mainly consist of literary theory in general (first five chapters) and the development of the different literary styles (chapter 6-25). Furthermore, it names and describes techniques of literary writing and literary critique. See “Chinese Literature—*Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 ‘The Mind of Literature and Carving Dragons,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/sanguozhi.html>, last accessed: February 24th, 2017.

the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu*, the *Zuozhuan*, the *Sanguozhi* 三國志¹⁵⁷ and many more, while applying the already known technique of moral judgment through praise and blame. As the reason for the integration of many different and unreliable sources, Liu Xie marks the unscientific curiosity of ancient historiographers; concerning the difficulties of historical writing, his main concern and critique hits the authors of historical works who only try to use as many and as different sources and opinions as possible in order to satisfy the curiosity of readers without taking into account the practical application of historical facts. Falsifications and deformations for the purpose of a favorable depiction of ancestors or important people of the past are outcomes of this method and are detected by Liu Xie. For all these reflections, the *Wenxin diaolong* is regarded as a very important and influential work in the development of Chinese critical analysis of historical compositions. Liu Zhiji also recognized the considerable role of Liu Xie's work, which he mentioned—together with five other compositions—as being one of the reasons for having compiled the *Shitong*. On these grounds, it is not surprising that the style and composition of the *Shitong* shows similarities to the *Wenxin diaolong*, as it represents, in a sense, the model for the *Shitong*.¹⁵⁸ In the self-preface, Liu Zhiji himself referred to the *Wenxin diaolong*.

詞人屬文，其體非一，譬甘辛殊味，丹素異彩，后來祖述，識味圓通，家有詆訶，人相掎摭，故劉勰《文心》生焉。¹⁵⁹

Concerning the pieces of prose writing of the men of letters, their style cannot be one; for instance, sweet and bitter are different tastes, and red and white are different colors. But those who come afterwards [i.e. descendants] are confined to an established tradition and ignore the virtues of the synthesis, so that the schools will be denigrated and

¹⁵⁷ “The *Sanguozhi* 三國志 (Records of the Three Kingdoms) is one of the official dynastic histories (*zhengshi* 正史). Together with its predecessors *Shiji* 史記, *Hanshu* 漢書 and *Houhanshu* 後漢書 it is one of the ‘four great histories’ (*sishi* 四史) of ancient China. It describes separately the history of each of the so-called Three Kingdoms 三國 (220-280 AD) in a biographic-thematic style (*jizhuan* 紀傳體). The author was Chen Shou 陳壽 from the Jin period 晉 (265-420)...,” see “Chinese Literature—*Sanguozhi* 三國志” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/sanguozhi.html>, last accessed: February 24th, 2017.

¹⁵⁸ Hsu (1983), pp. 434f; Koh (1957), pp. 4f; Koh, Liu (1956), p. 6.

¹⁵⁹ *Shitong* 史通 (2008), *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 10, *Zixu* 自敘, chap. 36, p. 206.

individuals will be criticized. Therefore, Liu Xie compiled the *Wenxin diaolong*.¹⁶⁰

Moreover, the Song poet Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅¹⁶¹ once stated: “For discussing literature just [read] the *Wenxin diaolong*, for criticizing history just [read] the *Shitong*, these two books cannot be not looked at, in fact they are very profitable in later studies.” (論文則《文心雕龍》，評史則《史通》，二書不可不觀，實有益於後學。¹⁶²)

Liu Zhiji, as becomes evident, was not the first one to occupy himself with historical criticism. Nonetheless, he was the first to ever concentrate—in one single work—on historical criticism and, furthermore, to establish rules for the proper writing of history. He drew inspiration from many works from the past and chose the adequate elements from each of them. Therefore, he, indeed, can be regarded as an initiator for a systematic contention about historical criticism.

4.2 Emergence of the *Shitong*

The writing of the *Shitong* by Liu Zhiji was a reaction to his dissatisfaction about the conditions of history writing during his time. In the Bureau of Historiography, he found himself unable to follow his understanding and concept of recording history. Therefore, he backtracked. Yet, Liu wanted to continue writing history, as he had done all of his life; he stated (the aforementioned):

¹⁶⁰ Some parts of the translation are loosely based on Damien Chaussende’s French translation. See Chaussende (2014), pp. 272f.

¹⁶¹ Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1050-1110), *zi* 字: Luzhi 魯直, from Jiangxi, was a scholar, poet and calligrapher from Northern Song dynasty (*Bei Song* 北宋; 960-1127). For more information, see Hermann, Huang, Pleiger, Zimmer (2011), p. 100.

¹⁶² *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故, p. 247. This statement is to be found in many Ming and Qing time sources, e.g., Wang Weijian’s *Shitong xungu*, in Yang Shen’s 楊慎 *Danqian yulu* 丹鉛餘錄 (*juan* 13) or in Wang Shizhen’s 王士禎 *Daijingtang quanji* 帶經堂全集. However, in Huang Tingjian’s works the following sentences is to be found which slightly differs to the statement cited by Ming scholars: “Liu Xie’s *Wenxin diaolong* and Liu Ziyuan’s *Shitong*, how could these both books not be read in the past? Although that which is discussed is not yet extremely sophisticated, so it impeaches ancient persons and [detects] huge mistakes in the Chinese language; it cannot be not known!” (劉勰《文心雕龍》)、劉子元《史通》，此兩書曾讀否？所論雖未極高，然譏彈古人，大中文病，不可不知也。From *Shangu daobi* 山谷刀筆, by Huang Tingjian, *juan* 2, *Yu wangli zhi-chengfeng zhifang* 與王立之承奉直方.)

必寢而不言，嘿而無述，又恐沒世之後，誰知予者。故退而私撰《史通》，以見其志。¹⁶³

[...] When I would be locked in silence and cease to write, I feared nobody would understand me after my death. I therefore decided to resign from the position and wrote the Comprehensive Perspective on Historiography on my own so that I could realize my calling.¹⁶⁴

Consequently, one can detect many reasons for the compilation of the *Shitong*: his general proclivity towards history, his discontent about the circumstances in the History Office and his wish to bequeath something to the world. The specific occasion for the writing of the *Shitong* probably were disagreements about the historical compilation of the *regesta* of empress dowager Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705), which had been started directly after the enthronement of Emperor Zhongzong of Tang 唐中宗 (656-710) and were completed in 706. Despite his large involvement, Liu was not even mentioned as co-author. Directly after this incident he began to write the *Shitong*.¹⁶⁵

4.3 Content of the *Shitong*¹⁶⁶

In his self-preface, Liu Zhiji clearly expressed his intentions for the writing of the *Shitong* and provided a short description of the content.

若《史通》之為書也，蓋傷當時載筆之士，其義不純。思欲辨其指歸，殫其體統。夫其書雖以史為主，而余波所及，上窮王道，下揆人倫，總括萬殊，包吞千有。自《法言》已降，迄於《文心》而往，固以納諸胸中，曾懣心不芥者矣。夫其為義也，有與奪焉，有褒貶焉，有鑒誡焉，有諷刺焉。其為貫穿者深矣，其為網羅者密矣，其所商略者遠矣，其所發明者多矣。蓋談經者惡聞服、杜之嗤，論史者憎言班、馬之失。¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇 *juan* 卷 10, *Zixu* 自叙, chap. 36, pp. 205f.

¹⁶⁴ Ng, Wang (2005), p. 122. Parts of translation inspired by Damien Chaussende's French translation. See Chaussende (2014), pp. 270f.

¹⁶⁵ Koh (1957), pp. 10f.

¹⁶⁶ For a translation of the abstract of the *Shitong* in the *Siku quanshu*, see Appendix II.1.

¹⁶⁷ *Shitong* 史通 (2008), *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 10, *Zixu* 自叙, chap. 36, p. 206.

As for me, I created my *Shitong* because I deplored that historians of our time do not base [their works] on solid righteousness. Ergo, I wanted to distinguish their respective statements and exhaustively examine their way of guiding principles. This book, although it mainly is devoted to history, deals with much broader issues: Above, it is interested in the imperial way and, below, it extends to human ethics; it encompasses the myriad differences and embraces the multiplicity of existences. From the *Fayan* up to the *Wenxin [diaolong]*, I have assimilated all the ideas conveyed in the texts, without being intimidated by the weight of that knowledge. My book now in principle sometimes concedes, sometimes withdraws, blames and praises, illustrates and warns, criticizes and spurs. The issues it understands thoroughly are very profound; the issues it brings together are very dense; the issues it discusses are very far reaching; and the issues it expounds are a lot. Those who dispute the classics hate to hear about the ridiculous persons of Fu Qian and Du Yu.¹⁶⁸ Those who discuss history dislike speaking about the neglecting of Ban Gu and Sima Qian.¹⁶⁹

*The Structure and Content of the Shitong*¹⁷⁰

The *Shitong* consists of twenty volumes divided into 36 inner (*neipian*) and 13 outer (*waipian*) chapters. The inner chapters deal with the formal structure of historiography, what is right and wrong in history writing. The six schools of history writing are described in the first chapter (*Liujia* 六家, the six schools), namely the school of the *Shangshu* 尚書 (School of Notes of Speech), of the *Chunqiu* 春秋 (School of Notes of Deeds), of the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (School of Chronology), of the *Guoyu* 國語 (School of the History of a Country),¹⁷¹ of the *Shiji* 史記 (School of Annals and Biographies

¹⁶⁸ Fu Qian 服虔 (Later Han period, 206-8 BC) and Du Yu 杜預 (222-284 AD) are famous for their commentaries on the *Chunqiu*. For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Fu Qian 服虔,” *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsfuqian.html>, last accessed: June 30th, 2017.

¹⁶⁹ Some parts of the translation are loosely based on Damien Chaussende’s French translation. See Chaussende (2014), pp. 272f.

¹⁷⁰ For the list of contents of the *Shitong*, see Appendix II.2. The abstract which is included in the *Siku quanshu* is translated in Appendix II.1.

¹⁷¹ The *Guoyu* 國語 (Discourses of the States) “is a collection of anecdotes and discourses, mostly between rulers and ministers, from the Spring and Autumn period 春秋 (770-5th cent. BCE).” The *Guoyu* is often correlated to the *Zuozhuan*, as it covers the same period of time; however, it contains even more

beginning in Ancient Times) and of the *Hanshu* 漢書 (School of Annals and Biographies of one Dynasty). While introducing these schools, Liu also characterized the attributed ancient works, presented their origin and reviewed them briefly. Thus, in this first chapter he already revealed his attitude towards the different ancient books: Towards the *Chunqiu* and the *Guoyu* he took a neutral position, whereas he praised the *Zuozhuan* and the *Hanshu*, and passed criticism towards the *Shiji* and the *Shangshu*. This assessment in terms of value was a new approach in historiography.¹⁷²

In the second chapter Liu Zhiji discussed the gains and losses of the two styles of history writing (*Erti* 二體, the two historiographical patterns), namely the chronological *biannianti* 編年體 style, which, e.g., is applied in the *Zuozhuan*, and the annalistic biographical style (*jizhuanti* 紀傳體) like in the *Shiji*. He concluded that the chronological style provided clarity, whilst the annalistic style offered space for detailed explanations. Nevertheless, the latter one harbored the danger of repetition and false classification. Finally, both styles should be applied adequately. These two concepts—presented in the first two chapters (*Liuji* and *Erti*)—developed into a basic theory adopted by many following scholars.¹⁷³

Liu went on describing the different parts of the Standard Histories, specifically the imperial biographies (*benji* 本紀), the biographies of hereditary families (*shijia* 世家), biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳) etc. Here, he also evaluated these categories which had been launched by Sima Qian: For example, he considered the ‘Tables’ (*biao* 表) to be redundant, pointed out the need for more (thematic) treatises and exposed the wrong placement of persons in some biographies. Moreover, he included very interesting chapters like the *Lunzan* 論贊 (Discussions and Criticism), *Bianci* 編次 (Arrangement and Order), *Yinxi* 因習 (Taking over [i.e. on the danger of mechanically incorporating earlier texts into later compilations]), *Pinzao* 品藻 (Classification), *Zhishu* 直書 (Honest Writing), *Qubi* 曲筆 (Crooked Brush), *Bianzhi* 辨職 (Qualities Needed for a

stories and, thus, is frequently regarded as source of supplementary information concerning the history of that time. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Guoyu* 國語,” *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/guoyu.html>, last accessed: July 3rd, 2017.

¹⁷² Koh (1957), pp. 28f.

¹⁷³ Koh (1957), pp. 29f.

History Official), and his autobiography (*Zixu* 自敘).¹⁷⁴ In most of these chapters, Liu Zhiji sharply criticized the stylistic scarcity of the presentation of history. Likewise, he denounced the uncritical, mechanical adoption of former views, and demanded a critical examination of source material (especially in the *Yinxi* and the *Moni* chapters).¹⁷⁵

The outer chapters concern the origin and transmission of concrete historical works; they discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the former historiographies. At first, Liu depicted the history of the History Office (*Shiguan jianzhi* 史館建置) and the history of the Standard Histories (*Gujin zhengshi* 古今正史). In the third, fourth and fifth chapter of the *waipian*—namely the *Yigu* 疑古 (Doubting Antiquity), *Huojing* 惑經 (Doubts about the Classics) and *Shenzuo* 申左 (Superiority of the *Zuozhuan*)¹⁷⁶—the Confucian classics and their value as history works are examined. The critique towards the *Shangshu* and the *Chunqiu* truly is unprecedented in this form. In the fifth chapter of the *waipian*, the *Shenzuo*, Liu named three strong points of the *Zuozhuan* and five weak points of the *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳 and *Guliang zhuan* 穀梁傳.¹⁷⁷ Concrete examples for superfluous words and sentences in the *Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語,¹⁷⁸ the *Hanshu* and the *Shiji* are named in the sixth chapter. The following sections, among other things, include deficiencies and inconsistencies in works like the *Chunqiu* or the *Suishu* 隋書 (History of the Sui dynasty), while the tenth and eleventh chapter are exclusively devoted to the critique towards the chapter *Wuxingzhi* 五行志 (Treatise about the Five Phases) of the *Hanshu*. In the twelfth chapter, Liu dealt with factual

¹⁷⁴ The inner chapters are translated into French by Damien Chaussende. See Chaussende (2014).

¹⁷⁵ Koh (1957), pp. 30ff.

¹⁷⁶ The fourth and fifth chapters (*Huojing* 惑經 (Doubts about the Classics) and *Shenzuo* 申左 (Superiority of the *Zuozhuan*)) of the outer chapters are translated into German by Michael Quirin. See Quirin (1987), chap. III.2. and III.3.

¹⁷⁷ The *Gongyang zhuan* is a commentary to the *Chunqiu*, written by Gongyang Gao 公羊高 from the state of Qi 齊 of the Warring States period, the same as the *Guliang zhuan* which is written by Guliang Chi 穀梁赤 from the state of Lu 魯. For further information, see “*Chunqiu-Zuozhuan* 春秋左傳, *Gongyangzhuan* 公羊傳 and *Guliangzhuan* 穀梁傳,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/chunqiuazuozhuan.html#guliangzhuan>, last accessed: July 14th, 2016.

¹⁷⁸ The “Family Sayings of Confucius” (*Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語) is a supplement to the *Lunyu* 論語 (The Analects) by Confucius, which only contain a selection of conversations with his disciples.

contradictions in the *Shiji*, *Hanshu*, *Dongguan hanji* 東觀漢記¹⁷⁹ and *Jinshu* 晉書 (History of Jin), before he turned to a critique of the History Office including his letter of resignation in the last chapter. Due to this assemblage, Koh Byongik entitled the *Shitong* to be a collection of negative critique towards history works of former times.¹⁸⁰

In regard to the genesis of this work, according to Koh Byongik the inner chapters were written firstly because they appear to be more authentic. The only sentence in the inner chapters referring to the outer chapters could have been inserted retrospectively (“Concerning the documents arranging and narrating the monarchs since ancient times, they are dealt with in the ‘outer chapters.’” 自古帝王編述文籍，《外篇》言之備矣。¹⁸¹). In the outer part, there exist at least two positions where the inner chapters are quoted. Likewise, the outer chapters seem to be incomplete (some data like book titles, personal names etc. are missing), while the inner chapters appear to be complete. Consequently, Koh Byongik opposed the assumption of the *Siku quanshu* for the *waipian* to be compiled at first and for the *neipian* only to be a shortened excerpt of the essence of the *waipian*. This conclusion is also indicated by the fact that Liu Zhiji’s autobiography is placed at the end of the inner chapters (not the outer chapters), while it is common to position it at the end of any work. Therefore, it stands to reason that Liu first completed the inner chapters, before turning to the outer ones. In summary, concerning the different parts and chapters it is difficult to determine a chronological order of writing.¹⁸²

The Criticism in the Shitong

Especially the critique of the *Chunqiu* was stressed and highlighted in the research of the *Shitong*. Michael Quirin examined how exactly Liu expressed criticism; according to him Liu’s critique mainly aimed at four points: Firstly, he criticized the accuracy and

¹⁷⁹ The *Dongguan Hanji* is a history work about the time of the Later Han period (*Houhan* 後漢; 25-220 AD), which is written in the *jizhuanti* 紀傳體 style. Its origin, probably, lies in an official biography of the first emperor of the Later Han, Emperor Guangwu 光武 (25-57 AD). It was compiled—among others—by Ban Gu 班固, but enlarged continuously. For further information, see “*Dongguan hanji* 東觀漢記,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/dongguanhanji.html>, last accessed: July 14th, 2016.

¹⁸⁰ Koh (1957), pp. 32f.

¹⁸¹ *Shitong* 史通 (2008), *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 1, *Liuji* 六家, chap. 1, p. 3.

¹⁸² Koh (1957), pp. 13-16.

consistency of ethical judgments in the *Chunqiu*, and in this course, he doubted the reasonable fulfilling of the ethical-didactic purpose of this work. Moreover, secondly, Liu passed criticism on the practice of concealment and, thirdly, on the errors and gaps as well as deficiencies within the structure of the *Chunqiu*. Fourthly, Liu even criticized Confucius' manner of editing and harbored doubts about Confucius' impartiality and loyalty towards ethical principles. Additionally, Liu Zhiji named a few points which he "has not yet understood:" Firstly, the question of regicide, which is depicted in the *Chunqiu* based on very doubtful examples;¹⁸³ secondly, the concealing of the actual murderers; according to Liu, this was an example for the inconsistency of the *Chunqiu*.¹⁸⁴

Frequently, the criticism in the *Shitong* was decried as being superficial. Latest studies about the *Shitong* pointed out that Liu's criticism, in fact, was not fragmented or shallow. He was a representative of historical realism, which for him had two dimensions: the critical treatment of source material and the impartial reconstruction of trustworthy and accurate history. Impartial recording was pushed forward immensely by Liu's critical evaluation. For example, the terms *shilu* 實錄 (literally: faithful or true record) and *zhishu* 直書 (to record faithfully) appeared more than forty times in the *Shitong* and can be regarded as the leitmotifs of his philosophy and historiography. To sum it up, Liu Zhiji proclaimed "to record actuality without concealment, embroidery and distortion."¹⁸⁵

4.4 Appraisal of the *Shitong*

The *Shitong* truly can be called a mark of epoch in books about historiographical comments. It was evaluated and appreciated by many scholars of different generations, including the *Siku guanchen* 四庫館臣 (i.e. officials responsible for the *Siku quanshu*), and therefore included in the historical section (*shibu* 史部) of the *Siku quanshu* (Complete Books of the Four Storehouses). Out of the 24 works of the *shiping*-category in the *shibu*-section, the *Shitong* occupies a special role: As it was pointed out before, it

¹⁸³ Concretely, Liu Zhiji contested the responsibility of the incriminated persons for the murder of the monarch.

¹⁸⁴ Quirin (1987), pp. 28f; for the elaboration of the four points of critique, see pp. 28-35.

¹⁸⁵ Hsu (1983), p. 435.

is stated that originally the *Shitong* inspired the establishment of exactly this sub-category, and it can be called the historical and theoretical origin of the judgment standard of the *shibu* chapter of the *Siku quanshu* because concerning the selection of works to be included in this section often principles deriving from the *Shitong* were used. Liu Zhiji's work was incorporated—on the one hand—because of its importance for historiography and its value as an ancient book for Chinese culture; on the other hand, this incorporation was the result of academic opinions and historiographical currents of that time: In order to evaluate a historical work, standards were needed which should be obtained from theory, reality and historical origin.

Furthermore, it is the only compilation whose commentary, the *Shitong tongshi* 史通通史¹⁸⁶ by Pu Qilong 浦起龍 (1679-1762), is included in the library as well. The *Shitong* presents the science of history as the explication of the regulations for historiography and the right purchase and use of historical knowledge. In the *Explanatory Catalogue of the Siku quanshu*, the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, one finds bibliographic notes to the Ming time commentaries which additionally shows its historiographical and literary value and its influence. In *juan* number 88, the *Shitong* and the *Shitong tongshi* are included, in *juan* 89 notes to the *Shitong huiyao*, *Shitong pingshi*, *Shitong xungu* and *Shitong xungu pu* are included.¹⁸⁷ The *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* appraised the *Shitong* as follows in an abstract, the same as in the *Siku quanshu*:

[...]其貫穿今古，洞悉利病，實非後人之所及。而性本過剛，詞復有激，詆訶太甚，或悍然不顧其安。《疑經》、《惑古》諸篇，世所共話，不待言矣。即如《六家篇》，譏《尚書》為例不純；《載言篇》譏左氏不遵古法；《人物篇》譏《尚書》不載八元、八愷、寒浞、飛廉、惡來、閔天、散宜生，譏《春秋》不載由余、百裡奚、范蠡、文種、曹沫、公儀休、寧戚、穰苴。亦殊謬妄。

¹⁸⁶ See *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部 15, *shiping lei* 史評類; and *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 88, *shibu* 史部 44, *shiping* 史評, vol. 17, p. 74.

¹⁸⁷ Mittag (2002), p. 18; Dai Jihua 代继华 (2007), “*Siku quanshu zongmu* ‘shibu’ zhong de *Shitong*” 《四库全书总目》“史部”中的《史通》 (The *Shitong* in the “History Section” of the *Annotated Catalog of The Emperor's Four Treasuries*), *Huanan shiyue daxue xuebao* 华南师范大学学报 (社会科学版) (Journal of South China Normal University) 6, pp. 71f; see *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 89, *shibu* 史部 45, *shiping* 史評, pp. 87f.

至于史家書法，在褒貶不在名號，昏暴如幽厲，不能削其王號也，
[...]亦多（瑣）屑支離。且《周禮》太史掌國之六典，小史掌邦國
之志，則史官兼司掌故，古之制也。子元之意，惟以褒貶為宗，餘
事皆視為枝贅。故《表歷》、《書志》兩篇，於班、馬以來之舊例，
一一排斥，多欲刪除，尤乖古法。餘如譏《後漢書》之採雜說，而
自據《竹書紀年》、《山海經》。[...] 然其縷析條分，如別黑白，
一經抉摘， [...] ¹⁸⁸

[...] It [i.e. the *Shitong*] runs through old and new ages, understands
thoroughly the advantages and disadvantages, and truly [reaches] what
no later generation should reach. Moreover, the character and foundation
is excessively firm; the words again are very sharp and the slandering is
excessive, probably in flagrant defiance of its peace. In both the chapters
Yijing [i.e. *Yigu*] and the *Huogu* [i.e. *Huojing*], the generations [of
history works] are all together reviled—one does not need to say [more].
Namely the *Liujia*-chapter defames the *Shangshu* as an example for
impurity. The *Zaiyan*-chapter defames the Zuo-clan for not obeying the
time-honored methods. The *Renwu*-chapter defames the *Shangshu* for
not recording the “Eight Brilliant Scholars,” the “Eight Gifted Scholars
[of Gaoyang shi],” Han Zhuo, Fei Lian, Elai, Hong Tian, or San Yisheng;
it defames the *Chunqiu* for not recording You Yu, Baili Xi, Fan Li, Wen
Zhong, Cao Mo, Gong Yixiu, Ning Qi, or [Sima] Rangju—this
especially is absurd and reckless.

As for the manner of presentation by historians, the praise and
blame does not depend on the fame [of a person]; befuddled and cruel
[sovereigns are depicted] as remote and strict, and one cannot erase such
a king's name. [...] And how many (trivial) pieces and fragments [he
included]! Furthermore, [as recorded] in the *Zhouli*, the Grand Scribes
manage the six laws of a country, while the Junior Scribes manage the
records of a country; then the History Office at the same time takes
charge of the state archives—this is the ancient system. The idea of
Ziyuan [i.e. Liu Zhiji] was only to take praise and blame as principal aim;
all matters left over were to be regarded as different and redundant.

¹⁸⁸ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 88, *shibu* 史部 44, *shiping* 史評, p. 73.
For a complete translation of the abstract of the *Shitong* in the *Siku quanshu*, see Appendix II.1.

Therefore, in the two chapters “Tables” and “Treatises” the old practices coming from Ban [Gu] and Sima [Qian] were one by one rejected; [Liu] very much desired to leave things out and particularly he opposed the old methods. The rest is like defaming the picking and fragmentary writing in the *Houhanshu*, while [Liu] personally depended on the *Bamboo Annals* and the *Shanhaijing*. [...] However, his detailed analysis is long and differentiated, such as differentiating black and white [i.e. good and bad/right and wrong], as soon as he selects [a work] [...]

The *Siku quanshu* evaluated the *Shitong* in a very differentiated way. Although it acknowledged the firm structure, the “slandering” was criticized sharply. Especially the defamation of the Confucian Classics aroused the discontent of the scribes of the *Siku quanshu*; the criticism in the *Shitong* about other ancient works was labelled “absurd and reckless” (*miuwang* 謬妄). On the other hand, the presentation of facts was praised because, for example, Liu Zhiji presented the monarchs and sovereigns as they were and did not hide their possible cruel nature. Nevertheless, the selection of personalities to be described in history works did not fit the taste of the *Siku quanshu* compilers who wished moral persons to be included in history works for representing examples to be followed. In general, Liu Zhiji was being accused of including very trivial facts, of choosing persons to be mentioned rather arbitrarily, and, hence, being excessively contradictory and partial. Furthermore, the neglect of the ancient system and the “old methods” of history writing (formulated, among others, by Ban Gu and Sima Qian) in favor of simple praising and blaming and his very detailed analysis, which occupied many pages, were criticized. However, the *Shitong* “runs through old and new ages, understands thoroughly the advantages and disadvantages, and truly [reaches] where no later generation should reach;” for that reason, it was stored in the imperial library as a treasury, and was appreciated as an important work for Chinese historiography.

Likewise, scholars from different ages criticized the *Shitong* from other perspectives. One common accusation was that Liu Zhiji made the same mistakes he decried. The modern scholar Han Yu-shan framed the reproach as follows:

Liu Chih-chi 劉知幾 661-721, a prominent historical critic who completed his *Shih-t'ung* 史通 revolted against the evil of inaccurate references and obsolete expressions, yet he packed his own paragraphs with allusions which are not only difficult to understand but also contain

inaccurate allusions in the nature of generalities. Recently, a scholar by the name of *Liu Hu-ju* 劉虎如, published an abridged edition of *Shih-t'ung* 史通 (selections and annotations).¹⁸⁹ Each page of *Liu's* text requires an average of from twenty to twenty-five footnote explanations.¹⁹⁰

Certainly, the *Shitong* exhibits many weak points: It was the first work ever to try to formulate general rules for writing history. Furthermore, it depicts the opinion of only one man, namely Liu Zhiji, and, thus, it provides only one possible conception of history. Nevertheless, it was a novelty and a first attempt to impartially illustrate generally applicable principles for how to write history works. In regard to these points, one has to give credit to Liu Zhiji and his “Generalities on Historiography.”

¹⁸⁹ This refers to: Liu Zhiji 劉知幾, *Shitong* 史通, selected and annotated by Liu Huru 劉虎如, Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1967.

¹⁹⁰ Han Yu-shan (1955), pp. 18f.

5. Ming Editions and Commentaries of the *Shitong*

如果说《史通》是中国史学史发展过程中的一朵奇花，那么它在唐没以降直至宋元以至明初几乎都是悄然开放，孤芳落寞，明代中后期的学者们惊羨于这朵奇花的绚丽，认识到它“考究精覈，义例森严，一团光彩，不可磨灭”，因而作出努力，“使其全书不废於世”，将它展现在人们面前，无论这些明代学者对《史通》的评论是褒还是贬，有一点是十分肯定的，他们都认识到《史通》是著写史书不可缺少的史学评论著作。¹⁹¹

If one says the *Shitong* is a marvelous flower in the process of the development of the history of historiography, in that way that it not after Tang dynasty until Song, Yuan dynasties down to the beginning of Ming dynasty almost quietly came to bloom, narcissistic in attitude and lonely. The scholars of mid and late Ming were surprised and admired the gorgeous beauty of this marvelous flower. They realized about it: “[It is] investigated carefully and examined intensively; the outline of the book is strict and each *tuan* [i.e. roll] is glorious, and it is indelible.” Consequently, they put in effort to “let this whole book not be superfluous in the world.” It developed in front of the people; regardless whether the commenting of the Ming time scholars concerning the *Shitong* is praising or blaming, it is somewhat very definite. They all realized that the *Shitong* is a written history book that books on historiography discussions cannot lack.

In fact, the *Shitong* aroused attention already in Tang dynasty. According to Byongik Koh, Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (685-762) prompted to copy it a few years after Liu’s death and appointed Liu Zhiji to a high post post mortem. Nevertheless, it is not known to what extent the *Shitong* was disseminated and appraised in Tang dynasty. At the end of Tang, the historiographer and chancellor Liu Can 柳璨 (d. 906; *zi* 字: Zhaozhi 炤之) morally and systematically attacked the *Shitong* for being impious in not respecting the old and sage and compiled the first commentary on the *Shitong*, namely the *Shitong xiwei* 史通析微; due to this critique, it must have been quite influential and widespread

¹⁹¹ Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 54f.

two hundred years after its compilation. In Song time, it was printed for the first time and published in various literary catalogues, together with the *Shitong xiwei*. Nonetheless, in general, the quality of the texts concerning the *Shitong* from Song dynasty was not yet very elaborate. For example, the *Yuhai* 玉海 (A Sea of Jades)¹⁹² by Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296)—a very extensively compiled encyclopedia—mentioned the *Shitong*, but contained many corruptions and blank spaces.¹⁹³

From the times of the Southern Song (*Nan Song* 南宋, 1127-1279) to Yuan dynasty and the beginning of Ming dynasty, the *Shitong* was not paid very much attention to, until it was completely ignored. According to the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, the *Shitong* was not even included in the extensive *Yongle Dadian*¹⁹⁴ from the time of Emperor Chengzu 成祖 (i.e. the Yongle 永樂 Emperor; r. 1402-1424), which was supposed to cover “all literary and documentary sources available.”¹⁹⁵ Hence, Byongik Koh and others concluded that it was not very widespread at the beginning of Ming. However, the modern scholar Zhang Sanxi 张三夕 (2001a) proves the *Siku*

¹⁹² The *Yuhai* 玉海 (A Sea of Jades) is famous because it consists of 200 *juan* and covers 21 main and 241 sub-topics, which were supposed to serve candidates for the preparation for the examinations. See “*Yuhai* 玉海 ‘The Jade Ocean,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/bencaogangmu.html>, last accessed: November 25th, 2015. The *Yuhai* mentions the *Shitong* a few times: See *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *zibu* 子部 11, *leishulei* 類書類, *Yuhai* 玉海, *juan* 17, 37, 42, 46; in *juan* 49 Wang Yinglin introduces the *Shitong* over roughly two pages.

¹⁹³ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 17f.

¹⁹⁴ The *Yongle Dadian* 永樂大典 (The Great Statutes of the Yongle Reign) is a large encyclopedia of 22,937 scrolls in 11,095 volumes, which was supposed to cover “all literary and documentary sources available.” All possible topics were covered as well, e.g. the universe, human relations or statecraft. See “Chinese Literature—*Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 ‘The Great Statutes of the Yongle Reign,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/yongledadian.html>, last accessed: June 28th, 2017.

¹⁹⁵ The *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* states that the *Shitong* was, indeed, not incorporated in the *Yongle Dadian*: “Concerning the old edition of the *Shitong*, its transmission was very rare; because the *Yongle Dadian* brought together various [books], and only left behind this book.” (《史通》舊刻，傳世者稀。故《永樂大典》網羅繁富，而獨遺是書。) See *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, *juan* 89, *shibu* 史部 45, vol. 17, p. 87, *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋). Byongik Koh and Wei Li 韦力 supported this; see Koh, Liu (1956), p. 18 and Wei (2006), p. 146. But Zhang Sanxi and Wang Jiachuan doubted this statement, and the former scholar found the *Shitong*, indeed, appearing in the *Yongle Dadian*: *juan* 10135 under the *shi*-category. See Zhang Sanxi 张三夕 (2001a), *Pipan-shixue-de-pipan*. Liu Zhiji *ji ch'i Shitong de yanjiu* 批判史学的批判: 刘知几及其史通研究, Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, p. 255; Wang Jiachuan 王嘉川 (2013), *Qingqian “Shitong” xue yanjiu* 清前《史通》学研究 (The History of Research on *Shitong* before Qing Dynasty), Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe 社会科学文献出版社, p. 193, FN 1.

quanshu zongmu to be wrong: In *juan* 10135 in the *shi* 史-category after the description of the *Xintangshu* 新唐書, there occurs a citation from the *Shitong*:

史通：元氏起於邊朔，其君乃一部之酋，長耳。道武追崇所及，凡二十八君。自開辟以來，未之有也。而《魏書序記》，襲其虛號，(生則謂之帝，死則謂之崩，)何異沐猴而冠，腐鼠稱璞者矣。¹⁹⁶

Shitong: The clan of the Yuan [i.e. the Northern Wei dynasty] rose from the Northern border region; their sovereigns then [each] were tribal chiefs of one section. Emperor Daowu then reached to confer imperial posthumous titles to all the twenty-eight sovereigns [of the past]. Since the creation of the world, this had not been done before. But the ‘Preliminary Records’ of the *Book of Wei* inherited these misleading titles. (At their birth they are called with the title emperor [帝], then their death is called the death of an emperor [崩].) But how are they different to monkeys wearing a hat? They are rotten rats called like jade.

This is a clear reference to the *Shitong*; it is even a complete quotation from the *Chengwei* 稱謂 chapter (*neipian* 內篇, *juan* 4, *chengwei* 稱謂 14). According to Zhang Sanxi, one probable reason could be the compilation system of the *Yongle dadian* which only would pay attention to the rhyming character of the “*tong* 通”, while neglecting the “*shi* 史.” But in this case the *Shitong* can be found in the category of the character “*shi*.”

Nevertheless, the *Shitong* had not yet achieved the glory it should experience in mid and late Ming dynasty. According to Wang Jiachuan, this was mostly due to the very depressing and lifeless academic world—concerning literature, history and philosophy—in the first century of Ming dynasty. Even though the *Shitong* performed a critical analysis of the two Confucian classics of the *Shangshu* and the *Chunqiu* as history books, this was not enough to get the common people’s attention, who followed the already established official system of Neo-Confucian thought. Therefore, the circulation of the book was very scarce.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ *Yongle Dadian* 永樂大典, *juan* 10135, *er zhi* 二紙, *shi* 史, *Lidai zhushi qi* “*Nanshi*,” “*Beishi*,” *Houzhoushu*,” “*Suishu*” 歷代諸史七 南史 北史 後周書 隋書, p. 10135-0013. The parts in brackets is not included in the *Yongle Dadian*, only in the *Shitong*. For the original paragraph in the *Shitong*, see *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 4, *chengwei* 稱謂 14, p. 79.

¹⁹⁷ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 193.

The study of the *Shitong* only began in mid Ming dynasty. Although—as mentioned—a few scholars had occupied themselves with research on the *Shitong* in former times, they had not followed the “three branches” of study, namely proofreading, annotating and commenting. This way of research only started in mid Ming times. Yang Yanqiu even claims that at that time every historian had a handwritten copy of the Song time edition of the *Shitong*.¹⁹⁸ In general, when talking about the *Shitong* in Ming dynasty, one has to distinguish between new editions and commentaries. The first one extensively occupying himself with the *Shitong* in Ming dynasty was the already known scholar Lu Shen 錄深 (see chap. 5.1). He can be seen as one of the initiators of the upsurge of the *Shitong*. While struggling with source material problems, he wrote the *Shitong huiyao*—a work which included only specific parts of the *Shitong*, so to say a commentary (see chap. 5.1.3)—, before he compiled a new edition of the *Shitong*.¹⁹⁹ In the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, it is stated that Lu Shen in the fourteenth year of Jiajing 嘉靖 reign period (1521-1567), namely 1535, “took the many mistakes in the edition of the *Shitong* by the Tang scholar Liu Zhiji to proofread and fix it, and in how many words did he fill incomplete [parts] and cut out wrong [parts]!” (陸深 “以唐劉知幾《史通》刊本多誤，為校定之，凡補殘剝謬若干言”).²⁰⁰ Afterwards two more revised and improved editions followed, namely by Zhang Zhixiang (see chap. 5.2) in 1577 and by Zhang Dingsi (see chap. 5.3) in 1602, whereby—according to Byongik Koh—due to scarce information it cannot be ruled out that these two are the same person, but this is unlikely.²⁰¹

5.1 Lu Shen 錄深 and his Commentary *Shitong huiyao* 史通會要

5.1.1 The Author

Lu Shen 錄深 (1477-1544), *zi* 字: Ziyuan 子淵, *hao* 號: Yanshan 儼山, originated from Shanghai, prefecture Songjiang, where his family was one of the most well-off ones. Already in his young years he became famous for his literary skills. After receiving his

¹⁹⁸ Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 48f; Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 193.

¹⁹⁹ Koh (1957), p. 22.

²⁰⁰ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 89, *shibu* 史部 45, vol. 17, p. 87.

²⁰¹ Koh (1957), pp. 23f.

juren 舉人 degree²⁰² in 1501, he took the metropolitan examination but failed because of his displeasing rendition of the Confucian classics. Finally, in 1505, he received his *jinshi* 進士 degree (“metropolitan graduate”) and was appointed Hanlin-scholar (*Hanlin xueshi* 翰林學士);²⁰³ two years later he was appointed compiler of the Grand Secretariat (*Neige* 內閣)²⁰⁴ because of his good reputation. In Lu’s following career, he was employed as “an attendant at the emperor’s classical lessons,” “director of studies at the National University,” “chancellor of the National University” and “expositor of the classics.”²⁰⁵ After holding several posts in his home region, in Shanxi, Zhejiang and Jiangxi, due to being expelled from the imperial office, he was appointed administration vice commissioner in Sichuan in 1535. One year later—after six years living in the provinces—he returned to the capital as Director of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices and later Senior Expositor of the Hanlin Academy, a post which he held two decades earlier as well. After joining the Jiajing 嘉靖 Emperor (r. 1521-1567) on several journeys and compiling several works about these tours, he was only allowed to retire in May 1541, returned home and died there in 1544.²⁰⁶

Lu Shen’s works covered a wide range of topics: national affairs, biographies of eminent persons, arts, literature and many more. Moreover, he kept detailed diaries, especially of his journeys, which are highly valuable for the research of his time (e.g.

²⁰² *Juren* 舉人 was the title appointed to persons that passed the provincial examinations (*xiangshi* 鄉試, “home examination”). For more information on the examination system, see “Terms in Chinese History—The Traditional Examination System,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/examination.html>, last accessed: July 15th, 2016.

²⁰³ The Hanlin Academy (*Hanlinyuan* 翰林院, lit. “Brush Forest Court”) was an institution of the imperial central government and, therefore, located within the palace. First established in the Tang dynasty, its structure became more complex in Ming dynasty. The duties of the Hanlin Academy were, among others, to draft official documents like edicts. See “*Hanlinyuan* 翰林院 The Hanlin Academy,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/hanlinyuan.html>, last accessed 20th April 2015.

²⁰⁴ The Grand Secretariat (*Neige* 內閣) was a central governmental institution. The office of the Grand Secretaries or Grand Academicians was established during the reign of the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor (r. 1368-1398). They were selected from other governmental institutions, namely the *Huagaidian* 華蓋殿, *Wuyingdian* 武英殿, *Wenyuange* 文淵閣 and the *Dongge* 東閣, and constituted the *Neige* 內閣 “Grand Secretariat.” Without having any real power or any controlling function at the beginning, they rather served as secretaries to the emperor, but gained more power—e.g. to make suggestions to the emperor—in later times. See “*Neige* 內閣 ‘The Grand Secretariat,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/neige.html>, last accessed: July 15th, 2015.

²⁰⁵ L. Carrington Goodrich and Fang Chaoying (eds.) (1976), *Dictionary of Ming biography 1368-1644*, 2 vols., New York et al.: Columbia University Press (hereafter called *DMB*), vol. 1, p. 1000.

²⁰⁶ *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 999-1002.

Feng Huai riji 封淮日記, *Nanqian riji* 南遷日記, *Tingcanlu* 停驂錄). Additionally, he occupied himself with medical studies, for example, about smallpox where he found correlations between climate circumstances and the spreading of this disease.²⁰⁷

Based on the account of his life in the *Dictionary of Ming Biography (DMB)*, Lu Shen can be characterized as a freethinking person who also opposed the traditional interpretation of the classics. Moreover, he was set back in his career several times for his non-traditional way of thinking. With this attitude, he conformed to the former mentioned non-traditionalists who opposed the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy.²⁰⁸ Still, through the whole of his life he was held in high esteem in the realm of academics.

5.1.2 Lu Shen's Research on the *Shitong*

[...] 昔人多稱知幾有史才，考之益信。兼以性資耿介，尤稱厥詞。顧其是非任情，往往摭摭賢聖，是其短也。至於評騭文體，憎薄牽排，亦可謂當矣，善讀者節取焉可也。²⁰⁹

[...] Men from former times often called [Liu] Zhiji to have *shicai* [historical ability] and verified his beneficial trust. They all together took his natural disposition for being upright and outstanding; especially they named his wording. Taking into consideration the [evaluation of what is] right and wrong as it pleases himself and often the excerpting of highly virtuous and wise people, these are his shortcomings. As for the evaluation of literary styles, he detested the frivolous and connected [everything] in a row, so one might say this is correct. As far as the good [parts] are concerned, how can a reader select these parts?

This evaluation of the *Shitong* very clearly shows and summarizes Lu Shen's opinion about Liu Zhiji and his work. Such an assessment of the *Shitong* can be detected in

²⁰⁷ *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 1002f.

²⁰⁸ I.e. the dominating Neo-Confucianism; see p. 35, FN 85. For information about Neo-Confucianism in Ming dynasty, see chap. 6.3.1 of the present study.

²⁰⁹ *Ti shuben Shitong* 題蜀本史通 (About the *shu*-edition of the *Shitong*), in *Yanshan ji* 儼山集 (A Manuscript Collection of [Stories happened at] Yanshan), by Lu Shen 陸深, from (*Qinding*) *Siku quanshu* 欽定四庫全書, *jibu* 集部 (non-canonical works), *biejilei* 別集類, *Ming Hongwu zhi Chongzhen* 明洪武至崇禎, *Yanshan ji* 儼山集, *juan* 卷 86, *tiba yi* 題跋一. In fact, the *Sibu congan* also provides Lu Shen's *Ti shuben Shitong* 題蜀本史通, there called *Ti shuben shitong hou* 題蜀本史通後; but some parts differ to the *Siku quanshu* version which will be highlighted in the following. See *Sibu congan* 四部叢刊, *chu bian* 初編, *Shitong* 4 史通四, *Ti shuben Shitong hou* 題蜀本史通後.

many currents of research in this realm. It demonstrates that this work was critically reflected and discussed by pointing out shortcomings—e.g. his evaluation of “right and wrong as it pleases himself”—and benefits—e.g. his evaluation of literary styles, especially the detesting of the frivolous. Nonetheless, most of the researchers and scholars agree on the statement that Liu Zhiji was a great historian and, so to say, had “historical ability” (*shicai* 史才). Lu Shen started his research on the *Shitong* in 1534 (thirteenth year of Jiajing reign period), four years after Yang Shen 楊慎 who wrote the *Shitong ping* 史通評 (Discussion about the *Shitong*; see Appendix II.6). Before he revised the whole *Shitong*, he first wrote a short comment or critical appraisal at the end of the text including the course of his proofreading and his overall assessment. He first distinguished between two separate levels in his “About the *Shu*-edition of the *Shitong*” (*Ti shuben shitong* 題蜀本史通):

深在史館日，嘗於同年崔君子鐘家，獲見《史通》寫本訛誤，當時苦於難讀也。年力既往，善本未忘。嘉靖甲午之歲，叅政江西²¹⁰時，同鄉王君舜典以左轄來自西蜀²¹¹，惠之刻本，讀而終篇，已乃采為《會要》，頗亦恨蜀本之未盡善也。明年乙未，承乏於蜀²¹²，得因舊刻校之，補殘刊謬，凡若干言。乃又訂其錯簡，還其闕²¹³文，於是《史通》始可讀云。[...]²¹⁴

[I, Lu] Shen, was involved in the daily routine of the Bureau of Historiography. Already in the same year of the nobleman Cui Zhongjia, I caught and observed the *Shitong* in an edition written full of text corruption; then I was very bitter about the difficult studying [of the *Shitong*]. When my young and vital age was bygone, I still did not forget about the old book. In the Jiawu year of the Jiajing period [1534], when I was involved in political affairs of Jiangxi, Wang Junshun—a person

²¹⁰ In the *Sibu congkan* version, it is *fan* 藩, so to say: “[...] when I was involved in political affairs of the Jiang vassal state/the vassal state at the river.”

²¹¹ In the *Sibu congkan* version, it is *yi zuoxia qian zi chuan shu* 以左轄遷自川蜀, so to say: “[...] acting as Left Assistant moving from Sichuan.”

²¹² In the *Sibu congkan* version, it is *chengfa xilai* 承乏西來, so to say: “[...] I accepted a position on a provisory basis coming from the west.”

²¹³ In the *Sibu congkan* version, it is *que* 缺.

²¹⁴ *Ti shuben Shitong*, in *Yanshan ji* 儼山集, *juan* 卷 86, *tiba yi* 題跋一.

from the same village as me—was in charge acting as Left Assistant coming from western Sichuan. Concerning the Hui block edition, I studied it until the end, only then I gathered the *Shitong huiyao*; I also considerably regretted that the *Shu*-edition was not yet extremely perfect. In the next year, the year of wood-sheep [1535], I accepted a position on a provisory basis in Sichuan. I gained it because I formerly proofread the old edition of it [i.e. the *Shitong*], repaired the injuries, trimmed the disorder, all in all how many words! Then again, I revised its misplaced passages; but there were still deficiencies in the text. Thereupon, the *Shitong* only then could be read and understood.

The second level is represented by his later words, which are echoed only in the *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 (Collectaneum of the Four Categories),²¹⁵ not in the *Siku quanshu* edition; they are introduced by “The former mentioned history official Lu Shen wrote this in the Hall of Faithful Love of the Provincial Administration Commission:” (*chengxuan buzheng shisi* 承宣布政使司) (前史官陸深書于布政司之忠愛堂):

凡校勘粗畢，訛舛尚多，惜無別本可參對也，方俟君子。昔人以思誤書為一適，所言殆盡未可廢也。故宜如右。廿又四日，深再題。

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In every collating and proofreading that is carelessly accomplished mistakes are rather many. Unfortunately, there are no separate copies which can be referred to for correcting. It is just waiting for a wise and capable man [to accomplish this undertaking]. People of the past regarded considering false documents as totally appropriate; [yet,] that which is said is almost wiped out but cannot be superfluous. Therefore, it is suitable as to be valued. In 20 and 4 more days, [Lu] Shen will again [approach] the problem.

²¹⁵ The *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 (Collectaneum of the Four Categories) is a collectaneum from the Republican Period (*Minguo* 民國; 1912-1949) under the editorship of Zhang Yuanji 張元濟 (1867-1959). The work is “arranged according the four traditional categories of literature.” For further information on the *Sibu congkan*, see “Chinese Literature—*Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 ‘Collectaneum of the Four Categories,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Poetry/sibucongkan.html>, last accessed: July 27th, 2016.

²¹⁶ *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊, *chu bian* 初編, *Shitong* 4 史通四, *Ti shuben Shitong hou* 題蜀本史通後.

From these statements, it becomes apparent that Lu Shen had just entered civil service, when he came to know the *Shitong*. Furthermore, he mentions Cui Xian(jiali) 崔铤(家里),²¹⁷ the nobleman Cui Zhongjia, who also published a written edition of the *Shitong*, which leads to the conclusion that copies of the *Shitong* were, indeed, passed on in the time before Ming dynasty. As Lu Shen, the same as Cui Xianjia, were compilers in the Hanlin Academy, it can be deduced that the *Shitong* was disseminated among famous historians and official of the time and was subject of debates in the scholar elite.²¹⁸

Notwithstanding, the most considerable problem was the access to a trustful edition of the original *Shitong* text. When Lu Shen wrote an epilogue to the *Shitong*, he only possessed a very fragmentary manuscript of this work. It is not known whether this hand-written copy had been produced in Song or Ming dynasty; however, it is certainly the case that this manuscript was full of text corruption, as Lu Shen declared himself (see above). In 1534 (thirteenth year of Jiajing reign period), he received a printed edition, the *Shu*-edition from Sichuan,²¹⁹ but likewise this edition was not immaculate. Nevertheless, the version acted as basis for his commentary *Shitong huiyao*. One year later, he was able to correct mistakes, arrange the chapters and make the *Shitong* readable, but could not get further due to missing additional text material. After he had started his work on the *Shitong*—only three month after he had started to act in his new

²¹⁷ Cui Xian 崔铤 (1478-1541)—*zi* 字: Zizhong 子鐘, and also Zhongfu 仲夙, first *hao* 號: Houqu 后渠, then Shaoshi 少石, from Anyang 安陽—was a Ming time Neo-Confucianist and politician. After receiving his *jinshi* degree in 1505, he became compiler and took part in the compilation of the *Veritable Records of Emperor Xiaozong (Xiaozong shilu 孝宗實錄)*. Cui Xian publicly offended Liu Jin 劉瑾 (d. 1510), “the most hated eunuch during the early years of Cheng-te period,” who abused his power in the court to enrich himself. (*DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 941-945). After several ups and downs in his career, Cui Xian was granted a respectable funeral and was bestowed with the posthumous title of Wenmin 文敏. For Cui Xian’s biography, see *Mingshi*, *juan* 282, *liezhuan* 170, pp. 7255f.

²¹⁸ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 218; Chuan Fanwei 傅范维 (2009), “Mingdai ‘Shitong’ xue yanjiu—yi Lu Shen, Li Weizhen yu Guo Kongyan fuzi wei zhongxin” 明代“史通”学研究—以陆深, 李维楨与郭孔延父子为中心, Taipei Foguang daxue lishi xuexi shuoshi lun wen 台湾佛光大学历史学系硕士论文 (Master Thesis from the History Institute of Taipei Foguang University), p. 22.

²¹⁹ In Ming dynasty, there existed two transmitted editions, the *Shu*-edition (*shu keben* 蜀刻本) and the Song-edition (*Song keben* 宋刻本). While Lu Shen relied on the old *Shu*-edition of the *shu fansi* 蜀藩司 (Regional Office of Sichuan), Zhang Zhixiang (see chap. 5.2), e.g., referred to the Song edition. Zhang Dingsi (see chap. 5.3) again used Lu Shen’s edition, the same as Guo Kongyan and Li Weizhen. The edition which was edited by Lu Shen was then called “new *shu*-edition” (*xin shu keben* 新蜀刻本). See Chuan Fanwei (2009), pp. 6f, 22.

post in Sichuan—, he was able to complete his compilation in the fourteenth year of Jiajing reign period (1535).²²⁰

He received credit for his compilation, which then became also known as the new *shu*-edition (*shuben* 蜀本) of the *Shitong*, although formerly this name was used for the Song time edition. Hu Yinglin 胡應麟, for example, formulated that Lu transferred seven tenth of Liu Zhiji's text and wrote three tenth by himself in accordance with Liu's style. In addition, he eliminated parts which were redundant, corrected mistakes and elaborated paragraphs which consisted of vulgar language. While examining and proofreading the Tang edition of Liu Zhiji's work in 1535, Lu detected, for example, missing parts in the chapter *Yinxi* 因习, corrected some parts in the chapters *Qubi* 曲笔 and *Jianshi* 鉴识, put these sections in a new category, detected their original place and wrote down this new, improved version.²²¹

After constructing this novel edition, Lu Shen chose parts that were essential to him and put them together in an annotated commentary adding an additional chapter called *Houren lunshi zhi yu* 後人論史之語 (Discussion of Descendants about History). He included this commentary in his *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集 (An Unofficial Manuscript Collection of [Stories happened at] Yanshan). Besides, Lu Shen not only transferred parts from the *Shitong* into a new compilation, but also complemented them: for example, he expanded the section about the history of the Bureau of Historiography up to his own time.²²²

The *Siku quanshu*—as to be seen below—appraised Lu Shen's attempt to correct the mistakes and improve the deficiencies of the *Shitong*. In the abstract about the *Shitong huiyao* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* (see citation below), Lu Shen's new edition as well as his commentary, the *Shitong huiyao*, are mentioned. The compilers of the *Siku quanshu* also evaluated Lu Shen's work and pointed out its shortcomings.

²²⁰ Koh, Liu (1956), p. 18; Koh (1957), p. 22; Li Jiyang 李紀祥 (2005), *Mingdai "Shitong" xueyanjiu* 明代《史通》學研究 (Academic Research on the *Shitong* in Ming dynasty), Jiaoxi (Taiwan): Foguang renwen shehui xueyuan lishixue xi 佛光人文社會學院歷史學系, p. 6; Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 222.

²²¹ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 18f; Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 49; Chuan Fanwei (2009), p. 6.

²²² Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 49f.

明陸深撰。深有《南巡日錄》，已著錄。深嘗以唐劉知幾《史通》刊本多誤，為校定之，凡補殘刊謬若干言。又以其《因習》上篇缺佚，乃訂正《曲筆》、《鑒識》二篇錯簡，類為一篇以還之。復采其中精粹者，別纂為《會要》三卷。而附以後人論史之語，時亦以己見參之。深集中別載《史通》二跋，大畧言，知幾是非任情，往往捃摭賢聖，是其所短。至於評隲文體，亦可謂當。又言，知幾嘗謂國史叙事，以簡為主，而其書之冗長乃不少。觀其議論，可以見其去取之旨矣。²²³

[It] was written by the Ming author Lu Shen. [Lu] Shen [wrote] the *Daily Records of the Emperor's Journey to the South*, which is also recorded in this catalogue [i.e. the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*]. [Lu] Shen once took the many mistakes in the woodblock edition of the *Shitong* by the Tang scholar Liu Zhiji in order to proofread it. Among how many words did he altogether repair deficiencies and trim errors! Furthermore, he took the former part of the *Yinxi*-chapter, which was lost, and the two chapters *Qubi* and *Jianshi*, where he corrected mistakes in the misplaced passages, and then resembled them in one chapter in order to restore it [i.e. the lost chapter]. Additionally, picking the essence out of it [i.e. the *Shitong*], he in another way compiled the [*Shitong*] *huiyao* in three *juan*. He attached words of discussions about history by later people, and he occasionally with his own opinion took part in this. Concerning what is [included] in Lu Shen's collection, that there are other records—namely two postscripts to the *Shitong*—, the character of the general idea that he used [Liu] Zhiji's [opinion of] right and wrong as much and as arbitrary as he pleased and that he often sampled virtuous and talented [men]—these are his shortcomings. As for the evaluation of the literary style, one may say it is appropriate. Moreover, he says that [Liu] Zhiji once called the National Histories to be narrative because he attached more importance to simplicity. But [on the other hand] the superfluous [parts] in this book are not few. Observing this debate, you can see the reason for this selection.

²²³ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 89, *shibu* 史部 45, p. 87.

Lu Shen, an already known scholar at that time, commented on his research about the *Shitong* and also referred to his mutations concerning the *Yinxi* and *Qubi* chapters and to the accusation about the *Shitong* having many superfluous parts.

按《史通》十卷，舊本定為三十八篇，篇繁/系一事，惟《因習》分為上、下篇。上篇舊稱闕/缺文，今本存三十七篇；比因訂正《曲筆》、《鑒識》二篇錯簡，乃類為一篇以還之。於此未必其本書也，而文無煩綴矣。²²⁴

Regarding the ten *juan* of the *Shitong*, the old edition [i.e. the original *Shitong*] is fixed as 38 chapters. The various chapters are handled one by one matter, only the *Yinxi* [chapter] is divided into a previous (*shang*) and later (*xia*) chapter. The old name of the previous chapter is ‘Lacking language’ (*quewen*); in the current version, there exist 37 chapters. The contrast exists because I corrected mistakes in the misplaced passages of the two chapters *Qubi* and *Jianshi*, and then resembled them in one chapter in order to restore it. Herein, this may not be its original edition, but a script without superfluous decorations.

5.1.3 The *Shitong huiyao*²²⁵

The “Excerpts of the *Shitong*” (*Shitong huiyao* 史通會要) by Lu Shen is an extensively annotated edition and commentary of Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong*. One characteristic of the *huiyao* is that it does not only represent an extract or a compilation of the original text, but it also contains all of Lu Shen’s knowledge, which he gained by reading the *Shitong*. In the first *juan* (*Shitong huiyao shang* 史通會要上; *juan* 24), he included the following chapters: (1) *Jianzhi* 建置 (Establishment; which in the *Shitong* is called *Shiguan jianzhi* 史官建置 [History of History Office]), (2) *Jiafa* 家法 (Regulations of the Schools [of Historiography]; which is a combination of the *Shitong* chapters *Liuja* 六家 [The Six Historiographical Traditions] and *Erti* 二體 [The Two Historiographical Patterns]), (3) *Pinliu* 品流 (Classes/Grades; called *Zashu* 雜述 [Miscellaneous

²²⁴ Lu Shen 陸深, *Ti Shitong hou* 題史通後 (About the *Shitong* latter part), in *Yanshan ji* 儼山集 (A Manuscript Collection of [Stories happened at] Yanshan), from *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *jibu* 集部 (non-canonical works), *bieji lei* 別集類, *Ming Hongwu zhi Chongzhen* 明洪武至崇禎, *Yanshan ji* 儼山集, *juan* 卷 86.

²²⁵ For a table of contents of the *Shitong huiyao*, see Appendix II.3.

Descriptions] in the *Shitong*) and (4) *Yili* 義例—two of its sub-chapters do not exist in the *Shitong* at all, namely the *Shi zhi youbie* 史之有別 (The Existence of Differences in History) and *Shi zhi you fuchu* 史之有附出 (The Existence of Supplementary Lists in History). In the *Shi zhi you fuchu*, which is added by Lu Shen, he states that history should be guided by a great man.

The second *juan* (*Shitong huiyao zhong* 史通會要中; *juan* 25) contains the following chapters: (1) *Shufan* 書凡 (All the Books), (2) *Xiuci* 修詞 (Writing Words), (3) *Xushi* 敘事 (Narratives), (4) *Xiaofa* 效法 (Imitations), (5) *Juanyong* 雋永 (Interesting Stories)—which replaced the following sections from the *Shitong*: *Yanyu* 言語 (Words and Speeches), *Moni* 模擬 (Imitations), *Zaiwen* 載文 (Recording Literary Pieces), and *Pinzao* 品藻 (Classification [of People]). The structure of the compilation discusses whether history had any rules, any commentaries, any limits, any format, any narratives, any examples or any differences. In the *Huiyao*, Lu Shen introduced many more categories and differentiations than there had been in the original *Shitong*. The next chapter (6) *Pianmu* 篇目 (Table of Contents) listed the arrangement structure and amount of *juan* of the twenty-two Standard Histories from the *Shiji* until the *Yuanshi* as created by Lu Shen.

The last *juan* (*Shitong huiyao xia* 史通會要下; *juan* 26) contains the ‘Collected Writings’ (*Congbian* 叢編) and approaches topics like *zhishu* 直書 (Straightforward Writing), *Shufa fanjian* 書法繁簡 (Traditional or Simple Writing Styles), *shicai* 史才 (Historical Ability), *Shiguan xiushi* 史館修史 (History of the Bureau of Historiography), and *Qubi* 曲筆 (Falsification in Writing) which depict Lu Shen’s opinion as well as the opinion of people whom he spoke to and whom he cited.²²⁶ Striking is the fact that Lu Shen, indeed, only incorporated eight chapters out of the 43 chapters of the *Shitong*. In contrast to the commentaries by Guo Kongyan and Li Weizhen (see chap. 5.4), he thereby rather created a new composition by using some of Liu Zhiji’s ideas. In the following, selected parts of the *Shitong huiyao* are introduced as examples.

²²⁶ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 49; see also *Shitong huiyao* 史通會要, by Lu Shen 陸深 (Ming), 3 *juan* 卷, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集 (An Unofficial Manuscript Collection of [Stories happened at] Yanshan), Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe (Siku biji xiaoshuo congshu 四庫筆記小說叢書), 1993, vol. 1, *juan* 卷 24-26, pp. (885-)133-143 (上), 144-149 (中), 149-154 (下).

First Part—The first chapter: Jianzhi 建置

Lu Shen's first chapter in the first *juan*, namely *Jianzhi* 建置 (Establishment [of the Bureau of History]), consists of almost 2,400 characters and describes the history of history writing and of the *taishiling* 太史令, the grand scribe. The author introduced his explanations with a citation by Ouyang Xiu, a great historian from Song dynasty, in which the importance of the duty of history writing is expressed:

史者，國家之典法也，自君王、善惡、功過與其百事之廢置，可以
[垂]勸戒，示後世者，皆得直書而不隱，故自前世有國者，莫不以
職為重。²²⁷

The one who writes history follows the law of the country. He should write straightforwardly the good and evil achievements and errors of a monarch rather than many things which can be put aside; and so, he can admonish and show it to all the later generations and hide nothing. Therefore, nobody from earlier generations, who had a country, did not regard this duty as important.

In the following implementations, the development of historiography is described starting with the times of the Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi* 黃帝, ca. 2698 BC-ca. 2598 BC), when the duty of writing belonged in the hands of Cang Jie 倉頡 (fl. ca. 2650 BC), the mystical inventor of writing, and Ju Song 沮頌, one of the Yellow Emperor's historians. In Zhou dynasty (*Zhouchao* 周朝; 1046-256 BC), there were many official posts; Lu Shen mentioned particular people holding the duty of recording events and sayings. The name of the post *taishiling* 太史令 first appeared in Qin dynasty (*Qinchao* 秦朝; 221-206 BC); in Han the title *taishigong* 太史公 was formally established occupying a position even higher than the one of the prime minister or chancellor (*chengxiang* 丞相)—a very important post in ancient China. After the time of Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145-90 BC), unfortunately, the position of the *taishi* 太史 was filled with people who were rather occupied with astronomy and mathematics, wherefore Lu Shen accused them of only knowing how to foretell the weather. The description continues

²²⁷ *Shitong huiyao shang* 史通會要上, *Jianzhi di yi* 建置第一, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 133. Originally this citation derives from “Lun shiguan rilizhuang” 論史館日曆狀 in *Zouyiji* 奏議集 by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, pp. 849f.

with a detailed account on the situation of history writing in Han dynasty and the specific official positions which were responsible—directly or indirectly—for the recording of the past. The historical survey follows the chronology of the dynasties: from Northern and Southern dynasties (*Nanbeichao* 南北朝; 420-589), Sui dynasty (*Suichao* 隋朝; 581-618) until Tang dynasty which is described more explicitly because of the full development of the diaries of activity and repose (*qijuzhu* 起居注) and imperial diarists (*qiju sheren* 起居舍人)²²⁸—established in Sui dynasty—and because of the establishment of the *shiguan* 史館 (Bureau of Historiography).

In contrast to Liu Zhiji who only concerned himself with the period until the beginning of Tang dynasty—until his living age—, Lu Shen went further in history and dealt with the entire history from the beginning of time until his own age—namely Ming—in his preface. Especially the characteristics of Song dynasty historiography are outlined in detail. After giving a short survey about the Yuan dynasty, he concluded his demonstration with some final remarks about the situation at his own time by denouncing the grievances of historians being only the assistants to supervisors who come from the *Neige*.

迄今修史，以勲臣官高者一人為監修，內閣官充總裁，學士等官充副總裁，詹坊經局皆豫纂修之事，而惟修撰、編修、檢討稱史官焉。

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Concerning history writing up to this day, they take one man who is a high meritorious minister official for the supervision of the compilation; officials from the Grand Secretariat fulfil the position of the director-general; [and] officials like scholars [i.e. Hanlin academicians] [only] fulfil the positions of Assistant director-generals. [The ones] overseeing workshops and managing offices, they all prepare the matters to be compiled. But only [the ones] compiling, editing and reviewing are called historiographical officials [*shiguan* 史官].

²²⁸ *DOTIC*, no. 622.

²²⁹ *Shitong huiyao shang* 史通會要上, *Jianzhi di yi* 建置第一, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 136.

After this chronological survey over the advancement of historical writing in China, Lu Shen listed a few single events or single characteristics of certain periods in time. However, it is unclear which structure or rules he followed while cataloguing these events, as the recorded facts do not appear to have any connection. In spite of this, he narrated very interesting facts: For example, he mentioned female writers or historians who were active members of the court in certain periods, especially, with the duty of keeping the *qijuzhu* 起居注 (Diaries of Activity and Repose). Furthermore, the phenomenon of private history writing is named and appreciated by him.

First Part—The second chapter: Jiafa 家法

As mentioned before, Lu Shen did not only recite and clear theories and statements by Liu Zhiji, but also contributed his own thoughts and even developed a philosophy of his own. In the second chapter *Jianfa* 家法 (Regulations of the Schools [of Historiography]), he, therefore, says:²³⁰

《史記》出於司馬遷，上起黃帝，下窮漢武，《紀》、《傳》以統君臣，《書》、《表》以譜年爵，因魯史舊名目之曰‘史記’，創新義例，解散編年，微而顯，絕而續，正而變，文見於此，而義起於彼，勒成一家，可謂豪傑待起之士。班書嗣興，不幸失其會通之旨，而司馬氏之門戶衰矣。²³¹

The *Shiji* derives from Sima Qian; it in the beginning starts with the Yellow Emperor and in the end stops with Han Wu[di]. The ‘Annals’ and ‘Biographies’ are used to arrange the ruler and his ministers; the ‘Treatises’ and ‘Tables’ list all the period’s nobility. Because the “History of the State of Lu” [*Lu Shi* 魯史] is the old name [of the *Chunqiu*], [Sima Qian] looked at it and called [his work] *Shiji*. It brought forth a new outline and scope; it dismissed the chronological *biannian* style. It concealed but [also] displayed [clearly]; it cut off [parts] but extended [some]; it was straight but [also] adaptable; literature can be seen in it, but [also] morality is raised in it—it was tied up into one school. One might well say that heroes are treated as scholars who are

²³⁰ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 50.

²³¹ *Shitong huiyao shang* 史通會要上, *Jiafa di* 家法第二, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 138.

raised. The book of Ban [Gu] inherited it [i.e. the *Shiji*] and became popular. Unfortunately, it lost the aim of understanding thoroughly; moreover, the family status of the Sima clan declined.

This short critical evaluation of the *Shiji* and the *Hanshu* did not correspond to Liu Zhiji's attitude, as Liu was considerably more critical towards the *Shiji* while praising the *Hanshu*. Lu Shen here, instead, devoted more space to the *Shiji* and discounted the *Hanshu* in two short phrases. Although Lu's opinion about the *Shiji* is also quite ambivalent, it appears to be considered more valuable than the *Hanshu* because it occupies more space. It is worth noticing that in the case of the *Shitong* the many critical approaches towards it—positive as well as negative—also reveal its value and estimation by Ming scholars. Anyway, in this passage, Lu Shen's own conception of history is revealed, or at least a different assessment of former history works.

In this context, the third part is especially interesting as this section is not derived from the *Shitong*, but rather represents and displays Lu Shen's own thoughts about history. It can be regarded as the transfer-part where Lu applied the knowledge he gained from reading the *Shitong* in order to formulate a conception of history by himself. In the following the *Congpian* 叢篇-chapters are shortly introduced.

*Third part—The Congpian 叢篇-chapters*²³²

夫愛憎之情忘，而後是非之論定，故史必修於異代。豈曰才難而已乎。堯典述德標，以虞書此聖人之志也。重華協帝毋亦身親筆削與禹貢夏后之書也，或曰伯益所記云。²³³

If the emotions of love and hate are neglected, only then there [can be] a definitive judgment of what is right and wrong. Therefore, history must be written in different ages; but how could one say, “[persons with historical] ability are hard to find,” and that's all? The *Yaodian*²³⁴

²³² For the structure of the *Congpian*-chapters, see Appendix II.4.

²³³ *Shitong huiyao xia* 史通會要下, *Congpian yi* 叢篇一, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 149.

²³⁴ The *Yaodian* (The Canon of Yao [the legendary founding emperor; 24th until 23rd century BC]) is the first and only chapter of the first part, namely the *Tangshu* 唐書, of the *Shangshu*. For further information about the *Shangshu*, see “Chinese Literature—*Shangshu* 尚書 or *Shujing* 書經,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/shangshu.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

describes the morality standard, which is used as the ideal of wise men in the [whole] *Yushu*.²³⁵ But Chonghua (i.e. Yushun, “Emperor Shun”), the harmonizing emperor, did not personally by himself write it; together with the *Yugong*²³⁶ it is a book from the time after Xia dynasty. Someone [claimed] it was written by Boyi.²³⁷

As stated previously, the chapters “Collected Writings” (*Congpian* 叢篇) do not echo complete parts of the *Shitong*. Rather, they represent an enlargement of Liu Zhiji’s thoughts made in his works, where Lu Shen collectively presented different opinions towards the way of writing history. Of course, his own ideas are reflected in this collection of citations, but he also included statements by various persons. The paragraph above depicts his introductory words, where Lu Shen first of all stressed the importance of writing without emotions to recognize what is right and what is wrong. Furthermore, Lu opposed the assumption that there were only few people with the required ability to write history. As a matter of fact, in all ages there were such persons.

In the first chapter of the “Collected Writings” (*Congpian yi* 叢篇一), Lu cited words by Zeng Gong 曾鞏²³⁸ noted in his *Yuanfeng leigao* 元豐類稿 (Thematic Essays from the Yuanfeng Era [1078-1085]) from Song dynasty, words by Su Ting 蘇頌²³⁹

²³⁵ The *Yushu* (The book of Yu[shun 虞舜, legendary emperor, 23rd century BC]) is the second part of the *Shangshu*; it contains the former mentioned *Shundian* 舜典 (Canon of Shun), *Dayu mo* 大禹謨 (The Counsels of Yu the Great), *Gaoyao mo* 皋陶謨 (The Counsels of Gaoyao), and the *Yi Ji* 益稷 (Yi and Ji). For further information about the *Shangshu*, see “Chinese Literature—*Shangshu* 尚書 or *Shujing* 書經,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/shangshu.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

²³⁶ The *Yugong* 禹貢 (The Tribute of Yu) is the first chapter of the third part, namely the *Xiashu* 夏書 (Book of Xia), of the *Shangshu*. It is considered the oldest book about geography in Chinese history. For further information, see “Chinese Literature—*Yugong* 禹貢 ‘The Tribute of Yu,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/yugong.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

²³⁷ Boyi or only Yi (second millennium BC) was a famous and great minister under the Emperors Shun and Yu the Great. See “Chinese Mythology—Bo Yi 伯益,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsboyi1.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

²³⁸ Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019-1083), *zi* 字: Zigu 子固, was a scholar and historian from Song dynasty. He supported the new style of prose writing and is seen as one of the “Eight Great Writers of Tang and Song” (*Tang Song ba da jia* 唐宋八大家). See “Chinese History—Song Period Literature, Thought, and Philosophy,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/song-literature.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

²³⁹ Su Ting 蘇頌 (680-737), *zi* 字: Tingshuo 廷碩, was an official and littérateur of Tang dynasty and Wu Zetian’s 武則天 Zhou dynasty (*Zhouchao* 周朝; 690-705), among other posts he was chancellor

from his *Zhangshuo jianxiu guoshi deng zhi* 張說監修國史等制 (Zhang Talking About the System of Direct Compilation of National Histories) from Tang dynasty, phrases from the *Shida xu* 詩大序²⁴⁰ from Han dynasty, words by Wen Jiaobiao 溫嶠表 collected in the *Tongdian* 通典 (Comprehensive Institutions; *Zhiguan ba* 職官八, *Mishujian* 秘書監) from Tang dynasty, or statements by Li Ao 李翱²⁴¹ from his compilation *Baiguan xingzhuang zou* 百官行狀奏 (Memorial on Obituaries for Officials) from Tang dynasty. Also three paragraphs from the *Shitong* are included (from the ‘Inner chapters,’ *juan 8, shushi* 書事 29; from the ‘Outer chapters,’ *juan 13, yigu* 疑古 3; and from the ‘Inner chapters,’ *juan 7, qubi* 曲筆 25). Furthermore, a memorial by Wei Bian 魏抃 (794-859, *zi* 字: Shenzhi 申之) from Tang dynasty is cited, words by Chen Fuliang 陳傅良²⁴² from the preface of his *Jianlong bian* 建隆編 (Book about Establishing the Eminent) from Song dynasty, and words by Cheng Minzheng 程敏政 (1445-1499; *zi* 字: Keqin 克勤, form Xiuning in Anhui) from his *Mingwen heng* 明文衡 (Judgment of Formal Texts) from Ming dynasty.

古之良史，明足以周萬事之理，道足以徧遍天下之用，知足以通難
知之意，文足以發難顯之情。²⁴³

under Emperor Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (685-762) and had a very intimate relation to him. See Luo Manling (2015), *Literati Story Telling in Late Medieval China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 38f.

²⁴⁰ The *Shida xu* or *Mao Shixu* 毛詩序 is a very important document for the study on poetry from the Western and Eastern Han dynasties. It appears to be a general preface to the *Shijing* 詩經. It is kind of the rather systematical summary and explanation regarding the theory of the Confucian *Shiyan zhi* 詩言志. For further information, see Zhang Shaokang 張少康 (1999), *Zhongguo wenxue lilun piping jianshi* 中國文學理論批評簡史 (Brief History of the Criticism of Chinese Literature Theory), Hongkong: Zhongwen daxue chubanshe 中文大學出版社 (Chinese University Press), pp. 31, 55-61.

²⁴¹ Li Ao 李翱 (772-841), *zi* 字: Xizhi 习之, originated from Tianshui in Gansu province; was a philosopher and prose writer in Tang dynasty; received his *jinshi* degree in 798 and was appointed to serve in the history department in Chang’an. See Liu Tonghui 刘同辉 (2010), *Chuancheng, quanshi yu kaixin—Zhongguo chuantong rengen xinlixue ji dangxia duli lujing yanjiu* 传承、诠释与开新——中国传统人格心理学及当下独立路径研究: 新学堂数字版, Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, n.p., *di er zhang* 第二章, *di yi jie* 第一节, *si* 四.

²⁴² Chen Fuliang 陳傅良 (1137-1203), *zi* 字: Chen Junju 陳君舉, *hao* 號: Zhizhai xiansheng 止齋先生, was an early Southern Song period 南宋 (1127-1279) historian and philosopher and a representative of the Zhedong School of the Yongjia reign (*Zhedong yongjia xuepai* 浙東永嘉學派). See “Persons in Chinese History—Chen Fuliang 陳傅良,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/personschenfuliang.html>, last accessed: July 20th, 2016.

²⁴³ *Shitong huiyao xia* 史通會要下, *Congpian yi* 叢篇一, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 149.

Concerning good historians of antiquity, they cleared enough the complete principle of all things, they spoke enough of the usefulness of everywhere under heaven, they knew enough the meaning of general difficult knowledge, and they wrote the prominent feeling of raising difficult questions. (From Zeng Gong)

The content of the phrases cited contains the question on good historians in general, court historians or national histories (“National histories clearly show traces of their gains and losses” 國史明乎得失之跡²⁴⁴ from the *Shida xu*). Apparently, by citing these statements Lu Shen aimed at stressing the importance of historians and exhibiting their main tasks (e.g. to report the good and the evil).

The second chapter (*Congpian er* 叢篇二) deals with methods of historical writing, and in fact represents a continuation of the first part. Mainly, Lu Shen here paraphrased Liu Zhiji’s thoughts of “writing straightforwardly,” “concealing nothing,” “not writing superfluously,” and so on, which is also addressed in the first part. For that reason, he used (fully or partly) quotations from Yuan Shansong 袁山松 (fl. in Jin dynasty 265-420) from the *Houhanshu* (see p. 30, FN 69)—which is also to be found in the *Shitong* (‘Inner chapters’ *juan 8 moni* 摸擬 28)—, from Liu Zhiji himself from his biography in the *Xintangshu*,²⁴⁵ from the *Shitong* itself (‘Inner chapters’ *juan 7 jianshi* 鑑識 26, ‘Inner chapters’ *juan 3 shuzhi* 書誌 8, ‘Inner chapters’ *juan 1 liujia* 六家 1, ‘Inner chapters’ *juan 7 tanze* 探蹟 27, ‘Outer chapters’ *juan 8 zashuo xia* 雜說下 9, ‘Outer chapters’ *juan 20 wushi* 忤時 13, ‘Outer chapters’ *juan 18 zashuo xia* 雜說下 9), from the *Tang liudian* 唐六典²⁴⁶ (The Six Statutes of the Tang Dynasty); again from the *Shitong* (‘Inner chapters’ *juan 8 shushi* 書事 29; ‘Inner chapters’ *juan 9 fansheng* 煩省 33, ‘Inner chapters,’ *juan 5 zaiwen* 載文 16, ‘Inner chapters’ *juan 4 chengwei* 稱謂 14),

²⁴⁴ *Shitong huiyao xia* 史通會要下, *Congpian yi* 叢篇一, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 149.

²⁴⁵ Here, Lu Shen cited Liu Zhiji’s famous statement: “A historian has three characteristics: ability, learning and insight” (史有三長, 才也, 學也, 識也。). *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan 132, liezhuan* 57, Liu Zixuan [Liu Zhiji], vol. 15, p. 4522. Partly, this part is also translated in chap. 3.2, p. 49.

²⁴⁶ The *Tang liudian* was compiled by imperial order during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong (685-762) and contains thirty *juan* about “governing standards” (*zhi dian* 治典), “education standards” (*jiao dian* 教典), “standards of rites” (*li dian* 禮典), “political standards” (*zheng dian* 政典), “criminal code” (*xing dian* 刑典), “encyclopedias” (*shi dian* 事典). See “*Tang liudian* 唐六典 ‘The Six Statutes of the Tang Dynasty,’” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/tangliudian.html), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/tangliudian.html>, last accessed: July 20th, 2016.

from the preface of Zhu Xi's (*Zizhi Tongjian gangmu* (資治通鑑綱目),²⁴⁷ and from the *Zizhi Tongjian Gangmu houxu* 資治通鑑綱目後序 by Li Fangzi 李方子 (fl. 1214), Zhu Xi's disciple, from Song dynasty.

The third chapter of this section (*Congpian san* 叢篇三) is completely devoted to the *Shitong*. Lu Shen here cited from the 'Inner chapters' (*juan* 6, *xushi* 敘事 22), from the 'Outer chapters' (*juan* 16, *zashuo shang* 雜說上 7), from the 'Inner chapters' (*juan* 4, *xuli* 序例 10; *duanxian* 斷限 12; *juan* 7, *pinzao* 品藻 23), from the 'Outer chapters' (*juan* 18, *zashuo xia* 雜說下 9 (his own opinion)), from the 'Outer chapters' (*juan* 17, *zashuo zhong* 雜說中 8 (his own opinion)), again from the *Shitong* from the 'Outer chapters' (*juan* 18, *zashuo xia* 雜說下 9), and so on. The statements do not have a direct relation, but all deal with the evaluation of ancient Chinese works, like the *Zuozhuan*, the *Shiji* or the *Shangshu*. The citations are framed and supplemented by Lu Shen's own thoughts, or represent an own compilation of different parts, for example:

司馬相如傳，子長錄其自敘孟堅因之，宋書《臧質》、《魯爽》、
《王僧達》諸傳，皆孝武自造。而敘事多虛。

Concerning Sima Xiangru's²⁴⁸ biography, Zichang [i.e. Sima Qian] mentioned [the biography] in his self-preface, and Mengjian [i.e. Ban Gu] followed this. Concerning all the biographies of "Zang Zhi [400-454]," "Lu Shuang [?-454]," and "Wang Sengda [423-458]" in the *Songshu*,²⁴⁹ they are all made by Emperor Xiaowu [of Liu Song] by himself. But the narration is very false.

²⁴⁷ The (*Zizhi Tongjian gangmu* (Outlines and Details of the *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government*), short *Tongjian gangmu*, is a monumental work by Zhu Xi, which is based on Sima Guang's complicated *Zizhi tongjian* (Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government). Zhu Xi was not able to finish it during his lifetime and, hence, it was finished by his disciple Zhao Shiyuan 趙師淵 (1150-1210, *zi* 字: Jidao 幾道). It was written in 59 *juan*, has many supplements, and observes history from the viewpoint of Confucianism. See "*Tongjian gangmu* 通鑑綱目," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/tongjiangangmu.html>, last accessed: July 20th, 2016.

²⁴⁸ Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179-117 BC), *zi* 字: Changqing 長卿 from Chengdu, was an important poet from Han dynasty. For further information, see "Persons in Chinese History—Sima Xiangru 司馬相如," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personssimaxiangru.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

²⁴⁹ I.e. the Book of the Liu-Song 劉宋 dynasty (420-479) by Shen Yue 沈約 (441-513), one of the 25 Standard Histories.

In this paragraph, Lu Shen put together parts from the *Shitong*, namely a paraphrased statement from the *neipian* (*juan* 9, *xuzhuan* 序傳 32) (underlined in dashes) and a direct citation from the *waipian* (*juan* 12, *gujin zhengshi* 古今正史 2) (underlined part) in order to display the relationship between these two passages and bring together suitable sections. In fact, these two statements aim to criticize the same, namely the false depiction of biographies due to adopting accounts from other sources without questioning them.

In the—short—forth section, there are references from different sources again. They derive from the *Shitong* (‘Inner chapters,’ *juan* 8, *shushi* 書事 29), as well; in this paragraph the *Hanshu* is quoted. Moreover, this chapter contains references to Zeng Gongliang’s 曾公亮²⁵⁰ words in the *Xintangshu* from Song dynasty, and words by Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄²⁵¹ written in his *Jin songshi biao* 進宋史表 (Tables for Advancing Song History) from Yuan dynasty. In brief, this part covers several topics, for example, the ranking of ancient history works and the discussion about national affairs. In the—again short—fifth chapter, Lu Shen discussed the way of writing national history: the supervision and the history of the method of history writing—i.e. at which time history was written by only one person and at which time by a group of persons. On that account, he drew on parts of the *Shitong* again (*waipian*, *juan* 20, *wushi* 忤時 13), and parts of the biography of Liu Zhiji in the *Xintangshu*.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ Zeng Gongliang 曾公亮 (998-1078), *zi* 字: Mingzhong 明仲, was a Chinese scholar from Quanzhou. He received his *jinshi* degree in the *tiansheng* 天聖 period (1023-1032); afterwards he became Vice Director of the Ministry of Personnel (*Libu shilang* 吏部侍郎) and at the same time Manager of Affairs of the Secretariat-Chancellery (*Zhongshu menxia pingzhangshi* 中書門下平章事), served in the Hall of Heavenly Manifestations (i.e. Hanlin Academy) as drafter and writer of the Bureau of History. His monumental history work is the *Wujing zongyao* 武經總要 (Collection of Military Classics and Techniques; 1044), which is an encyclopedia about military knowledge. See Qiu Yi 邱逸 (2012), *Bingshu shang de zhanche—Songdai de “Sunzi bingfa” yanjiu* 兵書上的戰車—宋代的《孫子兵法》研究 (Chariots in Military Manuals—Research of the Song time *Sunzi bingfa*), Hongkong: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, p. 259.

²⁵¹ Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄 (1283-1357), *zi* 字: Yuangong 原功, from Jiangxi, was a Hanlin Academician Recipient of Edicts (*Hanlin xueshi chengzhi* 翰林學士承旨). He wrote many works; among others, three national histories, namely *Jinshi* 金史 and *Songshi* 宋史; see respective entries at *ChinaKnowledge.de*. His famous work is, among others, the *Guizhai wenjin* 圭齋文集 in 15 *juan*. See Fan Ren’an 范昶庵 and Li Zhixian 李志賢 (1989), *Shufa cidian* 書法辭典 (Dictionary of Handwriting), Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe 江蘇古籍出版社, p. 130.

²⁵² *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 132, *liezhuan* 57, vol. 15, Liu Zixuan [Liu Zhiji], vol. 15, pp. 4519-4525.

The next subchapter (number 6) concerns the claims towards historians to always write honestly and straightforward at all costs. That means, for example, a historian should write the good and evil deeds of high officials or others as they are without euphemizing, falsifying or concealing anything. Here, Lu Shen once more included references to some statements by Liu Zhiji (see ‘Outer chapters,’ *juan* 14, *huojing* 惑經 4), a passage with quotations from the *Shuzhai laoxue congtan* 庶齋老學叢談 (Discussions on Ancient Studies by Numerous Schools) by Sheng Ruzi 盛如梓 (fl. thirteenth century) from Yuan dynasty, a part from the *Xu Shishuo* 續世說 (Continued Tales of the World)²⁵³ by Kong Pingzhong 孔平仲 (fl. 1065) from Song dynasty, from the biography of Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297)²⁵⁴ in the *Jinshu*,²⁵⁵ from the *Shitong* (‘Outer chapters,’ *juan* 12, *gujin zhengshi* 古今正史 12), and from the *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (Comprehensive Examination of Literature) by Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 (1245-1322)²⁵⁶ from Yuan dynasty.

In the last section of this chapter, Lu Shen cited parts of the *Yu Han Yu lun shiguanshu* 與韓愈論史官書 (Letters about Discussing with Han Yu²⁵⁷ the duties of a

²⁵³ The full title of the work is *Xu shishuo xinyu* 續世說新語; it is also called *Nanbeishi xu shishuo* 南北史續世說 (Continued Tales of the World from the Southern and Northern Dynasties Period). Mainly, it represents a collection of stories about scholars from the Southern and Northern Dynasties period (300-600). The authorship is not clear, sometimes it is ascribed to Li Hou 李屋 (?-1179), sometimes to Kong Pingzhong 孔平仲 (fl. 1065). See “*Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 ‘New Account of Tales of the World,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Novels/shishuoxinyu.html#xushishuo>, last accessed: July 31st, 2015.

²⁵⁴ Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297), *zi* 字: Chengzuo 承祚, was a writer and official from Western Jin dynasty (*Xijin* 西晉, 265-316). His most known work is the *Sanguozhi* 三國志 (The Records of the Three Kingdoms).

²⁵⁵ I.e. “Chen Shou” 陳壽, in *Jinshu* 晉書, *juan* 82, *liezhuan* 52, p. 1022.

²⁵⁶ Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 (1245-1322) was a historian from Song and Yuan dynasties. His *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (Comprehensive Examination of Literature), a comprehensive encyclopedia in 348 volumes, depicts various aspects of state administration. Ma in this book united the two styles of ancient history writing, namely the *jizhuanti* and the *biannianti*, and “wrote a book arranged in a thematic style, but with chapters written chronologically.” See “*Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 ‘Comprehensive Investigations Based on Literary and Documentary Sources,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/wenxiantongkao.html>, last accessed: July 31st, 2015.

²⁵⁷ Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), *zi* 字: Tuizhi 退之, from Nanyang 南陽 was a Tang essayist, poet and Neo-Confucianist. He was regarded to be one of the best writers (after Sima Qian) in China and was the first of the “Eight Great Masters of Tang and Song prose” (*Tang Song ba da jia* 唐宋八大家). See Shi

History Official) by Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819)²⁵⁸ from Tang dynasty, again sections from the *Shitong* and, furthermore, from the *Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補 (“Supplement to the ‘Abundant Meanings of the *Great Learning*’”) ²⁵⁹ by Qiu Jun 丘濬 (1421-1495). The content deals with lifestyles, the position of history in every human’s life and the call for a historian to display the public opinion (*gonglun* 公論; for this point, see chap. 8 and 9) as well.

In summary, the *Congpian*-chapters can be considered a collocation of Lu Shen’s thoughts on history with the aid of references from different works and different ages. In order to emphasize his view on history, he referred to statements by various writers from various ages, namely from Jin, over Tang, Song, Yuan to Ming dynasties, and not at least he borrowed remarks from Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong*. Furthermore, he complemented these propositions with his own ideas and brought together complementary statements to emphasize a certain position. In each *Congpian*-chapter the statements—while missing a structural link—deal very loosely with one idea on historiographical writing. Therefore, this third part of Lu Shen’s *Shitong huiyao* represents a kind of summary of the before mentioned notions connected to Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* and, thus, enlightens the actuality of Liu Zhiji’s ideas through the ages.

Appraisal

Lu Shen’s *huiyao* is appreciated by many scholars for being an excellent and meaningful enhancement of Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong*. However, He Liangjun 何良俊 (1506-1573; see chap. 11.4) criticized Lu for not being precise; therefore, he regarded Lu Shen

Jun 石俊 and Wang Hongying 王虹瑩 (eds.) (2013), *Guoxue fanzhou* 國學泛舟, Taipei: Long shijie 龍視界, pp. 243f; Yang Hongfeng 杨宏峰 (2015), *Hewei zhengzhixue* 何谓政治学 (What is Meant by Political Science), Beijing: Zhongyang bianyiju 中央编译局, n.p., *di shi jie* 第十节 *san, daibiao renwu* 三, 代表人物. For further information about his writing style, see “Chinese Literature—Neo-Confucianism,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/neoconfucianism.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

²⁵⁸ Liu Zongyuan (773-819), *zi* 字: Zihou 子厚, from Yongji in Shanxi was a Tang essayist and poet. Together with Han Yu, he is regarded as the founder of the Classical Prose Movement (*guwen yundong* 古文運動), which advocated a clear style of writing and invoked the pre-Han style. He is seen as one of the “Eight Great Masters of Tang and Song prose” (*Tang Song ba da jia* 唐宋八大家). See Shi Jun 石俊, Wang Hongying 王虹瑩 (eds.) (2013), p. 245.

²⁵⁹ For further information, see “Chinese Literature—*Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補 Supplement to the ‘Abundant Meanings of the *Great Learning*,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/daxueyanyibu.html>, last accessed: July 21st, 2016.

as not being qualified for the discussion on how to write history and for the evaluation of historical works. (“Then, he depicts the advantages and disadvantages of history, criticizes and promotes until nothing is left” 則作史利病，評陟無遺²⁶⁰). As a matter of fact, this appraisal is not very precise either: The value of the *Shitong huiyao* does not at all lie in the discussion of the good and bad in how to write history books and how to evaluate them. It is, as one can see in the chapters before, rather a synopsis of Liu Zhiji’s and Lu Shen’s ideas without any obvious claim to represent a complete evaluation of historiography.

Moreover, the *Shitong huiyao* is mentioned and referred to in many works; for example, in the preface of Hu Yinglin’s 胡應麟 (1551-1602) *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢 (Completion of History Books)—which is included in his *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢—the author declared:

陸文裕之輯史通也。因劉氏者十七，續劉氏者十三，繁者削之，謬者刊之，俚者文之，真子玄蓋臣哉。²⁶¹

Concerning Lu Wenyu’s [i.e. Lu Shen’s] compilation of the *Shitong*: He followed 70 percent of Liu[’s work], and continued to write other 30 percent of Liu[’s work]. Concerning the complicated [passages], he [i.e. Lu Shen] cut them; concerning the erroneous [passages], he revised them; concerning the vulgar [passages], he made them literary; is he not truly a loyal servant to Zixuan [i.e. Liu Zhiji]!

In this passage, the appraisal by Hu Yinglin towards the *Shitong huiyao* becomes evident, as he granted Lu Shen to have made the *Shitong* more understandable, clearer and more sophisticated. Also Zhang Zhixiang 張之象 (1496-1577; see chap. 5.2) appreciated the *Shitong huiyao* highly, however, he admitted that it had some shortcomings. Nevertheless, he also recognized that Lu Shen was the first to make the *Shitong* readable again.²⁶² Lu Shen’s conception of history will be further illuminated in chapter 11.3 taking into account further considerations in his *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄.

²⁶⁰ *Lu Wensu Gong quanji* 陸文裕公全集, *He Liangjun xu* 何良俊序, in *Siku quanshu cunmu zongshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *jibu* 集部, *di* 第 59 *ce* 冊, p. 163.

²⁶¹ *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢 *yi* 一, *neipian* 內篇 (inner chapters), in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, *juan* 卷 5, p. (886–)228.

²⁶² Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 220.

5.2 Zhang Zhixiang 張之象 and his Edition of the *Shitong*

5.2.1 The Author

Zhang Zhixiang 張之象 (1496-1577), *zi* 字: Yuelu 月鹿 and Xuanchao 玄超, originated from Songjiang district in Shanghai county. He was an Administrative Clerk in the Surveillance Commission (*ancha si* 按察司) of Zhejiang, and according to Wang Jiachuan, Zhang while acting as clerk had to hide his own true vocation for writing. After he had retired, he returned back home and devoted himself to writing. Today some poetry collections composed by him are handed down, e.g. the *Zhang wangshi ji* 張王室集 (The Collection of the Royal Family Zhang). Other works include the *Taishi shili* 太史史例 (Historical Examples of a Court Historian), the *Chusao qiyu* 楚騷綺語 (Profane Expressions of the *Chu Sao*²⁶³), the *Chufan* 楚范 (Clear Models), the *Tangshi leiyuan* 唐詩類苑 (Garden of Categories in Tang Poetry), the *Tangya* 唐雅 (Elegant [Words] of the Tang), the *Tongguan xinbian* 彤管新編 (New Compilations of the Paint Brush), the *Gushi leiyuan* 古詩類苑 (Garden of Categories on Ancient Poetry) and many more.²⁶⁴

5.2.2 General Information to Zhang Zhixiang's Edition

逮我明嘉靖間，吾鄉儼山先生陸文裕公，始購得《史通》鈔本及他刻本，採撰會要，多所闡明。已而是正，翻梓川蜀，猶自謂訛舛尚多，惜無別本可校。²⁶⁵

Before me during the Jiajing reign period of Ming dynasty, Lu Wensu Gong from the village of Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen] started purchasing a handwritten edition of the *Shitong* and then its block print-edition. [With that] he gathered the [*Shitong*] *huiyao* and many things were clarified. Later on, he revised it and reprinted the *shu*-edition from Sichuan; still

²⁶³ I.e. *Chuci* 楚辭 (Songs of Chu) by Qu Yuan 屈原 (340-238 BC); or especially the chapter *Lisao* 離騷 (Encountering Sorrow) of the *Chuci*.

²⁶⁴ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 254; *DMB*, vol. 2, p. 1058.

²⁶⁵ *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋, first scroll (*juan shou* 卷首), *zhuanping* 傳評, *Zhang Bishan xiansheng shitong xu* 張碧山先生史通序, p. 7.

the designated errors were rather many. He pitied that he did not have other editions he could proofread.

Almost forty years after Lu Shen had revised the *Shitong* (see chap. 5.1), Zhang Zhixiang 張之象 published a new edition of Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* at the end of his life. This edition was again further revised and corrected. He especially paid attention to further improving the chapters *Qubi* 曲筆 and *Jianshi* 鑒識, added about 730 characters to them and, additionally, eliminated sixty characters in various chapters. Because Zhang Zhixiang originated from Songjiang district, his edition was later known as *yunjian* 雲間-edition from the fifth year of Wanli 萬曆 reign period (1577)—*yunjian* being the ancient name for Songjiang. Zhang participated in the integration of the various editions of the *Shitong*, in the mutually proofreading, and, moreover, he even extended the Song time edition. Together with financial help from friends, he produced block print-editions in order to disseminate Liu Zhiji's work.²⁶⁶

5.2.3 Preface to Zhang Zhixiang's *Shitong*-Edition

張之象史通序²⁶⁷

Zhang Zhixiang's preface to the *Shitong*

《史通》者，唐劉子玄知幾所撰也。以漢求司馬遷后封為史通子，兼取《白虎通》之義，命曰《史通》。蓋知幾所自定若此。知幾當長安、神龍間，三為史官，頗不得志，憤懣悒悒，數欲求退，其與蕭至忠等諸官書是已。既而以前代史書，序其體法因習廢置，掇其述作深淺曲直，分內外篇，著為評議，備載史策之要。剖擊愜當，証據詳博，獲麟以后，罕睹是書。當時徐堅重之，云居史職者宜置座右。玄宗朝，詔其家錄進，上讀而善之，其書遂盛行於世。歷歲滋久，浸就散逸，宋儒朱晦翁猶以未獲見《史通》為恨。

The *Shitong* was written by Tang Liu Zixuan Zhiji. Because the Han sought [worthy] successors of Sima Qian in order to confer upon them the title “Sons of the Generalities about History,” they together took the

²⁶⁶ Koh (1957), p. 23; Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 49; Li Jiyang (2005), p. 7.

²⁶⁷ Preface cited from Guo Kongyan 郭孔延, *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋, first scroll (*juan shou* 卷首), *zhuanping* 傳評, *Zhang Bishan xiansheng shitong xu* 張碧山先生史通序, p. 7.

meaning of the *Baihutong*²⁶⁸ and assigned to it the title “Generalities about History.” Now, [Liu] Zhiji himself determined it like that. Between the Chang’an [701-705] and the Shenlong years [705-707], [Liu] Zhiji three times served as history official. But his ambitions were rather not fulfilled; he was distressed and discontented, irritated and worried; repeatedly, he desired to retire. He together with Xiao Zhizhong²⁶⁹ and others [administered] all the various official documents, and that is it. Later [in his *Shitong*], in regard to the history books of previous generations, he arranged their established rules which followed routines and put [things] aside as useless. He collected the writings which were deep or shallow and right or wrong. [Liu] divided [his work] into inner and outer chapters; he wrote on account of appraising through discussion; he prepared to write an outline of history policies. Liu analyzed and stroke appropriately; his proofs are detailed and extensive. After all affairs have come to an end, this book rarely was observed. At the same time, Xu Jian²⁷⁰ attached importance to it; then he said that this [book] which occupies history duties should be placed on the right side.²⁷¹ At the court of Xuanzong, he issued an edict his family record to be submitted; it should be presented, read out aloud and then be improved. Thereupon, [one sees that] these books were in vogue in this era. Throughout the years, [the *Shitong*] multiplied for a long time and gradually simply became scattered and lost. The Song scholar Zhu Haiweng [i.e. Zhu Xi], yet, regarded the ‘not-getting-to-see’ the *Shitong* as regrettable.

²⁶⁸ The *Baihutong* or *Baihu tongyi* (Comprehensive Meanings [as Discussed] in the White Tiger [Hall]) is traditionally attributed to Ban Gu (32-92) and represents “documented discussions on the relationships between politics, cosmology and philosophy” in the White Tiger pavilion near Luoyang. See “*Baihutong delun* 白虎通德論 ‘Virtuous Discussions of the White Tiger Hall,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/baihutong.html>, last accessed: August 5th, 2015.

²⁶⁹ Xiao Zhizhong 蕭至忠 (?-713?) from today’s Shandong province occupied several posts under the Emperors Zhongzong 中宗 (r. 684, 705-710), Ruizong 睿宗 (r. 684-690), Shang 殤 (r. 710) and Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712-756). He was known as an honest and correct official. See Zhu Shaohou 朱绍侯 (1997), *Zhongguo lidai zaixiang zhuanlie* 中国历代宰相传略 (Short Biographies of Prime Ministers of the Chinese Past Dynasties), Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社, p. 619.

²⁷⁰ See p. 46, FN 118.

²⁷¹ The right side traditionally was the place where highly appraised literature, books, characters and paintings were placed. This act meant an honor for history books.

In the first part of this very informative preface, Zhang Zhixiang highly appraised Liu Zhiji's book. In contrast to Lu Shen, Zhang here did not list the advantages and disadvantages, but rather provided a positive description of Liu's intention and approach. He honored the *Shitong* and regretted that "after all affairs have come to an end, this book rarely was observed." Furthermore, Zhang gave an impression of the situation concerning history books at that time, namely he displayed that from then on their status and esteem rose continually. Yet, the *Shitong* "gradually simply became scattered and lost." However, according to Wang Jiachuan this statement is not true, as in the time after Tang dynasty there were, indeed, many references to the *Shitong*, many records about it being included into family depositories and many people who occupied themselves with the *Shitong*.²⁷² But due to missing commentaries and excerpts about Liu's work, Zhang Zhixiang could have missed the attention paid to the work from Tang to Ming times. He, moreover, mentioned a very interesting fact, namely that even the great Neo-Confucian scholar Zhu Xi knew about the *Shitong* and regretted that he could not get hold of a copy of this work. Unfortunately, Zhang Zhixiang did not report where he obtained this information from; this is also the reason why Wang Jiachuan, among others, questioned Zhang's remark about Zhu Xi. Wang declared that, e.g., in the *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 (Thematic Discourses of Master Zhu) Zhu Xi did not mention the *Shitong* and none of Liu Zhiji's thoughts, which are also not found in other works by him. The preface continues as follows:

逮我明嘉靖間，吾鄉儼山先生陸文裕公，始購得《史通》鈔本及他刻本，採撰《會要》，多所闡明。已而是正，翻梓川蜀，猶自謂訛舛尚多，惜無別本可校。先輩之究意史學，勤且篤矣。是知求古書殘缺之餘，於千載散亡之后，豈不甚難，而不可不慎也。邇吳興凌子遇知摹刻《史記評林》，曾不研審，往往自用，至以知幾為宋人。夫知幾姓氏，初非奧僻，名著唐室，炯如日星，今古仰之，世尚有不知其人者。嗟乎！其人且不知，又安知《史通》何書哉？及覽《龜策傳》，首列評語，則題曰“槐野王公”，而不知《史通》固已具載也。筆自知幾，鑿鑿難掩，錯謬如斯，餘可例見。疑誤後學，孰執其咎？為惋悵者久之。

²⁷² See Wang Jiachuan (2014), p. 118.

Before me during the Jiajing reign period of Ming dynasty, Lu Wensu Gong from the village of Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen] started purchasing a handwritten edition of the *Shitong* and then its block print-edition. [With that] he gathered the [*Shitong*] *huiyao* and many things were clarified. Later on, he revised it and reprinted the *shu*-edition from Sichuan; still the designated errors were rather many. He pitied that he did not have other editions he could proofread. The intention of the research on ancient generations is the study of history; moreover, constantly importance is attached to it. Certainly, one knows that seeking ancient books leaves an incomplete remainder. After being scattered and lost over thousand years, how could it not be very difficult and how could one not have to be very cautious? Near Wuxing [in Zhejiang] Master Ling [i.e. Ling Zhilong²⁷³] encountered the usurped edition *Shiji pinglin*, which before had not yet been researched and examined. Often it was used for private use, until [Liu] Zhiji was regarded as a man from Song dynasty. The name [Liu] Zhiji at the beginning was not archaic, abstruse or unfamiliar. His book [i.e. the *Shitong*] was famous in Tang dynasty halls, and was shining like the sun and the stars. Today and in former times one respected it. Still, in his lifetime there were people who did not know this man [i.e. the author; Liu Zhiji]. Alas! Moreover, if this man was not known, how could one know what kind of book the *Shitong* is? And looking at the *Guice zhuan*,²⁷⁴ he firstly listed the critical judgments, then he brought to notice “Huaiye Wanggong;”²⁷⁵ but it is

²⁷³ Ling Zhilong 凌稚隆 (fl. 1540)—*zi* 字: Yidong 以栋, *hao* 号: Leiquan 磊泉 from Zhejiang, *jinshi* 1540—was an official working in the *Daming fu* 大名府; he was famous for his research on the *Hanshu* (*Hanshu pinglin* 漢書評林; Collection of Critiques on the *Hanshu*) and on the *Shiji*. The *Shiji pinglin* 史記評林 (Collection of Critiques on the *Shiji*) in Ming dynasty was supplemented by Li Guangjin 李光縉 and edited and proofread by Ling Zhilong 凌稚隆 in 130 *juan*; the most famous edition is the one by Ling Zhilong. Shi Yun 史雲 (n.d.), *Sima Qian yu Shiji* 司馬遷與史記, Yunshu 雲書 bestbook (ePublication), n.p., chap.: *Di shi zhang Mingshan shi ye zhong qianqiu* 第十張 名山事業重千秋, *Jiu*, ‘*Shiji*’ *tongxing banben he duben* 九, 《史記》通行版本和讀本.

²⁷⁴ The *Guice zhuan* 龜策傳, actually *Guice liezhuan* 龜策列傳 (Biographies of the Turtle-Bone Diviners) is a chapter in the *Shiji* (*juan* 128) in the biography section, one of the ten chapters which did not exist until the times of Emperor Yuan of Han (Han Yuandi 漢元帝; 76-33 BC) and Emperor Cheng of Han (Han Chengdi 漢成帝; 51-18 BC). Liu Zhiji mentioned the *Guice liezhuan* in *Shitong*, *neipian*, *juan* 4, *bianci* 編次 13.

²⁷⁵ I.e. Wang Weizhen 王維楨 (1507-1555), *zi* 字: Yunning 允宁, *hao* 号: Huaiye 槐野, from Huazhou 華州 (in today’s region of Shaanxi province). He received his *jinshi* degree in 1535 (fourteenth year of Jiajing 嘉靖 reign period) and worked as an official in the Directorate of Education (*Guozi Jijiu* 國子祭酒) in Nanjing. See Gong Xianzong 龔顯宗 (2007), *Ming Qizpai shiwen ji qi lunping zhi yanjiu*

not known whether the *Shitong* originally already provided a record [about it]. The technique of writing derives from [Liu] Zhiji, with certainty this is hard to hide; concerning the errors [in it], thus, if the rest fits, one can see [his] rules. Concerning errors by later scholars, who holds the fault for them? This is regretful for a long time.

In this part, Zhang Zhixiang began to illustrate the Ming time development of the *Shitong* research, and appraised Lu Shen's efforts in the analysis of Liu Zhiji's work, although he also referred to the fact that Lu's edition still contained mistakes. Likewise, Zhang also indicated the difficulties emerging from the study of ancient books in general, namely that they are not complete anymore, that their transmitted editions include mistakes or they are lost altogether. Here, Zhang also admitted that Liu Zhiji and his *Shitong* were quite well-known in Tang times and afterwards. Regretful for Zhang Zhixiang were the errors included by later scholars into this important work. Zhang went on:

偶梁溪友人秦中翰汝立，視予家藏宋刻本，字整句暢，大勝蜀刻，儼山先生所未及睹者，小子何幸，觀此秘籍。披閱撫玩，良慰素心。乃相與銓訂，尋討指歸，將圖不朽。復與郡中諸賢雋徐君虞卿、馮君美卿等，參合眾本，丹鉛點勘，大較以宋本為正，餘義通者，仍兩存之。反復折衷，始明潤可讀，庶無遺憾。斯文之寄，屬在何人，不與廣傳，恐遂廢沒。於是乃倡義捐貲，鏤板流布，非敢自秘，與世之知知幾者共欣賞焉。

By chance the friend from Liangxi [i.e. Wuxi], Qin Zhonghan Ruli,²⁷⁶ looked at the Song time block print-edition of my family's book storage. The characters and whole sentences were clear and, hence, decisively triumphed over the *shu*-edition. Concerning [the fact] that this edition was not touched upon by Mr. Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen], how lucky was I that I met this rare book? I opened it and I read it; I fondled it and I appreciated it. Instinctively, it soothed my true heart. Only then I dealt with assessing and revising, searched for the intentions, and made this

明七子派詩文及其論評之研究 (Study of the Literary Works of the Ming time Seven Masters of Poetry and their Commentary), Taipei: Huamu lan wenhua chubanshe 花木蘭文化出版社 (Gudian shige yanjiu huikan 古典詩歌研究彙刊 Second edition; 16), p. 40.

²⁷⁶ I.e. Qin Zhu 秦柱 (1536-1585), *zi* 字: Ruli 汝立, from Wuxi 无锡 in Jiangsu. He was a politician in Ming dynasty.

description immortal. Again together with various virtuous and talented people in the region like the Chief Minister Xu Junyu and Chief Minister Ping Junmei I consulted and synthesized the many editions, proofread and collated them. And generally, I regarded the Song edition as correct; thoroughly understanding the derivative meanings,²⁷⁷ there remained two preserved editions. But because we repeatedly compromised [between these two editions], [the *Shitong*] only then could be read brightly and clearly, and all were without regret. Concerning the deposit place of this piece of literature, whom did it belong to? This did not grant an extensive transmission, and I feared that, thereupon, it could be abandoned and disappear. Consequently, in order to propagate the cardinal principles of righteousness and financially aid public enterprises, I cut a block for printing and disseminated it, not daring to keep it secretly for myself. The ones of my generation, [therefore, now] know Liu Zhiji, and altogether admire him.

The third part of his preface depicts Zhang's research on the *Shitong*. He praised the lucky chance that he got hold of the Song time block print-edition, which he was extensively lucky about. Moreover, he stressed that this edition "was not touched upon by Mr. Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen] [...]" Therefore, he exclaimed: "How lucky was I that I met this rare book?" The same as Liu Zhiji, Zhang wanted his work to become immortal. Accordingly, he carefully revised the many versions of the *Shitong* and used the Song edition as the basis, as he regarded this edition as the most complete and properly transmitted one. Furthermore, Zhang, though, feared that the *Shitong* could disappear again, and, therefore, financially helped in disseminating it by sponsoring the printing of his revised edition. This, indeed, was a great help for Ming time and the later *Shitong* research.

知幾昔嘗以史通自擬《太玄》，且云“今之君山，即徐、朱等數君是也；後來張、陸，則未之知耳”²⁷⁸。張者謂張衡平子也。陸者謂陸續公紀也。儼山先生大雅博達，以文章名世，於公紀何讓乎！予

²⁷⁷ This expression refers to other meanings of a character differing from its original meaning, either because this character interchangeably was used for phonetically related characters, or a meaning deriving from its original meaning.

²⁷⁸ This quotation derives from the *Shitong*, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 10, *zixu* 自序 (autobiography, chap. 36). See *Shitong* 史通, p. 207.

小子單陋疏薄，雖不敢望平子，但《史通》繼刻，無忸前修。而張、陸二姓，適與知幾之言合，殆亦有異數云。

Liu Zhiji in former times came to know the *Taixuan*²⁷⁹—while drafting the *Shitong* by himself. Moreover, he said: “Concerning his Junshan,²⁸⁰ one could say that Xu [Jian] and Zhu [Jingze]²⁸¹ are these [for me]. But later, they will not be known as having been my Zhang [Heng] and Lu [Ji].” Zhang is the named Zhang Heng Pingzi;²⁸² Lu is the named Lu Ji Gongji.²⁸³ Mr. Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen] had a refined and broad knowledge, as well as his articles were well known to his contemporaries; how can he be regarded less to Gongji! I alone am simple, crude and weak, though, I do not dare to look towards Pingzi. But the following edition of the *Shitong* was not as perverted as the edition before. However, the two family names of Zhang and Lu fit appropriately to the words of [Liu] Zhiji, and even also have the special favor of saying.

In the last part of Zhang Bishan’s or Zhang Zhixiang’s preface, the author tried to classify Lu Shen’s and his own contribution and involvement in the rectifying and dissemination of Liu Zhiji’s work. In order to do so, he cited from the *Shitong* from a passage where Liu Zhiji compared his work to Yang Xiong’s *Taixuan*. Liu stated that—

²⁷⁹ The *Taixuan* or *Taixuanjing* 太玄經 (Classic of the Supreme Mystery)—in the *Siku quanshu Taiyuanjing* 太元經—by the Han scholar Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BC-18 AD) is based on the philosophy of the Yin-Yang- and *Wuxing*-concepts. See “Chinese Literature—*Taixuanjing* 太玄經 ‘The Classic of the Supreme Mystery,’” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/taixuanjing.html), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/taixuanjing.html>, last accessed: July 26th, 2016.

²⁸⁰ I.e. Huan Tan 桓譚 (23 BC-50 AD?), *zi* 字: Junshan 君山, who was Yang Xiong’s friend and defended his *Taixuan* very strongly.

²⁸¹ I.e. Zhu Jingze 朱敬則 (635-709) who was an official and chancellor during the reign of Empress Wu Zetian.

²⁸² Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139 AD), *zi* 字: Pingzi 平子, from Nanyang, was a scholar, geographer, mathematician and inventor in Han dynasty. Zhang wrote a commentary to the *Taixuan*, namely the *Taixuanjing zhujie* 太玄經注解. According to Lu Zongli, Zhang Heng also analyzed the *Shiji* and the *Hanshu* and performed critique towards these works, which is preserved in Fan Ye’s 范曄 (398-445) *Houhanshu*. See Lu Zongli (1995), “Problems Concerning the Authenticity of Shih chi 123 Reconsidered,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 17, p. 57.

²⁸³ Lu Ji 陸績 (188-219 AD), *zi* 字: Gongji 公紀, from Suzhou, was an official of Eastern or Later Han dynasty. For his biography, see *Sanguozhi* 三國志, vol. 5, *juan* 57, *wushu* 吳書 12, *Lu Ji zhuan* 陸績傳, pp. 1328f. Among others, his work (or commentary) on the *Taixuanjing* was appraised very high and was compared to Zuo Qiuming’s contribution to the *Chunqiu*. See *Sanguozhi* 三國志, vol. 5, *juan* 57, *wushu* 吳書 12, *Zhu Juan zhuan* 朱據傳, p. 1341.

like Yang Xiong's friend Huan Tan was a reliable and trustful friend—Xu Jian and Zhu Jingze were his friends and supporters. Still, they would not, as he foresaw, be known as great commentators of his work—as Zhang Heng and Lu Ji were known in regard to the *Taixuan*. Now, Zhang Zhixiang claimed that Lu Shen in regard to the commentating of the *Shitong*, indeed, had to be seen as at least equal to Lu Ji (concerning the *Taixuan*). Although before he mentioned the errors which are contained in Lu Shen's edition, he appreciated Lu's effort and contribution. At the same time, Zhang diminished himself and did not dare to compare himself to Zhang Heng, the other great commentator of the *Taixuan*. Nonetheless, the end of the paragraph closes with a remark half in earnest, half in jest: Zhang Zhixiang noted that Liu's words of naming Zhang and Lu as examples of the eminent and known commentators apparently fit to the names Zhang (Zhixiang) and Lu (Shen); and, hence, he implied that he himself and Lu Shen, certainly, could serve as the two known commentators of the *Shitong*.

Zhang Zhixiang evidently contributed immensely to the Ming time research of the *Shitong*, as he further developed the existing edition of the work in order to perfect it and make it readable and understandable again. Therefore, his contribution can be considered a further milestone—after Lu Shen's research—in the study of the *Shitong* in Ming dynasty, influencing many scholars who came after him.

5.3 Zhang Dingsi 張鼎思 and his Edition of the *Shitong*

5.3.1 The Author

Zhang Dingsi 張鼎思 (1543-1603), *zi* 字: Ruifu 睿父, from Changzhou 長洲 (in today's region of Hunan), received his *jinshi* degree in 1577. He was promoted several official posts, e.g. vice commissioner of the Fujian provincial surveillance commission, and Jiangxi surveillance commissioner. Works written by him are, for example, the *Langya manyan* 琅琊曼衍 (Spreading out Far and Wide in Langye), the *Kaogong ji putu* 考工記補圖 (Record about Technical Skills Supplemented by Illustrations), and the *Langya dai zui bian* 琅琊代醉編 (Indulged Writing about the Generations of Langye). Furthermore, Zhang Dingsi together with Xia Liangxin 夏良心 (fl. 1571, *zi* 字: Jingyao 景堯) compiled a new edition of the known *Compendium of Materia Medica* (*Bencao*

gangmu 本草綱目) by Li Shizhen 李時珍 (1518-1593), and Zhang wrote the preface to this edition from 1603.²⁸⁴

5.3.2 General Information to Zhang Dingsi's Edition

In contrast to Zhang Zhixiang, Zhang Dingsi took Lu Shen's edition, the *shu*-edition, as basis of his work and further revised this text. He added more than 430 characters in the chapter *Qubi* 曲筆, and more than three hundred in the chapter *Jianshi* 鑒識, while eliminating another sixty characters. In 1602, he published his new edition; this edition was later included in the collectaneum *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 (Collectaneum of the Four Categories), published by the Commercial Press (*Shangwu yinshuguan* 商務印書館) between 1919 and 1922.²⁸⁵ The text is introduced by an interesting preface by the author; afterwards Zhang cited Wang Ge's 王閣 *Kanzheng Shitong Xu* 刊正史通序 (Preface to the Proofread and Corrected *Shitong*). Then, the *Shitong* text follows. At the end of Zhang Dingsi's *Shitong*-edition in the *Sibu congkan*, the author attached Lu Shen's *Ti Shuben Shitong hou* 題蜀本史通後 (see chap. 5.1.2), Gao Gongshao's 高公韶 (1480-1539; *zi* 字: Dahe 大和, from Sichuan) postface to the new *Shitong*-edition (*Ba xinkan Shitong* 跋新刊史通), a postface by Peng Rushi 彭汝實,²⁸⁶ Li Ji's 李佶 *Kanzheng Shitong Xu* 刊正史通序 (Preface to the Proofread and Corrected *Shitong*), and a postface to the *Shitong* (*Ba Shitong* 跋史通) by Yang Ming 楊名.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁴ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 262; Carla Nappi (2010), *The Monkey and the Inkpot: Natural History and its Transformations in Early Modern China*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, p. 19.

²⁸⁵ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 49; Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 264.

²⁸⁶ Peng Rushi 彭汝實 (1481-1540), *zi* 字: Ziyuan 子兗, from Jiadingzhou 嘉定州, Sichuan, concerned himself with the *Shujing* 書經 [i.e. *Shangshu* 尚書]. In 1521, he received his *jinshi* degree and was seen as one of the “*Jiading si jian*” 嘉定四諫 (The Four Admonishers from Jiading)—together with Qi Chong 啟充, Xu Wenhua 徐文華 and An Pan 安磐. Among other things, Peng wrote the *Nanzhong Zouyi* 南中奏議 and the *Liu zhao jiwu* 六詔記聞. See *Mingshi* 明史, vol. 56, *juan* 208, *liezhuan* 列傳 96, pp. 5503f.

²⁸⁷ Yang Ming 楊名 (1505-1559), *zi* 字: Shiqing 實卿, from Suining 遂寧 in Sichuan, was an official of Ming time who scored very high in the imperial examination. Later he was imprisoned due to an imperial edict. See *Mingshi* 明史, vol. 55, *juan* 207, *liezhuan* 列傳 95, pp. 5470ff.

5.3.3 Preface of Zhang Dingsi's *Shitong*-Edition

The same as Zhang Zhixiang's preface, also Zhang Dingsi incorporated useful and interesting information in his preface to the *Shitong*.

(張鼎思)續校史通序²⁸⁸

唐長安、景龍間，劉子玄在東觀商榷諸史，著《史通》二十卷。傳刻弗廣，余家有抄本，齊六趙肖，十居一二，以故宦轍所至，必先購求，復得二三抄本。雖各有舛謬，而參稽互正，庶幾可讀。

Zhang Dingsi "The Preface to the Continued and Proofread *Shitong*"

Between the Tang era Chang'an [701-705] and Jinglong [707-710], Liu Zixuan discussed all various histories in the Dongguan²⁸⁹ and wrote the twenty *juan* work *Shitong*. The transmission of this edition is not extensive. But my family had a handwritten copy; together six copies from Zhao [i.e. Hebei] were scattered and lost. Out of ten one or two remained; due to the journeys as imperial official, I achieved that. First, I had to offer money [for these rare editions]; and then again, I obtained two or three handwritten copies. Although each of them contained mistakes, yet I could still comparingly investigate and mutually rectify them, and one could almost read it [i.e. the *Shitong*].

At the beginning of his preface, Zhang Dingsi described the sparse transmission of the *Shitong* and informed about the fact that his family possessed a handwritten copy. In addition, he was able to obtain other handwritten copies in the course of official journeys to compare with his own one. Here, Zhang gave precious information about the dissemination of the handwritten copies, and even named concrete data. His preface goes on:

茲承乏江臬，同寮諸公，一時士望，聚會之間，縱言至於史，方伯莆田吳公曰：“此有《史通》，太史陸儼山氏守藩時刻也，子其讎之。”余念儼山先生，才雄學博，其於是刻用心良勤，然恨無別本參對，若有望於後人。余豈敢辭，因出篋中本，更為校勘。篇章有

²⁸⁸ The whole following preface derives from: *Xujiao Shitong xu* 續校史通序, in *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊, *chubian* 初編, *shibu* 史部, *Shitong* 史通, *xu* 序, pp. 2ff.

²⁸⁹ Dongguan 東觀 is the name for the place of storing books in the palace.

應合應岐者，合之岐之；書名有應刪應益應定者，刪之益之定之。

《曲筆》篇為增四百卅餘字，《鑒識》篇增三百餘字，而去其自它篇羸者六十餘字。《因習》上卷已亡，刻中數行宜削而不削者，慎之也。它無可據者，姑仍其舊。

Now I accepted [in absence of better qualified candidates] a position in the river guidepost; and together with all the official gentlemen in charge of the allotment to the feudal nobles we temporarily [among ourselves] had family status. At our gatherings, we engaged in informal and free conversations as far as about history. The Provincial Administration Officer Pu Tianwu publicly said: “There is this *Shitong*, which the court historian Lu Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen]—at the time when he was appointed with the title of nobility—edited. Sons, you should proofread it.”

I studied Master Yanshan [i.e. Lu Shen]: His ability is imposing, and his learning extensive. He was attentive and very diligent in this edition. Though, he hated not to have other editions; yet, he participated in correcting this edition; and seemingly this was promising for later generations. How could I dare to dismiss it? Because I took this edition out of a box, I then even more collated it. The sections and chapters should have matching [paragraphs] and divergent ones; I matched them and I differentiated them. The book titles had sections to be deleted, some to be added, and some to be fixed; I deleted them, I added them and I fixed them. The chapter *Qubi* was enlarged by more than 430 characters; the chapter *Jianyi* by more than 300 characters. From this “chapter-mix” I left out more than sixty characters. The first *juan* of the *Yinxi* chapter was already lost; in my edition, I several times performed suitable deletions but was not “one who deletes [only],” and I did it carefully. Because this edition could not rely on something, I am lenient concerning this old [edition].

In this paragraph, Zhang Dingsi addressed Lu Shen’s edition, introduced by a story in which his principal in the office advised him and his colleagues to read Lu’s work. Indeed, Zhang regarded Lu Shen’s work as “very diligent.” Furthermore, he spoke of Lu Shen’s edition as “promising for later generations,” although in his research he did not have any other editions for comparison. Lu Shen’s edition together with the handwritten copies which he himself had obtained served as basis for his compilation. Zhang went on describing what he did, namely carefully fitting, deleting, differentiating

and expanding (by 430 characters). However, it is not clear how the edition transmitted by Zhang Dingsi's forefathers looked like. Therefore, it is difficult to assess whether he deleted and added characters in the right way; neither could he be certain about it. Wang Jiachuan, hence, spoke of a “blurred character” (扑朔迷离的色彩) of this edition.²⁹⁰

Zhang Dingsi continued as follows:

校竣，竊喟然曰：“嗟乎！史職之難久矣。左史以降，作者比肩，靡不自謂鞭撻狐、南，睥睨游、夏，而子玄橫加訶詆，所與完璧者，僅王君懋一人而已。由斯以談，柳子厚之不就，豈無見乎？然子玄身秉史筆，不自成家，龍姿美業，未聞光闡；鷄晨穢德，未聞昭戒。至其論史則信塚書而疑墳典，譏堯舜，訾湯文，誹周孔，不少顧忌，故宋子京有工拙之譏，柳炤之有《析微》之論。刻之不廣，大率為此。

When I had completed the proofreading, I sighed deeply: “Alas! The difficulties of a historian’s duties [have already been persisting] for a long time. Since there are Left Scribes, the writers worked shoulder on shoulder. There was none who did not certainly call to castigate [the recordings by] [Dong]hu²⁹¹ and Nan[shi],²⁹² while spying on the *Chunqiu*.²⁹³ But Liu Zixuan violently rebuked this slander. The only person who did this to these intact “jade stones [of literature]” was

²⁹⁰ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 264.

²⁹¹ Donghu 董狐, a historian from Jin 晉 of the Spring and Autumn period (771-476 BC), originated from Quwo 曲沃 in today’s region of Shanxi. Hereditarily, he was a court historian and was also called Shi Hu 史狐 (History Hu). Donghu had a reputation for always writing the truth. Confucius himself called him to be a *liangshi* 良史 (a good historian). For example, the story about minister Zhao Xuan 趙宣 (or Zhao Dun 趙盾) who fled, when his sovereign was attacked, and returned to the court after the latter had been murdered, was recorded by Donghu. Furthermore, he claimed Zhao Xuan to be responsible. Together with Nanshi he is named as example for righteousness and honesty by Liu Zhiji. See Chaussende (2014), p. 295.

²⁹² Lit. “The Scribe of the South,” refers to the History Official of the state Qi 齊 (1046-221 BC) in the Spring and Autumn period. He was executed because he recorded in the annals the regicide by a minister. Together with Donghu he is named as an example for righteousness and honesty by Liu Zhiji. See Chaussende (2014), p. 310.

²⁹³ Lit. “...spying on [Zi] You and [Zi] Xia.” Ziyou and Zixia were disciples of Confucius who recorded his writings, i.e. the *Chunqiu*. In the *Shitong*, it is found in the *neipian*, *juan* 6, *yushi* 敘事 22. See Chaussende (2014), p. 170, FN 58 for further information. Ziyou, i.e. Yan Yan 言偃 (506-?), *zi* 字: Ziyou 子游, (also Yan You 言游 or Yanzi 言子 “Master Yan”) originated from the State of Wu 吳 (eleventh century to 473 BC). Zixia, i.e. Bu Shang 卜商 (507-420? BC), *zi* 字: Zixia 子夏, furthermore, was important for the transmission of the *Yijing* 易經 and the *Shijing* 詩經.

Wang Junmao [i.e. Wang Shao],²⁹⁴ and that is all. From this point one can say that Liu Zihou [i.e. Liu Zongyuan²⁹⁵] did not engage in this; but how could he not pay attention to that? However, Zixuan personally controlled the recordings of historiographers, but did not by himself become a recognized expert. Concerning the intelligent demeanor of the emperor and his beautiful personal achievements, one did not hear it being vastly enhanced. Concerning the hen herald breaking the dawn of the day in a debauched way, one did not hear a clear warning. Coming to this discussion about history [i.e. the *Shitong*], he [i.e. Liu Zhiji] then believed the [*Ji*]zhong books and doubted the ancient classics; he ridiculed Emperor Yao and Emperor Shun, and slandered Emperor Tang²⁹⁶ and King Wen of Zhou,²⁹⁷ he slandered the Duke of Zhou and Confucius, and not seldom expressed scruples [about their sayings]. Therefore, Song Zijing [i.e. Song Qi]²⁹⁸ conducted good and bad mocking [in the *Shitong*]; and Liu Zhaozhi [i.e. Liu Can] had a discussion about [this] in his [*Shitong*] *xiwei*.²⁹⁹ That the edition was not vastly [disseminated], generally speaking was for this reason.

In contrast to Zhang Zhixiang, Zhang Dingsi's remarks were much more nuanced, critical, and more difficult to understand. In this paragraph, he thematized the problems and difficulties of being a historian. While in former times historians like Donghu and

²⁹⁴ Wang Shao 王劭, *zi* 字: Junmao 君懋, was an official of the Sui dynasty (581-619) and, among other things, wrote the *qijuzhu* 起居注 (Diaries of Activity and Repose). Furthermore, he compiled the *Huang Sui linggang zhi* 皇隋灵感志 (Record about the Inspiration of the Sui Rulers), the *Suishu* 隋書 (The Book of Sui), the *Qizhi* 齊志 (The Record about the Qi State), the *Qishu* 齊書 (The Book of Qi), and the *Ping Zei Ji* 平賊記 (Record about Suppression of Bandits). He was appreciated by Liu Zhiji for his intellectual honesty. According to Chaussende, he is one of those rare historians who did not sacrifice the content to the style. See Chaussende (2014), pp. 316f.

²⁹⁵ See p. 92, FN 258.

²⁹⁶ Tang of Shang dynasty (ca. 1675-1646 BC), also Cheng Tang 成湯 (Tang the Perfect) or Da Yi 大乙 was the first ruler of Shang dynasty (ca. 1600-1046 BC). See “Chinese Mythology—Tang the Perfect 成湯,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personschengtang.html>, last accessed: July 27th, 2016.

²⁹⁷ King Wen of Zhou (*Zhou Wen wang* 周文王; 1152-1056 BC) was a ruler of the pre-dynastic Zhou state (*Xian Zhou* 先周) in Guanzhou (today's region of Shaanxi) during the Shang dynasty, the predecessors of the later Zhou dynasty (*Zhouchao* 周朝; 1046-256 BC). He is regarded to be the founder of Zhou dynasty and is praised in classical poems as epic hero. See “Persons in Chinese History—Zhou Wenwang 周文王, King Wen of Zhou,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personszhouwenwang.html>, last accessed: July 27th, 2016.

²⁹⁸ See p. 51, FN 137.

²⁹⁹ See chap. 5.

Nanshi—who dared to say the truth without regard to the opinion of the ruler and both were executed in consequence—were slandered, Liu Zhiji and, thus, Zhang Dingsi praised their behavior.

However, Zhang here also posed the question why Liu Zhiji while being a historiographer never compiled a history book by himself. Furthermore, Liu only criticized or praised former history works and eminent persons of the ancient past; Zhang here criticized Liu for his critique towards Confucius and others. In consequence, scholars like Song Qi and Liu Can discussed these critical points of the *Shitong*, which apparently was appreciated by Zhang Dingsi. The scruples against the sayings of eminent people of the past are—according to Zhang—the reason that it was not disseminated very vastly.

要以序體法、明典要為作史者準繩，則是書亦豈可少哉！夫其上自唐、虞，下及陳、隋，綱羅千禩，貫穿百家，雖謂前無古人可矣，此徐堅所以有座右之許也。觀所上蕭至忠書，雖苦積薪，與蠶室，然讀白首有期，汗青無日之語，其志有足諒者。余深悲之，故於茲編三致意焉。

萬歷壬寅冬十月，谷旦后學長洲張鼎思撰。

One shall regard the established rules and clear standards in the preface as criteria for historiographers; how could this book then lack [something]! This goes back from [the times of] Emperor Tang [of Shang]³⁰⁰ and Emperor Yu [the Great],³⁰¹ and also down to [the times of] the Chen and Sui dynasties. The guiding principles were collected for a thousand years and ran through the many schools of thought. Even so, that it [i.e. the *Shitong*] is called unprecedented, is approved; this is why Xu Jian gave the allowance [for the *Shitong*] to be placed on the right. Concerning Xiao Zhizhong's writings which were exalted by this point of view, although [Liu] bitterly [suffered that] the newcomers came to

³⁰⁰ Tang of Shang or Tang the Perfect (Cheng Tang 成湯) was the founder of the Shang dynasty (17th-11th century BC). See “Chinese Mythology—Tang the Perfect 成湯,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personschengtang.html>, last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

³⁰¹ “Yu the Great (Da Yu 大禹) is the mythological forefather of the Xia dynasty 夏 (17th-15th cent. BCE) and a semi-god who tamed the floods.” See “Chinese Mythology—Yu the Great 大禹,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsyu.html>, last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

the fore,³⁰² [his writings were kept] together with silkworm cocoons. But if one reads the words “it can be expected that we are already hoary, before we [start] our literary undertakings,”³⁰³ [one sees] that his [i.e. Liu Zhiji’s] ambition was to be one who understands fully. I deeply sympathize with that; therefore, I again and again voice my opinion about this compilation.

In the *renyin* (39th) year of the Wanli reign period (1572-1620) in winter in the tenth month on an auspicious day written by me, Zhang Dingsi, from Changzhou.

In this last passage, the author again praised the *Shitong* as providing “established rules and clear standards [...] as criteria for historiographers,” which had been collected throughout the years. Therefore, Liu Zhiji’s approach to describe the times starting from Emperor Tang and Yu was deemed an advantage by Zhang Dingsi because in that way the guiding principles could be detected in the long Chinese history. Furthermore, he underpinned the statement by Zhang Zhixiang that the *Shitong* in its age, in effect, was somehow appreciated in some way, although it did not yet get the appropriate esteem. Personally, Zhang Dingsi, as he said, strongly sympathized with Liu Zhiji’s view about writing history and his claim that one first has to get a full understanding of the meaning and intention of history writing in general and the meaning of a particular happening in the specific case in order to properly undertake historiography. Eventually, this is the reason why Zhang compiled and edited a new edition of the *Shitong* and was not getting tired of spreading Liu’s ideas.

³⁰² The meaning of *jixin* 積薪 (lit. a pile of firewood), “newcomers come to the fore” here is derived from a passage in the *Shitong*, *waipian*, *juan* 20, *wushi* 忤時 13: 儻使士有澹雅若 严君平，清廉如 段干木，与僕易地而处，亦将弹缺告劳，积薪为恨。Chaussende translated this part as follows: “Si un lettré aussi raffiné que Yan Junping et aussi intègre que Duangan Mu prenait ma place, il se plaindrait du pauvre traitement qu’il reçoit et verrait avec détestation qu’on donne les meilleures places aux derniers arrivés.” So to say “...and with detestation would we see that the best seats are given to the ones who arrived last.” Chaussende (2014), p. 287.

³⁰³ This refers to a passage in the *Shitong*, *waipian*, *juan* 20, *wushi* 13: [...] 白可期，而汗青無日。Chaussende translated this passage as follows: “...que nous soyons déjà chenus avant même d’avoir commencé à écrire.” Chaussende (2014), p. 280.

Concluding Remarks

In summary, it became evident that the most significant problem was the access to a reliable edition of the *Shitong*. Lu Shen, Zhang Zhixiang and Zhang Dingsi all took Song editions as basis for their new editions of the *Shitong* and from that managed to elaborate these copies by comparing them to all sources they had. Nevertheless, after Lu Shen had already done a great job, Zhang Dingsi had access to Lu Shen's slightly erroneous edition and selected it as his main source while at the same time not taking into account Zhang Zhixiang's edition. Zhang Dingsi's edition—as a conglomerate and an elaboration of the achievements by Lu Shen and other scholars—was held in high esteem and had a deep impact for later studies. For example, Guo Kongyan (see chap. 5.4.2) possessed an edition in his family book collection, and he based his commentary on this edition. Wang Weijian did the same when writing his *Shitong xungu* (see chap. 5.5). Furthermore, Wang Zhongmin 王重民 said in his *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao* 中國善本書提要 about Zhang Dingsi's edition: “Concerning the editions of the *Shitong* printed by Ming time scholars, I regard this edition as the finest.” (明人所刻《史通》，以此本為最善。³⁰⁴). With these new and at the most reliable editions other scholars from Ming dynasty followed the example of Lu Shen and compiled commentaries to Liu Zhiji's work.

5.4 The Commentary *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋

《史通評釋》二十卷：明李維楨評，郭孔延附評並釋。[...] 維楨因張氏之本，略為評論。孔延因續為評釋 [...]。³⁰⁵

The *Shitong pingshi* in twenty *juan*—Criticized by Li Weizhen from Ming, further criticized and explained by Guo Kongyan [...] [Li] Weizhen on the basis of Master Zhang's edition slightly commented it; Guo Kongyan on this basis continued to criticize and discuss it [...]

³⁰⁴ Wang Zhongmin 王重民 (1986), *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao* 中國善本書提要, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, p. 149.

³⁰⁵ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 89, *shibu* 史部 45, *shiping* 史評, vol. 17, p. 87, *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋. For a full translation of the abstract of the *Shitong pingshi* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, see Appendix II.5.

Li Weizhen 李維楨 started the endeavor of compiling a commentary to the *Shitong*; Guo Kongyan 郭孔延 followed him shortly after and also obtained help from the latter in his studies. However, due to the absence of a concrete date for Li Weizhen's commentary, other sources seem to indicate that Guo Kongyan was the first to publish his commentary. The section about the *Shitong pingshi* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* cited above suggests that, indeed, Li Weizhen was the first one to write a commentary. However, Guo Kongyan's commentary is dated to the year 1604, while Li Weizhen's commentary—according to Wang Jiachuan—is dated to 1611. Albeit it is sure that originally there existed two separated versions of this commentary which showed some differences. But as a matter of fact, the original edition by Li Weizhen's critical commentary is only transmitted in pieces; for that reason, today there is no single commentary by Li Weizhen. Only the first block print-edition of the *Shitong pingshi*—a combined work of Li Weizhen's and Guo Kongyan's commentaries—is available and serves as the common *Shitong pingshi* edition.³⁰⁶ Nevertheless, Li Weizhen transmitted the preface of his *Shitong pingshi* in his work *Damishanfang ji* 大泌山房集, called the *Shitong xu* 史通序. In the edition which is stored in the Section of Ancient Books of the National Library of China (*Zhongguo guojia tushuguan gujiguan* 中國國家圖書館古籍館), the *Shitong pingshi* starts with a pre-preface by Li Weizhen (483 characters), followed by the preface by Guo Kongyan (which—in a shorter version—was also included in Li Weizhen's version of the *pingshi*).

The main priority of the book is the commenting, not the transmission of the original *Shitong* text—this is the main difference to the former editions by Zhang Zhixiang and Zhang Dingsi. So to say, the essence of the *Shitong pingshi* lies in the annotation and the correction of mistakes in the *Shitong*. Special attention was paid to commenting on the language, the intonation, the meaning and the references. To correct errors meant to highlight improper passages and to revise inaccuracies made by Liu Zhiji.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁶ Wang Jiachuan (2013), pp. 266, 268; Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 50. This conglomerate is to be found in the *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *shibu* 史部, *shiping lei* 史評類, *di* 第 279 *ce* 冊, pp. 1-299. The *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書 is a collection of books completed in 1997 and based on the *Siku quanshu* and following its structure.

³⁰⁷ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 266; Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 50.

5.4.1 Li Weizhen and his *Shitong Pingshi*

The Author

Li Weizhen 李維楨 (1547-1626), *zi* 字: Benning 本寧, from Damishan 大泌山, Jingshan 景山 (in today's region of Hubei), received his *jinshi* degree in 1568; because of his good grades he was awarded with the title *Shujishi* 庶吉士 (Hanlin Bachelor), and became an official compiler. Only after the Veritable Records of Emperor Muzong (*Muzong shilu* 穆宗實錄) were completed, he entered the History Office. In 1575, he was promoted Right Assistant Administration Officer (*You canyi* 右參議) in Shaanxi; then, he became Vice Commissioner of the Education Intendant Circuit (*Tixue fushi* 提學副使). Li Weizhen remained an official in the provinces for thirty years. In 1624, the compilation of the *Shenzong shilu* 神宗實錄 (The Veritable Records of Emperor Shenzong) was decreed; but due to internal struggles, Li was not allowed to enter the History Office, and was only promoted one grade. Thus, in the next year he retired from his office and returned home. Li was known as a pleasant and broad-minded person having encyclopedic knowledge and literary talent. His most famous work transmitted is the *Damishanfang ji* 大泌山房集 (Collection from Libraries in Damishan) in 134 *juan*; because he wrote this work at his own will, it was not praised highly in the *Mingshi* 明史.³⁰⁸

Li Weizhen's Preface in the Damishanfang ji

Seven years after Guo Kongyan had published the *Shitong pingshi*—according to Wang Jiachuan—, Li Weizhen publicized his work *Damishanfang ji*; at that time, Li had already been living secluded from daily life for fifteen years. In the *Damishan*, he discussed articles about historiography and many times cited the *Shitong*. But, surprisingly, his *Shitong ping* 史通評—i.e. his version of the *Shitong pingshi*—cannot be discovered in this comprehensive work. Wang Jiachuan provided three possible

³⁰⁸ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 268. The *Mingshi* 明史 or “History of the Ming” is the official written history of Ming dynasty, compiled between 1679 and 1739. Some peculiarities of the *Mingshi* in contrast to other Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史) are the illustrations in the treatises about the calendar, biographies of political factions and of rebels and other things. See “*Mingshi* 明史 ‘The History of the Ming Dynasty,’” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/mingshi.html), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/mingshi.html>, last accessed: October 28th, 2015.

reason for this phenomenon: Firstly, Li Weizhen simply left it out, which is unlikely considering his other statements revealing his deep connection with the *Shitong*. Secondly, the *Damishanfang ji* was published before the *Shitong ping* was completed. Unfortunately, even in his transmitted preface there is no concrete date of completion; it is only certain that he did not complete his work before summer 1605. The third option would be that somebody else falsely wrote this and transferred Li Weizhen's name to the work. Modern historians are prone to believe in this option, while scholars since the Qing dynasty never doubted the authorship of Li Weizhen. In the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* it is stated that the edition by Li Weizhen never arose the review of Ming time scholars canvassing it, and it was not discussed enough. (維禎所評，不出明人游談之習，無足置論。) ³⁰⁹

The passage which is included in his *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* is his preface to the *Shitong* (*Shitong xu* 史通序). In contrast to Guo Kongyan's edition (with 5,319 additional characters in the preface), Li Weizhen's edition only has 3,784 additional characters—almost identical to the largest part of Guo's preface—but bears a supplemental pre-preface consisting of 483 characters, which was not adopted in Guo Kongyan's edition—so together there are 4,267 additional characters. In the pre-preface, so to say the preface written only by Li Weizhen, in 483 characters it states the following:

史通序³¹⁰

大泌山恩李維禎撰

夫自二儀既判，垂玄象之文；萬肇化生，彰紀事之實。蒼頡、沮誦以前，造物代為敷揚，山川曲為攄寫，何必人抽金匱之藏，世擅如椽之筆哉？墳典愛播，柱下斯守，而麟史以後，南、董載淪。子長、孟堅，組繪其彤管；蔚宗、承祚，粉藻其丹鉛；伯起、伯深，標長於北朝；安國、休文，脫穎於江表。

³⁰⁹ Wang Jiachuan (2013), pp. 268f; *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 89, *shibu* 史部 45, *shiping* 史評, vol. 17, p. 87, *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋. For a complete translation of the paragraph about the *Shitong pingshi* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, see Appendix II.5.

³¹⁰ *Shitong xu* 史通序, by Li Weizhen, in *Shitong* 史通, by Liu Zhiji, Li Weizhen, and Guo Kongyan, in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *shibu* 史部, *shiping lei* 史評類, *di* 第 279 *ce* 冊, pp. 1ff.

非不英華秀發，波拂縈洄，然皆通蔽相妨，訾譽各半。故“謗書”傳於後世，“受金”沸於羣言。參夷之刑，求米之誚，亦或不免。下此諸子，又可知已。

So, completely separated from heaven and earth, texts of celestial phenomena were handed down. That everything originates in the evolutionary creation of birth from transformation, is manifested by the facts of the chronicles. Before the times of Cang Jie and Ju Song,³¹¹ the divine force that created the universe [i.e. nature] representatively made this widely known; [e.g.] through the songs about mountains and rivers it was expressed and written down. Why must men [now] take [something] out from the metal bookcase storage, and [then] the generation dares to [treat it] like a masterly writing? The ancient books were disseminated with pleasure, and the archivists³¹² observed this. But after the times of the *Chunqiu*,³¹³ the recordings of Nanshi from Qi³¹⁴ and Donghu from Jin³¹⁵ declined. Zichang [i.e. Sima Qian] and Mengjian [i.e. Ban Gu] as a group painted with their red-tube writing brushes. Weizong [i.e. Fan Ye]³¹⁶ and Zhengzuo [i.e. Chen Shou]³¹⁷ glossed over [texts] with this cinnabar and lead powder,³¹⁸ Boqi [i.e. Yang Zhen]³¹⁹ and Boshen [i.e. Cui Hao]³²⁰ [are seen as] publishing and

³¹¹ Cang Jie 倉頡 (ca. 2650 BC) according the legends was an official historian of Huangdi and the inventor of Chinese characters. Ju Song legendarily was one of the four officials of Huangdi, like Cang Jie. See p. 79 of the present study.

³¹² Zhuxia 柱下 here either refers to a *Zhuxia shi* 柱下史, a name for an archivist and later for a censor (see *DOTIC*, no. 1385), or the place where the ancient books were collected and stored.

³¹³ *Linshi* 麟史 here refers to the *Chunqiu*.

³¹⁴ See p. 106, FN 292.

³¹⁵ See p. 106, FN 291.

³¹⁶ Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445), *zi* 字: Weizong 蔚宗, was a historian and official of Liu Song 劉宋 dynasty during the Southern and Northern dynasties (*Nanbeichao* 南北朝; 420-589) and compiled, among others, the *Houhanshu* 後漢書. Cheng Qianfan 程千帆, Zhou Zuzhuan 周祖譔, Wang Lixing 王立興, and Tang Qingmin 湯擎民 (1984), *Zhongguo gudai wenxue yinhua* 中國古代文學英華 (The Glory of Ancient Chinese Literature), Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe 上海教育出版社, p. 87.

³¹⁷ For information on Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297), see p. 91, FN 254.

³¹⁸ This powder or ink was used for collating and annotating book collections.

³¹⁹ Yang Zhen 楊震 (54-124), *zi* 字: Boqi 伯起, was an official of Eastern Han dynasty from today's region of Shaanxi province. Already at a young age, he was keen in studying, especially the Confucian classics, and well-read. See Cai Dongfang 蔡東藩 (2013), *Lishi yanyi: Houhan* 歷史演義: 後漢, volume 2, Taipei: Long shijie 龍視界, vol. 2, p. 154.

increasing [the knowledge] about the Northern dynasties.³²¹ Anguo [i.e. Sun Sheng]³²² and Xiuwen [i.e. Shen Yue]³²³ [are regarded as] standing out in the area south of the Yangtze.

But, their outstanding glory is not at all blooming. [Like] waves whisking and winding around and waters whirling around, so they all openly concealed [things] and obstructed each other, slandering and praising half and half. Therefore, the “Slandering Letter” [i.e. the *Shiji*] is passed down to later generations, and *Shoujin* [i.e. Ban Gu]³²⁴ bubbles up in a multitude of words. The punishment for the cruel torture of wiping out the relatives in the times of feudalistic dynasties, and the slandering by *Qiumi* [i.e. Chen Shou]³²⁵ also is inevitable. The decline of these various schools again is already evidential.

³²⁰ Cui Hao 崔浩 (?-450), *zi* 字: Boshen 伯深 or Boyuan 伯淵, was a politician of Northern Wei 北魏 dynasty during the Southern and Northern dynasties (*Nanbeichao* 南北朝; 420-589). See Zhang Guangbin 張光賓 (ed.) (1981), *Zhonghua shufa shi* 中華書法史 (The History of Chinese Handwriting), Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan 臺灣商務印書館, p. 132.

³²¹ I.e. the Northern Wei (*Bei Wei* 北魏), the Eastern Wei (*Dong Wei* 東魏), the Western Wei (*Xi Wei* 西魏), the Northern Qi (*Bei Qi* 北齊), and the Northern Zhou (*Bei Zhou* 北周) during the Southern and Northern dynasties (*Nanbeichao* 南北朝; 420-589).

³²² Sun Sheng 孫盛 (302-373), *zi* 字: Anguo 安國, was a historian of Jin 晉 dynasty (265-420). See Knechtges, Chang (2014), vol. 2, pp. 1057f.

³²³ Shen Yue 沈約 (441-513), *zi* 字: Xiuwen 休文, was a historian and official of the Liu Song 劉宋, Southern Qi 南齊 and Liang 梁 dynasties during the Southern and Northern dynasties (*Nanbeichao* 南北朝; 420-589). He was the author of the *Songshu* 宋書 (The Book of Song), which recorded the history of the Liu Song dynasty. Knechtges, Chang (2014), vol. 2, pp. 861-869.

³²⁴ “Receiving Bribes” (*shoujin* 受金) points at Ban Gu who several times met the accusation of having received bribes for writing and not writing certain things in his *Hanshu*. In the *Shitong* the following is stated: “Ban Gu received money and only then began to write, and Chen Shou accepted rice and only then compiled the biographies. These are treacherous bandits who note such sayings, evildoers who write the records [i.e. history]. They even display it in all public places, and one could say they threw them to the wolves.” (班固受金而始書，陳壽借米而方傳。此又記言之奸賊，載筆之凶人，雖肆諸市朝，投畀豺虎可也。) *Shitong* 史通, *neipian*, *juan* 7, *Qubi* 25, p. 143.

³²⁵ This expression (*qiu mi* 求米) points at Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297), who was accused of demanding rice from people for including them or writing what they want in his *Sanguozhi*. It derives from the *Yulin* 語林 (a compilation about literary celebrities and miscellaneous from Wei and Jin dynasties) by Pei Qi 裴啟 from Eastern Jin dynasty (Dong Jin 東晉; 317-420); there it is written: “When Chen Shou should compile the [*San*] *guozhi*, he called Ding Liangzhou saying: ‘If I can demand to borrow 1000 *hu* of rice, then I will compile a beautiful biography for your father.’ Ding could not offer the rice, thereupon there was no biography [about him].” (陳壽將為國志，謂丁梁州曰：‘若可覓千斛米見借，當為尊公作佳傳’。丁不與米，遂以無傳。) In the *Shitong* there is a reference to this expression (see FN 324 above) in the *neipian* in the chapter *Qubi*. See Chaussende (2014), p. 187, also FN 9.

Li Weizhen in his preface very eloquently described the development of historiography in ancient China. Starting with the creation of the universe and the mythological figures of Cang Jie and Ju Song, he in very brief but figurative words went on and claimed that history writing after the *Chunqiu* declined. Moreover, he criticized historians like Sima Qian and Ban Gu with the expression *tongguan* 彤管 which points at brushes used by female writers or deprecatorily expresses that they only painted with brushes; also Fan Ye and Chen Shou are criticized by illustrating how they “glossed over texts with their cinnabar and lead powder,” which comprises the accusation of being superficial and of only annotating other works without writing something by themselves. Moreover, authors like Yang Zhen, Cui Hao, Su Sheng and Shen Yue are depicted as highly esteemed, but in fact they are not; in the next passage the impression of the previous sentences is corroborated. Furthermore, Li Weizhen blamed historians of ancient times for always concealing and obstructing each other. He called the *Shiji* by its nickname “slandorous letter,” and with his appellations of *Shoujin*, i.e. Ban Gu, and *Qiumi*, i.e. Chen Shou, seized the impeachments towards Ban Gu and Chen Shou of being venal. Therefore, he concluded, “the decline of these various schools [...] is [...] evidential.” The preface continues:

子玄生於右文之世，學窮書圃，思極人文。包洪荒於天外，剖纖³²⁶細於棘端。出海瓊光，熠耀靡定；走盤圓影，迴旋恐失。成案如山，斤割理解。

Zixuan [i.e. Liu Zhiji] was born in a world where literature was held in high esteem; he exhaustingly studied the *Shangshu* and extremely thought about the human culture. He included the wilderness of chaos in his lofty and elevated language; he analyzed fine and delicately [even] at the top of the thorn [i.e. extremely precisely]. His emergence was exquisite and brilliant, but his glory was not settled. With the image of going winding and circling around, I fear [his person and work] will be lost. The old practices [stand firm] like mountains, and penetratingly command the understanding of [everything].

After these deliberations about ancient history writing, he dealt with the period of time in which Liu Zhiji lived and labelled it as very affine to literature. In contrast to the

³²⁶ Sometimes written as 糾.

other author's critical evaluation, Li Weizhen exceedingly complimented Liu's "lofty and elevated language," and feared his work to become lost because of the old practices³²⁷ which control the scholarly realm. Liu Zhiji here is sharply contrasted to former historians which indicates Li's high appreciation towards Liu and exemplifies that he, indeed, followed Liu Zhiji's thoughts of critically evaluating highly prestigious ancient history works without regard to their official status. Li Weizhen went on as follows:

或有別標識鑿，捩人心意者，足以生擘太華之峰，直立東溟之水，非苟効何休之駁，倣謝該之解已也。余抽酉穴，諷誦積年。牀版幾磨，縹囊數易。真好在心，卷不離手。豈敢伸知己於千秋，庶以揭芳美於來祀。

Probably there are different characteristics for examination. The ones who turn around humans' intentions are enough to cause the highest peak of the Taihua mountain to break, and [enough to cause] the waters of the Eastern Chinese Sea to stand still. If [Liu] does not imitate He Xiu's³²⁸ contradiction, then he copies Xie Gai's³²⁹ ideas.

I took it out from the rock caves of the Small Youshan,³³⁰ recited with intonation and stored it up for many years. The blocks for printing

³²⁷ I.e. the official way of writing history, see chap. 10.1, or—in regard to the critique by Liu Zhiji towards history writing in his time—see the translation of his letter of resignation in Hung (1969).

³²⁸ He Xiu 何休 (129-182), *zi* 字: Shaogong 邵公, was an official of the Eastern Han dynasty. His contemporaries praised him as having great knowledge, especially about the Confucian classics. In the course of Eastern Han factional struggles, He was barred from office and returned home. At home, he devoted himself to the annotation of the Confucian classics. Among other things, he wrote the *Chunqiu gongyang jiegou* 春秋公羊解詁 (Explanatory Notes to the *Gongyang* Commentary of the *Chunqiu*). He refuted Jia Kui's 賈逵 (174-228) learning of the *Zuo* commentary to the *Chunqiu*, and advocated the *Gongyang* commentary. See "Persons in Chinese History—He Xiu 何休," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personshexiu.html>, last accessed: July 28th, 2016.

³²⁹ Xie Gai 謝該 (162-239), *zi* 字: Wenyi 文儀, was a specialist on the Confucian classics of Eastern Han dynasty. He was a master in the research on the *Zuo* commentary of the *Chunqiu* and had many disciples. Among other things, he wrote the *Xieshi jie* 謝氏釋 (Explanations by Xie Gai) about answering problematic questions of the *Zuozhuan*. See *Zhonghua quan ershiliu shi* 中华全二十六史 (2002), Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe 中国华侨出版社, vol. 2, p. 1141.

³³⁰ In the *Shujing zhu* 水經注 (Commentary to the River Classic) by Li Daoyuan 酈道元 (427/469-527) from Northern Wei dynasty (*Bei Wei* 北魏; 386-534 AD) it is stated: "There is a big You Mountain, and there is a small You Mountain. In a rock cave of the small You Mountain there are books in thousands of scrolls. The books were collected by the You family. Therefore, the first emperor of the dynasty composed a poem: Searching for the inherited books of You Yang." (有大酉山、小酉山。小酉石穴中有書千卷，酉氏好所藏書。故元帝賦曰：訪酉陽之遺帙。) See He Guangyue 何光岳 (1992),

were polished several times, the silk book bag changed many times. It was truly good cared for and the *juan* were not badly handwritten. How could one dare to extend the knowledge [which has already been existing] for a thousand years, all in order to bring to light the virtuous beauty in later generations!

Very flowery, Li Weizhen here outlined the power of scholars who are able to influence humans' intentions, considering Liu Zhiji to be one of them. Afterwards, he mentioned Liu's preference of the *Zuozhuan* commentary as opposed to the *Gongyang* commentary. In the following, Li advanced the depiction of his own experience with the *Shitong* and had to admit that "it was truly good cared for." Therefore, he demanded not to alter anything about this knowledge which had been existing for such a long time already, but to acknowledge that it was taken care of "in order to bring to light the virtuous beauty in later generations." The last paragraph of the preface reads the following:

通而無蔽，非子玄其孰當之？或曰，《白虎通》、《風俗通》皆以通名，當與子玄為埒。答曰：《白虎通》止於條對，而博雅未該；《風俗通》止於釋疑，而文頗不典，烏可與子玄例也！即長文擬《易》為《通玄》，時人比之揚雄《太玄》，由今觀之，其猶在通與蔽之間也。

抑余又有感焉，作史者不犯天災，則罹人眚，如班氏傷子長遇極刑，而亦不免身陷大戮。子玄數世摘華，媲美應氏以通乎？史者通乎其遇，洵乎其可當也矣。

Thoroughly understanding and not concealing anything, if not Zixuan who else should have acted like that? Some say, the *Baihutong*³³¹ and the *Fengsutong*³³² they all use a general name, the same as Zixuan. And

Yan Huang yanliu shi 炎黃源流史 (The History of the Origin and Source of the Mythical Hot Emperor and the Yellow Emperor), Nanchang: Jiangxi jiaoyu chubanshe 江西教育出版社, p. 324.

³³¹ See p. 96, FN 268.

³³² The *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義 (or *Fengsu tong* 風俗通) is an encyclopedia by Ying Shao 應劭 (d. 203 AD), a scholar and official from Eastern Han period. Ulrich Theobald on *ChinaKnowledge.de* states citing Feng Fang 馮方: "It was planned as a handbook for a ruler to learn how to adapt his style (*feng* 風 'wind') of administration and to rectify common (*su* 俗), but faulty methods. In philosophical respect his book was influenced by a realist tendency among scholars that fought against the widespread superstition at the court and among the officialdom. The *Fengsu tongyi* is therefore an important source for the study of Han period beliefs in abnormalities and miracles." See "Ying Shao 應劭," at

some reply: The *Baihutong* is limited in giving answers to any question asked, and learned [scholars] should not [use] this. The *Fengsutong* is limited in dispelling doubts and uncertainties, and the literati should rather not [take it as] a law. We cannot [compare] those to the example of Zixuan!

Namely, [Wang] Zhangwen imitated the *Yijing* for his *Tongxuan jing*,³³³ and contemporaries compared it to the promoted and imposing *Taixuan [jing]*. Due to the observation of this, it still is between thoroughly understanding and concealing.

But again, I comment on this: If historians do not withstand natural disasters, then they suffer from human mistakes. For example, Ban Gu³³⁴ was distressed that Zichang [i.e. Sima Qian] met the death penalty, but also—unavoidably—himself trapped and got executed. Because Zixuan's [fame] magnificently was spread over many generations, does he, therefore, rival Ying [Shao's work] by thoroughly understanding? Historians were thoroughly aware of this situation, and, indeed, it seems to be appropriate.

In the last passages of Li Weizhen's preface, he again highly praised Liu Zhiji and expounded that his work, namely the *Shitong*, cannot be compared to, for example, the *Baihutong* or the *Fengsutong*. Furthermore, Li here criticized many established historians and history works in favor of Liu Zhiji and his *Shitong* and in the end declared that Liu could also favorably be compared to the famous Ying Shao 應劭. In the whole preface, it becomes noticeable that Li Weizhen held Liu Zhiji in the highest esteem. According to the author, none of the traditional and famous masters of writing were able to rival the great Liu Zhiji. This preface stands in contrast to the works

ChinaKnowledge.de, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsyingshao.html>, last accessed: August 17th, 2015.

³³³ Wang Zhangwen 王長文 (238-302 AD), *zi* 字: Derui 德睿 or Dexie 德攜, was a scholar of the classics in Western Jin dynasty (*Xi Jin* 西晉, 266-316 AD). He wrote, among other things, the *Wumingzi* 無名子 in twelve chapters, the *Chunqiu sanzhuàn* 春秋三傳 in thirteen chapters, the *Yue Liji* 約禮記, and the *Tongxuan jing* 通玄經. The *Tongxuan jing* in four *juan* imitates the *Yijing*; it contains the chapters about classical language (*wenyan* 文言) and manifestation of divinations (*guaxiang* 卦象) which can be used for divination. Furthermore, it is compared to the *Taixuan* 太玄 (see p. 97, FN 280). See *Jinshu* 晉書, vol. 7, *juan* 82, *liezhuan* 列傳 52, pp. 2138f.

³³⁴ I.e. Ban Biao 班彪 (3-54 AD; father, began the *Hanshu*), Ban Gu 班固 (main author of the *Hanshu*), Ban Zhao 班昭 (45-116 AD; sister, completed the *Hanshu*), Ban Chao 班超 (32-102 AD; brother, famous general and administrator of the Western Regions [today's Central Asia]).

analyzed before, as it portrays Liu's achievement in a complicated and ornate way while neglecting any shortcomings of the *Shitong*, which observably do exist.

5.4.2 Guo Kongyan and his *Shitong Pingshi*

The Author

The biography of Guo Kongyan 郭孔延 (1575-?), *zi* 字: Yannian 延年, from Taihe 泰和 in Jiangxi, is not very clear. According to Wang Jiachuan, only his father, who also played a role in Guo's research on the *Shitong*, and his career are mentioned in a biography in the *Mingshigao* 明史稿,³³⁵ namely the *Guo Zizhang zhuan* 郭子章傳. Guo Zizhang 郭子章 (1543-1618), *zi* 字: Xiangkui 相奎, received his *jinshi* degree in 1571 and, thereafter, was promoted several official posts. In 1598, he became Right Vice Censor-in-Chief (*you fudou yushi* 右副都御史) and then minister of military affairs.³³⁶ While holding office in Guizhou, Guo Zizhang came to know Zhang Dingsi's edition of the *Shitong* and sent it to his son, Guo Kongyan, who at that time studied at the Imperial College in the capital. Guo Kongyan immediately started his work on the *Shitong pingshi* and already one year later completed the first draft of his commentary. With the help of Li Weizhen, he completed a second and superior version in 1604.³³⁷

*Guo Kongyan's Preface to the *Shitong Pingshi**

Today's established edition of the *Shitong pingshi* by Guo Kongyan begins with a preface called *Shitong pingshi xu* 史通評釋序 containing about 5,319 additional characters. Furthermore, this edition from 1604 contains Liu Zhiji's *Shitong xu* 史通序 (Preface to the *Shitong*; i.e. the *Shitong yuanxu* 史通原序 by Liu Zhiji), the chapter 'Liu Zixuan zhuan' 劉子玄傳 (Biography of Liu Zhiji) from the *Xintangshu* 新唐書, Chao Gongwu's 晁公武³³⁸ *Shitong ping* 史通評 (Discussion about the *Shitong*), the chapter

³³⁵ *Mingshigao* 明史稿 (Complete Draft Manuscript of the Ming History) in 310 *juan* was a draft to the official *Mingshi* 明史 by Wan Sitong 萬斯同 (1638-1702; *zi* 字: Jiye 季野) and served as its basis.

³³⁶ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 283.

³³⁷ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 284.

³³⁸ Chao Gongwu 晁公武 (1105-1180), *zi* 字: Zizhi 子止, from Shandong, was a bibliographer and book collector from the Southern Song dynasty (*Nan Song* 南宋, 1127-1279). He wrote commentaries to the Confucian classics, e.g. the *Shijing kaoyi* 石經考異. He is famous for his catalogue of his private library, named *Junzhai dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志 (Records of Books Read in my Studio in the Province).

‘Xu Shitong’ 序史通 (Introducing the *Shitong*) from the *Yuhai* 玉海 (A Sea of Jades) by Wang Yinglin 王應麟,³³⁹ Yang Shen’s 楊慎 *Shitong ping* 史通評 (Discussion about the *Shitong*; see Appendix II.6), Yu Shenxing’s 于慎行 *Shitong juzheng lun* 史通舉正論 (The *Shitong* Holding up the Correct View; see Appendix II.7), and Zhang Zhixiang’s 張之象 *Shitong xu* 史通序 (Preface to the *Shitong*; see chap. 5.2.3). At the end one finds additional notes, among others Lu Shen’s *Ti shuben Shitong hou* (see chap. 5.1.2).³⁴⁰

The preface of Guo Kongyan’s edition again is very expressive; therefore, a complete translation follows. This citation derives from the edition by the Shanghai guji chubanshe, which was reprinted in 2006 as a photocopy according to the original work from the 32nd year of Wanli reign period (i.e. 1604) in the collection of the Beijing Library.³⁴¹ Sometimes, single characters were not clearly readable. In these cases, the Microfilm edition of Li Weizhen’s and Guo Kongyan’s *pingshi* from 1986 was used as an aid and a supplement.³⁴²

史通評釋序

張睿父先生再刻，陸太史校定劉子玄《史通》於豫章竣，寄家君黔中。張先生手校為增七百三十餘字，去六十餘字，而《曲筆》、《因習》二篇，增補缺略，已成全書。家君讀而喜，以新刻寄延曰：“張先生為觀察，而手不釋書，猶諸生也。爾曹為諸生，乃不諸生也。子甚有其蒞，黔中亡籍，子家有《史通》蜀本、吳本再校之。刻中如‘干寶’之‘于’、‘揚雄’之‘楊’、‘王劭’之‘邵’、‘常璩’之‘據’、‘苻堅’之‘符’，當是寫誤。可發舊本，細為校定。”

See “Chinese Literature—Junzhai *dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/junzhaidushuzhi.html>, last accessed: August 2nd, 2016.

³³⁹ See p. 68, FN 192.

³⁴⁰ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 266.

³⁴¹ *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋 (Discussion and Explanation to the *Shitong*), by Guo Kongyan 郭孔延, in Guo Kongyan 郭孔延, Wang Weijian 王惟儉, Huang Shulin 黃叔琳 (2006), *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋, *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故, *Shitong xungupu* 史通訓故補, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, pp. 1-243, preface pp. 1f.

³⁴² *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋 (Discussion and Explanation to the *Shitong*), by Li Weizhen 李維楨 and Guo Kongyan 郭孔延, Microfilm, Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei zhongxin 全國圖書館文獻縮微中心, 1986.

Preface to the Commentary and Explanation to the *Shitong*

Master Zhang Ruifu [i.e. Zhang Dingsi] again edited [the *Shitong*], after court historian Lu [Shen] had proofread and had fixed Liu Zixuan's *Shitong* in Yuzhang [i.e. Jiangxi] completely; and [then he] sent it to my father in Qianzhong.³⁴³ Master Zhang himself proofread more than 730 characters, and removed more than 60. Moreover, in the two chapters of *Qubi* and *Yinxi* he increased and supplemented the incomplete parts, and thereafter had completed the whole book. My father read it and was very fond of it, and—in order to [compile] a new edition—he sent it [to me] inviting me: “Master Zhang investigated [the *Shitong*], but he personally did not explain the book; he is still a *zhusheng*.³⁴⁴ If you acted as *zhusheng*, then you were not a *zhusheng*. I, your father, deeply have this fear that the [region of] Qianzhong [could] lose its books. Your family has the *Shu*³⁴⁵-edition of the *Shitong* and the *Wu*³⁴⁶-edition, and, therefore, [you can] proofread them again. In these editions they, e.g., mistook in Gan Bao 干寶 ‘*yu* 于’ for ‘*gan* 干,’ in Yang Xiong 揚雄 ‘*yang* 楊’ for ‘*yang* 揚,’ in Wang Shao 王劭 ‘*shao* 邵’ for ‘*shao* 劭,’ in Chang Qu 常璩³⁴⁷ ‘*ju* 據’ for ‘*qu* 璩,’ and in Fu Jian 苻堅 ‘*fu* 符’ for ‘*fu* 苻,’ and wrote such errors. I can send [you] the old editions, and you [can] carefully proofread and fix [the *Shitong*].”

Guo Kongyan's preface reveals very interesting facts about the relation of the single Ming time editions and commentaries of the *Shitong*. Here, Guo first mentioned the first edition by Lu Shen and the newly revised edition by Zhang Dingsi, which Guo then took as foundation for his commentary. Furthermore, he also described what Zhang Dingsi had corrected and changed—the same as Zhang himself did in his preface.

³⁴³ I.e. the region west and north-west of the river Xiang in Hunan. R. H. Mathew (1947), *Mathew's Chinese – English Dictionary*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press (Harvard-Yenching Institute), p. 124, no. 896.

³⁴⁴ I.e. *xiuca* 秀才 (bachelor, licentiate, lit. “cultivated talent”); “men qualified to participate in Provincial Examinations,” see *DOTIC*, p. 248, no. 2633.

³⁴⁵ I.e. Lu Shen's edition.

³⁴⁶ I.e. Zhang Zhixiang's edition.

³⁴⁷ Chang Qu 常璩 (ca. 291-361) was a historian and author of the *Huayang Guozhi* 華陽國志 (Chronicles of Huayang/of the States South of Mount Hua), which is the oldest known regional history or local gazetteer in China. See Igor Iwo Chabrowski (2015), *Singing on the River: Sichuan Boatmen and Their Work Songs, 1880s-1930s*, Leiden [et al.]: Brill, pp. 41f.

According to the author, he learned about the work through his father who was very fond of the *Shitong*-edition by Zhang Dingsi, and invited his son, Guo Kongyan, to revise it again because he feared that the *Shitong* would be lost in the future. Moreover, Guo's father identified some problems with the current *Shitong*-editions: The problem with Zhang's edition—as he says—is that the author did not explain the book (而手不釋書). Additionally, he remarked that there were quite a few misspellings in the *Shitong*-editions. A very important fact is the information that the family of Guo Kongyan possessed several editions of the *Shitong*, namely Lu Shen's *Shu*-edition from 1535 and Zhang Dingsi's edition which had just been published in 1603, which displays the great interest in this subject matter. The preface goes on:

延自長安歸，循環校閱，再加芟正。篇中史官姓名，如左氏、遷、固古今共推者，可以無釋；自孔衍、荀悅以下，俱為著其爵里。間以己意為之評論，雖未必合作者之意，祇承嚴命，終陸、張二先生功耳。

I received it when I returned from Chang'an; I circulated it, read and revised it, and again added, eliminated and rectified [parts]. In the text, there were the names of history officials; for example, Zuo [Qiuming], [Sima] Qian and [Ban] Gu, ancient and contemporary [historians] were praised together. I cannot have an explanation for this. From Kong Yan³⁴⁸ and Xun Yue³⁴⁹ down, they all wrote for the sake of their official post and their hometown [affiliation]. Among [the commentators] they regarded the former as the intention for their discussions, [too]; though, these are not necessarily the ideas of their collaborators. They accepted with respect their fathers' commands; and in the end the two men Lu [Shen] and Zhang [Dingsi] had meritorious achievements and that is all!

³⁴⁸ Kong Yan 孔衍 (268-320), *zi* 字: Shuyuan 舒元, was an official of Eastern Jin dynasty. He had a wide knowledge about the Confucian classics. Especially, he researched the *Shangshu* and the *Chunqiu*, and wrote, among other things, the *Han shangshu* 漢尚書, *Houhan shangshu* 後漢尚書 and the *Han Wei Shangshu* 漢魏尚書. *Shitong* 史通, *neipian*, *juan* 1, *liujia* 六家 1, p. 4.

³⁴⁹ Xun Yue 荀悅 (148-209), *zi* 字: Zhongyu 仲豫, was a historian and author in the Later Han. He wrote the *Hanji* 漢紀 (Record of the Han) in the *biannian* style like the *Zuozhuan* 左傳, which, therefore, was much easier to read. See "Persons in Chinese History—Xun Yue 荀悅," at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsxunyu.html), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsxunyu.html>, last accessed: August 2nd, 2016.

In this passage, Guo Kongyan outlined what occurred to him while reading and rectifying the *Shitong*. Here, he stressed the fact that all the former historians “wrote for the sake of their official post and their hometown [affiliation]” (俱為著其爵里). This is also the case with the commentators of the *Shitong*, namely Lu Shen in Sichuan and Zhang Dingsi in Songjiang, who published editions in their hometowns. Nevertheless, they “had meritorious achievements.” Guo proceeded:

約而言之，考究精覈，義例嚴整，文詞簡古，議論慨慷，史通之長也。薄堯、禹而貸捺，丕，惑《春秋》而信《汲冢》，訶馬遷而沒其長，愛王劭而忘其[佞]，高自標榜，前無賢哲，《史通》之短也。然則徐堅所云“當置座右”者，以義例言，良非虛譽；而宋祁所云“工詞古人”者，以誇詡言，亦非誣善矣。

But to sum it up: The careful investigation is a very refined examination; the outline and scope of a book [follows] a neat formation; the language is laconic and archaic; the discussions are deeply moving—these are the strong points of the *Shitong*. Extending to [the times of] Yao and Yu it, thus, borrows principles and great achievements [from that time]; it doubts the *Chunqiu* and trusts the *Jizhong*³⁵⁰ [texts]; it scolds [Si]ma Qian and ends his excelling [reputation]; it honors Wang Shao and neglects other eloquent [personalities]; it highly praises itself; and [claims that] before there were no wise and capable men—these are the weak points of the *Shitong*. In that case, the saying “it [i.e. the *Shitong*] should be placed on the right side” by Xu Jian is considered as words on the value of the book—because the good [ones] have no false reputation. Furthermore, the saying “it [i.e. the *Shitong*] produces phrases of the ancient people” by Song Qi is considered as an expression of exaggeration—because one also does not slander the good [ones]!

This paragraph of his official preface is devoted to his assessment of the *Shitong*. Guo clearly named advantages and disadvantages: The careful investigation, neat formation,

³⁵⁰ *Jizhong* 汲冢 designates the corpus of texts found in a tomb in Jizhong (today's region of Henan) in 279 AD. The most important texts found are the Bamboo Annals (*Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年), furthermore, there are the *Guoyu* 國語, the *Yijing* 易經, and others. Normally, this especially refers to the Bamboo Annals. For further information on the *Jizhong* discovery, see Edward L. Shaughnessy (2006), *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, Albany (NY): Suny Press, pp. 131-184.

the laconic language and the “moving” discussion, Guo expressed, are the forte of Liu Zhiji’s work. In contrast, its shortcomings are that it draws on the times of Yao and Yu, doubts canonical classics like the *Chunqiu* and trusts the *Jizhong* texts—texts with an eventful and sometimes uncertain history—, scolds Sima Qian and praises Wang Shao. In addition, Guo accused Liu Zhiji of praising his own work, while neglecting that there were other “wise and capable men” before. In the end, Guo Kongyan neither approved of the praising of the *Shitong* by Xu Jian, nor did he accept Song Qi’s defamation of Liu Zhiji’s work; this corresponds to his debate of the pro and contra concerning Liu Zhiji’s work which is indicative for Guo’s reflective attitude. The last paragraph of the preface remarks the following:

延又因之有感焉。子玄自敘《史通》方諸《太玄》，《太玄》數百年後為張衡、陸績所重，第《史通》“後來張、陸，則未之知”。不謂今千年後，首刻于陸太史，再校于張觀察，為子玄之平子、公紀也。二姓俱同，事豈偶然？亦可謂子玄忠臣矣。

大明萬曆甲辰歲夏五日後學泰和郭孔延謹序

Prolonging I, therefore, again comment on this. Zixuan in his preface of the *Shitong* compares it to the *Taixuan*. The *Taixuan* several hundred years ago was attached importance to by Zhang Heng³⁵¹ and Lu Ji,³⁵² however, the *Shitong* [says]: “But later, they [i.e. Xu Jian and Zhu Jingze,³⁵³ Liu Zhiji’s friends] will not be known as having been my Zhang [Heng] and Lu [Ji].”³⁵⁴ Unexpectedly, today thousand years later, the first edition [of the *Shitong*] by the court historian Lu [Shen] was again proofread by Zhang [Dingsi] and inspected, and [hence] became Zixuan’s Pingzi [i.e. Zhang Heng] and Gongji [i.e. Lu Ji]. The two surnames are the same, how could this fact be fortuitous? Also, one can call Zixuan a loyal statesman.

³⁵¹ See p. 101, FN 282.

³⁵² See p. 101, FN 283.

³⁵³ See p. 101, FN 281.

³⁵⁴ For an explanation of this sentence, see Zhang Zhixiang’s preface in chap. 5.2.3; pp. 91ff.

[In the time of] the Great Ming Wanli [reign period], *jiachen* year (41st year) summer fifth month Guo Kongyan from Taihe carefully [compiled this] preface

This last paragraph of Guo Kongyan's preface seized a statement by Liu Zhiji from the *zixu* 自序-chapter, which is also mentioned by Zhang Zhixiang in his preface (see chap. 5.2.3). Guo here ended his preface with the witty memo that Zhang Zhixiang and Lu Shen had the same surnames as Zhang Heng and Lu Ji, who are known as the great commentators to Yang Xiong's *Taixuan*, the same of Zhang Zhixiang himself.

5.4.3 The *Shitong Pingshi*—The Transmitted Edition

The *Shitong pingshi* consists of twenty *juan*—the same as the *Shitong*. The striking fact about this commentary represents the annotated adoption of the original text (the *Shitong*). This means that the *Shitong pingshi*—compared to the *Shitong*—is enlarged by prefaces, annotations and corrections without losing the structure of the original text. In contrast to Lu Shen's *Shitong huiyao*, the *Shitong pingshi* follows the structure of the *Shitong* and contains comments. In the first edition, every chapter ended with Li Weizhen's words "the critique is" (*pingyue* 評曰), whereupon Guo Kongyan's critical statements followed; the latter are introduced by "attached critique" (*fuping* 附評). In the latest edition, the "*fuping* 附評" has disappeared. As reported by Wang Jiachuan, this happened because Li Weizhen had a higher reputation and was senior to Guo Kongyan. Nevertheless, the annotations in the *pingshi* are adopted only from Guo Kongyan's version. In fact, it is not yet totally clear which parts can be attributed to which author.

According to the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, Li Weizhen levelled general criticism at Zhang Dingsi's text and only provided critical comments (*ping* 評), while Guo Kongyan extended the criticism and the annotations by providing explanations (*shi* 釋) and using citations from other works for support. Consequently, according to Byongik Koh, Li Weizhen's annotations did not extend the level of common Ming time discussions; on the contrary Guo Kongyan leaned onto quotations from different works in order to prove his critical statements—this seems to be a more critical and sophisticated approach. However, Guo always cited from very ancient works without having any trustworthy references. Therefore, his work also features a number of

mistakes and gaps. Nevertheless, Guo Kongyan managed to improve the always-problematic chapters *Jianshi* (Recognition of Facts in a Mirror) and *Qubi* (Crooked Brush) in his critical commentary *Shitong pingshi* which was a great improvement and success.³⁵⁵ An insightful example of Guo Kongyan's commentaries is to be found in the third *juan* concerning the chapter of the *biaoli* 表歷 (Tables). In this part, Guo Kongyan commented the following:

《史通》‘雜說篇’云：太史公年表雖燕越萬里，而徑寸之內犬牙可接，雖昭穆九代，而方寸之中鳳行有序，使讀者簡便，舉目可詳。此篇乃謂讀者緘而不視，煩費無用。一褒一貶，令人何所適從。³⁵⁶

In the *Zashuo* chapter of the *Shitong* it says: Concerning the chronological tables of the Grand Scribes [i.e. Sima Qian and Sima Tan], although there was a great distance between Yan [in the north] and Yue [in the south] [i.e. great distance to their hometown], they can be connected like canine teeth in a circle with a diameter of one inch. Although the arrangement order of ancestral temples has [already] been existing for nine generations, still one can orderly walk like wild geese in a square inch. This makes it simple and convenient for the reader and he can look very explicitly. On the other hand, this chapter is said that readers [should] seal and not look at it because it causes trouble and expenses and is useless. One praises, one deprecates—it makes one [question] what is to be followed.

As Liu Zhiji criticized the *biaoli* tables by Sima Qian, Guo here advocated this approach by showing the advantages. He also revealed disadvantages which confers the character of a debate on this commentary as well; it once more reveals his reflective view on matters. Nevertheless, Li Weizhen's commentary did not lack brilliant ideas as well. For example, in the chapter about the Bureau of History (*Shiguan jianzhi 1* 史官建置第一), Li stressed the power of history officials over the emperor when he said: “The moment the emperor stops rewarding and punishing, history officials then record thousand times glory and dishonor.” (帝王止賞罰一時，史官則榮辱千載。³⁵⁷) Likewise, Li Weizhen

³⁵⁵ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 20f; Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 50f; Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 267.

³⁵⁶ *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋 (2006), *juan* 3 (*biaoli* 表歷 7), p. 31.

³⁵⁷ *Shitong* 史通, *juan* 11, *Shiguan jianzhi 1* 史官建置第一, in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *shibu* 史部, *shiping lei* 史評類, *di* 第 279 *ce* 冊, p. 156.

thoughtfully commented the discussion about why the rebel Chen Sheng 陳勝 was included in the *shijia* 世家 chapter:

史有變例，何可以一定拘乎？炎劉並業，由陳勝首事，豈不得比於蕭警乎？且《史通》云：‘勝之以傳，則下同臣妾’，勝非漢之臣妾，編之世家，正為當耳。³⁵⁸

If history has changes and laws, what can definitely be inflexible? The Han dynasty³⁵⁹ also [had] this profession. If the war was started by Chen Sheng,³⁶⁰ how could he not be compared with Xiao Cha?³⁶¹ Then the *Shitong* said: “If the lists with the successful candidates served as biographies, then he is as low as a female servant. Chen Sheng was not a female servant of the Han dynasty; so, in the compilation of the *shijia*[-chapter] the correct is regarded appropriate!

Li Weizhen in this comment alluded to the relativity of matters in history writing. For example, he considered the “rebel” Chen Sheng as on a par with Emperor Xuan of Western or Later Liang dynasty (*Hou Liang* 後梁, 555-587). As the takeover of the throne by Xiao Cha (i.e. Emperor Xuan) is much disputed, some historians did not consider him (and the other rulers of Later Liang) as true emperors. Hence, he could also be considered a rebel. Furthermore, he argued, if the biographies even mention female servants, then Chen Sheng has to be named even more.

One can see by the two examples of Guo’s and Li’s comments that they both indeed tried to itemize Liu’s statements and discuss the mentioned matters anew. They both seem to aim at a discussion of the two sides of a certain matter, and by doing that revealed a reflective and sophisticated approach towards such a debate. Therefore, their

³⁵⁸ *Shitong* 史通, *shijia* 世家 5, in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *shibu* 史部, *shiping lei* 史評類, *di* 第 279 *ce* 冊.

³⁵⁹ Yan Liu 炎劉 refers to the nickname of Han dynasty which derives from the Five Phases (*wuxing* 五行), where the fate of a dynasty is connected to fire (*huo* 火), and the family name of the Han dynasty rulers, namely Liu 劉.

³⁶⁰ Chen Sheng (d. 208 BC), *zi* 字: She 涉, was the leader of the first rebellion against Qin dynasty which is regarded as “the first armed peasant rebellion.” Chen proclaimed himself king, but in the end had to flee and was killed. See “Persons in Chinese History—Chen Sheng 陳勝 or Chen She 陳涉,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personschensheng.html>, last accessed: August 2nd, 2016.

³⁶¹ I.e. Emperor Xuan of Western or Later Liang dynasty (Liang Xuandi 梁宣帝; r. 555-561).

commentary (or commentaries) represent a further milestone in the Ming time research of the *Shitong*.

5.5 The Commentary *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故

5.5.1 The Author

Wang Weijian 王维俭 (fl. 1595), *zi* 字: Sunzhong 損仲, from today's region of Henan, received his *jinshi* degree in 1595. Afterwards he became county magistrate, was promoted Right Assistant Censor-in-Chief (*you qiandu yushi* 右佥都御史), Right Vice Minister of the Ministry of Works (*gongbu you shilang* 工部右侍郎) and other posts. After he was dismissed from office and had returned home in 1602, he devoted himself to the studies of the various Confucian schools. He edited the *Songshi* 宋史 (History of Song dynasty) and was very fond of ancient paintings and calligraphy; therefore, the *Mingshi* called him *Bowu junzi* 博物君子 (a person with excessive and great knowledge).³⁶²

5.5.2 The *Shitong xungu*³⁶³

General Information

When Wang Weijian started his studies of Liu Zhiji's work, his friend Zhang Minbiao 張民表³⁶⁴ supplied the former with Guo Kongyan's *Shitong pingshi*, where he identified deficiencies; thus, he decided to compile another commentary on the *Shitong*. The *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故 (Commentary work on the *Shitong*), which was completed in 1611, embodies a major improvement by eliminating corruptions and

³⁶² Wang Jiachuan (2013), pp. 384f.

³⁶³ For a translation of the abstract of the *Shitong xungu* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, see Appendix II.8.

³⁶⁴ Zhang Minbiao 張民表 (1570-1642), *zi* 字: Linzong 林宗, from Zhongmou 中牟 in today's region of Henan, received his *juren* degree in 1591. He was fond of ancient literature and collected many books. See Zhengzhou shi difang shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 郑州市地方史志编纂委员会 (2000), *Zhengzhou shizhi: Renwu juan, Zhuanji juan, fulu juan* 郑州市志: 人物卷. 传记卷. 附录卷, vol. 8, Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guju chubanshe 中州古籍出版社, p. 30.

adding comments. After a first draft, his friend Wang Yanshi 王延世³⁶⁵ sent him Zhang Zhixiang's *Shitong*-edition (see chap. 5.2), whereupon he improved his former version of the *Shitong xungu*.³⁶⁶

Wang Weijian very elaborately complemented the existing editions by relying on extensive source material. He revised and edited Guo Kongyan's commentary on the *Shitong*, and—in order to do so—used Zhang Zhixiang's edition as an aid and as reference. He elucidated the *Shitong* and annotated it by very precisely citing Guo and, thus, improving Guo's *Shitong pingshi*. Only the chapters *Zhishu* 直書 and *Qubi* 曲筆 were newly edited by him. It can be said that in Wang's edition the most corrupted chapter of the *Shitong*, the chapter “Crooked Brush” (*Qubi* 曲筆), was returned to its complete original form for the first time. Furthermore, he not only corrected mistakes but also added 1,142 characters to Liu Zhiji's *Shitong*.³⁶⁷

Content of the Preface to the Shitong xungu

The following citation of the preface derives from the edition of the Shanghai guji chubanshe which was reprinted in 2006 as a photocopy according to the original work from the 39th year of Wanli reign period (i.e. 1611) in the collection of the Shanghai Library.³⁶⁸ The present edition of the *Shitong xungu* is introduced by a preface (approximately 591 characters) by Zhang Minbiao. After that the short preface (about 215 characters) written by Wang Weijian himself follows.

王維儉史通訓故序

余既注《文心雕龍》畢，因念黃太史有云：“論文則《文心雕龍》，評史則《史通》，二書不可不觀，實有益於後學。”復³⁶⁹欲取《史

³⁶⁵ Wang Yanshi 王延世 (also called Wang Canjiang 王參將 due to his position as *Zuo canjiang* 左參將 “Left Assistant Regional Commander”), *zi* 字: Siyan 思延, from Xinyang 信陽 (near today's Shihegangxiang 沙河港乡 in Henan), from the end of Ming dynasty, dedicated himself to serving his country, climbed the military career ladder and became a military general and specialist in military art. See Fu Ying 付瑛 (1988), “Wang Zudi nianpu” 王祖嫡年譜, *Xinyang shiyue xueyuanbao (zhexue shehui kexue ban)* 信陽師範學院學報(哲學社會科學版) (Journal of Xinyang Teachers College (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)) 1, p. 62.

³⁶⁶ Koh, Liu (1956), p. 21; Wang Jiachuan (2013), pp. 385f.

³⁶⁷ Koh, Liu (1956), pp. 21f; Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 50f.

³⁶⁸ *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故, pp. 247f.

³⁶⁹ Probably misspelling for 復.

通》注之。中牟張林宗年兄以江右郭氏《史通評釋》相示，讀之，與余意多不合，乃以向注《文心》之例注焉。

Wang Weijian's preface to the "Commentary to the *Shitong*"

When I finished annotating the *Wenxin diaolong*, I then thought of what court historian Huang [Tingjian]³⁷⁰ had said: "For discussing literature just [read] the *Wenxin diaolong*, for criticizing history just [read] the *Shitong*, these two books cannot be not looked at, in fact they are very profitable in later studies."

Again, I wished to take the *Shitong* and annotate it. My fellow student³⁷¹ Zhang Linzong [i.e. Zhang Minbiao] from Zhongmou took the *Shitong pingshi* by Guo [Kongyan] from Jiangxi and showed it [to me]. I studied it and [its opinion] did not at all conform to my opinion; then, I annotated it according to the model of the annotation of the *Wenxin [diaolong]*!

Wang Weijian began his *Shitong xungu* with a citation by the Song poet Huang Tingjian, which is cited many times in the Ming time research on the Liu Zhiji's work; for example, Wang here probably referred to a citation by Yang Shen 楊慎 in his *Danqian yulu* 丹鉛余錄. After having studied the *Wenxin diaolong*, he then devoted himself to the study of the *Shitong*. Furthermore, in this preface he commented on the *Shitong pingshi* by Guo Kongyan which he did not at all agree with. He went on:

歷八月訖³⁷²功。然此二書譌霧甚多。嗣從信陽王思延得華亭張玄超本，其《文心》不能加他本，《史通》本大善，有數霧極快人者，故此書之校視《文心》為愈。往見李濟翁《資暇錄》，云李善注《文選》，有初注、再注以至四、五注者；蘇子由注《老子》，亦自言晚年[於，i.e. 於]舊注多所改定。今余此書，曷敢以為盡是？聊以備遺忘，為他日削稿之資耳。河南王惟儉序。

Eight months passed, before I accomplished it. So, in these two books the erroneous places are really many. Afterwards, Wang Siyan [i.e.

³⁷⁰ See p. 58, FN 161.

³⁷¹ *Nianxiang* 年兄 is a mutual reference among those who passed the same imperial civil-service examination.

³⁷² Probably misspelling for 迄.

Wang Yanshi] from Xinyang obtained the edition by Zhang Xuanchao [i.e. Zhang Zhixiang] from Huating [i.e. Songjiang]. That *Wenxin [diaolong]* cannot enrich this book [i.e. the *Shitong*] [because] the *Shitong*-book is much better. As extremely clever persons are rare, therefore the proofreading and inspecting of that *Wenxin [diaolong]* work was better.

In the past I saw Li Jiweng's [i.e. Li Kuangwen] *Zixialu*,³⁷³ and it says that Li Shan commented on the *Wenxuan*.³⁷⁴ There was a first commenting, then he commented again and again up to four or five times. When Su Ziyou [i.e. Su Zhe]³⁷⁵ commented on the *Laozi*, he himself in his later years also altered and fixed many things in his old commentary. Concerning my today's [editing] about this book, how do I dare to think it is complete? Moreover, because it is about to be forgotten, I will assist to complete the deletion, revision and finalizing of the manuscript.

When contemplating about the *Shitong*—in this case about the commentary by Guo Kongyan—and the *Wenxin diaolong*, Wang Weijian found many mistakes in both

³⁷³ Li Kuangwen 李匡文 (or Li Kuangyi 李匡義, Li Zhengwen 李正文, or Li Kuangfu 李匡父), *zi* 字: Jiweng 濟翁, was an official of lower rank at the time of Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 of Tang dynasty (888-904). He wrote the *Zixiaji* 資暇集 (Collection from Enriched Times of Relaxation) or *Zixialu* 資暇錄 (Records from Enriched Times of Relaxation) in three *juan* and the *Liang Han zhi Tang nianji* 兩漢至唐年紀 (The Ages from the Later and Former Han dynasties until the Tang dynasty) in one *juan*. See “Chinese Literature—*Zixialu* 資暇錄 ‘Records From Enriched Times of Relaxation,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Novels/zixialu.html>, last accessed: August 2nd, 2016.

³⁷⁴ The *Wenxuan* 文選 (Selection of Refined Literature) was written by Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501-531) from Liang 梁 dynasty (502-557). It constitutes a literary anthology and contains about 514 literary pieces by 130 authors. Li Shan 李善 (d. 689) was a minor official of Tang dynasty and was famous for his encyclopedic knowledge. He wrote a detailed commentary on the *Wenxuan* 文選, the *Wenxuan zhu* 文選注. “Li Shan’s commentary is of an extraordinary quality. He used more than 1,700 books to revise and explain the difficult texts of the writings included in the *Wenxuan* [...] In general, it is a more text-critical commentary than an explanation of the literary works.” See “*Wenxuan* 文選 ‘Selected Literature,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Poetry/wenxuan.html>, last accessed: August 19th, 2015.

³⁷⁵ Su Zhe 苏辙 (1039-1112), *zi* 字: Ziyou 子由, from today’s region of Sichuan, was an official and politician of Song dynasty. He—together with his brother Su Shi 蘇軾 or Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037-1101)—opposed Wang Anshi’s 王安石 (1021-1086) reforms and is seen as one of the “Eight Great Masters of Tang and Song prose” (*Tang Song ba dajia* 唐宋八大家). Su Zhe, among other things, wrote the *Luancheng ji* 欒城集 in 50 *juan* and its continuation in 24 *juan*. See Yue Yang 岳洋 (2015), *Songdai mingren zhuan: Xin xuetaang shuzi ban* 宋代名人传: 新学堂数字版 (Biographies of Eminent Persons of Song Dynasty: Editions of Figures of the New School), Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe (XinXueTang), n.p., chap.: Su zhe “Tang-Song ba dajia” zhong de “xiao Su” 苏辙“唐宋八大家”中的“小苏”.

books. Nevertheless, after getting hold of Zhang Zhixiang's edition of Liu Zhiji's work, Wang concluded that "the *Shitong*-book is much better." The research on Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong*, though, was much more elaborated because—according to Wang—people who are clever enough to understand the *Shitong* thoroughly are rare. The last passage appears to be a justification why Wang Weijian—after Lu Shen and Guo Kongyan—wrote another commentary on the same work, namely the *Shitong*. In order to do so, he used as reference prominent examples of scholars who composed several commentaries about the same pieces of literature. Due to these precedents Wang as well regarded the research on Liu Zhiji's work as incomplete. Furthermore, he feared that it will be forgotten and, hence, was eager to help to finalize the manuscript.

Wang Weijian's preface to his *Shitong xungu* is the shortest introduction to a commentary; notwithstanding, it contains many interesting facts. At his time, all the different editions of the *Shitong* were available to scholars which, of course, substantially facilitated the research on this subject. In contrast to Lu Shen, who had struggled with the problem of lacking source material, Wang possessed everything necessary for gathering a comprehensive commentary on the *Shitong*. Therefore, no wonder his commentary is regarded to be the most elaborated one.

Ming time Editions and Commentaries of the *Shitong* **—A Summary**

自明以來，註本凡三四家。而訛脫竄視，均如一轍。此本為內府所藏舊刻，未有註文，視諸家猶為近古。其中《點煩》一篇，諸本並佚其朱點，此本亦同。無可校補，姑仍之焉。³⁷⁶

From Ming time on, there were all together [only] three or four specialists annotating this book. And the errors were expelled and investigated, all as in one way method. This book is an old edition which is stored as a treasury of the imperial palace and has not yet annotations, when observing that all specialist are still from the near past. Concerning

³⁷⁶ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 88, *shibu* 史部 44, *shiping lei* 史評類, *Shitong* 史通, vol. 17, p. 74. For a complete translation of the *Shitong* part in the *Siku quanshu*, see Appendix II.1.

the chapter *Dianfan* in this work, in all the editions these bright red spots are lost, and this one is the same. Because there is no possibility that it can be proofread or supplemented, for the time being it remains like this.

The *Siku quanshu* confirms that the *Shitong* did not to have many commentators in Ming time. It speaks of three or four, and, indeed, there are only few known commentaries and editions, namely the ones that were mentioned before. According to Wang Weijian this happened because there were not many people who were able to understand the *Shitong*; many times the former mentioned commentators spoke of the difficulty to study the *Shitong* and its intricate language. Even until today only one translation of the *Shitong* into a Western language was completed last year, namely Damien Chaussende's (2014) French version. This fact supports the statement of Ming time scholars regarding the *Shitong* to be difficult to read. In consequence, the Complete Library noted that it left the *Shitong* as it was.

As it will be shown in Part V, the perception of the *Shitong* in Ming time had already started at the beginning of Ming dynasty. Before Lu Shen approached his studies on Liu Zhiji, there were at least four famous scholars who had paid attention to this work. Partly due to the difficult situation concerning the source material, partly due to complicated language of the *Shitong*, Lu Shen was the first one to compile a new edition and a commentary to Liu Zhiji's work. He—like Guo Kongyan—illustrated the advantages and disadvantages of Liu Zhiji's research on history. In contrast, Zhang Zhixiang and Li Weizhen in their prefaces only praised Liu Zhiji, and Wang Weijian exceedingly celebrated Liu and his *Shitong*. Zhang Dingsi in his preface did not conduct any assessment of this work at all. Moreover, the prefaces show that the reason why the *Shitong* was evaluated very ambivalently over the time, was its critique towards specific ancient history works. This is comprehensible taking into account the already mentioned explosive nature of Liu Zhiji's approach towards ancient history works. Nevertheless, in Part V, especially in chapter 12 it will be illuminated that scholars also paid attention to the theoretical historiographical part of the *Shitong* (namely the inner chapters), while the main focus remains on the *waipian* with their criticism of ancient pieces of literature. In the context of the study of currents in Ming time historiography, it will be elucidated how the *Shitong* was received in the scholarly domain of Ming dynasty besides what was shown by the introduction of the commentaries. The illustration of the perception will highlight that the *Shitong* perfectly corresponds to

Ming time currents in historiography because the perception of Liu Zhiji's work is a manifestation of the Ming time quest to figure out what is right and what is wrong in history writing.

In spite of that, first it is helpful to delineate currents of Ming China outside the field of historiography in order to get a most comprehensive picture of the situation in Ming dynasty and in order to detect possible influences from other realms of life. This will be approached in the next part of the study.

PART III: THE WORLD OF MING CHINA

While examining the revival of the *Shitong* some interesting aspects came to light. Lu Shen had already been an established scholar, when he started his research on the *Shitong*. Therefore, this renaissance has to be a small piece of a much bigger picture. In order to understand this whole picture, it is important to sketch the ongoing processes in Ming dynasty. Hence, the work now approaches the world of Ming China. As it was already addressed, Ming China is seen as an ambivalent time in Chinese history. On the one hand, it is characterized by a population growth, a development in commerce and the arrival of the Jesuits and thereby of Western science. On the other hand, the time of the Ming dynasty is alleged by not yielding great works and thoughts in the realm of the history of ideas; often one speaks of a decrease in historical writing as well as in philosophy. I assume that this is not true. Ming China—especially in the domain of historiography—saw some interesting currents worth investigating. To fully understand the circumstances and the setting in which the extraordinary and controversial debates about history writing emerged, it is important to first survey Ming time currents in the different fields of social currents, economics, politics and philosophy.

Coming to the case study of the revival of Liu Zhiji's *Shitong*, the question of why exactly this renaissance happened in Ming dynasty is a crucial one. Of course, many factors can be taken into account to explain this revival, but always we can distinguish two kinds: the sphere of the academics and the sphere of the social and economic background which facilitated the emergence of a “*Shitong*-revival.” In order to wholly grasp the possible currents and features of Ming dynasty which promoted this renaissance, it is essential to draft some ongoing processes and the history of ideas in Ming China. Therefore, in the following the most exceptional currents in Ming dynasty will briefly be pointed out. Of course, it would be a colossal task in itself to describe all the continuing progresses of this time; thus, only some relevant facts of Ming dynasty with focus on their influence on the development of Ming time historiography will be depicted.

6. Currents in Ming China

The Ming dynasty was the last and since the end of Song dynasty the first native Han Chinese dynasty, which also had a symbolic value in terms of the Chinese resurgence. Furthermore, it was a time—as Frederick W. Mote expresses it—of a “steady if undermeasured population increase, a significant increase in literacy, and the growth of learning throughout sub-elite levels of society, accompanied by a flourishing of sub-elite as well as elite cultural forms.” Urban networks expanded, the same as the productivity and the exchange; also maritime trade gained momentum, before it was entirely abolished—“the era of diplomatic reciprocity between China and the other Asian land powers was succeeded by an era of a sinocentric world order based on the Chinese presumption of Chinese centrality and superiority and at least nominally acknowledged by many other states, great and small, through the vehicle of the tribute system.” Yet, the Ming tried to solidify their power using “a uniform ideological basis for private and for bureaucratic behavior,” which will be outlined in the following chapters.³⁷⁷

Stability, Unity, and Ethnocentricity—Central Features of Ming China

As was touched upon in the introduction, Ming China is seen as a time of great stability, “one of the great eras of orderly government and social stability in human history.” Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig go on: “A total population of around one hundred million, possibly rising toward two hundred million [...] was maintained during 276 years in comparative peace.”³⁷⁸ Nevertheless, this stability did not only have positive effects: The fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw tremendous developments in Europe. The European Renaissance and its return to cultural and artistic values of the Greek and Roman antique, the Reformation and its schism of Christianity, nation states, the discovery of the New World—to name but a few—were progresses of colossal dimension and determined the course of Europe until the modern age. But what happened in China? It seems to have been totally excluded from the immense changes going on in the rest of the world. According to Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig this has to be seen as the time when China “fell behind the West in many

³⁷⁷ Frederick W. Mote (1988), “Introduction,” in *CHC* 7, pp. 1ff.

³⁷⁸ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 290.

aspects of material culture and technology as well as in certain forms of economic and political organization.” Accordingly, they see the stability of Ming dynasty as the source of China’s “backwardness.”³⁷⁹ Certainly, there was some innovation and development in China as well, but it was much slower, which partly derives from the Chinese opinion of “change within tradition”—“the Chinese of the Ming and Ch’ing periods saw their ideal models far in the past,” according to Reischauer, Fairbank, and Craig.³⁸⁰

This retreat to ideals in the past was predicated by the happenings of the near past, so to say under Mongolian rule. After the overthrow of the Mongolian Yuan dynasty, China seemed very reluctant to alien rule and everything that came from outside, and, thus, was “barbarian;” foreign influences were “nipped in the bud.” Therefore, a return to traditional values can be detected which caused Ming China not to be affected by any of the changes occurring in Europe. The attitude of ethnocentrism derived from the conviction of cultural superiority; everything was believed to be already existent in Chinese history, according to Chang Kwang-Chih. Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig term this phenomenon “culturalism” as delimitation to “nationalism” because the authors argue that this “culturalism” prevails even under alien rule; therefore, the actual government is not as important as the cultural unity. One of the effects or characteristics of this “culturalism” was a unity in geographical as well as in administrative and cultural perspective.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ The problem of China’s “backwardness” has been discussed and is still being discussed under the headline “The Great divergence debate” in many different perspectives. This topic is too comprehensive to discuss it here. For further information, see, for example: Kenneth Pomeranz (2000), *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (economic perspective); David S. Landes (2006), “Why Europe and the West? Why Not China?,” in: *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20:2, pp. 3-22; Andre Frank (1998), *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London; Eric Jones (1987), *The European Miracle*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Peer Vries (2003), *Via Peking back to Manchester: Britain, the Industrial Revolution, and China*, Leiden: Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies, Leiden University (industrial perspective); Qian Wenyuan (1985), *The Great Inertia: Scientific Stagnation in Traditional China*, London: Croom Helm; Benjamin Elman (2005), *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (scientific perspective). There are many more works, though.

³⁸⁰ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 291.

³⁸¹ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 291ff; K. C. Chang (1981), p. 158.

6.1 Social, Economic and Political Currents in Ming Dynasty

This subchapter is not supposed to give an overview over the tremendous social and economic changes which China underwent especially in the second half of the Ming dynasty. Rather, the intention of the following paragraphs is to highlight certain features of this time which potentially had an influence on the development of historiography. Nevertheless, the political, economic and social impacts are not supposed to be overemphasized; they only aim at completing the picture of possible influences on the development in history writing.³⁸²

6.1.1 Political Currents

In congruence with the main features of this dynasty, namely stability and unity, the Ming political system was more autocratic than the governmental structures of former dynasties: The posts of the prime minister (*chengxiang* 丞相) as well as of the Central Chancellery or Imperial Secretariat (*zhongshusheng* 中書省) were abolished already by the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor (r. 1368-1398; founder of the dynasty). Although now the newly established Grand Secretariat (*Neige* 內閣)³⁸³ helped the emperor in ruling the country and was, in particular, responsible for the handling of the memorials sent to the emperor; the power and authority of the emperor was extended.³⁸⁴

The eunuchs took a special role in the autocracy of Ming rule; with their loyalty to the emperor—deriving from the independence from any family bonds—they were as close to the emperor as nobody else. Hongwu had once warned: “Anyone using eunuchs as his eyes and ears will be blind and deaf [...] The way to manage them is to make them fear the regulations. Don’t give them rewards of merit.” After the Hongwu and Yongle 永樂 (r. 1402-1424) Emperors, already in the first half of the fifteenth century

³⁸² For further information on the social, economic and political changes in Ming China, see, for example: Timothy Brook (2005), *The Chinese State in Ming Society*, London; New York: Routledge-Curzon; Timothy Brook (1999), *The Confusions of Pleasure, Commerce and Culture in Ming China*, Berkeley: University of California Press; William T. de Bary (1970), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, Ann Arbor: Books on Demand; Roderich Ptak (1998), *China and the Asian Sea: Trade, Travel, and Visions of the Others (1400-1750)*, Alderhot: Variorum (Variorum Collected Studies, vol. CS 638); Dagmar Schäfer (2003), *Weaving an Economic Pattern in Ming Times, 1368-1644: The Production of Silk Weaves in the State-Owned Silk Workshops*, Heidelberg: Edition Forum; and there are many more.

³⁸³ See p. 73, FN 204.

³⁸⁴ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 299.

the eunuchs gained power, took over duties in the administration and became a second administrative division. This led to a constant struggle over power between the eunuchs and the Grand Secretaries. The political atmosphere all together was very tense.³⁸⁵

Timothy Brook in his book *The Chinese State in Ming Society* presents

[...] the Ming as a developed state with considerable capacities to govern and intervene, and yet [...] as a state vulnerable to the capillary influences of social power, in some competition with elites and local communities over resources and excluded from many of the spaces that social practices constructed, whether through the deviance that religious devotion allowed or the conformity that kinship rules imposed.³⁸⁶

*Domestic Political Developments: Zhang Juzheng's Legalism*³⁸⁷

The former mentioned idea of stability and unity could easily obfuscate the fact that there were indeed political progresses in the time of the Ming. Important reforms of Ming dynasty can be associated with one person, Zhang Juzheng 張居正 (1525-1582). Zhang Juzheng derived from Jiangling County in Hubei province, as the first one of his family received the *jinshi* degree (1547) and entered the Hanlin Academy. In opposite to other thinkers of his time, Zhang Juzheng did not occupy himself with philosophical effusions but engaged himself in active politics. He used to say: “If it is to the benefit of the state, I would do it regardless of life or death.”³⁸⁸ In his thoughts Zhang, supposedly, was influenced by Wang Yangming's 王阳明 (or Wang Shouren 王守仁; 1472-1529) ideas (see chap. 6.3.1), who proclaimed the power of one's individual mind for the sake of his morality; but this connection is not proved by verified statements. Nonetheless, it

³⁸⁵ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 299, 315f.

³⁸⁶ Brook (2005), p. 190.

³⁸⁷ “Legalism (or legism) is a state philosophy flourishing during the Warring States period 戰國 (5th cent.-221 BCE). It became the leading doctrine under the Qin dynasty 秦 (221-206 BCE) and was, together with Confucianism, the philosophical foundation of the Chinese state administration at least until the end of the Qing dynasty 清 (1644-1911). The core concept of the legalists is that state and society are effectively organised by administrative and penal law (*fazhi* 法治 ‘rule by law’) that is applied to all persons equally.” See “Chinese Thought and Philosophy—Legalism,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/legalism.html>, last accessed: August 3rd, 2016.

³⁸⁸ Translation by Robert Crawford (1970), “Chang Chü-cheng's Confucian Legalism,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 368. The original derives from *Zhang Wenzhong gong quanji* 張文忠公全集 by Zhang Juzheng 張居正, ed. by Guoxue jiben congshu 國學基本叢書, Shanghai: Shanghai Shangwu yinshuguan 上海商務印書館 (Shanghai Commercial Press), 1937, “Letters,” 11/417-18.

is known that he—the same as Wang Yangming—opposed the dominant Neo-Confucianism, advocated “activism, subjectivism, and relativism,” and, furthermore, encouraged the already mentioned independence and power of one’s own mind.³⁸⁹

Now, to learn is a matter that lies within the sphere of our prime duty; we cannot leave it aside for a single moment. Those who say that they love *Daoxue* [Neo-Confucianism] are in error; those who say that they dislike it are also mistaken; and those, who making an arbitrary choice among alternatives, say that there should not be the designation of one who dislikes *Daoxue* commit the worst errors.³⁹⁰

In 1572, Zhang Juzheng became chief Grand Secretary (*shoufu* 首幅) and “the Emperor [i.e. the Longqing 隆慶 Emperor, r. 1567-1572] abandoned all his own opinions and delegated [authority] to Juzheng. Juzheng then frankly took over the empire as his personal responsibility.” (帝虛己委居正，居正亦慨然以天下為己任[...])³⁹¹ When Zhang Juzheng was assigned to be a grand secretary, he already believed the Ming dynasty to be in decline. He sensed indications had already been present in 1547, but the starting point was to be found one hundred years after the establishment of the dynasty. According to his opinion, since the Jiajing 嘉靖 (r. 1521-1567) and Longqing Emperors imperial control had been decreased and decayed. Zhang Juzheng, a learned historian, interpreted that every dynasty had its own nature and the Ming dynasty had the one of its founder; this nature should be strengthened.³⁹²

While highly praising the Hongwu and the Yongle Emperors, Zhang Juzheng ascribed to the Ming dynasty three phases of decline: first, the aggravation of excellent traditions and customs and the liberalization of authority; second, the increasing power of the princes and at the same time the inobservance of law; third, the tax levy becoming unfair, people losing their employment and suffering from the effects of monopolies. Zhang Juzheng pointed out these grievances in a memorial in 1549 that consisted of five points and recognized one main evil: miscommunication between the

³⁸⁹ Crawford (1970), pp. 367ff.

³⁹⁰ Translation by Crawford (1970), p. 371; original from *Zhang Wenzhong gong quanji* 張文忠公全集, “Letters,” 11/422.

³⁹¹ Translation by Crawford (1970), p. 371; original from *Mingshi* 明史, vol. 57, *juan* 213, *liezhuan* 列傳 101, Zhang Juzheng *zhuan* 張居正傳, p. 5645.

³⁹² Crawford (1970), p. 372.

emperor and his ministers. Still, he was sure that everything could be turned into good, if the imperial authority was to be restored; the point was to strengthen laws and put them through.³⁹³

Hence, Zhang Juzheng proposed legalistic solutions and, at the same time, found justification in the philosophy of history. He hereby referred to the principle of constant change in time and situations; that means that history implies a law of reverse which follows a mandatory force or pattern. The principles and circumstances are constantly in flux and, simultaneously, form a unity, which—according to Zhang—implies that one cannot go back in time but is also unable to venture anything against adverse conditions. Summing up, Zhang concludes that the principle and the conditions develop in history; “only the given moment is real.” In his considerations, he was probably influenced by the *Yijing* 易經 (Book of Changes) which he studied very diligently.³⁹⁴

In the context of Ming time historiography, Zhang Juzheng plays an essential role as he in the next step applied this pattern that was just described to history, starting with the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties forming the first cycle. After the decline due to overelaboration, the Qin 秦 dynasty ruling only by law emerged but could not uphold its power, although it had the potential for “returning to the beginning.” The Han, Tang and Song periods followed, when “elaborateness was excessive and the world daily became more divorced from reality.” In the Yuan period, again there was the chance of “returning to the ancient” because the Yuan dynasty eradicated institutions of former emperors. But like the Qin dynasty the Yuan emperors were not able to hold on to their power. The Ming dynasty now—due to the spadework done by the Yuan dynasty—“was able to be simple, strict, and realistic (*zhipo* 質朴).”³⁹⁵ The reverse to simplicity was the goal, but again ornateness—so to say rites, music and definitely Neo-Confucianism—took over the lead. Simplicity, instead, would stop the cycle of decay, and—as representation of legalism—lead to a better way of ruling and to the ancient practice of government. Zhang explicitly stood up for a “high degree of institutional

³⁹³ Crawford (1970), pp. 373f.

³⁹⁴ Crawford (1970), pp. 374, 379.

³⁹⁵ Crawford (1970), pp. 376f.

relativism” in practice because according to him “laws and institutions [were] not constant.”³⁹⁶ Nonetheless, he stated the following:³⁹⁷

The laws cannot be lightly changed and at the same time cannot be unthinkingly followed. If they are unthinkingly followed, then one will inherit the worn-out [laws and institutions] and errors, and there will be a danger of decline which cannot be revitalized. This is the mistake of not wanting things to be done perfectly. If [the laws and institutions] are lightly changed [on the other hand], then [people will] hate the old and like the fashionable and there will be the calamity of change without order.³⁹⁸

The antagonism of the Ming dynasty lies in its institutionally multilayer structure which, indeed, was favorable for history. Zhang Juzheng once proclaimed that the Ming government was legalistic in its practice but Confucian in its doctrine. With his appraisal of Confucius’ practical thinking, Zhang advocated a return back to the ancient times; that included thoughts of Mencius who underlined the economic function of society and of Xunzi who—together with the Legalists—regarded man to be selfish and, consequently, in need for a strong government; that means—inter alia—that “the sovereign’s authority is absolute and unlimited.” Zhang Juzheng did absolutely encourage complete autocracy.³⁹⁹

To [devote one’s] complete ambition and exhaust one’s strength in order to assist in public affairs and not dare to have the intention of esteeming one’s own virtue in the slightest—this is obedience. When danger and barbarians suddenly increase, to accept the orders of superiors and not have the slightest intention of selecting when to advance or retreat according to the possibilities of advantage [for oneself]—this is obedience. Within, to have the skill of changing and adapting to [the emperor]; and without, not to have the reputation of correcting and saving [the emperor]—this is obedience. To bear all hatred and slander

³⁹⁶ Translated by Crawford (1970), p. 377; original from *Zhang Wenzhong gong quanji* 張文忠公全集, “Essays,” 3/551.

³⁹⁷ Crawford (1970), p. 377.

³⁹⁸ Translated by Crawford (1970), p. 379; original from *Zhang Wenzhong gong quanji* 張文忠公全集, “Essays,” 3/551.

³⁹⁹ Crawford (1970), pp. 380-384.

oneself and attribute all good and fame to the emperor—this is obedience. [Although a person's] merit covers the universe, to subordinate his own fame and be all the more respectful—this is obedience.⁴⁰⁰

To sum it up, the state always had to have absolute authority *de facto* and *de iure*. “If the authority of the state is strong, all undertakings will be auspicious. If the authority of the state is weak, then all undertakings will turn out badly.”⁴⁰¹ Ruling should be performed in due consideration of the practice of the three virtues of correctness and straightforwardness, strong rule, and mild rule, which derive from the *Book of Documents*—a book from which Zhang borrowed some of his ideas and convictions.⁴⁰²

In the end, Zhang Juzheng can, indeed, be considered as Legalist, as he adopted legalist ideas like the system of reward and punishment and “checking the correspondence between names and reality.” He considered himself to be a Confucianist, though; but still he differentiated between his contemporary Confucianists and himself. Zhang laid stress on the practical implementation of ideas.⁴⁰³ This demand for straightforwardness and correctness is likewise reflected in currents of history writing. As Zhang Juzheng, a learned historian, was influential in the politics of the Ming, his pragmatism and return to ancient Confucian ideals—which sometimes contradicted the new ideas of the dictated Neo-Confucianism—also certainly influenced the realm of history writing. At least, his attitude and his ideas stained on the contemporary debates, like the *gonglun*-debate on what is right and wrong.

Censorship

From Zhang Juzheng's remarks one recognizes some of the many problems of the Ming state. Concerning the later to be mentioned increasing “book culture,” in history writing, the Ming dynasty is seen as a censorship state due to the continual characteristic of state control. One prominent example was the case of Li Zhi 李贄 (see chap. 6.3.1) whose

⁴⁰⁰ Zhang Juzheng, *Zhangwenzhong gong quanji* (Guoxue jiben congshu ed.; Shanghai Commercial Press, 1937), “Letters,” 11/674. In Crawford (1970), p. 385.

⁴⁰¹ Zhang Juzheng, *Zhangwenzhong gong quanji* (Guoxue jiben congshu ed.; Shanghai Commercial Press, 1937), “Essays,” 11/674. In Crawford (1970), p. 390.

⁴⁰² Crawford (1970), pp. 390f, 394.

⁴⁰³ Crawford (1970), pp. 394, 398.

books were burnt because of their putative character as adulterated writings, especially for the youth; thereupon, Li Zhi committed suicide.⁴⁰⁴

This censorship was part of a much bigger campaign or feature of the administration system in Ming China. The Board of Censors (*duchayuan* 都察院), the “chief investigating bureau,” consisted of 110 mostly younger officials who were sent to the provinces and “investigated the conduct of justice and of ceremonies, the condition of granaries and schools, and received reports from officials and complaints from the public.” As they had direct access to the throne, they were considered very powerful; they could press charges against officials and even dispute with the emperor. Yet, their power was not unlimited: After nine years they returned to normal civil service, they had no immunity and were dependent on the emperor.⁴⁰⁵

One important feature of the Ming dynasty in correlation to censorship was the development of “public authority,”⁴⁰⁶ as Timothy Brook names it. According to him this concept is much more expressive and convincing than the rather limited defined term of “state control.” While the government remained almost the same during the Ming, the conception of “public authority” underwent changes. This concept became most notable in the policies concerning Buddhism. The Hongwu Emperor already installed a registry system⁴⁰⁷ as “bureaucratic means to intervene in institutional Buddhism systematically.” Without any practical usage, this system seems to have been a means of setting of bureaucratic uniformity. Besides the classification as a sect, nearly all parts of Buddhist life were regulated by official order: property, monasteries, attached land and behavior of the monks. Quotas for Buddhist and Daoist monasteries were determined.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁴ Brook (2005), pp. 118, 122f.

⁴⁰⁵ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 298.

⁴⁰⁶ Timothy Brook defines “public authority” as follows: “The concept of public authority [...] expresses the reception of the state’s authority in China in that arena: public authority exists to the extent that people are aware of and respond to the presence of acknowledged sources of power; most prominently the state. Not defined by the state alone, public authority takes form through the interaction of state and society.” See Brook (2005), p. 140.

⁴⁰⁷ This registry system included the classification of monks or Buddhist sects into different categories: Meditation (*chan* 禪)—concentration on meditational exercise in order to achieve personal enlightenment; Doctrine (*jing* 經)—concentration on the study of scriptures in order to comprehend their meaning; Teaching (*jiao* 教)—comprising of monks going out to the people, e.g., to perform funeral rites or to preach and to manage rites. See Brook (2005), pp. 143f.

⁴⁰⁸ Brook (2005), pp. 140, 143-146, 148.

This whole system of censoring contributed to the countermovement of the public discourse on what is right and wrong. Moreover, it also promoted the recalling of Liu Zhiji who had advocated to depict everything straightforwardly and correctly without regard to possible conflicts with the emperor of the elite.

6.1.2 Economy in the Ming Dynasty

The anti-commercialism which was attributed to Ming dynasty did not only become apparent through the maritime voyages⁴⁰⁹ of the eunuch Zheng He,⁴¹⁰ also the relation to Japan very descriptively shows that the tribute system was only “a political institution” for the Ming court, not a mean to merchandize.⁴¹¹

According to Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig the economic development in the country as a whole did, in fact, grow. The transport of tax grain from the Lower Yangtze (*Changjiang xiayou* 長江下游) and the Huai river (*Huai He* 淮河) to the new capital Beijing was an acute problem: The transport via sea was increasingly dangerous because of the Japanese pirates (it was abolished 1415); and after the capital was moved to Beijing the urgency to bring grain to the north was even stronger. Therefore, the

⁴⁰⁹ After his enthronement, Hongwu immediately tried to tie tribute relations with neighboring states of former times. It is conveyed that tribute missions from Korea, (Japan), Annam, Champa, Tibet, Cambodia, Siam, Borneo, Java, Sumatra and even from the Coromandel (southeast) of India were received. (Only the relations to Japan were difficult and differed in quality because Japan refused to acknowledge the suzerain status of China and the Chinese emperor.) These relationships were aimed at the establishment of a Confucian world order, as China was believed to be the “parent and the source ... of civilization.” China did not appear as representing “an aggressive imperialism,” but rather as defensively expressing their—already mentioned—“culturalism.”

In the current of this tributary undertakings, the Yongle Emperor ordered seven great maritime expeditions to the *nanyang* 南洋 (the Southern Ocean, i.e. the region of Southeast Asia) from 1405 until 1433. The main character in these enterprises was the Muslim eunuch Zheng He 鄭和 (1371-1433). Already during the first expedition from 1405 to 1407 they arrived in India; the second (1407-1409) and third (1409-1411) campaigns led them to India, too. During the fourth excursion Zheng He and his fleet even reached the far end of Aden and Hormuz at the Persian Gulf, the same as the fifth (1417-1419), the sixth (1421-1422), and the seventh (1431-1433) voyages. During these expeditions, seven Chinese even had the chance to go to Mekka. Of course, a lot of “tribute envoys, lore and curiosities” were brought back. See Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 317, 319, 321.

⁴¹⁰ Zheng He was the commander-in-chief of the expeditionary fleets of early Ming dynasty. He supported his Master Zhu Di (later Yongle Emperor) in the campaigns against the Mongols outside the Great Wall 1393 and 1397 and, hereby, gained a high reputation. Also in other campaigns, e.g. the blockade of Beijing in 1399 and the southern expedition of 1402, he could prove himself to be a trustful and knowing partner in military campaigns. “Cheng Ho,” in *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 194f.

⁴¹¹ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 323ff.

system of the Grand Canal (*da yunhe* 大運河)⁴¹² was further extended. Accordingly, also the trade between the south and the north on the Yangtze River and in South China developed. Because many of the traded commodities were exquisite works like porcelain from Jingdezhen 景德鎮, teas, silks from Suzhou, cotton cloth from Songjiang 松江 near Shanghai and timber—all of them produced in newly established or extended production places—, merchants and officials came in contact and worked together. Over those enlarged trade routes also scriptures, books and knowledge was disseminated further in the country, which had an influence on the realm of the history of ideas, too. An additional feature of the economic growth was the formation of regional guilds (*tongxiang hui* 同鄉會) and the establishment of guild halls (*huiguan* 會館), which raised the status of merchants as well as it supplied firm and organizational structures for merchandizing. Furthermore, the European contribution to China's trade in the form of silver stimulated the economic growth in Ming China.⁴¹³

Due to this kind of developments scholars generated the concept of the “seeds of capitalism” emerging in Ming dynasty. This development, which came along with the opposition to the *lixue* 理學 (i.e. Neo-Confucianism), certainly had an influence on academic currents in this time, but will not be touched upon further in this context.⁴¹⁴ Important here is the concentration in the lower Yangtze delta, the Jiangnan area, as the economic center of the Chinese empire. Because in this context an alternative elite

⁴¹² The Grand or Great Canal is the main stream of a net of canals going through the whole of China. Ever since the transport via canals was the most convenient, the fastest and the cheapest way. The oldest parts originate from the Spring and Autumn Period (*Chunqiu* 春秋, 771 BC-476 BC) and were extended vastly in Han period (206 BC-220 AD) under the Cao 曹 family. Under the Yuan dynasty—facing the same problem of having a capital far from the grain fields—, the canal system was again enlarged and modernized. See “*Da yunhe* 大運河 ‘The Grand Canal,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/yunhe.html>, last accessed: May 12th, 2015.

⁴¹³ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 333f, 336.

⁴¹⁴ Cang Xiuliang 仓修良 and Wei Deliang 魏得良 (1983), *Zhongguo gudai shixue shi jianbian* 中國古代史學史簡編, Ha'erbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe 黑龍江人民出版社, p. 378. Many authors occupied themselves with the concept of the “seeds of capitalism,” which was believed to sprout out of the bosom of the feudalistic production method (它顯然是在封建主義生產方式的歷史前提) according to Meng Xiangcai 孟祥才, or which China did develop out of itself (*potu erchu* 破土而出) according to Max Weber (1864-1920). For more information on this topic, see, e.g. Gary G. Hamilton (1985), “Why No Capitalism in China?,” Max Weber (1991), *Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen: Konfuzianismus und Taoismus*; Karl August Wittfogel, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas: Orientalische Despotie – eine Vergleichende Untersuchung der Macht*; Meng Xiangcai 孟祥才 (2002), *Zhongguo zhiben zhuyi mengya wenti duanxiang* 中國資本主義萌芽問題斷想; Shang Yue 尚钺 (1956), *Zhongguo zibenzhuyi guanxi fasheng ji yanbian de chubu yanjiu* 中国资本主义关系發生及演变的初步研究; Étienne Balazs (1960), “The Birth of Capitalism in China.”

arouse which revolted against the established official and indoctrinated elite in Beijing. This was where the controversies and discussions—especially the *gonglun*, the public dialogue (see Part IV and chap. 8)—of Ming dynasty evolved which initiated the currents in Ming historiography and the break with tradition.

6.1.3 Social Currents

The social progresses in Ming dynasty are tightly connected to economic and cultural currents. The main feature in these progresses is an increasing social mobility which resulted from economic growth and prosperity—which entailed social mobility—, extended learning (see chap. 6.2.3), and the popular teachings of Wang Yangming and especially Wang Gen 王艮 (1483-1541) in his Taizhou school (see chap. 6.3.1). In consequence, these developments meant “more people [could] participate in the cultural life of the nation.”⁴¹⁵ This characteristic also contributed to the expansion of the ongoing public debate about what is right and wrong.

Another phenomenon, which resulted from economic growth, appeared and encouraged an increasing social mobility: In Ming time—for the first time—sons of merchants were allowed to participate in the civil examinations; this was an opportunity for them to achieve “greater wealth and orthodox success and power.” Before, the Chinese had always followed the traditional Confucian thinking whereby merchants (*shang* 商) were regarded as an essential but as the lowest grade in social hierarchy—the first three being the gentry scholar (*shi* 士), the peasant farmer (*nong* 農) and the artisans and craftsmen (*gong* 工). Ergo, the softening of these formerly very strict class distinctions is not to be underestimated. Nevertheless, some occupations were still forbidden to take part in the examinations, e.g. the Daoist or Buddhist clergy.⁴¹⁶ In general, Benjamin A. Elman concludes that

[...] through the unprecedented impact of commercialization and demographic growth, however, the reach of the imperial state expanded

⁴¹⁵ William Theodore De Bary (1970c), “Individualism and Humanitarism in Late Ming Thought,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York [et al.]: Columbia University Press, p. 171.

⁴¹⁶ Benjamin A. Elman (2014), “Unintended Consequences of Classical Literacies for the Early Modern Chinese Civil Examination,” in Benjamin A. Elman (ed.), *Rethinking East Asian Languages, Vernaculars, and Literacies, 1000-1919*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, p. 214.

from metropolitan and provincial capitals to all 1,350 counties. The upsurge in the number of lower-level candidates, however, was inversely proportional to the dominant power of palace graduate degree-holders in high office starting in the late sixteenth century—so much so that once-powerful provincial graduates were downgraded. Officialdom increasingly was the prerogative of a very slim minority.⁴¹⁷

Especially this phenomenon is important, as the scholar officials which were employed after having passed these civil examinations were the ruling elite in the Chinese empire and determined the currents in the political, social, economic and academic realm, i.e. including the realm of history writing.

6.2 Academic Currents of Ming dynasty

While it is quite true to say that the literary class, known as the philosophers, do not govern the empire, it must be admitted that they exercise a wide influence over its rulers.⁴¹⁸

The sect of the Literati is proper to China and is the most ancient in the kingdom. They rule the country, have an extensive literature, and are far more celebrated than the others.⁴¹⁹

Matteo Ricci

6.2.1 Scholars and Officials—the Gentry-Class⁴²⁰ and its Official Pressure

The academic currents of Ming dynasty, which will be described in the next chapters, prepared the ground for the emergence of a strong and large “elite class of officially recognized literati trained in the Confucian ideology.” Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig

⁴¹⁷ Elman (2014), p. 216.

⁴¹⁸ Matteo Ricci (1953), *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci; 1583-1610*, transl. by Louis J. Gallagher, New York: Random House, p. 26. This citation, the same as the following, originates from Matteo Ricci’s diary. Its original title was *Dell’entrata della Compagnia di Giesù e Christianità nella Cina*, composed in Beijing in Italian; it was translated in Latin after his death by the Jesuit Nicolas Trigault under the title *De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas Suscepta ab Societate Jesu. Ex P. Matthaei Riccij eiusdem Societatis Commentarijs Libri V. ad S. D. N* which again was translated into English by Louis J. Gallagher and is now known under the title *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*.

⁴¹⁹ Ricci, Gallagher (1953), p. 94.

⁴²⁰ The term “gentry” is a translation for the Chinese *shenshi* 紳士; however, the term *shenshi* extends the English meaning of “gentry” which often implies a background of aristocracy.

estimate a total of (only) 25,000 metropolitan degree holders for the whole Ming period; but the lower graduates are estimated to have been about half a million people (at any time in Ming).

On the one hand, this large number partly emanates from another phenomenon which came to existence in Ming dynasty: the purchase and sale of degrees, which was an accepted and popular mean of gaining a degree—*nota bene* not an official post. That means the vendee did not have the right to enter an official career, but could enjoy all the privileges of the gentry class. The enlargement of this class, which happened due to this sale of posts, offered several advantages for the government: *Videlicet*, the gentry took over many public functions without compensation, such as raising funds, supervising the building of public irrigation systems, dams, bridges and canals, also the maintenance of temples and shrines and the founding of schools and academies.⁴²¹ In contrast to officials through examination, the gentry stayed in one place, in their hometown, and in times of need (after a catastrophe or when temples had to be restored) they took over so to say temporary public duties as they were described above. In general, this happened in smaller towns, and the benefitters were owners of large areas of land; hence, they were also called “landlord-gentry,” “the middle stratum of leading families in the country side who provided many of the degree-holders through examination or purchase.”⁴²²

On the other hand, there were the protagonists of the intellectual developments, the scholars and officials who actually occupied posts. They found themselves in a rather difficult position in regard to disputes against their official obligations and the examination system, and, furthermore, to disputes with Buddhism and Daoism. The former named disputes entailed political pressure and even danger because of their roles as scholar and official; on that account, the power and omnipresence of the state put strong pressure on Ming Confucians whose social conscience was stressed. This came from the autocratic and bureaucratic structures of the predominant Ming despotism.⁴²³ As Confucians they always struggled with the conflict between the pursuit of self-cultivation and the participation in the external life, e.g. their official duties. The

⁴²¹ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 309ff.

⁴²² Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 338.

⁴²³ William Theodore De Bary (1970b), “Introduction,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York [et al.]: Columbia University Press, pp. 5f.

philosopher Zhu Xi 朱熹 (see chap. 6.3.1) mastered to unite the rational and moral demands and Sima Guang 司馬光 (see chap. 2.2), then, postulated to record facts and show moral examples. Now, Ming scholars again had to cope with the same problem.⁴²⁴

In addition to these inner and outer pressure, which affected the intellectual elite of Ming China, changes in the class of the scholar-officials itself diversified elite learning. In Ming dynasty, the Confucian examination system and the official system altogether became increasingly effective and advanced; de Bary even proclaimed that the examination system was “democratized” in so far as it was facilitated to include people of more practical nature, so to say merchants and craftsmen. As a result, the “commitment to Confucian ideals” was not valued anymore; only the learning by heart of the Four Books,⁴²⁵ a “mindless assimilation” of commentaries such as the one by Zhu Xi, and the “technical mastery” of poetry forms were still necessary. This lowering of the standard intensified the pressure on Ming Confucians because it did not represent original Confucian ideas. Therefore, they suffered from interior struggles and exterior pressure from conformism—as de Bary puts it: “The scholar stood alone [...] He could only retire to his homeground, strive for economic self-sufficiency on the land [...], or devote himself to teaching.”⁴²⁶

Another phenomenon contributed to the tight and precarious situation of officials: the selling of posts. In contrast to the selling of degrees, here, posts with an actual function were sold. From the financial crisis in the first year of Jingtai reign (i.e. 1450) on, the selling of offices and entry admissions for the governmental schools (*guozijian* 國子監) became common. In late Ming, it had become accepted that in order to obtain a post in the Grand Secretariat (*Neige* 內閣), for example, applicants had to pay a certain amount of money; sources speak of fifty thousand tael silver in the case of Shen Que 沈

⁴²⁴ De Bary (1970b), p. 9.

⁴²⁵ In contrast to the promoted Five Confucian Classics (*wujing* 五經; namely *Shijing* 詩經, *Shangshu* 尚書 or *Shujing* 書經, *Liji* 禮記, *Yijing* 易經, *Chunqiu* 春秋), in Neo-Confucianism they were replaced by Zhu Xi’s Four Books (*sishu* 四書); they include the Great Learning (*Daxue* 大學), the Doctrine of the Mean (*Zhongyong* 中庸), the Analects (*Lunyu* 論語) and the Mencius (*Mengzi* 孟子).

⁴²⁶ De Bary (1970b), pp. 6f.

灌.⁴²⁷ In this regard, offices and posts with no responsibilities, so to say “useless” and “unnecessary” assignments were established and multiplied rapidly: From under thirteen thousand civilian and military posts in the Hongwu reign period (1368-1398), their number increased to more than one hundred thousand in the Zhengde 正德 reign (1505-1521). Regardless of the strict prohibition, the selling of official posts endured until the Jiajing 嘉靖 period (1521-1567) which brought along corruption as well. This manner even continued in Wanli 萬曆 period (1572-1620), involved massive disorganization in the administration, and—according to Albert Chan—thus, was one of the reasons for the collapse of Ming dynasty.⁴²⁸ Certainly, these deficiencies contributed to the changes in thinking and in historiography. Especially, the *gonglun*-debate, which will be described in Part IV, emerged from the defects of Ming dynasty organization.

6.2.2 The Examination System of the Ming

There is a law in the land, handed down from ancient kings and confirmed by the custom of centuries, stating that he who wishes to be learned, and to be known as such, must draw his fundamental doctrine from these same books (i.e. the Confucian canon).⁴²⁹

The judges and the proctors of all examinations, whether they be in military science, in mathematics, or in medicine, and particularly so with examinations in philosophy, are always chosen from the senate of philosophy, nor is ever a military expert, a mathematician, or a medical doctor added to their number. The wisdom of those who excel in the profession of ethics is held in such high esteem that they would seem to be far afield from their own particular profession.⁴³⁰

Matteo Ricci

Crucial for developments in Ming dynasty was also the examination system as a central entity for influencing the class of scholars, the main actors of progresses. After the

⁴²⁷ Shen Que 沈灌 (d. 1624), *zi* 字: Mingchen 銘鎮, from Wucheng 烏程 in today's region of Zhejiang, became *juren* in 1591 and one year later *jinshi*. He was grand secretary from 1621 to 1622. *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1177f.

⁴²⁸ Albert Chan (1982), *The Glory and Fall of the Ming Dynasty*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 290-293.

⁴²⁹ Ricci, Gallagher (1953), p. 33.

⁴³⁰ Ricci, Gallagher (1953), p. 41.

Ming gained power over China, they wanted to re-established institutions of the Chinese past—namely Tang and Song times—rather than retaining the organization of the Mongolian Yuan dynasty. This went as far as decreeing “the revival of T’ang style of clothing and the banning of foreign styles.” Therefore, also the examination system of Tang and Song dynasties was adopted. Concerning this civil examination system, Benjamin Elman described that “after the restrictions of the Mongol era, Ming China tried to reinvent a meritocracy in which social prestige and political appointment depended on written classical examinations to establish legitimate public credentials.”⁴³¹

There were three stages of examina: the preliminary examinations in the district town (*xian* 縣). With the successful passing, the candidates qualified for the examinations in the prefectural city (*fu* 府), where they received—if successful—the lowest principal degree, *xiucai* 秀才 (bachelor, licentiate, lit. “flowering talent”). Now, they could name themselves literati; that means they enjoyed privileges such as being exempt from labor service and corporal punishments. To remain in this elite status, the literati had to take further examinations to qualify for a higher degree, or at least constantly attend the periodically examinations every three years at their level. The second examination stage, the provincial exams (*xiangshi* 鄉試), were again preceded by preliminary exams; when both were passed one received the title of *juren* 舉人 (recommended man). The third level of examination was the metropolitan exams (*huishi* 會試), which qualified for the title of a *gongshi* 貢士 (presented scholar). With the degree of a *gongshi*, one was called to the palace for a final exam in front of the emperor, which was followed by an appointment to an official post. Having passed the court or palace exams (*dianshi* 殿試) one gained the title of a *jinshi* 進士 (lit. “advanced scholar”), the highest rank. Even after having passed all these tests, the life of the literati was determined by further examination to constantly proof their competence.⁴³² In 1500, for example, twice a year ten percent of the 150 million⁴³³ Chinese would travel

⁴³¹ Elman (2014), p. 199.

⁴³² Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 304f.

⁴³³ The number of population in Ming China is problematic to estimate. There are two data which are considered actual data: In 1393, at the beginning of Ming, the Chinese empire had about 60,548,000 inhabitants, in 1812 in Qing dynasty, it had a population of about 360,282,000. According to Martin Heijdra, the population of 1600 can then be assumed to be about 230 million and 290 million for 1650.

to a place in the 1,350 counties (*xian* 縣) to take the civil examinations. About seventy-five thousand passed the first obstacle on the way to a successful literati career; the provincial examinations were passed by around six thousand. Because of the mobility required for the examination, China is considered to be “the most mobile empire in the early modern world” in the time of Ming dynasty—internally speaking. Nevertheless, only five percent of the candidates achieved their goal and received the desired *jinshi* degree (see Appendix III.1). But the 95 percent who failed also had an important role in society: As educated literati they took over tasks as “doctors, Buddhist or Daoist priests, pettifoggers, teachers, notaries, merchants, [...] lineage managers, [...] astronomers, mathematicians, printers, and publishers.”⁴³⁴ In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the competition level in lower examina was increased so that the numbers of unsuccessful candidates in the provincial examinations fourfold from 1441 to 1573—“gold went to the provincial graduate (*juren*), and [only] silver to the palace graduate (*jinshi*).” In general, the number of official position did not fit the number of successful candidates at all, wherefore also *jinshi* had to look for other occupations, for example as teachers or writers. In this context, the new group of unsuccessful candidates of the civil examination engaged themselves in the increasing production of “vulgar writing” (*suwen xue* 俗文學). They were responsible for the emergence of popular literature—in contrast to official writings—which, in consequence, led to an increased production and printing of books (see chap. 6.2.3).⁴³⁵

The content tested in the examinations was mainly restricted to the Four Books of Song Neo-Confucianism and the Five Confucian Classics (*wujing* 五經).⁴³⁶ During the time of the Yongle 永樂 reign (1402-1424), even explicit and final editions were stipulated in order to exclude heterodox thoughts and to gain a homogenous canon of works to be known by all officials in the country.⁴³⁷ Furthermore, in contrast to the

See Martin Heijdra (1998), “The Socio-Economic Development of Rural China During the Ming,” in *CHC* 8, pp. 436-440.

⁴³⁴ Elman (2014), pp. 203f.

⁴³⁵ Elman (2014), pp. 199f, 205f.

⁴³⁶ The Five Classics include the *Shijing* 詩經 (Classic of Poetry), the *Shangshu* 尚書 (Book of Documents), the *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Rites), the *Yijing* 易經 (Book of Changes), and the *Chunqiu* 春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals).

⁴³⁷ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 305.

Song curriculum of the examinations, poetry was removed which still did not have a big influence on the popularity of poetry in the class of the literati. Additionally, the civil examination questions in Ming also included more and more policy questions from the fifteenth century on which is—according to Benjamin A. Elman—a sign of “the dynasty’s and the public’s interest in astrology, calendrical precision, mathematical harmonics, and natural anomalies.”⁴³⁸

Syncretistic tendencies and currents (see chap. 6.3.3) also had a leverage on the civil examination system, as the candidates as well as the examiners were influenced by such thoughts. “Although the examinations were officially based on the Ch’eng-Chu commentaries on the classics, the minds of both administering officials and competing candidates were strongly influenced by currents of heterodox thoughts.” For that reason, a famous syncretist called Yang Qiyuan 楊起元 (1547-1599) used *Chan* 禪-Buddhist⁴³⁹ ideas in his examinations, and yet scored first; the chief examiner Li Chunfang 李春芳 (1510-1584) applied a phrase by Master Zhuang (Zhuangzi 莊子, ca. 369-286 BC),⁴⁴⁰ so to say a Daoist concept, when formulating a question about the Analects.⁴⁴¹ Supporters of the Confucian orthodoxy, therefore, submitted a memorial to the Ministry of Rites (*libu* 禮部) in 1588 to protest against the heterodox scriptures and to urge a burning of the “bizarre interpretations and twisted discussions” (*xinshuo quyì* 新說曲議) of the canon. Nonetheless, these tendencies dominated over prohibitions and reflected the syncretistic trends of this time.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁸ Elman (2014), pp. 199f.

⁴³⁹ The *Chan* 禪 or Meditation school of Buddhism developed in the seventh century AD as a unique mixture of Chinese (especially Daoist) elements and Mahāyāna Buddhism. The most striking concept of *Chan*-Buddhism is that the universal Buddha nature are inside every person and can be achieved directly without studying and rational theorizations, instead by communication between master and disciple and spirit to spirit. See Erik Zürcher (2003), “Buddhismus,” in Brunhild Staiger, Stefan Friedrich, Hans W. Schütte (2003), *Das Große China-Lexikon*, p. 118.

⁴⁴⁰ Zhuangzi 莊子 or Zhuang Zhou 莊周 was a philosopher who later was honored a Daoist sage. Declining official posts, he led a private and quiet life almost like a hermit. The book *Zhuangzi* is ascribed to him, but was consolidated by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79/77-8/6 BC). It is—next to the *Daodejing* 道德經 (The Classic of the Way and Natural Virtue)—the most influential and important book of Daoism. See “*Zhuangzi* 莊子 Master Zhuang,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/zhuangzi.html>, last accessed: November 24th, 2015.

⁴⁴¹ Tadao Sakai (1970), “Confucianism and Popular Educational Works,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York [et al.]: Columbia University Press, p. 338.

⁴⁴² Ch’ien (1986), p. 25; Sakai (1970), p. 339.

6.2.3 Extension of Learning—Books, Encyclopedias and Libraries in Ming

Due to the elitist education system, generally speaking, the social gap between scholars and non-educated people was tremendous in Ming dynasty. Consequently, scribes and official lecturers were assigned by the state to record happenings and to disseminate current events to the people. In addition, already in the reign period of Hongwu (1368-1398) a system of official pavilions was established where official statements about official, public and local matters were announced in order to narrow the gap between scholars and non-educated people. There were specific pavilions in each county or district for the declaration of certain information: In the Pavilion for Declaring Goodness (*jingshan ting* 敬善亭) the names of morally distinguished local persons were listed and read out, while in the Pavilion for Extending Clarity (*shenming ting* 申明亭) the names of criminals were published. The latter one also served as a forum to solve disputes, to discuss marriage matters, leasehold and assaults. However, these useful and modern institutions were already abolished one century before the end of Ming. Hence, the era of a convergence between literate and illiterate through official announcements for analphabets via the officials in the pavilions had passed.⁴⁴³

Concerning the realm of the literate elite, the Hongwu Emperor also recognized how easily information could circulate through the medium of books and very quickly understood what the key was for the successful ruling of an empire: “the control and dissemination of knowledge.” In the beginning of Ming the dissemination of books was very slow because of their expensive purchase and the expensive printing technology. Now, the emperor influenced the information flow by aggrandizing and promoting the publication of books he wanted the people to read. Nonetheless, therewith he opposed the monopolization of publishing, the licensing of publishers and the ostracizing of certain books. The books Hongwu preferred were, for example, schoolbooks, books about administrative issues and moral teaching books; he thereby encouraged the study of specific knowledge for specific groups of society—the knowledge about laws and regulations for his officials, the knowledge about the teachings of Confucianism for students, the knowledge about the principal sutras for Buddhist monks, and the knowledge about the simple rules for reconstituted agrarian self-sufficiency for

⁴⁴³ Brook (1998a), pp. 57f.

common people. For these purposes books were compiled by official order; among these books the most famous are the *Gongzi shu* 公子書 (The Princes' Book) from 1366, the *Wunong jiyi shanggu shu* 務農技藝商賈書 (The Book for Cultivators, Craftsmen, and Merchants), the *Da Ming ling* 大明令 (The Ming Statutes) from 1368, the *Da Ming zhi* 大明志 (Gazetteer of the Ming Dynasty) and the *Da Ming li* 大明律 (The Ming Code) from 1373. The compilation of such general reference works was continued and expanded by Hongwu's son, the Yongle Emperor, who encouraged the production of the Great Compendia (*Daquan* 大全; see Appendix III.2) and the re-editing of the Buddhist and Daoist canons. A great example of such a comprehensive work is the *Yongle encyclopedia*,⁴⁴⁴ a work which was regarded to be the world's largest encyclopedia. Many of these expansive works served examination candidates for their preparation—in Jiajing period (1521-1567) even books with model exercises and with hypothetical examination questions (*niti* 擬題) appeared on the book market.⁴⁴⁵ Such editions also consisted of dynasty histories or collected Confucian classics (including their commentaries). Other examples as the above mentioned are—in this respective—a collection of Neo-Confucian writings (*Xingli daquan* 性理大全, Great collection on nature and principle), a collection of memorials from the earliest dynasties until Yuan dynasty (*Lidai mingchen zouyi* 歷代名臣奏議, Collection of Memorials Through All Ages) from the year 1416 and collections concerning medical issues like the *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目⁴⁴⁶ by Li Shizhen 李時珍 (1518-1593) or technical issues like the

⁴⁴⁴ The *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 (The Great Canon [literally, Vast Documents] of the Yongle Era) is a Chinese compilation that was the world's largest known encyclopedia. It was compiled during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) by 2,169 persons under the order of the Yongle Emperor (r. 1402-1424), and after four years completed in 1408. It consists of 22,937 scrolls in 11,095 volumes and covers all that had ever been written on the Confucian canon, history, philosophy, and the arts and sciences, which were ordered according to the rhyme groups of the keywords. See “*Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 ‘The Great Statutes of the Yongle Reign,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/yongledadian.html>, last accessed: November 25th, 2015.

⁴⁴⁵ Brook (1998a), pp. 62, 64f; Brook (2005), pp. 104f; Sakai (1970), pp. 332-335.

⁴⁴⁶ The *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 (Guidelines and Details of Materia Medica) “is China's most important traditional book on pharmaceuticals.” It was compiled by Li Shizhen 李時珍 (1518-1593), completed 1578, and consists of 52 scrolls, in which there are 16 classes of pharmaceuticals divided into 61 sub-classes. Over 11,000 recipes for the treatment of various diseases and almost 2,000 pharmaceutical objects are described. See “*Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 ‘Guidelines and Details of Materia Medica,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/bencaoangmu.html>, last accessed: November 25th, 2015.

Tiangong kaiwu 天工開物⁴⁴⁷ by Song Yingxing 宋應星 (1587-?) from the year 1637. In late Ming, around 1,500 of these comprehensive compilations had already been compiled.⁴⁴⁸

For these large reference works Ming time writers took the great encyclopedias from Song and Yuan dynasties written by, for example, Wang Yinglin 王應麟,⁴⁴⁹ Zheng Qiao 鄭樵⁴⁵⁰ and Ma Duanlin 馬端臨⁴⁵¹ as examples and compiled great encyclopedias⁴⁵² themselves. Due to the large amount of information intended to be

⁴⁴⁷ “The *Tiangong kaiwu* 天工開物 (The Exploitation of Heavenly Treasures) is a compendium on industry, agriculture and artisanry written by the late Ming period 明 (1368-1644) scholar Song Yingxing 宋應星 (1587-?) [...] It thus gives an excellent overview of the proto-industrial situation of China during the early 17th century. It is very rich in content and especially valuable for the many illustrations which excellently picturize what is described in the texts. The scientific value of the *Tiangong kaiwu* cannot be overrated.” See “*Tiangong kaiwu* 天工開物 ‘The Exploitation of Heavenly Treasures,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/bencaogangmu.html>. last accessed: November 25th, 2015.

⁴⁴⁸ Wolfgang Franke (1988), “Historical Writing During the Ming,” in *CHC* 7, pp. 728f; Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 308.

⁴⁴⁹ Wang Yinglin’s 王應麟 (1223-1296) famous encyclopedias include the *Yutang leigao* 玉堂類稿, the *Yexuan leigao* 掖垣類稿 and the *Yuhai* 玉海 (Jade ocean). See “*Yuhai* 玉海 ‘The Jade Ocean,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/bencaogangmu.html>, last accessed: November 25th, 2015.

⁴⁵⁰ Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162), *zi*: Yuzhong 漁仲 (from today’s region of Fujian), was a great historian of Song dynasty and wrote the *Tongzhi* 通志 (General Treatise), a famous institutional history of China from its beginnings through the Tang dynasty (618-907). Wang Xinlong 王新龙 (2013), *Dasong wangchao (si)* 大宋王朝 (四), Qingpingguo shuju zhongxin 青苹果数据中心 (Green Apple Data Center), chap. ‘Tongzhi shi shei suozhu’ 《通志》是谁所著, n.p.

⁴⁵¹ Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 (1254-ca. 1324) from Yuan dynasty compiled, e.g., the famous administrative history *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (Comprehensive Investigations based on Literary and Documentary Sources), which in 348 scrolls depicts the state administration from antiquity until Yuan dynasty. “*Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 ‘Comprehensive Investigations Based on Literary and Documentary Sources,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/wenxiantongkao.html>. last accessed: November 25th, 2015.

⁴⁵² There were different kinds of encyclopedias: (1) general, e.g. the *Santai wanyong zhengzong* 三臺萬用正宗 (Orthodox Teaching for a Myriad Uses, 1599); (2) examination studies, e.g. the *Gujin wenyuan juye jinghua* 古今文苑舉業精華 (Essential Learning for Examination Studies, Past and Present) by Yuan Huang; (3) letters and formal documents, public and private, e.g. the *Hanmo daquan* 翰墨大全 (Great Compendium of Model Letters, 1307); (4) poetry, e.g. the *Shixue huixuan* 詩學彙選 (Antology for the Study of Poetry) by Hu Wenhuan; (5) history and customs, e.g. the *Gushi qibao dacheng* 故事七寶大成 (Complete Collection of the Seven Treasures of Ancient Things, late Ming); (6) children’s education, e.g. the *Youxue yizhi zazi daquan* 幼學易知雜字大全 (Great Compendium and Dictionary for the Elementary Instruction of Children, late Ming); (7) household affairs, e.g. the *Jujia biyong shilei quanji* 居家必用事類全集 (Complete Collection of Matters Necessary for Household Use, 1560); (8) miscellaneous things, e.g. the *Shilin guangji* 事林廣記 (Broad Record of Many Matters, Yuan and Ming editions); (9) miscellaneous, e.g. the *Wuche bajin* 五車拔錦 (Collection of Excerpts from All Kinds of Books, 1597); (10) miscellaneous, e.g. the *Wenlin guangji* 文林廣記 (Broad Record of Many Writings,

included, Ming time encyclopedias were rather a collective attempt by many authors, not works by one single person—as it had been the case in Song and Yuan dynasties. The topics were not limited to the officially predefined content; beyond the books compiled by official order, there were many comprehensive works consisting of themes regarding common concerns and problems of everyday life, which arose out of and led into a strong urge to collect all the knowledge from any different realms of life. The preface of the *Jujia biyong shilei quanji* 居家必用事類全集 (Complete Collection of Matters Necessary for Household Use) from the Wanli period (1572-1620), for example, notes:

This book deals with matters concerning the four classes of people⁴⁵³ and the many branches of learning. It provides all kinds of knowledge and the essence of what is contained in a host of other books—all things which the householder cannot well do without [...] It being thus of the most real and practical use, its title is most appropriate.⁴⁵⁴

In the preface of the *Shilin guangji* 事林廣記 (Broad Record of Many Matters) it explicitly says: “Everything that concerns the immediate needs of the common people is brought together here.” The broad and comprehensive utility and usefulness is already observable when looking at the titles of all those encyclopedias.⁴⁵⁵ Yet, as Wolfgang Franke remarked in the *Cambridge History of China*, when examining most of these large-scale volumes—the ones concerning official matters and common matters—, it becomes apparent that they can only be admired for their magnitude, not for their sophisticated character.⁴⁵⁶ But this does not discount the value of the compendia in regard to the overall extension of learning. The vast circulation of any kind of books was a peculiarity of Ming dynasty which had an enormous impact on the development of learning in the Chinese empire.

1607); (11) miscellaneous, e.g. the *Jiyu quanshu* 積玉全書 (Complete Book of Many Treasures) by Li Guangyu; (12) miscellaneous, e.g. the *Leishu zuanyao* 類書纂要 (Compilation of the Essentials of the Encyclopedias, between 1621 and 1627). See Sakai (1970), pp. 333f.

⁴⁵³ The *shinonggongshang* 士農工商, i.e. scholars, farmers, workers, merchants.

⁴⁵⁴ This translation derives from Sakai (1970), p. 334.

⁴⁵⁵ De Bary (1970b), p. 9; Sakai (1970), pp. 332-335.

⁴⁵⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 728f; Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 308.

In general, the dissemination of books was raised constantly, until in the last century of the Ming the publication of books gained a state of commercial nature. The entrepreneur and publisher Yu Xiangdou 余象斗 (ca. 1560-ca. 1637) from Jianyang 建陽 stands exemplarily for this commercialization of learning because he offered to make information accessible for a certain price. Slowly a mass market for books developed, especially in the province Fujian. Like in the case of the reference works, the repertory of topics hereby was very wide; it reached from teaching books, moral treatises, law texts, novels, theater plays to erotica, gag books, route guides, and travel reports of foreign regions, just to mention a few subjects. These kinds of books clearly were written for the masses, and scholars usually deprecatorily looked down on such kind of literature—at least outwardly. Nevertheless, many people appreciated this trivial literature and—additionally to the obligatory books—devoured such works. Popular scientific and sensational writings were widespread and appreciated, which reveals a movement from scholarly learning to commercial entertainment. Likewise, this development entailed a motivation for more people to publish their own pieces of literature.⁴⁵⁷

Along with the dissemination, the expanding accessibility and the total increase of books, more and more libraries were established to store them. Although there had existed libraries before Ming dynasty, it was at that time when they extended to repositories of thousands and ten thousands of book volumes; they were constructed everywhere. Quite often single officials or private scholars were the patrons of library building; famous private sponsored libraries are, for example, the *Tianyi ge* 天一閣 (The Number One Library Under Heaven) founded by Fan Qin 范欽 (1506-1585) and then owned by the Fan family in Ningbo, and the *Wanjuan lou* 萬卷樓 (Library of Ten Thousand Fascicles) with more than ten thousand book volumes belonging to the Yu family in Shanghai. Apart from family libraries, in Ming an increasing establishment of school libraries (*zunjing ge* 尊經閣; Pavilion for Revering the Classics) not only in prefectural schools, but also already in county schools can be observed—again not an invention by the Ming, but promoted in Ming times. To establish canons for many realms of life which were stored in libraries, hence, gave the emperor the power over

⁴⁵⁷ Brook (1998a), pp. 167f, 170.

knowledge. This—in the second step—served the purpose that every scholar or students in the empire would read the same. On that account schools with libraries were established. From 1430, this library movement gathered momentum and blossomed from the 1460s to the 1540s and again from 1570 until 1620. The building of libraries, indeed, was a very significant phenomenon, which can be traced back to certain changes in the view on knowledge itself. Not only the recognition of the importance of the physical accumulation of books contributed to this occurrence, but also their appreciation as a “cultural production”—so to say their immaterial value as carriers and distributors of knowledge.⁴⁵⁸

One reason for private persons to sponsor libraries was that they highly cherished the sacredness of the classics. This arising “classicism” (i.e. the appreciation of the classics) is elucidated in many commemorating essays concerning the building of a library; still, there are also other voices: Luo Hongxian (1504-1564) when commemorating the establishment of Jishui school library in 1546 stated that—as Timothy Brook puts it—“although the classics are used to teach the learning of the ancients, [...] they are not all ancient texts. Furthermore, though the classics deserve to be revered, reverence of the classics was not an ancient practice. Classicism is a present construction that has only an attenuated link to the past.”⁴⁵⁹ With this thinking Luo followed Wang Yangming’s thought that the ancients did not just rely on fixed texts; according to Wang, texts were a substitute for the ceasing of the right understanding, which in former times was accomplished through self-cultivation, not through book learning. The purpose of a library was the protection of books and scriptures of all kinds. Nevertheless, in the first place libraries were determined to store the canon dictated by the government; therefore, the building of libraries itself was not—as it seems at the first glance—a sign of “a social movement to open the process of knowledge acquisition,” but rather a “state’s project to edify and control knowledge,” as it had already been Hongwu’s intention. After all, the dissemination of knowledge—albeit only prescribed knowledge—did encourage the opening of minds.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁸ Brook (2005), pp. 101, 103ff.

⁴⁵⁹ Brook (2005), pp. 115f.

⁴⁶⁰ Brook (2005), pp. 106, 113-117.

Besides the libraries and the learning of the well-off, as the topics of literature implicate, more and more people and groups of society engaged themselves in reading books. At the beginning of Ming intrinsically books were still a luxury good and readers needed money to purchase literature. Yet, especially the economic development in the lower Yangtze delta—Taizhou, the home of important philosophical movements (see chap. 6.3.1), was situated in this area, too—fostered the literary education of merchants' or economics' descendants while making it just affordable. Partly this also happened due to the improvements in printing technology and the emergence of evermore publication companies, which resulted in the positive effect of the dissemination of books in general. In fact, it was not as much the technology itself which improved and promoted the literary development; rather it was the decreasing costs of printing because even illiterate laborers were able to be adapted at this technology. Even the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) was astounded by the simple and cheap way of printing in China.⁴⁶¹

The whole method is so simple that one is tempted to try it for himself once having watched the process [...] The simplicity of Chinese printing is what accounts for the exceedingly large number of books in circulation here and the ridiculously low prices at which they are sold.⁴⁶²

Literacy increased vastly and merchants from this area became supporters and defenders of “classical and popular culture.” That is why the demand for reading material grew and, furthermore, the specialization of knowledge became more sophisticated. Not only the number of unsuccessful but also the number of successful candidates in the official examinations who presumably were the main readers of historical compilations increased significantly: While between 1388 and 1448 there were only 150 successful candidates, the number rose to 290 between the years 1451 and 1505 and even to 330 between 1508 and 1643. The reason for this rise was the social mobility due to which merchants now worked their way up to the bureaucracy class. De Bary observed another associated phenomenon, videlicet that established gentry families continued to exist only because they went into business; others occupied themselves with engaging in popular culture, such as drama, fiction or theater performances. Likewise, this

⁴⁶¹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 726; Brook (2005), pp. 127f.

⁴⁶² Ricci, Gallagher (1953), p. 21.

promotion of the circulation of books and of learning in general clearly displays that the group of educated people represented a considerably part of society and even increased in that time. The scholar Gui Youguang 歸有光 (1506-1571)⁴⁶³ put it that way: “In ancient times the four functional orders of commoners had their distinct functions, but in later times the status distinctions among scholars, peasants, and merchants have become blurred.”⁴⁶⁴ In fact, even household slaves of wealthy families were able to obtain a certain degree of education and were, though rarely, even found to take part in civil examinations. Over 25,000 palace graduates were counted under Ming dynasty. It was a time when traditional role models were turned inside out by rapid changes in the economic and social domain.⁴⁶⁵ This process was fostered by the currents in the philosophical realm, e.g. Wang Yangming’s (see chap. 6.3.1) attitude of everyone being able to become a sage.

In consequence, knowledge in general and the knowledge of the Chinese classics in particular was extended to the masses, not at least because of the promotion by Ming time emperors. Therefore, as Benjamin A. Elman expressed, the Chinese classics in Ming dynasty were much more known and read by the Chinese than the Bible was known to Europeans. Classical learning, painting, literature, and calligraphy—arts which acted as symbols of elite culture—were supported by the court in order to keep up the values of the elites. Nevertheless, the extension of learning and the associated softening of the distinctions between social classes were perceptible and also derived from influences by philosophical currents described before. Especially, Wang Yangming was crucial for this development because he “opened schools and academies

⁴⁶³ Gui Youguang was 歸有光 (1506-1571), *zi* 字: Xifu 熙甫, from today’s region of Jiangsu, was one of the most famous Ming time writer. He gained his *jinshi* degree in 1565. In his writings, he followed the tradition of the old-style of Tang-Song eras and opposed any kind of imitation. Famous compilations by him include, e.g., the *Xiang Ji Xuan Zhi* 項脊軒志 (A History of the “Backbone” Room) and the *Sanwu Shuili Lu* 三吳水利錄 (Records of the Water Conservancy in the Three Wu). See Zhong Hua 鍾華 and Chen Yanfang 陳艷芳 (2015), *Xianggang Gaozhong sheng: Bidu gushiwen (xiace)* 香港高中生:必讀古詩文 (下冊), Hongkong: Sanlian shudian 三聯書店, p. 155; and “Persons in Chinese History—Gui Youguang 歸有光,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Ming/personsguiyouguang.html>, last accessed: August 29th, 2016.

⁴⁶⁴ Ping-ti Ho (1964), *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911*, New York and London: Columbia University Press, p. 73; from Gui Youyang’s 歸有光 *Zhenchuan xiansheng ji* 震川先生集, chap. 13, pp. 2ab-2b.

⁴⁶⁵ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 726; de Bary (1970b), pp. 172f; Sakai (1970), p. 337; Elman (2014), p. 199.

for commoners on a wider scale than ever before.”⁴⁶⁶ This feature of Ming period will be clarified in the next chapters.

6.3 History of Ideas: Philosophical Currents and Their Influences

Philosophers are both causes and effects: effects of their social circumstances and of the politics and institutions of their time; causes (if they are fortunate) of beliefs which mould the politics and institutions of later ages.⁴⁶⁷

These words by the famous British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) describe the situation in China very aptly. All the former mentioned political, economic and social changes and developments had an influence on the development of historiographical writing and the other way around. But it is philosophy—as Bertrand Russell trenchantly observed—that is cause and effect of its time. Especially in Chinese culture, in which philosophy had always played an important part, it is crucial acting as stimulating spirit of ongoing processes. In Ming dynasty, the repercussions of changes in philosophical attitudes were noticeably in the sphere of politics, economics, society and—last but not least—of historiography. Therefore, it is an ungrounded assumption to talk of a general decrease of the historical studies in Ming period. However, it is true that Zhu Xi’s Neo-Confucian teachings were officially held in high esteem at the beginning of Ming, which hindered the (noticeable) blooming of historiography. Edwin G. Pulleyblank, for example, assumed that the Neo-Confucianism thought was the reason for the so-called decrease of academic studies in Ming dynasty because it only stressed the “general meaning” (*dayi* 大意); according to him, academic studies could

⁴⁶⁶ Elman (2014), p. 202.

⁴⁶⁷ Bertrand Russell (1947), *A History of Western Philosophy: and Its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, London: George Allen und Unwin Ltd, p. 5. This citation is used by many Chinese historians of philosophy as well which shows how suitable Russell’s ideas are in the Chinese context. Furthermore, his work was completely translated into Chinese as *Xifang zhexueshi* 西方哲学史 (A History of Western Philosophy) by Luo Su 罗素 (Bertrand Russell). The Chinese of the citation reads the following: 哲学家们既是果，也是因。他们是他们时代的社会环境和政治制度的结果，他们（如果幸运的话）也可能是塑造后来时代的政治制度信仰的原因。

only be revived in the seventeenth century under Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682).⁴⁶⁸ Timothy Brook, too, pointed out that in his opinion

[...] the power of the Neo-Confucian moral vision, reinforced by its new status as the orthodox ideology of the examination system, was sufficient to dampen a historian's ardour for detecting anachronism, scrutinising evidence, or specifying the particularities of place, to say nothing of building causal explanations.⁴⁶⁹

Brook underlined his statement by citing Zhao Shenxiu's 趙慎修⁴⁷⁰ preface to a compilation of abstracts from the Standard Histories from 1594 who in this work advocated "concentrating on the underlying principles," not on facts themselves.⁴⁷¹ This is a direct hint at the predominance of Neo-Confucianism which came along with the neglect of true recording of facts. Even the official record in the *Mingshi* 明史 (History of the Ming Dynasty) confirmed the assumption of Ming dynasty Confucianism following the currents of Song dynasty. It declared:

原夫明初諸儒，皆朱子門人之支流余裔，師承有自，矩矱秩然。曹端、胡居仁篤踐履，謹繩墨，守儒先之正傳，無敢改錯。學術之分，則自陳獻章、王守仁始⁴⁷²

Basically, Confucianists of early Ming all represented minor branches and what were left of the followers of pupils of Zhu Xi. The

⁴⁶⁸ Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682) is considered one of the outstanding Confucians of late Ming and Early Qing dynasties (next to Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 and Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲). He was loyal to the Ming dynasty and never served under the Qing emperors. See "Chinese History—Qing Period Literature, Thought, and Philosophy," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/qing-literature.html>, last accessed: May 12th, 2015; Pulleyblank (1961), p. 159.

⁴⁶⁹ Timothy Brook (1998b), "Medievalism and the Chinese Sense of History," *The Medieval History Journal* 1.1, p. 159.

⁴⁷⁰ Zhao Shenxiu 趙慎修, zi 字: Jingsi 敬思 or Qingma 清麻, was a scholar official under the Jiajing 嘉靖 Emperor (1522-1565). He received his *jurem* degree in 1565. He worked under the Yancheng county magistrate, transferred into the Ministry of War (*bingbu* 兵部) management and climbed the career ladder to become a secretary-general of the ministry. Afterwards, he was appointed district magistrate of Yanzhou. Among other things, he compiled the "Record about Jiaozhou" (*Jiaozhou zhi* 膠州志) and the *Qingkuo shiji* 清廓詩集. He Cheng 何成 (2002), "Xincheng wangshi: Dui Ming Qing shiqi Shandong keju wangzu de ge'an yanjiu" 新城王氏：对明清时期山东科举望族的个案研究, Ph.D. Shandong daxue 山东大学, p. 219.

⁴⁷¹ Brook (1998b), p. 159.

⁴⁷² *Mingshi* 明史, vol. 76, *juan* 282, *liezhuan* 列傳 170, *Rulin yi* 儒林一, pp. 1b-2a.

transmission of doctrines from their teachers was clearly traceable and their patterns were in perfect order. Cao Duan 曹端 (Yuechuan 月川, 1376-1434) and Hu Juren 胡居仁 (Jingzhai 敬齋, 1434-1484) earnestly practiced their own doctrines and carefully followed earlier prescriptions. They held on to the standard handed down to them by earlier Confucianists and dared not make any change. The division of systems of learning began with Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章 (Baisha or Boshha 白沙, 1428-1500) and Wang Shouren 王守仁.⁴⁷³

As addressed briefly in the last sentence, in fact, there were decisive developments in philosophical thought in the right direction which, in consequence, probably influenced historical writing of Ming dynasty. These developments were initiated by Chen Baisha and Wang Yangming and their School of Mind (*xinxue* 心學)⁴⁷⁴—all to be introduced in the next chapter.

6.3.1 The Neo-Confucianism of Ming Dynasty

The Neo-Confucianism of “The Learning of the Way” (*Daoxue*)—how Benjamin A. Elman calls it—developed into an empire-wide orthodoxy in Ming dynasty, at least in the upper classes. At the beginning of the Ming period, the upsurge of Neo-Confucianism dominated. The Imperial College (*taixue* 太學) pronounced not to read Confucius, Mencius or the Five Classics (*wujing* 五經) anymore, but Zhu Xi’s *Tongjian gangmu* 通鑑綱目. Certainly, this also influenced the genre of historical writing.⁴⁷⁵

At the beginning, the main personalities in the philosophical realm of Ming dynasty were the mentioned Cao Duan 曹端 and Xue Xuan 薛瑄 (*hao* 號: Jingxian 敬軒, 1392-1464) from the north—establishing the Hedong 河東 School—and Wu Yubi

⁴⁷³ Translated by Chan Wing-tsit (1970b), p. 29.

⁴⁷⁴ The *School of Mind* (*xinxue* 心學) was a Confucian school founded by Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139-1192) in Southern Song (*Nan Song* 南宋, 1127-1279). In Ming time, Wang Yangming was its leading figure. It is regarded to be the “rival” of the *School of Principle* (*lixue* 理學) or Cheng-Zhu School by Zhu Xi, Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107) and Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085). For more information on Lu Jiuyuan, see “Persons in Chinese History—Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/personslujiuyuan.html>, last accessed: August 5th, 2016.

⁴⁷⁵ Yang Yanqiu 杨艳秋 (2001), “Ming zhong houqi de shixue sichao” (Trends of Historical Studies after the Reigns in the Mid-late Ming Dynasty), *Shixueshi yanjiu* 史学史研究 (Journal of Historiography) 102.2, p. 36.

吳與弼 (*hao* 號: Kangzhai 康齋, 1391-1469) and the mentioned Hu Juren 胡居仁 in the south—establishing the Congren 崇仁 School—who together personified a new variation of Confucianism characteristic for the Ming time. According to the philosopher Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周 (called Jishan 戡山, 1578-1645), they developed their own independent Confucian thoughts: For example, Cao Duan did not attribute his ideas and concepts to a teacher; rather he referred to ancient works of philosophy. Moreover, Wu Yubi obtained his insights through intense reflection. After them, Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章 created a new school with a new canon of ideas, and Wang Yangming managed to link theoretical philosophical thoughts with daily practices. This independent origin of thoughts in Ming time Confucianist thinking correlates with the perception of Confucianist as not being related to a teacher, as Confucius himself did not have a teacher either.⁴⁷⁶

Content-related, this independence or at least a shift in this direction can be proved by the fact that concepts like the “Great Ultimate” (*taiji* 太極), “*yin* 陰 and *yang* 陽” and the “relation between the principle (*li* 理) and material force (*qi* 氣)” literally vanished from contemporary discussions. These concepts had been the main focus of Zhu Xi, and now—at the beginning of Ming—they were not at all paid attention to. Cao Duan, for example, even refuted the concept of the Great Ultimate; the topic of “investigating things” (*gewu* 格物) was also neglected by the early Ming-Confucianists. Xue Xuan constituted an exception: He followed the Cheng brothers and Zhu Xi in their conception; in general, the Hedong school is regarded as rather following the Cheng-Zhu School. In the Congren school the concept of seriousness (*jing* 敬) of the mind was the essential thought. Members of this school, especially Wu Yubi, achieved learning “through assiduous exerting and stimulating oneself, and much through sweating and shedding in tears in the middle of the night on the pillow.” (*keku fenli, duo cong wugeng zhenshang, han liulei xia delai* 刻苦奮勵，多從五更枕上、汗流淚下得來。)⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ Chan Wing-Tsit (1970), pp. 29ff.

⁴⁷⁷ MRXA, “Shishuo” 師說, “Wu Kangzhai Yubi” 吳康齋與弼, p. 3. An Annotation to this part about Wu Yubi can be found in Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1987), *The Records of Ming Scholars* (Translation of the *Mingru Xue'an* 明儒學案) translated and edited by Julia Ching, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 53f. For more information on the *Shishuo*-chapter of Huang Zongxi’s *Mingru Xue'an* in general, see Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1987), trans. by Julia Ching, pp. 16f.

Principally, they gave instructions “how to live a simple and peaceful life;” still, the central concepts were seriousness and the cultivation of the mind.⁴⁷⁸

It is noticeable that Ming time Neo-Confucianism was affected by a distancing from the intellectual facets—e.g. the principle of the “investigation of things”—and the metaphysical speculation; instead the concentration on one’s mind, including cultivating and preserving it, became the focus of philosophical discussions. In summary, at the beginning of Ming the Cheng-Zhu school remained very popular. But during Jiajing and Wanli periods a wave against the Song time Neo-Confucianism appeared and also had a bearing on historiography.⁴⁷⁹ The man who contributed most to this shift in Neo-Confucianist thoughts from the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy to a concentrating on one’s own mind was the former mentioned Wang Yangming 王阳明.

Wang Yangming

有明學術，【白沙開其端，至姚江而始大明。蓋，】從前習熟先儒之成說，未嘗反身理會推見至隱，所謂「此亦一述朱耳，彼亦一述朱」耳。⁴⁸⁰

The path of Ming learning was opened by Chen Xianzhang but became brilliant only with Wang Yangming. The earlier custom was to memorize the known sayings of the former scholars, without reflecting carefully in oneself or seeking to develop their hidden points. This is the meaning of the saying that each man is only repeating Chu Hsi.⁴⁸¹

The leading figures of the changes in Neo-Confucian thought of Ming dynasty were Chen Xianzhang and even more Wang Yangming. Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章 (or Chen Baisha 陳白沙)⁴⁸² represented the “philosophy of the natural” and was accused of

⁴⁷⁸ Chan Wing-Tsit (1970), pp. 33ff, 38f.

⁴⁷⁹ Chan Wing-Tsit (1970), pp. 42f; Yang (2001), p. 36.

⁴⁸⁰ *MRXA*, *juan* 10 “Yaojiang xue’an” 姚江學案, p. 179. In this edition by the Zhongguo shuju chubanshe 中國書局出版社 in Beijing from 1985 the underlined part is missing, as this edition follows the edition by Zheng Xing 郑性 (called Zheng ben 郑本). However, this citation derives from the edition by Gu Run 贾润 and Gu Pu 贾朴 (father and son), called the Gu edition. In the Daoguang 道光 era (r. 1820-1850) of Qing dynasty (1644-1910), an edition melted from the Zheng and the Gu edition by Mo Jin 莫晋 (Mo edition) was published. Guo Qi 郭齐 (2003), “Shuo Huang Zongxi ‘Mingru Xue’an’ wannian dingben” 说黄宗羲《明儒学案》晚年定本, *Shixueshi yanjiu* 史学史研究 2, p. 43.

⁴⁸¹ Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 (1987), trans. by Julia Ching, p. 100.

⁴⁸² Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章 (or Chen Baisha 陳白沙; 1428-1500) was a famous Ming time Confucian scholar. He was one of the first scholar deriving from a very rural area, namely Xinhui 新會 in

following the Buddhist and Daoist beliefs while he at the same time “affirmed the existence and significance of ‘principle’ (*li*) as a Confucian idea.” In general, Chen Xianzhang lay the foundation for Wang Yangming’s ideas and, hence, is regarded as precursor of Wang Yangming 王阳明 (or Wang Shouren 王守仁; 1472-1529).⁴⁸³ Wang Yangming as well as Chen Xianzhang were worried about the increasing number of books and the resulting increasing learning. As was disclosed, learning in Ming dynasty meant the studying of Zhu Xi’s works which were part of the canon dictated by the emperor. For Wang Yangming, Zhu Xi’s much admired writings and ideas were too complex; therefore, he promoted the simplicity of the old sages, the “innate knowledge” (*liangzhi* 良知) which should lead to the original learning of Confucius. Accordingly, the most striking feature about Wang Yangming’s “philosophy” was that he proclaimed the idea of moral knowledge being intuitive. Wang opposed the accumulation of learning and knowledge and excessive cultural activity. For him “studying the Classics was less useful for acquiring moral knowledge than engaging in meditation and moral introspection.”⁴⁸⁴ Thus, everyone could become a sage—“all over the streets there are sage man” (滿街都是聖人⁴⁸⁵). By doing so, Wang attributed the power of being gifted with morality and reason to every man; consequently, every man under heaven was regarded to be equal.⁴⁸⁶ The ideal for him was a sage man of deeds, not just a scholar. Accordingly, Wang Yangming himself devoted much of his life to official duties and did not search scholarly seclusion—in the *Ming History* he is described to be more a state’s man than a scholar. Wang did not acquire his ideas of “the unity of knowledge and action” (*zhixing heyi* 知行合一) by engaging in academic philosophical questions,

Guangdong 廣東. Chen entitled himself as being “half farmer and half scholar.” Ren Yuwen, “Ch’en Hsienchang’s Philosophy of the Natural,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 53ff. For more information on Chen Xianzhang, see Ren Yuwen (1970).

⁴⁸³ Ch’ien (1986), p. 17.

⁴⁸⁴ Timothy Brook (2010), *The Troubled Empire. China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties*, Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press (History of imperial China), p. 163; Sakai (1970), p. 345.

⁴⁸⁵ *Chuanxi lu, juan xia* 下, *Mensheng huangsheng seng lu* 門人黃省曾錄 (The Record of the Disciple Huang Shengseng [1496-1546]), sec. 313.

⁴⁸⁶ Ren Feng 任鋒 (2012), “Zhongguo sixiang shi zhong de Gonglun guannian yu zhengzhi shijie” 中國思想史中的公論觀念與政治世界 (The Conceptions of Gonglun and the Political World in the History of Chinese Thinking), in Xu Jilin 許紀霖 (ed.), *He zhong wen ming?: Zhongguo jue qi de zai si kao* 何種文明?: 中國崛起的再思考 (Which Civilization?: Rethinking on the Rise of China), Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe (Zhishi fenzi luncong 知識分子論叢第 10 輯), p. 212.

but experienced the needs of people by his own while working as provincial governor in the border region of Jiangxi and Fujian. He led the people there to practice self-government and become responsible for their moral standards. From this direct experience with the life of peasants, he developed his ideas and teachings of all classes equally being able to achieve sagehood. This stands in contrast to Zhu Xi's attitude claiming that there is no sense in active service. Wang Yangming's return to old Confucian ideals—which was also advocated by scholars like the former mentioned Wu Yubi, Hu Juren, Chen Xianzhang, or Lou Liang 婁諒 (1422-1491)—resulted from cultural and political pressure and the newly emerging attention to the burdens of culture.⁴⁸⁷ Although such an attitude emerged as early as in Song dynasty already, back then there prevailed a sharp distinction between high and low status, rich and poor, good and bad people. Therefore, Wang Yangming's philosophy—which did not distinguish in status or wealth—can be valued as “the basis for new movements in popular thought and new developments in popular culture.”⁴⁸⁸

In this way, Wang Yangming followed the Song Neo-Confucian School of the Heart (*xinxue* 心學, or “Learning of the Mind”), which had been founded by Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139-1193) in contrast to Zhu Xi's *lixue* 理學 (“Teachings of the Order” or “School of the Principle”). The most striking contrast between these two competing philosophies was that Lu Jiuyuan, and now Wang Yangming, contradicted Zhu Xi's teachings of a dualism between Heaven and man, namely between the “Heavenly Principle” and “human desire,” and advocated the view of these both being parts of one single realm, “which[, in fact,] brought it closer to Buddhism.”⁴⁸⁹

With his philosophy of “the unity of knowledge and action” another important aspect about Wang Yangming and his teachings came along, namely the emphasis on the extension of the inborn knowledge and the claim of “always doing something.”⁴⁹⁰ He said to his disciples:

⁴⁸⁷ De Bary (1970b), pp. 10f.

⁴⁸⁸ Sakai (1970), pp. 340f.

⁴⁸⁹ Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), p. 309. This will be referred to in the discussion about the “Unity of the Three Teachings” below, too.

⁴⁹⁰ Chan Wing-Tsit (1970), p. 46.

[...] 知是行的主意。行是知的功夫。知是行之始。行是知之成。若會得時，只說一箇知，已自有行在。只說一箇行，已自有知在。[...] 今人卻就將知行分作兩件去做。以為必先知了，然後能行。我如今且去講習討論做知的工夫。待知得真了，方去做行的工夫。故遂終身不行，亦遂終身不知。此不是小病痛，其來已非一日矣。某今說箇知行合一，正是對病的藥。⁴⁹¹

Knowledge is the principal force of action and action is the result of knowledge. Knowledge is the beginning of action and action is the completion of knowledge. He who understands this knows that when he says, 'I know,' this implies action also. In the same way, when he says, 'I do,' he knows that this implies also understanding [...] But alas, people nowadays separate knowledge from action as two distinct objects. They presume that one must first obtain knowledge before one can act. They say: 'Let us first try to acquire knowledge. As soon as we come to possess it we will try to put it into action.' Thus they never come to act, nor do they ever come to know. This is by no means a light matter nor is the problem a new one. It is because I wish to remedy this defect that I now try to expound my theory of the correlation of knowledge to action.⁴⁹²

Wang also formulated Four Dicta (*siju jiaoyan* 四句教言) which constitute and express his teachings and intentions:

無善無惡是心之體，有善有惡是意之動，知善知惡是良知，為善去惡是格物。⁴⁹³

In the original substance of the mind there is neither good nor evil. When the will becomes active, there is good and evil. The function of

⁴⁹¹ *Chuanxi lu, juan shang* 上, *Xu Ai yinyan* 徐愛引言 (Introduction by Xu Ai), sec. 5.

⁴⁹² Translated in Chan (1982), pp. 322f.

⁴⁹³ *Chuanxi lu, juan xia* 下, *Mensheng huangsheng seng lu* 門人黃省曾錄 (The Record of the Disciple Huang Shengseng [1496-1546]), sec. 315; from a discussion between Ru Zhongju 汝中舉 and Dehong 德洪 from the *dinghai* 丁亥 year (i.e. 1587) of Wanli reign period.

innate knowledge is to know good and evil. The investigation of things
is to do good and remove evil.⁴⁹⁴

As a matter of fact, Wang Yangming's efforts were crowned with success: Especially in Longqing 隆慶 (1567-1572) and Wanli 萬曆 (1572-1620) periods, the results of Wang's influence became obvious even in the civil examinations. Although the exams were still based on the Cheng-Zhu teachings, the examinees more and more occupied themselves with Buddhist, Daoist or syncretistic ideas. Surely, orthodox officials wanted to dam this heterodox movement which, in fact, also meant the expansion of learning to the masses. Wang Yangming's popular belief that every man could become a sage originally derived from Mengzi's ideas, which were disseminated through Wang and were brought back into the minds of the people.⁴⁹⁵ As Edward Ch'ien stated, Wang Yangming's "doctrine of liang-chih and liberal view of heterodoxy did much to loosen the grip of Ch'eng-Chu orthodoxy on the Ming intellectual scene," which was a great progress.⁴⁹⁶ Accordingly, Wang Yangming was also often accused of heterodoxy because he promoted the gaining of knowledge for all classes. This, naturally, did not conform to the literati's opinion of class hierarchy and the exclusiveness of knowledge and arts for elites. Nevertheless, his comments on the correlation of knowledge and action disproved the accusation on him to be a disciple of the Buddhist *Chan* sect.⁴⁹⁷

After Wang Yangming's death, his school—now known as Yangmingism (*Yangmingxue* 陽明學)—divided into three sections: the left wing (*zuoyi* 左翼), or existential school (*xiancheng pai* 現成派)—“The men in the street are all sages”—; the right wing (*youyi* 右翼), or quietist school (*guiji pai* 歸寂派); and the orthodox (*zhengtong pai* 正統派), or cultivation school (*xiuzheng pai* 修證派)—which adopted Wang Yangming's original ideas.⁴⁹⁸ One of the men who followed his ideas and

⁴⁹⁴ Chan Wing-tsit (1963), *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings by Wang Yang-Ming*, New York and London: Columbia University Press, part III, “Conversations Recorded by Huang Mien-Chih,” sec. 315, p. 243.

⁴⁹⁵ Sakai (1970), pp. 338f.

⁴⁹⁶ Ch'ien (1986), p. 28.

⁴⁹⁷ Elman (2014), pp. 202f; Chan (1982), p. 323.

⁴⁹⁸ Takehiko Okada (1970), “Wang Chi and the Rise of Existentialism,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 121f.

developed them further was Wang Zhi 王畿.⁴⁹⁹ He was one of Wang Yangming's most talented disciples and very often discussed various problems with his master.⁵⁰⁰

Even though Pulleyblank attested to Wang that his thoughts were another drawback for historiography, it has to be admitted that this was a clear break from the esteemed Confucian philosophical tradition—which only could be surpassed by Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602; see below), who opposed the study of the classics and almost abandoned Confucianism completely. Some academics even insinuate a European influence to Li Zhi's conception and detect the principle of "Searching for the truth in the facts" in it.⁵⁰¹

Taizhou School

In the [Taizhou] school itself personal relationships crossed traditional class lines, intellectual associations crossed political lines, and educational work crossed religious lines.⁵⁰²

The Taizhou school (*Taizhou xuepai* 泰州學派) was founded by Wang Gen 王艮 (1483-1541), one of Wang Yangming's disciples. Wang Gen constructed a kind of individualism similar to Western thought individualism—a thing assumed impossible in China. He himself originated from a salt maker's family and was able to work his way up to a potent leader of a philosophical school, the Taizhou school. It is regarded to be a radical and popular division of Wang Yangming's school. The name derives from Wang's hometown (in today's region of Jiangsu province) which was situated in the economically prosperous area of the Yangtze delta. According to Dorothy Ko, "in membership and basic tenets, it epitomized the spirit of the emergent urban culture—a fluid status system, emphasis on the self, and celebration on the vitality of life."⁵⁰³ Many members of the Taizhou school were commoners such as agricultural laborers, salt makers, merchants or clerks. The development of this school profited from the

⁴⁹⁹ For more information on Wang Zhi's ideas and concepts, see Takehiko Okada (1970), "Wang Chi and the Rise of Existentialism."

⁵⁰⁰ Takehiko Okada (1970), p. 125.

⁵⁰¹ Brook (2010), pp. 163, 179ff; Pulleyblank (1961), p. 159.

⁵⁰² De Bary (1970c), p. 173.

⁵⁰³ Dorothy Ko (1994), *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 79.

social and economic changes (see chap. 6.1), which enabled evermore people to participate in cultural life. “In the Taizhou school itself personal relationships crossed traditional class lines, intellectual associations crossed political lines, and educational work crossed religious lines.” Here, Confucian thought merged with popular religious beliefs and thereby managed to lessen the gap between the upper-class elite and commoners—established by traditional Confucian thought. Nevertheless, initially Wang Gen established the Taizhou school “as a force for the moral regeneration of all humanity and not necessarily for greater participation of the common people in a new political process.”⁵⁰⁴ Due to his energy, Wang Gen’s school was able to disseminate vastly in sixteenth century China and constituted a rather left sided wing of Wang Yangming’s teachings. The peculiarity about this school was its diversified membership mentioned above: Commoners such as woodcutter, agricultural laborers, clerks and merchants the same as scholar-officials confessed themselves to Wang Gen’s ideas. Ping-ti Ho attested to Wang Gen and his son “carrying the intellectual torch of the masses [...] Never before and never afterward, in traditional China, were so many people willing to accept their fellow men for their intrinsic worth or did they approach more closely the true Confucian ideal that ‘in education there should be no class distinction.’”⁵⁰⁵

Important representatives of this school were its founder Wang Gen 王艮, further Wang Ji 王幾 (1498-1583, also called Wang Longxi 王龙溪), Luo Rufang 羅汝芳 (1515-1588), He Xinyin 何心隱 (1517-1579),⁵⁰⁶ Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖 (1550-1617), Guan Zhidao 管志道 (1536-1608), Yang Qiyuan 楊起元 (1547-1599), Zhou Rudeng 周汝登 (1547-1629), Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602) and Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1540-1620). The two latter scholars will be introduced more in detail in following as their philosophical thoughts as well as their efforts in history writing are significant.

⁵⁰⁴ De Bary (2013), pp. 864f.

⁵⁰⁵ Ho (1962), p. 199.

⁵⁰⁶ He Xinyin 何心隱 (1517-1579), original name Liang Ruyuan 梁汝元, from Yongfeng 永豐 in Jiangxi, scored highest in the examinations, but did not serve in the government. He became an active member of the Taizhou school and organized his clan according to its principles. In contrast to his confession to the Taizhou school and his acting out of this doctrine, in his writings he did not take part in current philosophical discussions but rather appears to have followed Song Confucianists’ ideas. *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 513ff.

Personalities Following in Wang Yangming's Footsteps:

Li Zhi and Jiao Hong

In this time of colossal changes in the history of ideas, one aspect of discussion was the question of individualism which in some cases resulted in the—socially and politically speaking—negative effect to strive for a life of a hermit. This emerging attitude was promoted by Buddhist and Daoist attitudes towards life. The discussion also concerned the relation between the individual and others. The problem of the individual is implicit in the Ming debate about the self which did not—automatically—involve changes in traditional social institutions or schemata. However, in the realm of this discussion it was said that truth was supposed to come through “action, discussion, and constant self-criticism.”⁵⁰⁷

The person most important in the discussion of individualism was the already mentioned Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602).⁵⁰⁸ WM. Theodore de Bary observed that Li Zhi “has been both condemned and acclaimed as the greatest heretic and iconoclast in China’s history. He is in any case one of the most brilliant and complex figures in Chinese thought and literature.”⁵⁰⁹ Li followed the main ideas of the Wang Yangming school; nevertheless, he developed his ideas further and, for example, advocated the acceptance of the worthiness of the literature of every age by negating the adhesion on the Confucian classical canon.⁵¹⁰ Albert Chan called him “a man of independent character and outstanding audacity, who had the courage to say openly what his contemporaries wished to say but dared not.”⁵¹¹

This correlates with Li Zhi’s attitude towards the upcoming “Unity of the Three Teachings” (see chap. 6.3.3), which he saw as “the heroic vocation pursued in a world of hopeless corruption and suffering—a strange combination of Confucian commitment

⁵⁰⁷ De Bary (1970c), pp. 146f, 150, 153, 155.

⁵⁰⁸ Li Zhi’s career did not follow a straight path. In the *Dictionary of Ming Biography (1368-1644)* it is described as “an uneventful and largely unrewarding official career of twenty-five years.” After ending his career, he devoted his life to his intellectual studies, until in 1588 he “shaved his head” and became a Buddhist monk, which did not hinder him to remain a “free-thinking, non-conformist” person. *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 807-817.

⁵⁰⁹ De Bary (1970c), p. 188.

⁵¹⁰ De Bary (1970c), pp. 193, 196.

⁵¹¹ Chan (1982), p. 323.

to life and Buddhist pessimism concerning the world.”⁵¹² This statement together with his withdrawal to a monastery bear witness that he steadily tried to overcome the antithesis of realism and idealism or “between his sanctioning of selfishness and his condemnation of the self-seeking moralists.” In the end, he did not manage to prevail over this contradiction and died a martyr death.⁵¹³

Although he did not find a solution for the problematic questions he raised, Li Zhi was a wide read scholar in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Due to his individualism, he was able to achieve intellectual independence up to a high level; he was not successful in creating a new order in state and society or even a new world, yet. Partly due to his contacts to Matteo Ricci,⁵¹⁴ whom he got to know in later years, he developed almost modern concepts of the world; but China was still tightly connected to traditional learning.⁵¹⁵ Zou Shan 鄒善,⁵¹⁶ when asked by Liu Yuanqing 劉元卿 (1544-1609), said about Li Zhi’s popularity: “Who does not want to be a sage [*sheng*] or be called virtuous [*hsien*], but it was always so inconvenient to become one. Now [according to Li Chih] nothing seems to obstruct the path to enlightenment [Buddhahood]—not even wine, women, wealth, and lack of self-control. This is quite a bargain, and who does not like a bargain?” (人莫不欲以聖賢名，行之則不易。今則求悟之道無所禁阻，酒色財氣並皆不禁。此則大有利事，夫誰不欲？)⁵¹⁷

⁵¹² De Bary (1970c), p. 211.

⁵¹³ De Bary (1970c), pp. 211ff.

⁵¹⁴ Matteo Ricci (1552-1610; Chinese name: Li Madou 利瑪竇) was one of the most important Jesuit missionaries coming to China. From 1582 until his death he acted as missionary and head of the Catholic mission in China, and was even allowed—by imperial decree—to reside in the capital. He is famous for his world map *Yudi shanhai quantu* 輿地山海全圖 (printed in 1584), in which he translated the place names into Chinese. Wolfgang Franke in the *Dictionary of Ming Biography* said: “All in all Ricci may be considered as the most outstanding cultural mediator between China and the West of all time.” *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1137-1144.

⁵¹⁵ De Bary (1970c), pp. 222f.

⁵¹⁶ Zou Shan 鄒善 (*hao* 號: Yingquan 穎泉) was Zou Shouyi’s 鄒守益 (1491-1562) son. He received his *jinshi* degree in the *bingchen* 丙辰 year of Jiajing 嘉靖 reign period (1556). For his biography, see *MRXA*, vol. 1, *juan* 16, *Jiangyou wangmen xue’an yi* 江右王門學案一, p. 335.

⁵¹⁷ Translated by Nelson I. Wu (1973), “Intellectual Movements Since the Teachings of Wang Yang-ming: Parallel but Nonconcurrent Developments,” *Philosophy East and West* 23.1/2, pp. 279f. Original from *Mingshi* 明史, vol. 77, *juan* 283, *liezhuan* 列傳 171, *Rulin er* 儒林二, Zou Shouyi 鄒守益, p. 7268ff. See Guo Jisheng 郭繼生 (2007), *Yishu shi yu yishu piping* 藝術史與藝術批評 (History and Criticism of the Arts), Taipei: Shulin chuban youxian gongsi 書林出版有限公司 (Bookman Books Ltd.), p. 186.

In regard to the question of the development of “Li Zhi’s individualism,” de Bary drew three main conclusions for the time of Wang Yangming, Wang Gen and Li Zhi. Firstly, he granted the time of Ming dynasty having developed a kind of modern individualistic thoughts attributable to the liberal and humanitarian movement of Wang Yangming’s school. Secondly, out of this movement, He Xinyin 何心隱 as a member of the Taizhou school created a positive individualism and established an egalitarian clan community to implement these structures and ideas. Due to a lack of support by scholar-officials, who did not achieve to gain independence from the ruling state, his project still failed. Thirdly, Li Zhi tried to develop this idea of individualism even further to a radical state. But he, too, failed because of the lack of supporters from the elite class and scholars.⁵¹⁸

Li Zhi’s fate stands symbolic for the ambivalent currents in Ming dynasty. As noted, Li among others, was a proponent of syncretic tendencies of Ming time. When he was accused of being a heretic, he even referred to Emperor Taizu 太祖 (r. 1368-1398; i.e. the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor), who had also supported the former mentioned “Unity of the Three Teachings.” Although such tendencies extended to the highest class of literati, Li Zhi had to die in prison and his works were forbidden.⁵¹⁹ In his *Xu Fenshu* 續焚書 (A Continuation of a Book to be Burned), Li Zhi declared:

余自幼讀《聖教》不知聖教，尊孔子不知孔夫子何自可尊，所謂矮子觀場，隨人說研，和聲而已。是余五十以前真一犬也，因前犬吠形，亦隨而吠之，若問以吠聲之故，正好啞然自笑也已。五十以後，大衰欲死，因得友朋勸誨，翻閱貝經，幸于生死之原窺見斑點，乃復研窮《學》、《庸》要旨，知其宗實，集為《道古》一錄。於是遂從治《易》者讀《易》三年，竭晝夜力，復有六十四卦《易因》錄刻行世。

嗚呼！余今日知吾夫子矣，不吠聲矣；向作矮子，至老遂為長人矣。雖余志氣可取，然師友之功安可誣耶！既自謂知聖，故亦欲與釋子輩共之，蓋推向者友朋之心以及釋子，使知其萬古一道，

⁵¹⁸ De Bary (1970c), pp. 223f.

⁵¹⁹ Ch’ien (1986), p. 27.

無二無別，真有如我太祖高皇帝所刊示者，已詳載于《三教品刻》中矣。

夫釋子既不可不知，況楊生定見專心致志以學夫子者耶！幸相與勉之！果有定見，則參前倚衡，皆見夫子；忠信篤敬，行乎蠻貊決矣，而又何患于楚乎？⁵²⁰

While I was reading the “Sages’ [texts]” since my childhood, I did not understand the sages. While respecting Confucius, I did not know Confucius and what is respectable about him. This is like a so-called dwarf looking at the stage, he follows men explaining and studying, and sings the same sound (or imitates) and that is all! Certainly, before I was fifty [years old], I was a real dog because before when dogs barked at images, I also followed and barked at them. If asked about the reason why I barked, I could just have kept silent and laugh at myself. After fifty I became very weak and wished to die; therefore, I got an advice from a friend and flipped through the palm leaf scriptures [i.e. Buddhist scriptures], and fortunately I realized the points concerning the origin of life and death. Then again, I studied exhaustingly the main ideas of the *Great Learning [Daxue]* and the *Doctrine of the Mean [Zhongyong]*, and I realized their principal aims and facts and gathered the *Daogu lu*.⁵²¹ Thereupon, I followed one who managed the *Yijing* and read it for three years. I did my utmost day and night, and again published the *Yinyin*,⁵²² which made the sixty-four hexagrams known.

Alas! Today I know my Confucius, and I do not bark [anymore]. Before I was regarded as a dwarf, but when I reached an old age I finally became a grown man. Although my ambition is desirable, how can I accuse the achievements of my friends and teachers to be slanderous! Since I call myself knowing the sages, hence, I also wish to share this with the group of Buddhist believers. Now, I push the hearts of my former friends as well as Buddhist believers, and let them know this one

⁵²⁰ *Xu fenshu* 續焚書, *juan 2*, *Shengjiao xiaoyin* 聖教小引, pp. 67f.

⁵²¹ I.e. the *Mingdeng daogu lu* 明燈道古錄 (The Bright Light of the Records About the Ancient Times) by Li Zhi.

⁵²² I.e. the *Jiuzheng yiyin* 九正易因 (Nine Corrections to the Essence of the *Book of Changes*) by Li Zhi.

eternal *Dao* which is unique and cannot be something else. This [i.e. my idea] is really like that which was published and shown by my high Emperor Taizu, and I already published it in detail in an edition of the *Qualities of the Three Teachings*.⁵²³

However, since the Buddhist believers have to understand it, how is the situation with Yang Dingjian⁵²⁴ who with a single-minded devotion studies Confucius? Let us strive to this happily together! If indeed we have [someone] like [Yang] Dingjian, then we jointly would rely on an authority as before, and everywhere we would see Confucius! If we are faithful and honest and sincerely respectful, our [*Dao*] will be successful [even] when going to Barbarian tribes. So what worry do we have in Chu?⁵²⁵

This passage very clearly illustrates Li Zhi's thoughts about the Three Teachings. The crucial part in this text is the part where he referred to Emperor Taizu who proclaimed a kind of unity between the Three Teachings, too. It is intriguing to backtrace Li Zhi's development towards the idea of a unity of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism described in this part and his relentless belief in the persuasive power of this attitude, which will also be successful in Barbarian tribes, as he said. This conception of the Unity of the Three Teachings also formed his interesting view on history and history writing which will be touched upon in chapter 11.6.

One of Li Zhi's contemporaries was Jiao Hong 焦宏 (1541-1620), *zi* 字: Ruo Hou 弱侯, from Nanjing, known as an educated and skilled man; albeit, it was only in 1589 at the age of fifty he was honored with the *jinshi* degree and became a Hanlin compiler. Jiao had passed the palace examination as *zhuangyuan* 狀元 (principal graduate), i.e.

⁵²³ I.e. the *Sanjiao pin* 三教品 (The Qualities of the Three Teachings), a compilation edited and compiled by Li Zhi.

⁵²⁴ Yang Dingjian 楊定見 (fl. 1614), *zi* 字: Feng Li 鳳裏, from Ming Lincheng 明麻城 (in today's region of Hubei). He wrote a preface to the *Zhongyi shuihu quanshu* 忠義水滸全書. See Lu Xun 魯迅 (Zhou Shuren 周樹人) (2015), *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe* 中國小說史略 (Brief History of the Chinese Novel), Shuoxue han 朔雪寒, n.p., *Di shiwu pian yuanming zhuanlai zhi jiangshi (xia)* 第十五篇元明傳來之講史 (下), note 12.

⁵²⁵ I.e. today's region of Hubei and Hunan.

with the highest grade, which bestowed great glory on him.⁵²⁶ Also Li Zhi respected him highly and said about him in his *Xu Fenshu*:

夫侯千古人也，世之願交侯者眾矣。其為文章欲以立言，則師弱侯；為制科以資進取，顯功名不世之業，則師弱侯。⁵²⁷

There are a great many in the world who like to associate with Jo-hou [Jiao Hong]. Those who are engaged in literature and desire to become established in words take Jo-hou as their teacher. Others who pursue the civil service examinations in order to advance and to gain glory with meritorious and ever-lasting accomplishments also take Jo-hou as their teacher [...]⁵²⁸

The close relationship and mutual respect of Li Zhi and Jiao Hong becomes apparent through these words; they shared similar values. The same as Li Zhi, Jiao Hong drifted away from Neo-Confucianism, in fact, he “came to Buddhism via Confucianism, not, however, as an alternative but as a further elaboration.” Jiao Hong was very fond of Buddhism and actively took part in Buddhist life, including compiling texts about Buddhism. In fact, he saw Buddhist writings as commentaries to the Confucian classics; commentaries to the classics from Han and Song dynasties were called into question and heavily criticized by Jiao Hong. Likewise, Jiao followed in the footsteps of Wang Gen 王艮 of the Taizhou school. To his opinion “no knowledge [was] possible without the awareness of self-identity, which cannot rely on instructions from outside.”⁵²⁹ As great scholars of their time Li Zhi as well as Jiao Hong eagerly engaged in the current discussions about history writing and, as a consequence, incorporated their “extravagant” and non-conformist thoughts in their philosophy of history writing. Their role in the public discourse in the field of historiography will be touched upon in chapter 11.6.

⁵²⁶ Ch’ien (1986), p. 46

⁵²⁷ *Xu fenshu, juan 2, Shou Jiao taishi zunweng houqu gong bazhi huadan xu* 壽焦太史尊翁後渠公八秩華誕序, p. 56.

⁵²⁸ Translated in Ch’ien (1986), p. 39.

⁵²⁹ Ch’ien (1986), pp. 42, 44; “Persons in Chinese History—Jiao Hong 焦竑,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Ming/personsjiaohong.html>, last accessed: June 2nd, 2017.

The Revival of Classical Learning

It was also Wang Yangming who fostered another phenomenon: Along with the emphasis on “concrete studies” (*shixue* 實學) and the classical tradition, Wang stimulated the revitalization of the Five Classics in order to supersede the concentrating on the Four Books (*sishu* 四書) of Neo-Confucianism. As a characteristic of the strengthening of Neo-Confucianism, from Song to Ming dynasties the Five Classics had increasingly fallen behind and the Four Books had been promoted. In Ming, the *Sishu daquan* 四書大全 (The Great Compendium of the Four Books) compiled in the Yongle 永樂 period (1402-1425) was the officially compiled edition, which served as the basis for the civil examination. At the same time, it was only necessary to know one of the Five Classics. In late Ming—as stated—the situation changed.⁵³⁰

Beginning with the *Sishu renwu kao* 四書人物考 (A Study of Persons in the Four Books) from 1557 written by Xue Yingqi 薛應旂 (1500-1573?)⁵³¹—formerly the director of the Bureau of Evaluations (*kaogong langzhong* 考功郎中) and a disciple of Wang Yangming—the Four Books were evermore questioned and scholars tried to concentrate on the true Confucian doctrines advocated in the Five Classics. Benjamin Elman refers to Miyasaki Ichisada who expressed that scholars advocating this attitude “had contact with the Jesuits and their circle of literati and took great interest in Western astronomy and mathematics. Matteo Ricci and the Jesuits did have strong ties to the fundamentalist position in Confucianism.” He contrasted the “original” Confucianism to the “materialism” of the *Daoxue*, the Neo-Confucianism, and tried to persuade other

⁵³⁰ Elman (1984), pp. 46f.

⁵³¹ Xue Yingqi 薛應旂 (1500-1573?), *zi* 字: Zhongchang 仲常, from Wujin 武進, Jiangsu, “was director of the Bureau of Evaluations (*kaogong langzhong* 考功郎中) in the secondary capital Nanjing 南京. Because he criticized the high official Yan Song 嚴嵩 he was demoted to assistant prefect (*tongpan* 通判) of Jianchang 建昌. Later on he was vice education intendant (*tixue fushi* 提學副使) in Zhejiang 浙江, but soon retired from office to dedicate himself to the study of history and of Neo-Confucianism, as a disciple of Wang Yangming 王陽明.” His works include the books *Sishu renwu kao* 四書人物考, *Jiazi huiji* 甲子會記, *Kaoting yuanyuan lu* 考亭淵源錄, *Xianzhanglu* 憲章錄 and *Fangshan wenlu* 方山文錄. See “Chinese Literature—Song-Yuan *zizhi tongjian* 宋元資治通鑒,” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/songyuanzizhitongjian.html>, last accessed: August 13th, 2016.

Chinese scholars of the integrity of the original Confucian doctrines.⁵³² Matteo Ricci articulated:

The doctrine most commonly held among the Literati at present seems to me to have been taken from the sect of idols, as promulgated about five centuries ago [that is, the Sung period] [...] This philosophy we endeavor to refute, not only from reason but also from the testimony of their own ancient philosophers to whom they are indebted for all the philosophy they take.⁵³³

In the course of this abandonment of the metaphysical contemplations of Neo-Confucianism, on the other side—according to Benjamin Elman—there was a turn towards an intellectual approach in the research of Confucianism. This “intellectualist turn” finally resulted in the emergence of the *kaozheng* 考證-method or *kaozheng*-Confucianism, which became popular in Qing dynasty (see chap. 13).⁵³⁴ In consequence, the Ming time currents of discarding the dominant Neo-Confucian thoughts, the revival of the original Confucian ideas and especially Wang Yangming’s practical approach paved the ground for far-reaching developments in later times. Therefore, these currents also heavily influenced history writing as a main reflection of appearing ideas.

6.3.2 Buddhism and Daoism

During the whole Ming dynasty, the relationship of the scholars and the government to Buddhism was always very ambivalent: Buddhism was put under strict regulations by the Hongwu Emperor, which prevailed through the whole time of Ming period. The undulated shifts in the relationship between state and Buddhism show the instability in this relationship. In a broader sense, as Timothy Brook suggested, “these [...] shifts provide an opportunity to explore the relationship between social institutions and public authority over the course of the Ming dynasty.”⁵³⁵

First of all, the attitude of the state towards Buddhism seems to have been very restrictive, although no emperor ever said to suppress Buddhism. At the beginning,

⁵³² Elman (1984), pp. 47f.

⁵³³ Ricci, Gallagher (1953), p. 95.

⁵³⁴ Elman (1984), p. 48.

⁵³⁵ Brook (2005), p. 139. For the concept of public authority, see also chapter 6.1.1, especially, p. 145, FN 406 of the present study.

Hongwu even sponsored the reconstruction of destroyed monasteries and temples. After 1380, this noble attitude changed and Buddhism was considered a threat to the government. Even more, a bureaucratic structure was established to oversee the realm of Buddhist activities and Buddhist monks (e.g. the establishment of registers and the control of property). “Buddhism was being shaped more and more into a creature of the state.”⁵³⁶ The Yongle Emperor most widely reversed these restrictions and it was again allowed to found new monasteries. No further suppression was executed towards Buddhism. Yongle was rather concerned with revenue and public labor than with ideology or security. Hence, he set fixed quota for monasteries in prefectures, subprefectures etc.⁵³⁷

Imperial patronage, as it seems, mostly served the purpose of political intentions. In the era of mid Ming, it was rather the officials who complained about the Buddhist monks; however, those were not complaints about ideological misconducts but rather about administrative disputes because of the loosening of Buddhist institutional control (e.g. itinerancy, non-registration, “alleged licentiousness” etc.). Furthermore, the sale of ordination certificates⁵³⁸ had been forbidden by the Hongwu Emperor; now the money raised by these sales was used to compensate crop failure and to invest in new grain in 1451, for example, and developed into an accepted mean for raising emergency funds. Already in the first half of the sixteenth century, “clerical status was cut free from state certification [...] [and] the state regulation of Buddhism had become a fiction.”⁵³⁹

Complaints appearing about “immoral monks” increasingly vanished from the public sphere, so did the restrictions towards monks. Nevertheless, because there was a fear of sectarian organizing, in 1573 a ban was issued forbidding mass ordinations, which is a sign of a shift from fiscal concerns towards concerns about security of the state. Yet, this ban was not an attempt to regain supervision over Buddhist activity; for that the implementation was just not consequent enough. Consequently, monasteries and Buddhist activities stayed independent from the state. “The formal relationship of

⁵³⁶ Brook (2005), pp. 140-144.

⁵³⁷ Brook (2005), pp. 145, 147f.

⁵³⁸ This sale of ordination certificates did not result in an increasing number of incompetent monks; it rather offered an opportunity to buy a remission of paying taxes. Only few of the persons having bought an ordination certificate actually became monks. See Brook (2005), p. 151.

⁵³⁹ Brook (2005), pp. 150ff.

the state to Buddhism in the late Ming—at least as expressed in the abandonment of quotas, the decay of certification, and the decline of registries—was otherwise one of relative indifference.”⁵⁴⁰ The Chenghua Emperor (1465-1487) invited Lamaist monks from Tibet and Mongolia; in the reign period of Zhengde (1506-1521), the many Tibetan abbots received the title of *guoshi* 國師 (imperial teacher) and the emperor himself studied Buddhist texts in their original language. Especially, during the Wanli period (1572-1619) Buddhism was held in high esteem: Court ladies read Buddhist texts and took up the tasks of Buddhist monks during court ceremonies; eunuchs sponsored the building of Buddhist temples. In general, “the intellectual class as a whole was strongly attracted toward Buddhism, which put forward a coherent system of philosophy [...]”⁵⁴¹

Regarding the content of Buddhist teachings, one can observe a shift to an orientation to the mortal world which correlates to similar developments in the realm of the morality books (see chap. 6.3.4) and the “Unity of the Three Teachings” (see chap. 6.3.3) in general. Lay Buddhism increased and—not least because of the monk Yunqi Zhuhong 雲棲祿宏 (courtesy name Fohui 佛慧 and style name Lianchi 蓮池)—lay Buddhists became equivalent to Buddhist monks. Also many of the high-class literati-gentry⁵⁴² affiliated with lay Buddhist organizations e.g. in order to “release life” (*fangsheng* 放生).⁵⁴³

Another underappreciated aspect of Ming thought is the influence of Daoism which connects with the “Unity of the Three Teachings.” Liu Cunyan stated in his article that “in all of Chinese history Taoism was never so powerful or more powerful or more pervasive among all social strata than during [Ming dynasty].”⁵⁴⁴ Daoist priests were even appointed to ministerial posts and their political power had a wide range. This was also due to the affiliation some emperors like Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (r. 1465-1487;

⁵⁴⁰ Brook (2005), pp. 152ff.

⁵⁴¹ Chan (1982), pp. 112f.

⁵⁴² Peng Shaosheng 彭紹升 (1740-1796) listed twenty disciples of Zhuhong; nine among them received the *jinshi* degree and two became so prominent that their biographies were integrated in the Ming dynastic history. Ch’ien (1986), p. 24.

⁵⁴³ Ch’ien (1986), pp. 23f.

⁵⁴⁴ Liu Cunyan (1970), “Taoist Self-Cultivation in Ming Thought,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 291.

i.e. the Chenghua 成化 Emperor) and Emperor Shizong 世宗 (r. 1522-1566; i.e. the Jiajing 嘉靖 Emperor) had with Daoism. Also Wang Yangming integrated some Daoist thoughts in his teachings (the same as Buddhist concepts) because—as he remarked and recognized for himself later—there was actually no difference between Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism. The only contrast could be found—according to Wang Yangming—in the fact that Buddhists and Daoists tried to escape life and should therefore be regarded as selfish.⁵⁴⁵ How Wang Yangming included Daoist thoughts in his teachings and how they influenced him, is shown in many of his recorded dialogues with his followers. When asked by his disciple Lu Cheng 陸澄⁵⁴⁶ “about ‘the place where the vital spirit, the vital *ch’i*, and the vital sperm are stored’ and about ‘the sperm of the true *yin* and the *ch’i* of the true *yang*’” (*zhen yin zhi jing, zhen yang zhi qi* 真陰之精，真陽之氣), Wang answered:⁵⁴⁷

夫良知一也，以其妙用而言謂之神，以其流行而言謂之氣，以其凝聚而呈呈之精，安可形象方所求哉？真陰之精，即真陽之氣之母，真陽之氣，即真陰之精之父：陰根陽，陽根陰，亦非有二也：苟吾良知之說明，即凡若此類，皆可以不言而喻；不然，則如來書所雲三關、七返、九還之屬，尚有無窮可疑者也。⁵⁴⁸

Now, innate knowledge [i.e. *liangzhi*] is one. In terms of its wonderful functioning, it is spirit; in terms of its universal operation, it is force; and in terms of its condensation and concentration, it is essence. How can it be understood in terms of shapes and locations? The essence of true *yin* is the mother of the force of true *yang*, and the force of true *yang* is the father of the essence of true *yin*. *Yin* is the root of *yang* and *yang* is the root of *yin*. They are not two different things. If my theory of innate knowledge is clearly understood, then all such matters can be understood without any explanation. Otherwise there will be an infinite number of things in doubt, such as [the Taoist formulas to prolong life] called the

⁵⁴⁵ Liu Cunyan (1970), pp. 291, 308, 318.

⁵⁴⁶ Lu Cheng 陸澄, *zi* 字: Yuanjing 原靜, received his *jinshi* degree in the dingchou 丁丑 year of the Zhengde 正德 reign period (i.e. 1517). His Biography is to be found in the *MRXA*, vol. 1, p. 296.

⁵⁴⁷ Liu Cunyan (1970), pp. 307f.

⁵⁴⁸ *Chuanxi lu, juan zhong* 中, *Da Lu Yuanjing shu* 答陸原靜書 (Letter as Reply to Lu Yuanjing), sec. 154.

“three gates,” the “seven returns,” and the “nine returns,”⁵⁴⁹ mentioned in your letter.⁵⁵⁰

In summary, it becomes clear that Daoism had some influence on the world of thought in Ming dynasty. This is also represented by the popular belief in Daoist immortals. A very precise example is the admiration of the Daoist master Zhang Sanfeng 张三丰 who is believed to have lived at the beginning of Ming, died and then came back to life—historical proved facts are missing. Especially in Hongwu and Yongle periods he became famous and honored as Daoist immortal, who had contributed to the founding of the dynasty.⁵⁵¹ Nevertheless, the most important factor concerning Daoism in Ming dynasty is Wang Yangming’s attention to certain aspects and the incorporation in his thoughts and teachings.

6.3.3 The Unity of the Three Teachings—Syncretism in Ming

This incorporation was a characteristic of the syncretism in Ming dynasty. In general, popular religious elements were present during the whole time of Ming era. Superstitious beliefs, e.g. the interpretation of omens, fortunetelling and geomancy, were common throughout China; Matteo Ricci once said: “No superstition is so common in the entire kingdom as that which pertains to the observance of certain days and hours as being good or bad, lucky or unlucky in which to act or to refrain from acting; because the result of everything they do is supposed to depend upon a measurement of time.”⁵⁵²

But there was more: According to Edward Ch’ien “syncretism in late Ming is unique in both strength and significance, especially in terms of its implications for the constitution of Confucianism as a philosophy.” Daoist elements as well as Buddhist elements, which infiltrated Neo-Confucianist orthodoxy, are crucial for the understanding of the different schools of thoughts in that time—e.g. Wang Yangming,

⁵⁴⁹ The Chinese expression “*sanguan* 三關” describes mouth, hands, and feet which are regarded as the gates of heaven, man and earth. “*Qifan* 七返” points at the return of the soul after seven periods; and “*jiuhuan* 九還” points at the return of the soul after a complete cycle. Chan Wing-Tsit, p. 133, FN 5.

⁵⁵⁰ Chan Wing-Tsit (1963), part II, “Letter in Reply to Lu Yüan-ching,” sec. 154, p. 133.

⁵⁵¹ Anna Seidel (1970), “A Taoist Immortal of the Ming Dynasty: Chang San-feng,” in William Theodore de Bary (ed.), *Self and Society in Ming Thought*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 484.

⁵⁵² Ricci, Gallagher (1953), pp. 82f.

the schools of Zhejiang, Taizhou and Jiangxi. Persons like Guan Zhidao 管志道 (1536-1608), Li Zhi (1527-1602), Yang Qiyuan 楊起元 (1547-1599), Zhou Rudeng 周汝登 (1547-1629) and Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1540-1620) were called “wild Chanists” (*kuangchan* 狂禪) because they employed Buddhist and Daoist thoughts when interpreting the Confucian classics. Likewise, the Taizhou school—introduced before—was prominent in applying Buddhist and Daoist thoughts. The peculiar feature of Ming time syncretism was that it—unless in former syncretistic currents where only Buddhist and Daoist matters were concerned—now had an effect on the Confucian philosophy.⁵⁵³

This feature originated in the development of a strengthening of the Confucian official system which came along with an appearing tension between moral and culture, between activity and standstill, which again derived from questions about the nature of mankind—especially questions about the world being static or dynamic, metaphysic or physic, about abstract ideal or active power, moral standards or trans-moral perfection. This mysticism, which is lived out in Ming dynasty, did not have a direct connection to *Chan* 禪 Buddhism, but rather showed a kind of its own. It is the former mentioned School of Mind (*xinxue* 心學) picked up by Wang Yangming. This life-affirming, positive attitude stands in contrast to *Chan*-Buddhism and Daoism; still, Wang Yangming’s philosophy did narrow the distance between *xinxue* and Buddhism and Daoism. It included the sagehood which can be equaled to the Buddhahood in Buddhism and—like in Daoism—approved the affective and physical side of the human nature.⁵⁵⁴

In the end this led to attitudes like Jiao Hong’s thoughts who was followed by Lin Zhao’en 林兆恩 (1517-1598). Lin was another characteristic representative of syncretism in Ming, as he—the same as Jiao Hong—opposed the idea of a subdividing syncretism which saw Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism as separate sections but advocated, according to Ch’ien, that “the Way or Tao as the ultimate truth is embodied in all three teachings as the common concern for sagely mind.”⁵⁵⁵ Lin therefore wished “[...] to unite the Confucians, Buddhists, and Taoists and combine and unite them with

⁵⁵³ Ch’ien (1986), p. 5.

⁵⁵⁴ De Bary (1970b), pp. 12f, 20, 22.

⁵⁵⁵ Ch’ien (1986), pp. 14f.

the Confucianism of Confucius.”⁵⁵⁶ Further he stated: “The teachings of Confucius, Lao Tzu, and Shākyamuni all have the beginning, middle, and end.”⁵⁵⁷ With his persuasion to “combine [the three teachings] into one” (*sanjiao heyi* 三教合一) Lin Zhao’en developed into the leading figure of Ming time syncretism—he was called “Master of the Three Teachings” (*sanjiao xiansheng* 三教先生)—, founded a religious organization and—together with his disciples—built “Shrines of the Three Teachings” (*sanjiao ci* 三教祠) along their ways through the country.⁵⁵⁸

According to Edward Ch’ien the unique power of Ming syncretism emanated from the practice of some Ming emperors, e.g. the Hongwu Emperor (r. 1368-1398, Emperor Taizu), who pronounced the oneness of the Three Teachings. “Emperor T’aitu’s syncretic pronouncements and recruitment practice epitomized a ‘Ming dynastic policy’ which was a ‘major condition’ that ‘precipitated’ the growth of syncretism in the Ming.” Later Li Zhi, as it was pointed out, referred to Emperor Taizu, and yet was imprisoned. Some of the syncretic tendencies derived from a dissatisfaction with the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy which, among other things, can be seen in the case of Wang Yangming. Wang was one of the initiators and—with his attitude of the *liangzhi*—contributed to the creation of an “intellectually fluid situation” in Ming dynasty, which then enabled syncretism to spread.⁵⁵⁹

6.3.4 Morality Books

The question of the transformation of moral values in society or rather the reception of the former established moral values is crucial in respect to the philosophical and historiographical development. Albert Chan, for example, speaks of a decay of moral values: In the second half of Ming dynasty the prosperity of commerce and industry urged people to live an extravagant lifestyle, which also influenced moral behavior. Scholars without an official post became Buddhist monks and made friends with high

⁵⁵⁶ Judith A. Berling (1980), *The Syncretic Religion of Lin Chao-en*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 214; from *Xin benxu pian* 心本虛篇 (On the Mind’s Original Voidness) by Lin Zhao’en, II: 34b-35a.

⁵⁵⁷ Berling (1980), p. 216; from [*Lin Zhao’en*] *Xu kao* [林兆恩]續考, XIV: 4.1a-1b. For more information on Lin Zhao’en and his syncretistic thoughts, see Judith A. Berling (1980), *The Syncretic Religion of Lin Chao-en*.

⁵⁵⁸ Ch’ien (1986), p. 22.

⁵⁵⁹ Ch’ien (1986), pp. 26ff.

officials and members of the high society, festivities with dubious characters were celebrated, and even prostitutes and actors socialized with normal people. Gambling, theft and robbery were the results of this loosed life. The problem in stemming these damnabilities was that the wealthy and influential families were the source of the evil.⁵⁶⁰

Apart from pure philosophy, the reply to these processes of a changing attitude towards the former moral framework and to these thoughts about moral and moral decay was the emergence of the so-called “morality books” (*shanshu* 善書). Although many of them had already been compiled in Song dynasty, they gained momentum and became highly prominent in Ming dynasty. The increasing amount of such books was especially seen among common people, but also among all other classes and people of different economic position or religious affiliation—even disciples of the Neo-Confucian Cheng-Zhu school. These books were devoted to morally balancing actions to a positive reward or a negative punishment. To illustrate the good and bad deeds, they were reverted to popular tales and visualizations. One well-known tale is the Daoist *Taishang ganying pian* 太上感應篇 (Treatise of the Most Exalted One on Moral Retribution)⁵⁶¹ first appearing in a compilation by Li Shi 李石 (1108-1181, *zi* 字: Zhiji 知幾) of Song dynasty and again promoted and most popular in Ming dynasty. The fame of the morality books interrelates with a new attitude towards reward and punishment; that is to say that now the belief of the dependence on the favor of a god vanished and was replaced by the spirit that everyone was responsible for his own fate by doing good things or bad things. This is shown, e.g., in the morality book *Gongguoge* 功過格 (Ledgers of Merit and Demerit) where a system is introduced in which the merits and demerits of a person are accounted to an amount of “credit points.” Besides, this work includes the Daoist notion of accumulating merits by good works and as well Confucian moral principles.⁵⁶² For example, in the *Ledgers of Merit and*

⁵⁶⁰ Chan (1982), pp. 314f.

⁵⁶¹ The *Taishang ganying pian* 太上感應篇, the “Treatise of the Most Exalted one on Moral Retribution” or “[Lao Zi’s] Treatise on the Response of the Dao,” is a Daoist book without concentrating on former concepts like self-cultivation or meditative practices but on the actual world and man’s performances in it. Also Buddhist influences are detectable in this treatise. For further information, see William Theodore de Bary (2013), *Sources of Chinese Tradition: Volume 1: From Earliest Times to 1600*, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 904ff.

⁵⁶² Sakai (1970), pp. 341f.

Demerit one hundred copper cash are specified to be one credit point, as one meritorious deed. Further it points out:

If the same good deed is performed by a poor person, the number of merits increases in proportion to the degree of poverty. In the case of a really poor man, even if he incurs an expense of no more than five or ten coppers, it is counted as equal to one hundred coppers spent by the rich.⁵⁶³

Another effect of these morality books was that they developed and specialized according to the increasing specialization in regard to labor and status among the common people. Therefore, the topics of *shanshu* were expanded to cover also monetary issues and issues related to economy. Beginning in Song time, the status and the function of common people were taken into account in regard to questions of moral behavior. The connection between morality books and popular religions, which often represented a topic of these books, contributed to this loosening of social and hierarchical structures because of the “democratization” taking place in Buddhism, for example. In Buddhist works like the *Longshu jingtu wen* 龍舒淨土文 (The Preachings of *Longshu* Concerning the Pure Land)⁵⁶⁴ from 1160 some specialized positions of common people are mentioned: subordinate office helpers, physicians, monks, women, rich men, household slaves, farmers, peasants, dealers, merchants, craftsmen, fishermen, wine sellers, even prostitutes and criminals etc. This shows that in Ming time the contentual stress and aim of morality books lay on men’s behavior in this mortal world, not—as it used to be in Song dynasty—in the “religious salvation in another world” anymore. In other words, conditions and circumstances of living and their limits of performing meritorious deeds (e.g. due to a lack of money) were considered. Hence, works like the *Bu feiqian gongde li* 不費錢功德例 (Meritorious Deeds at No Cost), a

⁵⁶³ Sakai (1970), p. 350; from *Huizuan gongguo ge* 匯纂功過格 (Corpus of the Ledgers and Merit and Demerit) (Daoguang edition), 8/25a-26b.

⁵⁶⁴ For example, the sixth fascicle of the *Longshu jingtu wen* includes a variety of advices for, e.g., literati, officials, physicians, monks, but also for servants, farmers, merchants, artisans, prostitutes, criminals, ill people, slanderers and boys and girls. For more information on this interesting book, see, for example, Trevor Davis (2012), “Pure Land and the Social Order in Twelfth-Century China: An Investigation of ‘Longshu’s Treatise on Pure Land,’” Student Work, Paper 1.

Ming time compilation from the seventeenth century, were compiled to grant a chance to everybody to do good things without regard to their wealth.⁵⁶⁵ In the preface it says:

People seek after the joys of the other world and neglect life in this world. They think it meritorious to heap praises on the Buddha, to spend money for Buddhist rituals, or to go to great expense for Taoist services. They never think it is a waste of money to spend it on such religious observances.⁵⁶⁶

The *Meritorious Deeds at No Costs* is even divided into sections concerning the different social classes and, thus, provides instructions for good deeds according people's social status. There are twelve chapters like "Local gentry" (*xiangshen* 鄉紳), "Candidates for Officialdom" (*shiren* 士人), "Peasants" (*nongjia* 農家), "Craftsmen" (*baigong* 百工), "Merchants and Dealers" (*shanggu* 商賈), "Physicians" (*yijia* 醫家), "Women" (*funü* 婦女) or "Monks" (*sengdao* 僧道) and so forth. Tadao Sakai provides an overview of the specific tasks assigned to the categories of people in his article "Confucianism and Popular Educational Works." Conspicuously, the scholars are attributed to fulfil traditional Confucian values, while peasants should not, for example, "take their landlord's seed crops for [their] own benefit," craftsmen should not "reveal and spread abroad the secrets of your master's home," and merchants should "be fair in their dealings." In the last chapter commandments for "People in General" are summarized, e.g. "Do not speak deceitful words," "Do not let your children mistreat household slaves" or "Lay wooden boards where the road is broken off."⁵⁶⁷

Famous people like Yuan Huang 袁黃 confidently followed this system of compensating bad deeds by credit points with good deeds—originally this system derived from a Daoist-Buddhist context. Therefore, he drew on the formerly described syncretism and the "Unity of the Three Teachings." Out of these influences, Yuan Huang developed his own philosophy and life style which included self-discipline and a resolute moral standard. One peculiarity was his pursuit to connect his ideas with the practical world, for example, with the ambition of people to pass the imperial examinations to acquire an official position. Hence, his works—the same as morality

⁵⁶⁵ Sakai (1970), pp. 345ff.

⁵⁶⁶ Sakai (1970), p. 349; from *Bufeiqian gongde li* 不費錢功德例 (Edo edition), p. 49a.

⁵⁶⁷ For an overview, see Sakai (1970), pp. 351-361.

books in general—“were concerned with the daily lives of the common people,” and thus reflected upon the social changes appearing in Ming dynasty (see chap. 6.1).⁵⁶⁸ Yuan Huang commented on this in this *Liming pian* 立命篇 (Establishing One’s Own Destiny, 1607):

The virtue of modesty (*qianxu* 謙虛) is essential for poor scholars and those seeking to enter the civil service without much means. Poor scholars cannot hope to achieve merit [and thus succeed in the examinations] through works that involve the expenditure of money, but the essential thing in the achieving of merit is the attitude of mind. Modestly, which is an attitude of mind, does not require any expense.⁵⁶⁹

Again Wang Yangming’s thoughts and ideas become obvious through Yuan Huang’s words. Merit did not anymore depend on materialistic dispenses. In some of these works even specific behavior for good deeds was listed as examples. In the *Huizuan gongguo ge* 彙纂功過格 (A Synthetic Compilation of Ledgers of Merit and Demerit), for example, we find the following suggestions: “Aid your relatives, teachers, or friends, if they are in need of clothing, food or money [...],” “Save good people from enmities and calamities,” “Help the poor, widowers, widows, and orphans of your own locality.” Besides, there were calls to follow the spirit of charity and benevolence, also taxes should be paid, schools and temples be helped and morality books should be printed.⁵⁷⁰ From all these citations, the changes in thinking and attitude in Ming dynasty become clear: There was a shift away from materialistic and monetary value toward a prevailing stress on spiritual value.⁵⁷¹ Tadao Sakai concludes the following concerning the morality books:

First, there is the belief that it should be possible for all men to lead a good life and achieve fulfillment regardless of social status. In other words, one need not be a member of the Confucian elite to be a good man, nor need one be well to die. Second, there is a definite method which men may follow in order to achieve true success in this life.

⁵⁶⁸ Sakai (1970), pp. 343ff.

⁵⁶⁹ Sakai (1970), p. 348; from *Liming pian* 立命篇 (Wanli edition), 23a; *Yinshi lu* 陰志錄 (Edo edition), 9b *Qianxu lizhong*.

⁵⁷⁰ Sakai (1970), pp. 348ff.

⁵⁷¹ Sakai (1970), p. 350.

Rewards may be expected from the practice of this method, some of them material, and others spiritual [...] Fifth, although there is a strong emphasis on this-worldly morality, religion and retribution in the afterlife are seen as reinforcing the moral order. Religious piety is enjoined, and the prevalent belief in the essential harmony of the Three Teachings is clearly reflected.⁵⁷²

The peculiarity of this appearance of morality books lies in its connection to the ongoing public dialogue about what is right and wrong (*gonglun* 公論), which was the main feature of evolving processes in the historiography of Ming dynasty—the main topic of this study. Morality books offered concrete examples for good and bad behavior and “a definite method which men may follow in order to achieve true success in this life.” As it will be demonstrated in the next part, the *gonglun* as a public discussion about the overall definition of what is good and what is bad and provided “a definite measure” to this question which corresponds to the aim of morality books. In fact, it appears as if morality books dealt with and corresponded to the public dialogue in the realm of the daily life of common people. This distinctiveness of the *gonglun* in the scholarly realm will be investigated in the next part.

⁵⁷² Sakai (1970), pp. 361f.

PART IV: THE CONTROVERSY OF THE MING DYNASTY AND THE ROLE OF THE “PUBLIC OPINION”

In the introduction to his *Self and Society in Ming Thought* William Theodore de Bary proclaims that, in contrary to many dynasties before, generally speaking the Ming dynasty has often been labelled as a time of “general decline and aimless drifting,” as a depression between Song and Qing dynasties. Some scholars even claim that the emphasis of Wang Yangming 王阳明 was due to the lack of greater personalities. According to the famous historian Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1823-1929), one of the disadvantages of Ming dynasty lay in the corruption by *Chan*-Buddhism; the stereotyped and fixed examination system is supposed to be another reason. Yet, according to de Bary, the criticism against the official examination system obscures the fact of the establishment of many private academies. Therefore, the author even speaks of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as being of the most creative and stimulating ones. Although many difficulties occurred, creative tensions could be sensed. Therefore, Ming dynasty is not at all shaped by “dumb conformity,” but rather stands for lively controversy and intellectual diversity.⁵⁷³ Furthermore, de Bary concludes that the “seeming introversion of Ming thought” is not to be mistaken for an escape of practical problems, but “this process of introspection and re-examination emerged not only the most deeply committed and personally effective of Confucian activists, Wang Yangming, but also at the end of the dynasty the most searching critique of political and social institutions China had ever known.”⁵⁷⁴ Because of the tremendous developments, which occurred during the path of Ming dynasty, de Bary concludes “that what we find in the sixteenth century is a near-revolution in thought, rather than simply a passing mood of eclecticism.”⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷³ De Bary (1970b), pp. 1ff.

⁵⁷⁴ De Bary (1970b), p. 6.

⁵⁷⁵ De Bary (1970b), p. 23.

7. Tensions during Ming Dynasty

The academic and philosophical realm of the Ming dynasty is characterized by tensions between many contradicting developments. At the beginning, the Ming dynasty is characterized by a fixation on Neo-Confucianism. In this regard, Ming China can be considered as the second half of a development starting in Song dynasty. It is the development of a revival of Confucianism which included a strengthening of the civil bureaucracy and the extension of trade and industry and urbanization; this also included the dissemination of printing and, thus, of education. This increased social mobility and possibilities to take part in the official examinations. Nevertheless, this did not result in a democratization of learning, so to say the opening of learning for all classes of society, but rather must be seen as a development inside the class of scholars.⁵⁷⁶

These developments of increased learning, Zhu Xi's "investigation of things," and the specialization of learning, which led to a never-ending flow of newly appearing books and knowledge, resulted in the emergence of Wang Yangming's contempt of book-learning. Wang Yangming represents a new kind of active Confucianist who publicly opposed the Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism and preferred active service to words. He put in motion syncretic currents and brought forward humanitarianism and the junction between upper and lower classes. The "Unity of the Three Teachings" did not at all resemble a popular-religious phenomenon, but was an expression of the union of different powers in society under the leadership of the elite classes. This trend was expressed in painting and literacy, as well as especially in the romantic drama literature and the already mentioned "morality books." (see chap. 6.3.4) Hence, it is shown that individualism in Ming was expressed in a liberal and optimistic view on the self. All of these factors are indications for a "near-revolution in thought" as de Bary puts it. This new view on the self stressed the real nature of man, that means his physical life and his concrete needs; it was a new pragmatism concerned with practical desires.⁵⁷⁷ Referring to de Bary, Wang's approach arose "from a heightened awareness of the burdens of culture which was common in the Ming" and resulted in a "deeper preoccupation with

⁵⁷⁶ De Bary (1970b), p. 8.

⁵⁷⁷ De Bary (1970b), pp. 11f, 22f.

the true nature of the self to which both political and cultural pressures drove the Ming Thinkers.”⁵⁷⁸

In other words, the tensions which existed in Confucian thought between morality and culture, action and quiescence, political involvement or disengagement all focused on the underlying problem of man’s nature: was it static or dynamic, metaphysical or physical, an abstract ideal or an active force, a moral norm or a trans-moral perfection? How was the individual to understand that nature in relation to his actual self and his society?⁵⁷⁹

In sum, the tensions in Ming dynasty constituted themselves in three realms: (1) The predomination of Zhu Xi’s and the Cheng brothers’ Confucianism now faced the pragmatism of Wang Yangming’s, Wang Gen’s and Li Zhi’s approach in the field of philosophy. Furthermore, (2) the persistent and fixed system of civil examinations encountered the emergence of many private academies with private learning in the academic sector. Moreover, (3) in general, the autocratic and despotic rule of Ming government was confronted with an ever increasing and lively atmosphere in the realm of the intelligentsia; the intellectual atmosphere was vivid and generated ideas and thoughts of its own on how to see the world, philosophy and learning on a large scale and, e.g., history writing in great detail. The reply to these tensions was a public discussion (*gonglun* 公論) about values in many realms of life, so to speak about what is right and wrong. This *gonglun* was the initial point for de Bary’s so-called “near-revolution in thought,” or at least for tremendous changes in the history of ideas of Ming dynasty.

⁵⁷⁸ De Bary (1970b), pp. 11f.

⁵⁷⁹ De Bary (1970b), p. 12.

8. The *Gonglun* Discourse—A Near-Revolution in Thought?

The questions raised by Theodore de Bary in the last citation (see page before) are the point where the so-called *gonglun* debate starts. *Gonglun* 公論 can be translated as “public opinion” or “public discourse about what is right and wrong” (*gongzheng de lunshu* 公正的論述); “Diskurs, der die allgemeine Norm (was als richtig und wahr, falsch und unwahr gilt) hochhält,”⁵⁸⁰ (discourse which holds up the general norm (what is considered as right and true, and as wrong and untrue))—that is how Prof. Mittag denotes this very striking feature in the academic world of Ming dynasty. The *gonglun* can be seen as a contrast or as a mutual complement to the *gongdao* 公道, the right way (*gongzheng de daoli* 公正的道理). This discourse was reflected in the history and historiography of late Ming period, developed into a leitmotif of the public dialogue about the same and complied with the general standard of what is right or wrong.⁵⁸¹

Although this research focusses on the *gonglun*-debate in the realm of historiography, it is, nevertheless, important to encompass the whole scope of the debate which—according to some researchers—penetrated different realms of the academic and political world. Therefore, the entanglement of the *gonglun* in philosophy and politics will briefly be depicted by mainly following Ren Feng’s 任鋒 theories which he presented in his paper “Gonglun guannian yu zhengzhi shijie” 公论观念与政治世界 (The Conceptions of the *Gonglun* and the Political World).

The Gonglun, the Politics and Philosophy

As a phenomenon “the public dialogue” appeared during different periods of Chinese history, especially in Song dynasty. Yet, the Ming time *gonglun* debate was very

⁵⁸⁰ Achim Mittag (2002), “Was heißt und zu welchem Ende betrieb man historische Kritik in China?,” *Oriens Extremus* 43.1/2, p. 24. Prof. Mittag says about his suggested translation of *gonglun* that he took into account the contemporary language usage and leaned on a Neo-Confucian world chronicle probably by Wang Shizhen in which *gonglun* is described as providing “a standard measure” (*yi ding zhi heng* 一定之衡) in order to appreciate what is good and to reject what is evil (*shan qi shan, e qi e* 善其善, 惡其惡) and in order to name what is right and true as right and true and what is wrong as wrong (*shi shi, fei fei* 是是, 非非). See Mittag (2002), p. 24, FN 99.

⁵⁸¹ Achim Mittag (2005), “What Makes a Good Historian: Zhang Xuecheng’s Postulate of ‘Moral Integrity’ (*Shi de* 史德) Revisited,” in Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, Achim Mittag und Jörn Rüsen (eds.), *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism, and Ideology. Chinese Historiography and Historical Culture from a New Comparative Perspective*, Leiden: Brill (Leiden Series in Comparative Historiography, 1), p. 366.

different from, e.g., the one appearing in Song dynasty. The ambition of Ming literati to win the emperor's favor (*de qun xingdao* 得君行道) encountered a lot of pressure, as it was shown before; therefore—according to Ren Feng—they changed their elite attitude into also “looking downwards” and becoming aware of the common people (*jue min xingdao* 覺民行道). The Confucian practice of the popular thoughts of society became the realm which contributed most to Ming culture (see chap. 6.3). Regarding the historical development of the *gonglun*-conception, Ren Feng firstly believes that the *gonglun*-discourse, which was opened by Song-Confucianists, showed a generative inertia of intrinsic thoughts. In contrast, although the political world of Ming literati did not arouse a reform movement as great as in Song time, it thus continued to grow and displayed new aspects. Secondly, the philosophy of mind (*xinxue* 心學) which regarded Wang Yangming's discourse movement as the center of administration emerged and developed strongly. The appearance of the Neo-Confucian movement taken as the *gonglun*-phenomenon became visible completely. With the *gonglun*-conception a correlation of ideas deserving attention emerged. These two aspects interacted and mutually stimulated each other; one might even say they mutually induced labor for the reflection of the *gonglun*-conception in later periods and modern times. Concerning the general ideal of this time, yet from the whole politics and society the embodiment of the *gonglun*-discourse can be understood. In consequence, it is important for a government to pay attention to the “public opinion.”⁵⁸²

Many scholars expressed their attitude towards this conception; Huang Jin 黄潛 (1277-1357),⁵⁸³ for example, from Yuan dynasty once articulated: “The fair and right way is the business of the government, but the public discourse [about what is right] is the business of the intelligentsia” (*gongdao zai zhengfu, er gonglun zai shijunzi* “公道

⁵⁸² Ren Feng (2012), p. 208.

⁵⁸³ Huang Jin 黄潛 (1277-1357), *zi* 字: Jinqing 晉卿, from today's region of Yiniao 義鳥, Zhejiang, was appointed a minor official already in his early years; from then on he became a famous official in literary circles. Among other things, he composed a treatise about his ancestors, *Mashi shipu* 馬氏世譜 (Generation Manual About the Ma Clan). Xiao Qiqing 蕭啟慶 (2012), *Jiuzhou sihai fengya tong: Yuandai duo zu shiren juan de xingcheng yu fazhan* 九州四海風雅同: 元代多族士人圈的形成與發展 (The Literary Pursuits of the Whole World: The Form and Development of Scholarly Circles of Multi Clans in Yuan Dynasty), Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi 聯經出版事業公司, p. 154.

在政府，而公论在士君子”。⁵⁸⁴ The great Ming time historian Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590; see chap. 11.5) said that the public law is above, and the public discourse below (*gongfa zai shang, gonglun zai xia* 公法在上，公论在下)。⁵⁸⁵ Sun Cheng'en 孙承恩 (1485-1565)⁵⁸⁶ believed that the imperial court directs the *gonglun* and has a duty of censoring the *gonglun*. As both of this cannot be accomplished, the gentry and “wilderness” can give expression to the *gonglun*. Furthermore, the *gonglun* not only proceeds from the Secretaries of the Ministry of Personnel, but also “the educational institutions [promote] this *gonglun*” (*xuexiao yi gonglun ye* 學校亦公論也⁵⁸⁷). Gao Panlong 高攀龍 (1562-1626)⁵⁸⁸ citing Wang Shugu 王述古 (1564-1617)⁵⁸⁹ said that in the world there exists a public dialogue about what is right and wrong, but not necessarily among Censors and Supervising Secretaries (*taisheng* 臺省); even though among the *taisheng* there can exist a public dialogue about what is right and wrong, but not necessarily all the gentlemen engage in it. (*Tianxia you gonglun, weibi taisheng. Taisheng you gonglun, weibi zhugong.* 天下有公論，未必台省。台省有公論，未必諸公。)⁵⁹⁰ The ideal status would be that the government gives expression to the

⁵⁸⁴ This is a summary of Huang Jin's thought by Ren Feng, see Ren Feng (2012), p. 209 and p. 209, FN 3. In the original Huang Jin says: “The court is responsible for the distribution of the right way; the intelligentsia then is responsible for the public dialogue” (朝廷則為公道發於士君子則為公論). *Wenxian ji* 文獻集, *juan* 4 (246).

⁵⁸⁵ This is a summary of Wang Shizhen's thought by Ren Feng, see Ren Feng (2012), p. 209 and p. 209, FN 4. In the original Wang Shizhen says: “Below is regarded to be the public dialogue, while above is regarded to be the public law (夫在下為公論，在上為公法). *Yanzhou sibugao* 兪州四部稿, *juan* 126 (*Feng shilü xiansheng* 奉釋屢先生).

⁵⁸⁶ Sun Cheng'en 孙承恩 (1485-1565), *zi* 字: Zhenfu 貞甫, from Huating 華亭, born as son of the district magistrate Sun Yanci 孙衍次, received his *jinshi* degree in 1511 and was granted the position of a compiler afterwards. He was an influential figure of his time, but had to resign due to illness. When the Jiajing emperor ascended the throne, he was called to the court again. Among other things, he wrote the *Wenjian ji* 文簡集. See Lin Xiaoming 林晓明 (ed.) (2001), *Songjiang wenwu zhi* 松江文物志 (Record About Cultural Objects from Songjiang), Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe 上海人民美術出版社, p. 126.

⁵⁸⁷ *Wenjian ji* 文簡集, *juan* 28 (61).

⁵⁸⁸ Gao Panlong 高攀龍 (1562-1626), *zi* 字: Cunzhi 存之, from Wuxi, received his *jinshi* degree in 1589. See *Mingji beilue: Lidai biji congbian* 明季北略: 歷代筆記叢編, *juan er* 卷二.

⁵⁸⁹ Wang Shugu 王述古 (1564-1617), *zi* 字: Xinfu 信甫, from Yuzhou 禹州 in Henan, received his *jinshi* degree in 1587.

⁵⁹⁰ Gao Panlong 高攀龍, *Gaozi yishu* 高子遺書, *juan* 卷 11, *Shanxi buzhengsi you buzheng shizhong song wanggong xingzhuang* 山西布政司右布政使中嵩王公行狀, p. 658, in *Siku quanshu* 文淵閣四庫全書, *jibu* 集部, *bieji lei* 別集類, *Ming Hongwu zhi Chongzhen* 明洪武至崇禎.

gonglun, or otherwise the *gonglun* can only be promoted by the society and among the people.⁵⁹¹

Furthermore, Wang Yangming's idea that everybody could become a sage was further developed and found its ultimate attainment in Li Zhi who proclaimed that also Confucius' "right and wrong" was not the real "right and wrong," and thereby neglected the authority of every doctrine in the field of learning and politics. In fact, Wang Yangming's idea of everybody being able to achieve sage hood, i.e. everybody being equal, displayed one main aspect of the tendency in the *gonglun*-discourse. This directly expresses that the idea of emphasizing common people's public opinion could show more clearly the proper common understanding than the ones having power and influence could do. In consequence, this underpinned the basis of the *gonglun* as being the popular will. Furthermore, this teaching movement opened the space for a public discussion about what is right and wrong because it caused participants to get rid of their political and societal identities and status in terms of official posts, professions, regional origin or believe; only the power of innate knowledge about the truth was taken as criterion. Consequently, free, equal and blooming relation links emerged among the participants, and they were deeply convinced about having a meeting in minds regarding morality and reason. For example, Geng Ju 耿橘 (fl. 1601) displayed in his *Yushan shuyuan zhi* 虞山書院志 (Records of the Yushan Academy) in the chapter *Huibuyin* 會簿引 (Introduction to the Assembly Registers) the rules of such assemblies:⁵⁹²

虞山會講，來者不拒。人皆可以為堯舜，何論其類哉？凡我百姓，年齒高者與年少而知義理者，無分鄉約、公正、糧裡、市井、農夫，無分僧道游人，無分本境地方，但願聽講，許先一日或本日早報名會簿，俟堂上賓主齊，該吏書領入，照規矩行禮。果胸中有見者，許自己上堂講說。[...] 但不許不通名姓，乘機溷入，不守規矩，紊亂喧嘩，致失會體。⁵⁹³

⁵⁹¹ Ren Feng (2012), p. 209.

⁵⁹² Ren Feng (2012), pp. 212f.

⁵⁹³ Chen Shilong 陈时龙 (2005), *Mingdai zhongwanqi jiangxue yundong (1522-1626)* 明代中晚期讲学运动 (1522-1626) (The Teaching Movement of Mid-Late Ming Time (1522-1626)), Shanghai:

When the Yushan community discussed, they refused nobody and no request. If men maybe all believe in Yao and Shun, how can we discuss this kind? We are all common people; the old one and the young ones know reason and principles; this has nothing to do with local rules, impartiality, provisions of the hometown, towns, farmers, and it has nothing to do with Buddhist and Daoist travelers, and it has nothing to do with the place of origin, if they only listen to the teachings. They are allowed to enter their names in the assembly book at any day or at the morning of the day [of the assembly]. As soon as guests and hosts together are at the meeting place, they receive these official books, enter, and in accordance with the rules carry out a ceremony. If in one's mind there are opinions, one is permitted to go up the stage and give a lecture. [...] But one must not be obstructed to tell one's name, seize the opportunity to disorderly enter, not observe the rules, [cause] disorder and hubbub, and [must not] cause the meeting system to be violated.

As Wang Yangming characterized the innate knowledge as being inside every human being, in consequence every person was supposed to know what is right and wrong through his intuitive. With his concept of the innate knowledge of every individual person, Wang Yangming paved the path for the *gonglun*-debate where every single person could participate and could obtain a conception of their own about what is right and wrong and good and evil.⁵⁹⁴

道即是良知：真知原是完完全全，是的還他是，非的還他非，是非只依著他，更無有不是處，這真知還是你的明師。⁵⁹⁵

The Way is innate knowledge. From the beginning it is perfect. It regards what is right as right, and what is wrong as wrong. If we only

Fudan daxue chubanshe (Shanghaishi shehui kexue boshi wenku 上海市社会科学博士文库), p. 183; from Geng Ju 耿橘, *Yushan shuyuan zhi* 虞山書院志 *Huibuyin* 會簿引.

⁵⁹⁴ Xiang Yannan (2005), “Wanming shiren ziwoyizhi de zhangyang yu lishi pinglun” 晚明士人自我意识的张扬与历史评论 (Animation of Intellectuals' Self-Consciousness and Historical Commentary in Late Ming Dynasty), *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 4, p. 108.

⁵⁹⁵ *Chuanxi lu, juan xia* 卷下, *Mensheng huangsheng seng lu* 門人黃省曾錄 (The Record of the Disciple Huang Shengseng [1496-1546]), sec. 265. From a discussion with the disciple who asked Wang Yangming “Why is the Way identical with education?” (*Ruhe dao ji shi jiao?* 如何道即是教?); translation see reference below.

rely on it with regard to what is right and what is wrong, everything will be correct. This innate knowledge is, after all, your wise teacher.⁵⁹⁶

Likewise, concepts of traditional Confucianism also enhanced the *gonglun*-debate. Many who gave lectures were aware of the characteristic open space which was situated between family life and the political affairs of the monarch and his servant-officials. This already implied clues to conceptions of the public realm in a modern sense and it hinted at the important significance of the *Youpeng jiangxue huodong* 友朋講學活動 (Movement of Friends Giving Lectures) as a secondary element of the *gonglun*. In fact, concerning this movement using the link between friendship and teaching one could have developed an organizational concept of strongly founded political and societal ties. For example, He Xinyin 何心隱 advocated the traditional “five relationships” (*wulun* 五倫)⁵⁹⁷ ethics model molded by regarding friendship as the core tie of an “assembly,” and constructed an equal, free and open-minded common social group via teachings. The politics of the monarch and his servant-officials should also be guided by a kind of relationship model of friendship-teaching (*pengyou jiangxue* 朋友講學). Hence, the picture of *gonglun* as public discussion and opinion had a solidified and conjoined organizational function.⁵⁹⁸ The development of such an idea benefitted from the organizational form of teaching-assemblies (*jianghui* 講會), which vigorously developed in the Yangmingism teaching campaign. Concerning friendship relationships, the late Ming scholar Gu Xiancheng 顧憲成 (1550-1612) said:

群一鄉之善士講習則一鄉之善皆收而為吾之善，而精神充滿乎一鄉矣；群一國之善士講習則一國之善皆收而為吾之善，而精神充滿乎一國矣；群天下之善士講習則天下之善皆收而為吾之善，而精神充滿乎天下矣；[...] 君臣父子夫婦兄弟各有專主，而朋友則無所不攝。

⁵⁹⁶ Chan Wing-Tsit (1963), part III, “Conversations Recorded by Huang Mien-Chih,” sec. 265, p. 218.

⁵⁹⁷ *Wulun* 五倫 are the five cardinal Confucian relationships, i.e. ruler and subject (*junchen* 君臣), father and son (*fuzi* 父子), husband and wife (*fifu* 夫婦), elder and younger brother (*xiongdì* 兄弟), and between friends (*pengyou* 朋友).

⁵⁹⁸ Ren Feng (2012), p. 213. For more information on these ideas, refer to He Xinyin’s collected works (*He Xinyin xianzheng cuantong ji* 何心隱先生爨桐集), *juan* 卷 2, chapters *Shishuo* 師說, *Lunyou* 論友, *Wuhui* 語會, and *Lunqian* 論潛, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=39310&page=6&remap=gb>, last accessed: January 12th, 2017.

[...] 非朋友無以成其君臣父子夫婦兄弟，非講習亦無以成其朋友。

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If all the good scholars of one village lecture and study, then the good deeds of one village will all be received and become our own good deeds, and the spirit will permeate the whole village. If all the good scholars of one country lecture and study, then the good deeds of one country will all be received and become our own good deeds, and the spirit will permeate the whole country. If all of the good scholars of the world lecture and study, then the good deeds of the world will all be received and become our own good deeds, and the spirit will permeate the whole world [...] [In the relationships of] the monarch and his servant-officials, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers one is the specific master; but [between] friends are not at all such a classification [...] There is no friendship ceaselessly turning into [a relationship] such as the monarch-servant-officials, father-son, husband-wife, elder-younger brothers [relationship]; also there is no lecture-study [relationship] ceaselessly turning into friendship.

Accordingly, friendship bonds are equally formed out of teaching movements and offer the basis for the formation of a society of virtuous persons in a worldly range. In the traditional patterns of the *sangang*⁶⁰⁰ and *wulun*, the teaching movement fully activated the societal and political meaning of friendship as a human relationship, and in the next step it explored and transformed traditional relation patterns and formed a new group consciousness—this is a new aspect in the traditional *gonglun*-conception. In this respect, the *gonglun* can be regarded as the bond of a new social conception. According to Ming time scholars, this field of vision of universal range did not only include the world (*tianxia* 天下), but also spread over the cosmos and encompassed the whole life of men.⁶⁰¹ Xue Fangshan 薛方山 (fl. 1535) said:

⁵⁹⁹ *Donglin shuyuan zhi* 東林書院志, *juan* 卷 3, *huiyu yi* 會語一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=23174&page=58&remap=gb>, last accessed: January 12th, 2017.

⁶⁰⁰ *Sangang* 三綱 are the cardinal guides of the social order, namely ruler-subject, father-child, and husband-wife.

⁶⁰¹ For example, the politician, philosopher and literati Liu Zongzhou 刘宗周 (1578-1645) said: “When studying one cannot not explain; particularly one cannot at the same time not explain. So, the father easily explains to the son, the elder brother easily explains to the younger, the husband easily explains to his wife, and the monarch easily explains to his servant, the men within the gates easily

古者諫無官，以天下之公議，寄之天下之人，使天下之人言之，此其為盛也。⁶⁰²

The ancients remonstrated not having officials; for the mass discussion of the world, they entrusted the people of the world, causing the people of the world to discuss this [i.e. their opinion]; this is magnificent!

其世治者，其論公於眾；其世興者，其論公於朝；其世衰者，其論公於野。⁶⁰³

The ones who govern this world, their discourse publicly is in the masses. The ones who promote this world, their discourse publicly is in the court. The ones who weaken this world, their discourse publicly is in the wild areas.

According to that, the ideal government is the expression of the *gonglun* articulated in the entire public masses. However, in the case of a weak government often it is articulated by the society and people outside the government; the *gonglun* then happens in the “wild,” not at the court.⁶⁰⁴ This corresponds to the situation in Ming time historiography where the *gonglun* was present among the scholars in the Jiangnan area, in the “wild” while the official part of historiography appeared weak because of its non-reflective reproduction of the court’s opinion—as will be revealed in the Part V.

Regarding the political situation in late Song and then especially in Ming time, the *gonglun*, as well happened in the “wild.” However, this “wild” appearance rapidly developed into the emergence of cliques, which, thus, is closely linked to the phenomenon of the *gonglun*. The appearance of cliques normally was regarded as violating the common understood *gonglun* of the world. Nevertheless, the dispute of

explain to the family members, and the men outside the gates easily explain to the village people. But if they lead a life of leisure and stay alone, they easily from their heart explain it themselves.” (學不可不講，尤不可一時不講。如在父便當與子講，在兄便當與弟講，在夫便當與婦講，在主便當與仆講，在門以內與家人講，在門以外與鄉裡親戚朋友講，若是燕居獨處，便當自心自講...) From *Liuzi yishu* 劉子遺書, *juan* 卷 3, *Xueyan er* 學言二, p. 62. Furthermore, he said “Filling up the cosmos, observing quietly the law of nature is only [possible] in a teacher-friend [relationship].” (充塞宇宙，靜觀物理，無非師友。) From *Liuzi quanshu* 劉子全書, *juan* 卷 13, *Huijiang* 會講, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=en&file=105709&page=846&remap=gb>, last accessed: September 2nd, 2017.

⁶⁰² *MRXA*, *juan* 25, “Xue Fangshan jishu” 薛方山紀述, vol. 1, p. 595.

⁶⁰³ *MRXA*, *juan* 48, Cui Xi’s 崔銑 (Cui Houqu’s 崔後渠; 1478-1541) “Shiyi” 士翼, vol. 2, p. 1160.

⁶⁰⁴ Ren Feng (2012), p. 214.

cliques was often displayed and catalyzed in a fight over the common understanding via public discussion and opinion. In practice, teaching movements formed a certain kind of organization of persons with the same principles; and naturally this had impulses for current politics and society.⁶⁰⁵ In the rise of cliques in Ming dynasty, the *gonglun*-concept developed into an important method. In the Confucian tradition, the literati or even the candidates for the civil examination faced a very unsuitable political situation in the government and often used open spaces in the system to publish critical open discussions.

The Donglin 東林 faction⁶⁰⁶ in late Ming dynasty went one step further than predecessors in Eastern Han or Southern Song times, and from teachings at an academy of classical learning initiated a spirit of a discussion about what is right and wrong (*gonglun*). They demanded the publication of political deliberation and opposed the common routine of private and hidden discussion. For example, the politician Qian Yiben 錢一本 (1539-1610) said: “Moreover, that which is said publicly equals the public speech of the world. Concerning that which is said privately, loyal officials [should] not [speak] privately.” (況所言公，當與天下公言之；所言私，忠臣不

⁶⁰⁵ For information on Ming time phenomenon of the *gonglun* in cliques, Ren Feng recommends a record in the *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 by the Song time scholar Li Jingde 黎靖德 (n.d.): “宣政間，鄆州有數子弟好議論士大夫長短，常聚州前邸店中。每士人大夫過，但以指舒縮，便是長短他。時人目為豬鬃，以其狀似豬以鬃掘土。此數子弟因戲以其號自標，為甚‘豬鬃大夫’、‘豬鬃郎’之屬。少間，為人告以私置官屬，有謀反之意。興大獄鍛煉。舊見一策子載，今記不得。近看《長編》有一段，徽宗一日問執政，‘東州逆黨，何不為處分了？’都無事之首尾。若是大反逆事，合有首尾。今看來，隻是此事。想李燾也不曾見此事，隻大略聞得此一項語言”。*Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, *juan* 卷 130, p. 4996.

⁶⁰⁶ The Donglin “party” originated from the Donglin Academy (Eastern Forest), which initially had been established in Song dynasty at Wuxi 無錫 and was revived in 1604 as a reaction to the ongoing evils of corruption, disasters, and later on evils committed by the eunuch Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢 (1568-1627). In fact, this group was not a party in the sense of an organized faction, but rather a part of “a movement motivated primarily by moral sentiments.” The members of this group wrote and published a lot of books, met in monthly discussions and assemblies, and also lectured in other academies. “The Tung-lin aim was a moral crusade to reassert the traditional principles of Confucian conduct and apply them in political life.” With their aims, they opposed the philosophical syncretism which had been made popular by Wang Yangming. In contrast, the Donglin party concentrated on Mencius and reaffirmed his statements about “the supreme importance of the individual’s moral integrity.” Thereby, they condemned even “various holders of power in the Inner court, both Grand Secretaries and eunuchs,” which resulted in a sectarian struggle of reciprocal denunciation about the moral integrity of ministers. This struggle resulted in imprisonment, torture and murder of many members (e.g. Yang Lian 楊漣) of the Donglin faction. Nevertheless, there was a lot of opposition to these actions by Wei Zhongxian, and the “public opinion” of the scholar class was that “Wei’s conduct completed the moral degradation of the Ming regime, after which nothing could save it.” Reischauer, Fairbank, Craig (1960), pp. 341ff. For more information on the Donglin faction, see John W. Dardess (2002), *Blood and History in China: The Donglin Faction and its Repression, 1620-1627*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.

私。) ⁶⁰⁷ Furthermore, in the biography of Gu Yuncheng 顧允成 (1554-1607) in the *Mingshi*, it says: “The things in the world are not the private discussion of one family.” (天下事非一家私議。) ⁶⁰⁸ In a time when things turned out contrary to the way one wished, this *gonglun*-spirit advocated by the Donglin Academy turned into a confrontation of a court discussion led by Gu Xiancheng 顧憲成 (1550-1612), the founder of the Donglin movement, and Wang Tinjue 王錫爵 (1534-1614) against an outside discussion. Many other literati recognized the importance of a public dialogue, too. Miao Changqi 繆昌期 (1562-1626), for example, compiled the work *Gonglun guo zhi yuanqi* 公論國之元氣 (The *Gonglun* as the Vitality of the Nation) and considered the *gonglun* as the vitality of the country and the essence of the political rise and decline of a country. Additionally, Sun Cheng'en expounded and proved the legitimate and common character of the *gonglun* from the perspective of cosmological ontology and proclaimed “The *gonglun* is the vitality of heaven and earth, it is the lifeblood of a country.” (公論也者，天地之元氣，國家之命脈也。) ⁶⁰⁹ Furthermore, He Xinyin ascribed the source of the *gonglun* debate to Confucius. In respect to Confucius' proclamation that the Xia 夏, Shang 商 and Zhou 周 dynasties always acted with integrity, he stressed the essential position of the masses, and regarded them as the source of vitality in the sense of a cosmological ontology. Hereby, the *gonglun* of the masses represents an independent power without suffering from political influence, and shows that a country with *gonglun* gathers together the ideas about what is right and what is wrong of the common people. At the same time, it is able to stand face to face with the monarch system of controlling the state's system and law. Miao Changqi 繆昌期 (1562-1626) considered the *gonglun* being the sun in the universe; and according to him, a country has to have national affairs which are discussed in a public dialogue (*gonglun guoshi* 公論國是) like the sky has to have the sun. In fact, the *gonglun* about national affairs requires a representative coming from an essence of ethics and politics which is capable of reflecting this common spirit. The appearance of a *gonglun* unavoidably leads to the ones discussing about national affairs being confused and

⁶⁰⁷ *Mingshi* 明史, *juan* 231, *liezhuan* 列傳 119, *Qian Yiben zhuan* 錢一本傳, p. 6038.

⁶⁰⁸ *Mingshi* 明史, *juan* 231, *liezhuan* 列傳 119, *Gu Yuncheng zhuan* 顧允成傳, p. 6035

⁶⁰⁹ *Wenjian ji* 文簡集, *juan* 卷 28, *Zaizeng fangli xu* 再贈方礪菴序, p. 595.

diverse, especially about what is right or wrong. Nevertheless, the ones in power cannot stubbornly use party doctrine to negate the ongoing *gonglun*. Concerning Miao Changqi's considerations, Ge Quan 葛荃 noted:⁶¹⁰

在繆昌期的設計中，由卿士大夫掌握和操縱輿論，代表天下百姓，與君權相維相制，這是他在當時的歷史和政治條件下，所能找到的最佳參政方式。⁶¹¹

In Miao Changqi's plan, the literati master and control the public opinion; they represent the common people in the world; they are mutually connected with the monarchical power and mutually control it. Under the historical and political conditions of his time, that what he was capable of finding was the best method for participating in politics.

The open space for expressing the *gonglun*-conception in Ming dynasty towards layers outside the governmental system spread and developed enormously. This trend is closely linked to the Ming Neo-Confucian movement and the teachings by Wang Yangming rising in mid to late Ming. In fact, these teachings turned into a most beneficial hotbed for the development of the *gonglun*-conception; hence, there is a tight connection between Ming time teachings and the *gonglun*. Although these teachings were mostly active in the society outside the governmental system, however they were hidden in unusual political implications, as well. On the basis of the Song Neo-Confucianism, such academic ideas guided the political transformation. Nevertheless, the Ming Neo-Confucianism represented by Wang Yangming went a step further and encouraged new knowledge because it recognized the necessity of going through a discussion and discourse in order to spread new knowledge. This caused the public discussion and opinion (*gongyi yu lun* 公議輿論) of the *gonglun* to develop to a great extent. Due to the restrictions of the political environment, the shape and development of such a new *gonglun* only appeared faintly in the governmental system, but it was even more circulated among the group of scholars outside the government and among the popular masses. As the discourse and teachings by the new Neo-Confucianism

⁶¹⁰ Ren Feng (2012), pp. 215f.

⁶¹¹ Ge Quan 葛荃, *Zhongguo zhengshi wenhua jiaocheng* 中国政治文化教程, Gaodeng jiaoshen chubanshe 高等教育出版社, chap. "Zhongguo zhuantong de 'gongsiguan' yu 'yi gongmin wei ben'" 中国传统的“公私观”与“以公民为本,” p. 171.

(especially by Wang Yangming) can be regarded as the hidden *gonglun*, it is very hard to shake off an entanglement with the government; the discourses and teachings of literati—who mostly worked in the official system—often occur to be closely connected with the examination system, the operational administrative power and governmental affairs.⁶¹²

The most prominent example of such a connection was Zhang Juzheng 張居正 (1525-1582; see chap. 6.1.1). He was of the opinion that the current situation should be controlled by Confucius' teachings, the correct political and cultural orientation should be that the literati base themselves on their duty, and at the same time complete their duties regarding the teachings and regarding the government—a tension which was touched upon in chapter 7 already. Zhang thought to establish “banners” for the teachings and encourage everyone to publicly debate. In politics, this was enough to shake the latent energy of opposing the current politics' authority. From the standpoint of officials enthusiastic about these teachings, the teachings had a solidified common understanding and a positive significance for the opening Ming time administration and thinking in general.

There are many examples of literati who built a bridge between their teachings, discussions and political affairs. Geng Dingxiang 耿定向 (1524-1596),⁶¹³ a follower of Wang Yangming, stressed that his teachings merged into discussions about governmental affairs, which was a reflection of the value ascribed to public discussion and opinion. The Taizhou disciple Luo Rufang 羅汝芳 (1515-1588)⁶¹⁴ stated that there was a close connection emerging between the governing of counties and prefectures and the educating of the people by means of these teachings. In general, in the Taizhou

⁶¹² Ren Feng (2012), p. 228.

⁶¹³ Geng Dingxiang 耿定向 (1524-1596), *zi* 字: Zailun 在倫, from Huang'an 黃安 in today's region of Hubei, *jinshi* 1556, was a scholar, imperial censor and important figure in the *Xinxue* school in Ming dynasty. His statements are to be found in his work *Geng Tiantai xiansheng wenji* 耿天台先生文集. See Huang Wenshu 黃文樹 (2003), Zhang Juzheng de jiaoyu sixiang yu jiaoyu geming 張居正的教育思想與教育改革, Taipei: Xiuwei chuban 秀威出版, p. 53.

⁶¹⁴ Luo Rufang 羅汝芳 (1515-1588), *zi* 字: Weide 惟德, from Nancheng 南城 in Jiangxi, received his *jinshi* degree in 1553, then became an official in the Ministry of Justice (*xingbu* 刑部); afterwards he moved to Yunnan and engaged in politics. See, e.g., Tian Ya 田涯 (2009), *Zhege shijie hai you ai ma?—Naxie caizijaren de aihen qingchou* 這個世界還有愛嗎?——那些才子佳人的愛恨情愁 (Is There still Love in this World?—Love and Hate Emotions of Those Gifted Scholars and Beautiful Women), Taipei: Xiuwei chuban 秀威出版, p. 7.

School (see chap. 6.3.1)⁶¹⁵ there were even more people who considered the teachings as statecraft undertakings of political prospects, for example Wang Gen 王艮 (1483-1541), Yan Jun 顏鈞 (1504-1596)⁶¹⁶ and He Xinyin 何心隱 (1517-1579). In practice, they thought teaching village people the *gonglun* would affect the government in a positive sense. This was even more important as the literati sensed an intensifying degeneration of the political situation until late Ming. At that time, a part of the Donglin party expressed the political *gonglun*, emanating from the teachings and expanding to the question of what is right and wrong in the public affairs of the world. Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周 (1578-1645), e.g., said: “When heaven and earth die and become dark, when human hearts extinguish and cease, then we only have the teachings to make clear the right principles; the capable and the virtuous [will] save the persistence of people in one thread!” (天地暝晦，人心滅息，吾輩惟有講學明倫，庶幾留民彝於一線乎?)⁶¹⁷ Therefore, the teachings which clarify the right principles are the clue to the persistence of humankind; the *gonglun* here gains a character of embracing everything in heaven and earth. The historical connection between the conception of the *gonglun* and the political world was founded in Song dynasty, but developed from teachings in academies and public speeches to factional political struggles and mass organizations. The discourses of Ming dynasty also had a huge impact on the dissemination of the traditional Confucianism, namely it prominently stressed the teaching method of discussing and debating among people. Wang Yangming said, for teaching one “must spread from mouth to mouth, wide spreading it among comrades and almost not fall [behind].” (須口口相傳，廣布同志，庶幾不墜⁶¹⁸) Furthermore, “when teaching one

⁶¹⁵ For more information on the conceptions advanced by the Taizhou School, see Wu Zhen 吳震 (2009), *Taizhou xuepai yanjiu* 泰州學派研究, Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe 中國人民大學出版社.

⁶¹⁶ Yan Jun 顏鈞 (1504-1596), *zi* 字: Zizhi 子和, *hao* 號: Shannong 山農, studied in various places and was befriended with princes. Together with Luo Rufang and He Xinyin he represented the principle thoughts of the Taizhou School. Huang Junjie 黃俊傑 (2008), *Zhongri “Sishu” quanshu chuantong chutan* 中日四書詮釋傳統初探, Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue chuban zhongxin 國立臺灣大學出版中心, vol. xia 下, pp. 490f.

⁶¹⁷ Zhao Yuan 趙園 (2006), *Zhidu, Yanlun, Xintai—‘Mingqing Zhiji shidafu yanjiu’ xubian* 制度·言論·心態——<明清之際士大夫研究>續編, Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe 北京大學出版社, p. 216; from *Liu Zongzhou nianpu* 劉宗周年譜.

⁶¹⁸ *Yangming xiansheng wenlu* 陽明先生文錄, *xu* 序, Qian Dehong 錢德洪, in *Wang Yangming quanji* 王陽明全集, *jingxinlu* 靜心錄 10, *xushuo* 序說, *xuba zeng* 序跋增, sec. 31. Online at Chinese

must personally instruct each person.” (講學須得人人面授)⁶¹⁹ Zhang Nai 張鼐 (?-1510)⁶²⁰ added: “When many people excite their good hearts, in order to understand [one’s emotions one has to] use talking.” (夫眾人之動其良心也，以會以語也)⁶²¹ Concerning the academic exploration of the truth, they utterly laid stress on discussion and emphasized and implemented discussions in spoken language—this consciousness towards teachings constituted a form of public discussion and opinion, and indirectly promoted the provoking of the *gonglun*, which then was directed to politics and society. Thus, it resided among people in groups of different social strata, of different regions and of different status. He Xinyin, for example, in his *Yuanxue Yuanjiang* 原學原講 protested against Zhang Juzheng’s suppression of teachings via discussions and thereby even sacrificed his life. Before his death, he wrote remarkable pieces of literature and quoted representative works proving that teaching in the way of open discussions belongs to the natural instincts of men. In effect, discussions were the intrinsic idea of Confucian culture, as well. In the next step the late Ming/early Qing scholar Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) in his *Ming yidai fanglu* 明夷待訪錄 in the chapter “Xuexiao” 學校 designed a public organization restricting the absolute power of the emperor; public discussion was the way for achieving this. In consequence, politics did not anymore regard “the right and wrong” of the emperor as the ultimate conception of “right and wrong;” instead, “the right and wrong” of all men in the world (天下人的是非) became valid. As a matter of fact, this brought the modern rising *gonglun* a step further in the direction of an organizational form.⁶²²

In sum, the scholarly realm in Ming dynasty was very diverse and manifested a comprehensive public dialogue which questioned ancient values and dictated virtues.

Text Project, <http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=308795#靜心錄之十%E3%80%80> 序說·序跋增補, last accessed: September 4th, 2017.

⁶¹⁹ Chen Shilong (2005), p. 13, cited from Qian Dehong 錢德洪 (1496-1574), *Kewenlu xushuo* 刻文錄敘說, *Yangming quanshu* 陽明全書, *juan shou* 卷首 (first *juan*).

⁶²⁰ Zhang Nai 張鼐 (?-1510), *zi* 字: Yonghe 用和, from Licheng 歷城 in Shandong, received his *jinshi* degree in 1475 and afterwards was promoted county magistrate in Xiangling 襄陵 and imperial censor in Liaodong 遼東. Pan Rongsheng 潘榮勝 (2006) (ed.), p. 158.

⁶²¹ Chen Shilong (2005), p. 13, cited from Sun Shenxing 孫慎行 (1565-1636) and Zhang Nai 張鼐, *Yushan shuyuan zhi* 虞山書院志, *juan* 卷 7, *huiyu* 會語.

⁶²² Ren Feng (2012), p. 212.

The emperor and his opinion was not considered to be the ultimate answer to all questions anymore; rather, through discussion a common understanding of right and wrong should be generated. This truly represents a feature which had not been in Chinese history before, at least not in this widespread dimension. In consequence, a true break in tradition is to be detected with regard to the ongoing public discourse; ancient structures in thinking were broken in a large scale and diverse thinking and freedom of expression were results of this discussion. The *gonglun*, then, became one of the main features of Ming time historiography as well. Because history writing has always played a crucial role in the Chinese society and history itself was considered the teacher for life (*historia magistra vitae*)—as shown in chapter 2—the question of what is right and what is wrong and a definite measure for true and false were supposed to be displayed in historiography, too. Therefore, in the next chapter the *gonglun* in the realm of history writing will be illustrated.

PART V: HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE MING DYNASTY AND ITS DAWNING OF A MODERN ERA

It is true that the Ming dynasty cannot boast of such outstanding original cultural and intellectual achievements as earlier periods. This is true as well in the field of historiography. The major creative innovations in historical writing occurred earlier and had by Ming times become the models for historical writing.⁶²³

Here, Wolfgang Franke in his article “Historical Writing During the Ming” in the *Cambridge History of China* seemingly followed the general view on Ming time historiography as being inferior to other times in Chinese history; nevertheless, he further on illustrated precisely the peculiarity of Ming time history writing. As with all long periods of time, the three hundred years of Ming dynasty were not homogenous as well. Changes had a bearing on many facets of the people’s life and, of course, academics. Therefore, it can be observed that historiography also experienced enormous alterations and developments during Ming dynasty, that is to say in a way of quality and quantity. One characteristic of this transformation was the development of a critical attitude towards historical works of the past and towards source material. This course became obvious in the sixteenth century only. Therefore, Franke proceeded in his remarks:⁶²⁴

Actually, historical writing, in quantity as well as in quality, made great progress in Ming days, particularly after the fifteenth century. There have been no more outstanding innovations in historical writing such as Ssu-ma Ch’ien’s Records of the Grand Historian, Shih-chi, the model of all the later Standard histories; or Ssu-ma Kuang’s Tzu chih t’ung-chien of 1085, the first historical record covering, in a continuous description, a period of nearly 1,400 years [...] But due to the great expansion of literacy and to the increasing numbers of scholar officials, who constituted the majority of the authors as well as of the readers of

⁶²³ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 727.

⁶²⁴ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 726.

historical works, the transmitted patterns of historical writing were expanded and improved.⁶²⁵

After all, for Wolfgang Franke it is true that Ming dynasty—in terms of innovations—cannot be compared to the cultural and intellectual advancements of former dynasties; this is in particular valid for historiography. According to him, the new achievement was mainly an easier accessibility to compilations. In Tang or Song dynasties only a small group could appreciate the splendors of literary works and was able follow the traces of important writers. Now, in Ming dynasty books became available to many more people, which also led to the compilation of evermore literary works—partly because of the possibility of access and imitation of considerable works, partly because of the increasing demand for books.⁶²⁶ But this is not the end of the story. The ongoing processes of the Ming dynasty had a strong bearing on historiography.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁵ Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 4.

⁶²⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 727.

⁶²⁷ For a list of the historians who are discussed or taken into consideration in this part, see Appendix V.1.

9. The Ming time *Gonglun* and Historiography

咸以孔子之是非為是非，故未嘗有是非耳!⁶²⁸

Because all took the [conception] of right and wrong by Confucius as the [ultimate] right and wrong, there is not yet a [true perspective of] what is right and wrong.

The “revolutionary” aspect in the Ming time *gonglun*-debate was that the ultimate right and wrong was not supposed to be dictated by Confucius or the emperor. The famous Ming time literati Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), for example, seized and joined the public debate about what is right and wrong (*gonglun* 公論) and implicated in the citation above that in contrary the knowledge about what is right and wrong should evolve from each individual’s thoughts (*tianxia ren de shifei* 天下人的是非). Moreover, the great Ming time historian Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590) intensively engaged in the public discourse, as well. For instance, in the preface to Yuan Wang’s 袁王 *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編 Wang Shizhen displayed the nature of the *gonglun*.⁶²⁹ He said:

史者一代之成書實萬禩⁶³⁰之公論。公論者善其善惡其惡是是非非一定之衡也。一代書成而公論不盡，歸之龍門茂林曠世鉅筆。⁶³¹

Concerning history, the published books of one generation actually represent the “public discourse” of ten thousand years. The *gonglun* [provides] a definite measure for appreciating what is good and for dismissing what is evil, for approving what is correct and for repudiating what is wrong. If the books of one generation are completed, but the *gonglun* is still incomplete, one [has to] return to [former] prestigious, elegant and outstanding masterpieces.

Wang here formulated the essence of the public debate, namely to provide a “definite measure” (*yiding zhi heng* 一定之衡) for what is right and wrong. In this course, all the

⁶²⁸ *Cangshu* 藏書, by Li Zhi 李贄, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban 中華書局出版, (1959) 1974, *diyī ce* 第一冊, “Cangshu shiji liezhuan zongmu qianlun” 藏書世紀列傳總目前論, p. 1.

⁶²⁹ For a translation of the whole preface, see chap. 11.5.

⁶³⁰ = 祀 year.

⁶³¹ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, by Yuan Wang 袁王 and Wang Shizhen, Beijing: Beijing shi Zhongguo shuju, 1985, *yuanyu er* 原序二, p. 4.

published books represent the ongoing debate and embody the question about right and wrong, especially in history writing.⁶³² Moreover, Wang offered an important hint at the correlation of Ming time historiography and the rediscovery of Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* (see Part II, especially chap. 5), videlicet the demand to access former masterpieces, if the *gonglun* of a generation is not yet completed. In consequence, the renaissance of the *Shitong* according to Wang Shizhen served the purpose of providing “a definite measure” for what is right and wrong in history writing due to a lack of an own accomplished *gonglun* in Ming dynasty.

In regard to historiography, the question of right and wrong which was touched upon in the *gonglun*-debate reached a new level in Ming dynasty because of influences of individualistic tendencies by Wang Yangming, Wang Gen and Li Zhi. Before the conception of what is right and wrong (*shifei* 是非) was dictated by the court; now according to Wang Yangming's concept of “innate knowledge about the truth” and Li Zhi's modern thoughts about individualism, this traditional ideas were overturned and the thoughts of every man on earth counted (*tianxia ren de shifei* 天下人的是非).

The discussion on history turned to the evaluation of facts and their value. Therefore, the intensity of the self-awareness and of the degree of the freedom of thought had a significant influence on the dynamics and the independent character of an ongoing discussion about history and historiography. In traditional China, due to its feudalistic and autocratic structure and collective thinking there was no sense of individualism or the self-awareness of one person. As mentioned in chapter 6.3.1, Li Zhi—preceded by Wang Yangming and He Xinyin 何心隱 (1517-1579)—radically advocated individualistic thoughts, which was one of the influencing topics in the *gonglun*. This breaking free and new self-awareness also shaped the changes in late Ming historiography and helped to break off conservative and fixed patterns in this realm. This is how a critical attitude towards history writing emerged: People suddenly dared to doubt official records, applied their own value system for, e.g., the evaluation

⁶³² For this point, also see Prof. Mittag's article “Was heißt und zu welchem Ende betrieb man historische Kritik in China?” in *Oriens Extremus* 43.1/2.

of sources, and had their own thoughts on what is right or wrong. A new ideological trend in history writing emanated.⁶³³

According to the modern historian Xiang Yannan 向燕南 from the Beijing Normal University in the history of historiography the currents in Ming dynasty are unprecedented, mainly in regard to the question of what is right and wrong in history writing. Concerning the judgment of what is right and wrong in history, the essence is that the society's value system is reflected in the historical knowledge. Since the times of Han Wudi 漢武帝 (r. 141-87 BC) the Confucian learning provided the measurement for what is right and wrong in history. The attitude of the evaluation of history of the Song Neo-Confucianism was very beneficial for an autocratic state. Now, in Ming dynasty, the prevailing intellectually fluid situation promoted that historians broke through the fence of feudalistic and autocratic ideas and provided a theoretical asylum for independent knowledge history. The spirit of independence and the publicly lived self-consciousness was distinctive for late Ming period historians and became an important factor for historians: They had to have an independent value judgment towards what is right and wrong in history. Slavishly following the ancient people's attitude of history like a parrot was depreciated and regarded as a loss of the peculiar independent character of historians and as not being able to be a true historian.⁶³⁴

The historian Zhu Yunming 祝允明 (1461-1527; see chap. 11.2) expressed that “by using their reputation and power one has to follow them [i.e. the conservative forces]; and when they powerfully raise their voice one does not dare to do one's best,” (以聲與勢而從焉，而強訥焉而不敢盡焉⁶³⁵), and therewith confirmed the fear by many scholars concerning the pressure by the orthodox ideology and autocracy.⁶³⁶ With this attitude, he was one of the first introducing the *gonglun*-debate and linking it to historiography. This was continued by Wang Shizhen who held the opinion that the *gonglun* is reflected in the historiography of every generation. In his preface to Zhu

⁶³³ Xiang Yannan (2005), “Wanming shiren ziwoyizhi de zhangyang yu lishi pinglun” 晚明士人自我意识的张扬与历史评论 (Animation of Intellectuals' Self-Consciousness and Historical Commentary in Late Ming Dynasty), *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 4, pp. 108f.

⁶³⁴ Xiang Yannan (2005), pp. 109f.

⁶³⁵ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* 祝子罪知錄, *juan* 卷 *er* 二, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33039&page=2>, p. 2, last accessed: February 28th, 2017.

⁶³⁶ Xiang Yannan (2005), p. 110.

Yunming's *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* 祝子罪知錄 he addressed the question of what is right and wrong and its relation to the ages:

王子曰：是非之變若棼絲。然有一人之是非，有一事之是非，有片言可折之是非，有千古不決之是非。⁶³⁷

Master Wang said: The change [of the attitude] of what is right and wrong appears confused and stringed. So, there is [the conception of] one man about what is right and wrong, there is [the conception of] one affair about what is right and wrong [in this case]—a few words can change what is right and wrong, and through the ages one cannot determine what is right and wrong.

This statement alludes to the relativity of the attitude of right and wrong in different ages and negates a standard answer to this debate. Li Zhi, as well, advocated the idea of the relativity of *shifei* 是非 (right and wrong); Wang Shizhen cited him in his preface to Li Zhi's *Cangshu* 藏書 (A Book to Be Hidden Away): “Human judgments [about what is right and wrong] are not fixed quantities. In passing judgments men [also] do not hold settled views.”⁶³⁸ (人之是非，初無定質；人之是非人也，亦無定論。⁶³⁹). Li Zhi followed his individualistic thoughts whilst he attributed an individual opinion about what is right and wrong and individual judgments to every individual. In regard to the question how to handle the problem that “human judgments are not fixed quantities,” Wang Shizhen voiced:

後之君子[且]奈何？亦存其迹而已矣。曷為存[其迹]？[曰]有案矣，
曰有斷矣，則未知[其]是是非非也。與其所以取是非者，的然而
無萬一訛也，信傳信，疑傳疑，一人不以一事蒙，一事不以一人廢
[...]⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁷ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, xu* 序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=2>, p. 2, last accessed: February 2nd, 2017.

⁶³⁸ *DMB*, vol. 1, p. 811.

⁶³⁹ *Cangshu* 藏書, *diyici* 第一册, “Cangshu shiji liezhuan zongmu qianlun” 藏書世紀列傳總目前論, p. 1.

⁶⁴⁰ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, xu* 序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=2>, last accessed: April 6th, 2016. Characters in brackets are not readable in the hand-written original and, hence, inserted according to secondary sources, namely Xiang Yannan (2005), p. 112. The translation of the preface is continued in chapter 11.2, pp. 235-240.

How do later gentlemen handle this? However, traces are preserved and that is all!” “And how are these traces preserved?” He said: “There are records.” And he said: “If there are breaks, then one does not know [how] to approve what is right and to repudiate what is wrong. Rather than [taking] that which is [generally] taken as the right and wrong, one [should] realize it clearly [by oneself], and there will be not the smallest error. If trusting [an affair], communicate that you trust it; if doubting, leave doubtful points. One person not taking into account one [particular] affair is thus not ignorant; and one affair not taking into account one [particular] person is not superfluous [on these grounds] [...]”

The solution is recording history according to one’s own believes, not trusting what is generally said to be right and wrong; in this way one will realize the truth. Consequently, one should disclose what is trusted and what is doubted. Likewise, the different characteristics and manifestations of the *gonglun* debate in historiography—which implicated strong criticism on habitual ways of thinking and history writing—will be touched upon in detail in later chapters. Firstly, it is important to sketch these habitual ways which were criticized, namely the official historiography.

10. Official versus Private Historiography

In Ming dynasty, the category of historical writing (*shibu* 史部) experienced a formerly not known expansion and was characterized by the emerging of many additional styles of writing history. In terms of structured approaches, Ming dynasty historiography is not to be equaled to the historiography of later times beginning in Qing dynasty (1644-1912). For example, the Qing scholar Pan Lei 潘耒 (1646-1708) established fixed rules⁶⁴¹ for the compilation of history works which were already applied in the compiling of the History of Ming (*Mingshi* 明史). Nevertheless, many of these later fixed rules dawned from the Ming time discourse about the proper history writing.⁶⁴²

The official national history (*guoshi* 國史) including the Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史) still constituted the most important part of historiography. The Standard Histories were written in the composite style (*jizhuan ti* 紀傳體) and divided into *benji* 本紀 (annals), *shijia* 世家 (hereditary houses), *zhi* 志 (treatises), *biao* 表 (tables) and *liezhuan* 列傳 (biographies). The official history mostly was based on the veritable records (*shilu* 實錄). Apart from the veritable records and its sources—namely the diaries of activity and repose (*qijuzhu* 起居注), the daily records (*rili* 日曆) and the local materials—there were also other official compilations. As already mentioned in chapter 6.2.3, a specific characteristic of Ming time official writing was the collection of vast compilations, starting with the *Yuanshi* 元史 (History of Yuan Dynasty) from Hongwu 洪武 period (1368-1398) succeeded by different collections of Neo-Confucian writings, of “Memorials from ancient times to the end of the Yuan dynasty” (*Lidai mingchen zouyi* 歷代名臣奏議) from 1416 and the already mentioned Yongle encyclopedia (*Yongle dadian* 永樂大典). Furthermore, there were general reference books compiled under the surveillance of the Directorate of Ceremonial (*sili jian* 司禮

⁶⁴¹ Those rules included the collection of materials on the broad basis, the critical analysis of documents, distributed responsibilities, standardized rules of reporting, impartial discussions, sufficient time for completion, and the claim for the history work not to become too long. See Yang Lien-Sheng (1961), “The Organization of Chinese Official Historiography: Principles and Methods of the Standard Histories from the T’ang through the Ming Dynasty,” in William G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University Press, p. 55.

⁶⁴² Yang Lien-Sheng (1961), p. 55.

監) and kept in the Classics Storehouse (*jingchang* 經廠) such as the *Daming huidian* 大明會典 (Collected Statutes; 1503 and 1583) or the *Daming jili* 大明集禮 (Collected Ceremonies; 1530). Also, semi-official works such as monographs for administrative purposes were composed serving, e.g., as handbooks for different institutional activities, often also independently by individual government institutions (e.g. the *Libu zhigao* 禮部志稿, “Draft Monograph of the Ministry of Rites,” 1620; or the *Wanli kuaiji lu* 萬曆會計錄, “Record of the Accounting Procedures of the Wanli Reign,” 1582).⁶⁴³

Additionally, a sector of private or semi-official historiography—also compiled in the composite style—arose as a counterpart to official historical writing, called *yeshi* 野史 (“wild history”). The third important form of history writing was the family records (*jiashi* 家史) which provide many detailed accounts of genealogies. Other forms of historical writing include private or official works in the annalistic style (*biannian ti* 編年體), thematic history works (*jishi benmo* 紀事本末),⁶⁴⁴ treatises about miscellaneous happenings (*zashi* 雜事), e.g. certain periods of time or single events, collections of edicts and memorials written by high officials (*zhaoling zouyi* 詔令奏議),⁶⁴⁵ biographical collections (*zhuanji* 傳記),⁶⁴⁶ writings about the duties of officials (*zhiguan* 職官),⁶⁴⁷ compilations about political institutions (*zhengshu* 政書)⁶⁴⁸ or

⁶⁴³ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 727ff, 733, 755f.

⁶⁴⁴ “Narratives from the Beginning to the End, making the sequence of events supreme.” In simple terms the *jishi benmo* are called *shibie* 事別 (Genetic Topical Treatment), while the *jizhuan ti* is called *nianbie* 年別 (Chronological Treatment) and the *biannian ti* is called *renbie* 人別 (Biographical Treatment). Han (1955), p. 40.

⁶⁴⁵ The “Mandates and Memorials” were state papers. Especially memorials which were presented by high officials to the emperor were enlightening. For more information, see Wolfgang Franke (1968), pp. 119ff; Han (1955), p. 43.

⁶⁴⁶ The biographies (*liezhuan*) are the most prominent part of the Standard Histories and are ascribed to the *zhuanji* (Biographical Memoirs) section. Also the *nianpu* 年譜, chronological biographies, counsels and exhortations are grouped in this category. Hereby, the main purpose of biographical writing was “to pay respect to the dead and to give a final judgment on their lives [...]” See Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 74; Han (1955), p. 43.

⁶⁴⁷ These books (official administration)—the same as the *zhengshu* (political books)—were “guides for the officials in their administrative practice and for the civil service candidates in their preparation for the examinations.” Additional to works concerning the organization of officialdom and government institutions, works on criminal law, official rites and ceremonies, fiscal administration and government economic enterprises, political encyclopedias, examinations and schools, and local histories. See Wolfgang Franke (1968), pp. 176f; Han (1955), p. 44.

treatises about geography and territorial administration (*dili* 地理).⁶⁴⁹ Also the number of non-canonical history-related works like the *bingjia* 兵家 (military affairs and border defense),⁶⁵⁰ *zajia* 雜家 (writings, mostly political encyclopedias, of miscellaneous schools) or *xiaoshuo* 小說 (novels) increased.⁶⁵¹

Most of the works introduced in this part belong to the category of private history. From the early Ming there are only a few outstanding and innovative scholars who occupied themselves with history; for example, the ones addressed in this part are He Qiaoxin 何喬新 (1427-1502), Shao Bao 邵寶 (1460-1527, see chap. 11.1), Zhu Yunming 祝允明 (1461-1527, see chap. 11.2), Li Mengyang 李夢陽 (1473-1529), and Zhu Minggao 朱明鎬 (1607-1652, see chap. 11.9). The historical ideas of scholars like Lu Shen 錄深 (1477-1544, see chap. 5.1 and 11.3), He Liangjun 何良俊 (1506-1573, see chap. 11.4), and the great Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590, see chap. 11.5) prestigiously represent the progenies developing out of the ongoing *gonglun*-debate about what is right and wrong in history writing. Furthermore, philosophers like Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602, see chap. 6.3.1 and 11.6) and Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1541-1620, see chap. 6.3.1 and 11.6) also contributed important thoughts about historiography via their literary pieces which are taken into account. Generally speaking, scholars and literati could not be labelled to have one specific profession in classical China; rather, they

⁶⁴⁸ See FN 647 above. According to Han Yu-shan the *zhengshu* (political treatises) are works on “ordinances, institutes, regulations, and precedents governing governmental machinery, describing the changes in organization and in regulation.” Han (1955), p. 44.

⁶⁴⁹ The *dili* 地理 division covers topics on administrative geography rather than on actual geography. Furthermore, it provides information on local histories about local institutions. Still, there are works found on major parts of China. Waterways, mountains, temples and even travel records are supplied. But as travels in general were seen as “unavoidable hardship,” they are not paid much attention to. Local gazetteers and provincial histories are, instead, very detailed and “are not limited to topographic descriptions, but usually also contain treatises on historical development, irrigation and waterways, military defense, tax and revenue, lists of Confucian schools and academies, temples and antiquities, and in some cases, also biographies of officials [...], lists of native candidates [...]” See Wolfgang Franke (1968), pp. 233f; Han (1955), p. 44.

⁶⁵⁰ As ancient China did not distinguish between foreign and domestic policy, the Ministry of Rites was responsible for peaceful relationships and the Ministry of War was responsible for military actions. Therefore, texts concerning foreign policy can be found in various subdivisions of the Division of History or the Division of Non-Canonical writers (*zibu*)—in particular in the *bingjia* section. See Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 203.

⁶⁵¹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 727f. The trinomial typology of *guoshi*, *yeshi* and *jiashi* is also named by Wang Shizhen in the preface of his *Shicheng kaowu* 史乘考誤, see chap. 11.5, and Mittag (2002), pp. 21f.

acted as philosophers, politicians and historians at the same time. In the context of this research project, the mutual influences of historical, philosophical and socio-political currents gain special importance, whereby scholars appear as philosophers and historians in many cases. Furthermore, as in the case of Liu Zhiji (and as it was during most of the time of Chinese history), in Ming time most of the addressed scholars held an official office and at the same time compiled private history works. Hence, official and private historiography had a tight connection and at the same time strove to distinguish themselves from each other.

10.1 The Official Part: The Institutionalization of History Writing

The origin of the intensified production and liveliness in the realm of private historiography in Ming dynasty was the situation in the field of official history writing; in fact, private history works were a reaction to the experienced deterioration in official historiography. Mainly, there were four considerable problems in official Ming time historiography: (1) the problem of the Bureau of Historiography, (2) the problem of the veritable records, (3) the problem of bureaucracy, and (4) the problem of subjectivity.

The Problem of the Bureau of Historiography

The Bureau of Historiography (*shiguan* 史館) had already been established in the first half of seventh century as an official institution for the writing of historical works. In Ming times, history writing was still regarded as an important (governmental) task. This becomes apparent through the fact that historians were not subordinate officials but descended from the middle class and were appointed by high-class officials. They had to stand out due to their qualifications. First-class (*xiuzhuan* 修撰 or *dianbu* 典簿) and second-class historiographers (*bianxiu* 編修) were employed already one year before the official founding of the dynasty; in 1381, it was announced that there had to be three first-class compilers, four second-class and four correctors (*jiantao* 檢討). While their number differed, these ranks were engaged continuously through the entire period of Ming dynasty; moreover, historians were highly respected and had an eminent reputation.⁶⁵²

⁶⁵² Franke, Wolfgang (1961b), "The Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty," in William G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan*, London [et al.]: Oxford University

The problem of the National Bureau of History Writing (*Guoshiguan* 國史館) in Ming dynasty is evidenced by its position in the administration system of the dynasty. In the transition period of the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the Ming court decided not to establish the *shiguan* as an independent institution, but to integrate it into the Hanlin academy (*Hanlin yuan* 翰林院). While in former times the National Bureau of History Writing had been independent from any political influence, now it was integrated in the Grand Secretariat (*Neige* 內閣), the main political organ, which thereby also received the responsibility of the compiling of the veritable records. After the reign period of the Xuande 宣德 Emperor (r. 1425-1435) the Grand Secretaries (*Neige daxueshi* 內閣大學士) themselves became supervisors of compilation (*zongcai* 總裁), that means they supervised the drafts of the compilers (*zuanxiu guan* 纂修官), who belonged to the Grand Secretariat or the Hanlin Academy. Furthermore, there were vice-supervisors (*fu zongcai* 副總裁) which were elected from the secretaries or academicians (*xueshi* 學士). The formerly very important post of the Chief Compiler of the Dynastic History (*jianxiu* 監修)—who also had expertise—did not have any relevant influence on the compilation and the work of the Ming time *Guoshiguan*. This is even more astonishing considering the fact that the *jianxiu* had a higher rank than the secretaries, but especially from mid to late Ming their significance diminished.⁶⁵³

In sum, the Bureau of History now was directly subjected to the influence of the court, i.e. the emperor. A possible influence on and falsification of historical records by the court is obvious—and was also recognized by contemporary scholars.

The Problem of Official Historiographers and the Veritable Records

The members of the *shiguan* 史館 (the official historiographers, the *shi* 史 or *shiguan* 史官) were responsible for the official compilations, especially for the compilation of the veritable records (*shilu* 實錄) of each emperor. There were three main sources for

Press, pp. 62f; Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 736f. For a precise and more detailed description on the development of the examination system, see also “Terms in Chinese History—The Traditional Examination System,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/examination.html>, last accessed: February 6th, 2017.

⁶⁵³ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 736; “*Hanlinyuan* 翰林院 The Hanlin Academy,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/hanlinyuan.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017; Wolfgang Franke (1961b), pp. 68f.

the *shilu*: (1) the diaries of activity and repose (*qijuzhu* 起居注), which were based on the actions and words by the emperor; (2) the daily records (*rili* 日曆), which were compiled by a committee while taking into account the *qijuzhu* and other sources such as the *shizheng zhi* 時政志 (Records of the Current Government; not for the public); and (3) various other sources, e.g. materials collected in the provinces, memorials or edicts. The *shilu* canon acted as basis for the *guoshi* 國史 (National History) and the *zhengshi* 正史 (Standard Histories).

Due to the subordination of the *shiguan* to the Hanlin Academy, the *Hanlin zhuguan* 翰林諸官 (the Various Bureaus of the Hanlin Academy, see p. 73, FN 203) had a dominant position in documenting the veritable records, which were compiled after the death of an emperor. As mentioned, the Grand Secretaries were responsible for the compilation as supervisors of compilation. Therefore, the perspective of the veritable records was always limited to the history of the government, and the civil history, the academic history and social history were discarded.⁶⁵⁴

Additional to the limited view of the veritable records due to the affiliation of the *shiguan* to the Hanlin Academy, in Ming dynasty after some years the sources used for compiling the *shilu* were reduced as well. After they had been implemented in the times of Emperor Mingdi 明帝 of Han dynasty (r. 57-75 AD), the diaries of activity and repose (*qijuzhu*) were recorded since the year 1364 in Ming dynasty; from 1367 on, officials of the Hanlin Academy compiled the diaries.⁶⁵⁵ In comparison to the times from Tang to Song dynasties when the important political discussions (*shizheng zhi*) were included, now only matters handled in audiences should be written down. The political discussions were degraded and were not labelled as official documents in Ming anymore, but rather as private chronicles by scholars. Furthermore, the daily records (*rili*) were collected over some years; in 1373, for example, a commission was mandated to compose the daily records from beginning of Ming dynasty until then. They were isolated from the outside world and managed to complete the task by writing

⁶⁵⁴ Qian Maowei 钱茂伟 (2010), “*Mingshilu bianzuan yu mingdai shixue de liubian*” 《明实录》编纂与明代史学的流变 (The Compilation of the *Mingshilu* and the Development and Change of Ming Historiography), *Xueshu yue kan* 学术月刊 (Academic Monthly Magazine) 5, p. 106; Wolfgang Franke (1968), pp. 8f.

⁶⁵⁵ Wolfgang Franke (1961b), pp. 62f.

one hundred chapters until 1374.⁶⁵⁶ Thereafter—until 1575—the *qijuzhu* and the *rili* were abolished and, hence, the veritable records had to default to miscellaneous historical materials (*shishu* 史書), to “copies of summaries of endorsed memorials of the six boards” and other metropolitan organizations. Moreover, officials were sent out to collect local material in the provincial capitals, which became one kind of the left sources for the veritable records.⁶⁵⁷ After the reign of Emperor Longqing 隆慶 (1567-1572) every region appointed academics to be responsible for the collection of historical data. There was a call for the establishment of local historical materials and general historical collection agencies which were supposed to lay down strict acquisition rules for historical data.⁶⁵⁸ The reliance on local or regional historical data was diminished by the re-establishment of the *qijuzhu* and *rili* in consequence to a memorial by Zhang Juzheng (see below “The Reform of History Writing,” p. 217). Furthermore, after the reign of Emperor Wanli 萬曆 (1572-1620) the system of collecting everyday life data and the system of court official documents of the *liuke* 六科⁶⁵⁹ were established and an imperial bulletin was published—therefore, the sources of compilation shifted to historical data accumulated in the court again.⁶⁶⁰

The depiction of the development of the veritable records shows that the problem of the sources which should be used for the compilation of the veritable records was prevailing all over the course of Ming dynasty. The historian Wang Shizhen said about the missing *qijuzhu*-system and the reliance on temporary files as basis for the veritable records the following:⁶⁶¹

⁶⁵⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1961b), p. 65.

⁶⁵⁷ Wolfgang Franke (1961b), p. 66; Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 737f.

⁶⁵⁸ Qian (2010), p. 106.

⁶⁵⁹ The *liuke* 六科 were part of the civil-service system in Ming dynasty; it is an abbreviation for the six offices, namely concerning the following matters: official (*li* 吏), family (*hu* 戶), ceremonial (*li* 禮), military (*bing* 兵), legal (*xing* 刑), and labour (*gong* 工). “Six offices of scrutiny, a cluster of major central government agencies staffed with Supervising Secretaries or Supervising Censors (*jishizhong* 給事中) who were responsible for maintaining censorial surveillance over the Six Ministries (*liu bu* 六部).” *DOTIC*, p. 317, no. 3793.

⁶⁶⁰ Qian (2010), p. 106; Wolfgang Franke (1968), pp. 8f.

⁶⁶¹ Qian (2010), p. 106.

故事，有不諱，始命內閣翰林臣纂修實錄，六科取故奏部院咨陳牘而已，其於左右史記言動闕如也。⁶⁶²

Before history did not have any taboos. At the beginning, it was ordered that the Hanlin scholars of the *Neige* should compile and annotate the veritable records. The *liuke* took the old memorials of the Ministries and the Censorate and consulted and explained the documents, nothing more! But this lacked the words and conduct of historical records in any event.

Wang Shizhen here complained that the veritable records were only based on the memorials of the ministries without considering other historical records and sources. The same topic was also touched upon by the Chief Grand Secretariat Zhang Juzheng:

邇者纂修世宗、穆宗實錄，臣等祇是總裁，凡所編輯，不過諸司章奏，稍加刪潤，彙括成篇。至於仗前柱下之語，章疏所不及者，即有見聞，無憑增入。是以兩朝之大經大法罔敢或遺，而二聖之嘉謨嘉猷多所未備，此皆史官職廢致然也。⁶⁶³

When, recently, the veritable records of Emperor Shizong and Emperor Muzong were compiled, only ministers were their head examiners, and all bureaus together compiled them. However, all took charge of the memorials of the emperor; they were slightly more revised and polished and shaped and drawn together and became a whole piece of writing. As for relying on the words of former “Imperial Censors,” the chapters which are scattered were inferior, namely they have information which were added in without testimony. Hence, the essential principles, laws and regulations of the two governments were deceived and presumed or abandoned. Furthermore, much of the wise policies and of the wise plans for governing of the two sages has not yet been provided. Because of this all the duties of historiographers were disused and given up; it is so.

⁶⁶² *Shicheng kaowu* 史乘考誤 *yi* 一 (Investigation about Errors in History works), by Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (Ming), 11 *juan* 卷, in *Yanshantang bieji* 弇山堂別集, (Alternative Records from the Yanshan Studio), Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju (Zongguo shixue congshu 中國史學叢書; 16), 1965, *juan* 卷 20, p. 855.

⁶⁶³ *Chunming mengyu lu* 春明夢餘錄, *juan* 卷 13, p. 249.

For that reason, the *Mingshilu* 明實錄⁶⁶⁴ (Veritable Records of Ming Dynasty) primarily were based on the compilation of files of every government ministry, which appeared very partial. Furthermore, this bureaucratic process—in which many ministries and many officials were involved—entailed documents and collected data of different quality; this caused the rise of many critical voices. For example, He Liangjun 何良俊 (1506-1573, see chap. 11.4) said: “If these are the great decrees and regulations of the imperial court, then how much was spent for one false compiling official? Therefore, they are reluctant to part and cherish the small money.” (此是朝廷大典章，便差一纂修官所費幾何？乃靳惜小費！⁶⁶⁵)

The Problem of Bureaucracy and Partiality

In addition, another considerable problem of the Ming dynasty Bureau of Historiography was—as it had been in former dynasties as well—the number of people involved in the process of compiling a history work: It was not only the compilers themselves but also supervisors from the Grand Secretariat and other persons from the Hanlin Academy; in the compilation of the *Mingshilu* 明實錄 (Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty), for example, about one thousand people were involved; nonetheless, there were lists of all the members which unfolds the eminence of history writing. However, the compilation of the veritable records, the main task of the bureau, mostly ended up in rather being a political endeavor than an academic one. The discussion about the *Mingshilu* perfectly reveals this fact because it was criticized heavily by contemporaries for representing the concerns of a certain group of people at the court only. This political partiality in history works aroused many critical voices, e.g. by the scholars Wang Ao 王鏊 (1450-1524), Zheng Xiao 鄭曉 (1499-1566), Lang Ying 朗瑛 (1487-ca. 1566) and Shen Defu 沈德符 (1578-1642) who all condemned the

⁶⁶⁴ The *Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty* “is a collection of chronologically arranged primary sources from the Ming court.” The *shilu* of 13 reigns from Ming Taizu 明太祖 (r. 1368-1398) until the Tianqi 天啟 Emperor, Ming Xizong 明熹宗 (r. 1621-1627), are incorporated in 2,606 scrolls. Every veritable record of one emperor was compiled directly after his death, and the current emperor wrote a preface (*yu zhi xu* 御製序). See “Chinese Literature—*Mingshilu* 明實錄 ‘Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/mingshilu.html>, last accessed: May 4th, 2015.

⁶⁶⁵ *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, *juan* 卷 8, *shi si* 史四, p. 73.

Mingshilu.⁶⁶⁶ What was criticized mostly, was the partial view of the writers according to their sympathies and antipathies, which in most cases did not only stem from and express the Confucian ideal of praise and blame, but rather reflected rivalries between different groups at the court—accordingly, the veritable records could be manipulated by political disputes between the members of the compilation commission involved.⁶⁶⁷

Still, in fact, the authors themselves did not get many possibilities of interlacing their own opinion. “Adjustments,” deletion of inglorious events and obvious falsifications were ordered by superior officials or the emperor himself. Furthermore, in some cases writings could be suppressed at all, albeit generally such censorship was prohibited. Unintended mistakes were common, as well. After all, it was an important political task to write the veritable records, although cases are known—e.g. the case of the Veritable Records of the Hongwu Emperor (*Taizu shilu* 太祖實錄)—where seals were broken in order to change the content in the aftermath. Also the *Huizong shilu* 惠宗實錄 about the Jianwen 建文 Emperor (r. 1398-1402)—included in the *Taizong shilu* 太宗實錄 of the Yongle 永樂 Emperor—and the *Daizong shilu* 代宗實錄 of the Jingtai 景泰 Emperor (r. 1449-1457)—included in the *Yingzong shilu* 英宗實錄 of the Zhengtong 正統 Emperor (r. 1435-1449 and 1457-1464)—are doubted to be originals; especially the discussions about the Guangzong Veritable Records (*Guangzong shilu* 光宗實錄) about the Taichang 泰昌 Emperor (r. 1620) were discussed controversially because many different lobbies at the court were involved: There was a dispute going on between the eunuchs and the Confucian Donglin faction (*Donglin dang* 東林黨, see p. 205, FN 606); in-between was the emperor. The compilation of the veritable records first was affiliated with one party, later with the other, which led to alterations of facts and of the manner of presentation. Moreover, modifications made by private persons occurred as well; parts of the Veritable Records of the Emperor Xizong (*Xizong shilu* 熹宗實錄) about the Tianqi 天啟 reign (1621-1627) were erased by a follower of the Donglin faction, for example. In general, the veritable records were kept secretly from

⁶⁶⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 741ff, 751; Mittag, Achim (2012), “Chinese Official Historical Writing under the Ming and Qing,” in Daniel Woolf, José Rabasa, Masayuki Sato and Edoardo Tortarolo (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing. Volume 3: 1400-1800*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 28.

⁶⁶⁷ Wolfgang Franke (1961b), pp. 68f.

mid Wanli 萬曆 reign period (1572-1620) to mid-sixteenth century. From that time on, more and more private families wanted to keep a copy which led to an abundance of copies in the private sector.⁶⁶⁸

In fact, almost all historical works contained subjective opinions. This is natural in the sense that Ming writers were too close to the history they wrote about; they themselves were involved in the events which they recorded. Therefore, the evaluation of affairs was also one-sided and could result in general approval or—as it happened in the case of the *Mingshilu*—in general criticism.⁶⁶⁹

The Reform of History Writing

Qualitative differences in the compilation of different history works partly resulted from the fact that the officials involved in this process also had many other obligations. The collection of historical data was additional work; hence, sometimes they were not eager to fulfill this task and did not pay enough attention to the selection of the sources. Because of these deficiencies and in order to solve these problems, a “reform of history writing” was set up to improve official history writing under the reign of Wanli. One important point of the reform was the re-installment of the diaries of activity and repose in 1575. Zhang Juzheng had advocated this point especially in his memorial from the same year, as he was of the opinion without the diaries (*qijuzhu*) there would be no reliable sources for the veritable records. In his memorial, he mentioned eight essential points: (1) The keeping of the diaries (*qijuzhu*) is to be regarded as the most important duty of a historian. One historian, who had to be replaced every day, was supposed to record everything spoken in an audience, all imperial edicts (*shengyu* 聖諭), proclamations or imperial orders (*zhao* 詔), decrees (*zhi* 旨), memorials and other documents of the Grand Secretariat. Six other historians were supposed to write down memorials of the six boards (*liubu* 六部) only. (2) There should be fixed dates and places for the writing of the diaries in the emperor’s presence. (3) There should be rules about the format of transmitting edicts and memorials to the *Guoshiguan*—for example, via the Grand Secretariat. (4) The accuracy was to be regarded more important than the style of writing; that means no literary style should be used. Instead, only events and

⁶⁶⁸ Wolfgang Franke (1961b), pp. 69-72, 75.

⁶⁶⁹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 752.

facts should be reported without giving any causal correlation between them or temporary sequences and without the writer's own opinion and praise or blame. (5) A building should be erected to host the *Guoshiguan* and its writing utensils. (6) There should be regulations for the storage and safeguard of the diaries: At the end of each month seven volumes should be bound, one with the collected diaries and the six others for the reports of the six boards. (7) There should be exact regulations for the copying attendants. (8) The events of the first two years of Wanli reign era should be recorded in concordance with the existing documentation material.⁶⁷⁰ The content of this memorial by Zhang Juzheng (1525-1582) very clearly explains the duties of official historians, and how official historiography should be written. The fourth duty which Zhang attributed to good history writing is very important: namely, to record the truth. He postulated compilers should only transfer the texts as they are, and should not alter anything, for the sake of truth should not use the literary style, and, last but not least, should not include any personal opinion or appraisal, so to say should not follow the norm of "praise and blame."⁶⁷¹ Therewith, Zhang Juzheng followed the currents which emerged in the private sector of historiography. The same as many other scholars of his time, he realized the shortcomings of official historiography and tried to improve and reform it. The procedure which resulted from this reform is described by the scholar Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558-1639)⁶⁷² in detail. This passage shows very clearly how hard it was tried to shield the archivists from any kind of influence. They were sealed off to guard them against voices from outside, and the whole process was very strict.⁶⁷³

每月初九日，將記注編纂等稿送內閣看定。十日，公同各官投櫃封鎖，年終並入大櫃。明常朝，御皇極門，即輪該日記注，並編纂官三四員，列於東班石欄銅香爐下，各科給事中之上。或午朝御皇極門，列於御座西稍南，隨從記錄。凡封稿之日，記注與編纂官於東

⁶⁷⁰ Wolfgang Franke (1961b), pp. 63f.

⁶⁷¹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 738ff.

⁶⁷² Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558-1639), *zi* 字: Zhongchun 仲醇, *hao* 號: Meigong 眉公 and Migong 麋公, originated from Huating, today's Songjiang District, Shanghai, and was a Ming time landscape painter and calligrapher and writer. His most famous compilation is the *Baoyantang miji* 寶顏堂秘笈, in which also very rare texts were incorporated. See "Persons in Chinese History—Chen Jiru 陳繼儒," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Ming/personschenjiru.html>, last accessed: February 10th, 2017.

⁶⁷³ Qian (2010), p. 109.

閣門外，分左右，如常朝儀，候中堂入東閣。先記注官入，分左右揖，次編纂官入揖，隨中堂同入右房，記注官收《起居注》，編纂官收《六曹章奏》入櫃。封完，出東閣，再揖如前。候中堂出門，柱邊揖別，復入東閣，記注一揖，與編纂一揖而別。⁶⁷⁴

At the beginning of each month on the ninth day, one takes the drafts of the diaries and the compilations to give it to the *Neige* for inspecting and deciding about it. On the tenth day, jointly each official goes to his cabinet and seals [himself] off; at the end of the year they simultaneously enter the big cabinet. Concerning the Ming imperial court, there is the imperial Huangji Gate, that is where the recording of these diaries is served in turns, and they are compiled by three or four officials at the same time. They line up in the east side of the court at the stone balustrade under the copper incense burner, and at the supervising censors of every office. Probably at noon [when the emperor ascends the throne to discuss political matters] at the imperial Huangji Gate, they line up west a little bit south of the imperial throne, and accompanying they take notes. On every day of sealing the manuscripts, the diarists and the compilers are outside of the door in the eastern pavilion, divided to the left and right as it was the usual court rite, and wait for the central scroll to enter the eastern pavilion. At first diarists enter, dividing to the left and right they bow with hands clapping for salutation. At second the compilers enter bowing with hands clapping for salutation; following the central scroll they enter the right room. The diarists gather the *qijuzhu*, the compilers the *Memorials of the Liucao*⁶⁷⁵ and enter the cabinet. When the sealing [of the documents] is completed, they leave the eastern pavilion, again bowing with hands clapping like before. They wait for

⁶⁷⁴ *Minglun huibian guanchang dian* 明倫彙編官常典, *juan* 卷 280, *Hanlinyuan bu* 翰林院部, *jishi er* 紀事二, di 第 279 ce 冊, di 第 11 ye zhi 頁之 1, online at *Gujin tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成, http://10.24.1.30.gjtsjc.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/home/content_level01.asp?cmd=search&hb=2&d=2&b=8&v=280&c=4&t=474&fix=1&fixsp=9#MyFix1 and <http://10.24.1.30.gjtsjc.erf.sbb.spk-berlin.de/home/page.asp?imgPg=2790111>, last accessed: July 18th, 2017.

⁶⁷⁵ The *Liucao* 六曹 are six administrative bodies from Eastern Han time (25-220 AD), namely the division of the three highest ranking officials (*sangong cao* 三公曹), the division of the Ministry of Personnel (*libu cao* 吏部曹), the division of the people (*min cao* 民曹), the division of the north and south zhuke (*nanbei liang zhuke cao* 南北兩主客曹), the division of the two thousand stones (*erqian shi cao* 二千石曹), and the division of all the government offices in the capital (*zhongdouguan cao* 中都官曹). *Houhanshu* 後漢書, *zhi di ershiliu* 志第二十六, “Baiguan san” 百官三.

the central scroll to come out of the door, and [standing] next to the pillars they wish goodbye bowing with hands clapping. [Then] again they enter the eastern pavilion, the diarists once again bowing and clapping hands, and the compilers once again bowing and clapping hands; then they part.

It is evident that in the third year of Emperor Wanli's reign (i.e. 1575) the reform about history writing in the late Ming had been seriously implemented. This institutionalization of the *qijuzhu* and the *zhangzou* 章奏 (memorials) of the six ministries (*liubu* 六部) was very convenient for the later compilation of the veritable records. This method was applied to reduce the dependence on local information collection; however, critical opinions remained. For example, Jiang Dejing 蔣德璟 (1593-1646)⁶⁷⁶ was against the reliance on the *qijuzhu* and the *zhangzou* because as a bureaucratic codification this system seemed to be too sketchy for him. Therefore, he responded to this development by expressing the following:⁶⁷⁷

作史難，讀史亦不易。自余在著作之庭，見所纂實錄，皆採科抄章奏與起居注兩者。而科抄多漏略，十僅得三四；起居自文書房傳論及閣揭外寥寥。即欲有所刪潤，以諸曹掌故與邸報，參補而已。又一二載筆，視為爛朝報，不經心。其高者胸臆為政，間規時局所向，行其高下。至於百十年之久，文獻俱湮，而野史與之錯行於世。繇今思之，古今史殆未可盡信也。⁶⁷⁸

Writing history is difficult; but reading history is not easy, too. I personally was in the hall where books are written and saw the veritable records being compiled. All gathered departments copied the two [sources], [namely] the memorials to the emperor and the diaries of activity and repose. But the departments when copying leave out and omit a lot: out of ten only three or four [are left]. The *qiju[zhu]* are

⁶⁷⁶ Jiang Dejing 蔣德璟 (1593-1646), *zi* 字: Zhongbao 中葆, *hao* 號: Bagong 八公 and also Ruoliu 若柳, originated from Fujian, and was a Ming time politician. In 1622, he received the *jinshi* degree; in 1642, he was appointed *daxueshi* 大學士 (Grand Secretary).

⁶⁷⁷ Qian (2010), p. 110.

⁶⁷⁸ *Mingwenhai* 明文海, by Huang Zongyi 黃宗義, *juan* 卷 230, *Xu ershiyi* 序 二十一, *jianshao xu* 鑑杓序, by Jiang Dejing 蔣德璟; from *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *jibu* 集部 (non-canonical works), *Zongji lei* 總集類.

passed on and told personally by the *Wenshufang*⁶⁷⁹ and, hence, the [top-secret] *Gejie*⁶⁸⁰ [wanderrings] outside are very few. Thus, if one wishes to somewhat revise and polish them, one [should] consult with all various official state archives and official gazettes and mend them, that's all! Moreover, if one or two writings and records are considered as decayed governmental bulletin, this is not careful [recording]. If the eminent ones have affections for the government, they separate the customs from that which is angled by the current political situation, and carry out its good and bad [deeds]. As for the duration of one hundred or so years, the documents related to the country's history all fell into oblivion; but the private history together with its mistakes is carried out in the world. Owing today's thought about it [i.e. private history], ancient and modern histories can hardly be entirely trusted.

The reforms were the beginning of improvements in the national history writing. Nevertheless, there were many critical points left, whereas one can say that Wang Shizhen's following statement is valid for the whole period of Ming dynasty and—in a positive sense—was the motivation for the emergence and sophistication of private history works; namely Wang articulated in his *Shicheng kaowu* 史乘考誤 (see chap. 11.5):

國史之失職未有甚於我朝者也。⁶⁸¹

National historiography never failed in its task
to such an extreme degree as under our dynasty.⁶⁸²

10.2 The Private Part: A Prosperous Time

Because of this failure of official historiography, scholars were motivated to write privately what they thought was right. Nevertheless, according to Wolfgang Franke “the line of distinction between semi-official, semi-private, and entirely private compilations

⁶⁷⁹ The *Wenshufang* 文書房 was an organization of all top-secret documents in Ming time, where the imperial court directly controlled the imperial edicts and mandates. Also called *zhichifang* 制敕房 (Building of controlling Imperial Mandates).

⁶⁸⁰ The *Gejie* 閣揭 were top-secret memorials which directly went from the *Neige* to the emperor.

⁶⁸¹ *Shicheng kaowu* 史澄考誤 yi 一, *juan* 卷 20, p. 855.

⁶⁸² Transl. by Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 732.

is in many cases difficult to draw.” This is due to the fact, as mentioned before, that scholars normally held an official post and at the same time wrote private history works, “either in active service at the court” (*zaichao* 在朝) or “retired [...] in the wilderness” (*zaiye* 在野).⁶⁸³ Nevertheless, the large amount of this kind of non-official history works was a particular characteristic of Ming dynasty history writing. This “unofficial historiography” (*yeshi* 野史), which mainly consisted of so called *biji* 筆記 (Collected Notes or Notebooks), was the main reason why so many history works emerged in Ming China.⁶⁸⁴ These *biji* were supposed to collect things from the past (*zhanggu* 掌故), and they are a characteristic of later Ming historical writing. The name “unofficial” or “private history” derives from the fact that such works were compiled by private individuals without the official assignment to do so. The term was first used in the *Treatise on Literature of the Tang History* in the title *Taihe yeshi* 太和野史 (Private History of Emperor Wenzong to Emperor Zhaozong, 827-889)⁶⁸⁵ by Gongsha Zhongmu 公沙仲穆.⁶⁸⁶ The *biji* mostly were classified as belonging to the category *zibu* 子部 (“Masters and Philosophers,” i.e. the non-canonical writers), in the sections *zajia* 雜家 and *xiaoshuo* 小說 of the traditional Chinese categories of literature,⁶⁸⁷ not to the *shibu* (history) section. Although they seem to be non-organized scriptures, they contain worthy information about historical topics.⁶⁸⁸ “The purpose of the authors [of *biji*] was in most cases the desire to supply materials for learned and witty conversations [...] But often the authors hoped to supplement the official histories by writing down their own experiences and information. Another purpose was to illustrate traditional ethics by

⁶⁸³ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 756.

⁶⁸⁴ Mittag (2005), p. 367.

⁶⁸⁵ This title is also to be found in the *Xintangshu* 新唐書: 公沙仲穆《大和野史》十卷[起大和, 盡龍紀。]右雜史類八十八家, 一百七部, 一千八百二十八卷。失姓名八家, 元行沖以下不著錄六十八家, 八百六十一卷。See *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 58, *zhi* 志 48, *yiwén* 藝文 2, vol. 5, p. 1469.

⁶⁸⁶ Han (1955), p. 42.

⁶⁸⁷ Classical Chinese literature was divided into four categories (*sibu* 四部), namely: the classics (*jingbu* 經部), the history works (*shibu* 史部), the “Masters and Philosophers” (*zibu* 子部), and the category of the belles-lettres (*jibu* 集部). The *zibu* included Confucian (*rujia* 儒家), military (*bingjia* 兵家), Legalist (*fajia* 法家), agricultural (*nongjia* 農家), medical (*yijia* 醫家), astronomical and mathematical (*tianwen suanfa* 天文算法), scientific (*pulu* 譜錄), miscellaneous (*zajia* 雜家), Buddhist (*shijia* 釋家), and Daoist treatises (*daoja* 道家), divination books (*shushu* 術數), treatises on art (*yishu* 藝術), encyclopedias (*leishu* 類書), and novels and stories (*xiaoshuojia* 小說家).

⁶⁸⁸ Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 98.

giving examples of behavior both laudable and blamable.”⁶⁸⁹ The concrete subjects dealt with in the notebooks are, for example, the Confucian Classics, literature or the history of earlier times. In some collections the “Collected Notes” are even categorized under the history division (*shibu*), in the section of *bieshi* 別史⁶⁹⁰ or *zashi* 雜史.⁶⁹¹ Wang Shizhen’s *Yanshantang bieji* 弇山堂別集 (Alternative Records from the Yanshan Studio) from 1590 and his *Yanzhou shiliao* 弇州史料 (Historical Material from Yanzhou) published in 1614 are such kinds listed under the *bieshi*-category.⁶⁹²

Many private history works in the annalistic pattern (*biannianti*) were created: for example, the *Huang Ming tongji* 皇明通紀 (Comprehensive Annals of Imperial Ming Dynasty) from 1555 by Chen Jian 陳建 (1495-1567), Shen Guoyuan’s 沈國元 *Huang Ming tongji congxin lu* 皇明從信錄 (Trustworthy Record of the Imperial Ming) of 1620 and the *Shigang pingyao* 史綱評要 (Critical Commentaries on Historical Figures) from 1610 attributed to Li Zhi. Furthermore, the *Xianzhang lu* 憲章錄 (Record of Previous Examples to Learn)⁶⁹³ of 1573 by Xue Yingqi 薛應啟 covering the beginning of Ming dynasty until 1521, the *Zhaodai dianze* 昭代典則 (Canonic Regulations of Our Glorious Dynasty)⁶⁹⁴ of 1600 by Huang Guangsheng 黃光昇 (Ming time until 1527), the *Ming dazheng zuanyao* 明大政纂要 (Essentials of Ming Administration) of 1619 by Tan Xisi 譚希思, the extraordinary *Guo que* 國權 (Discussions about the Ming State)⁶⁹⁵ of 1653 by Tan Qian 談遷, which covers the whole Ming period, were based on

⁶⁸⁹ Herbert Franke (1961a), pp. 116f.

⁶⁹⁰ *Bieshi* (“The Separate Histories”) are historical works which cannot be categorized as *zhengshi* and the in three styles of writing (*biannian*, *jizhuan*, *jishi benmo*). The topics are diverse and cover different dynasties; in contrast to the *zashi*, the *bieshi* texts outline important political subjects, for example in official publications or “revised editions of dynastic histories.” Han (1955), p. 41.

⁶⁹¹ The *zashi* or miscellaneous histories, in comparison to the *bieshi* and *zhengshi*, cover smaller issues and subjects of smaller importance. Han (1955), p. 41; Wolfgang Franke (1968), pp. 98f.

⁶⁹² Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 760.

⁶⁹³ Dai Lianbin (2012), “Books, Reading, and Knowledge in Ming China,” Dissertation at the University of Oxford, p. 319.

⁶⁹⁴ “Chinese Literature—*Zhaodai dianze* 昭代典則 ‘Canonic regulations of Our Glorious Dynasty,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zhaodaidianze.html>, last accessed: February 23rd, 2017.

⁶⁹⁵ “Chinese Literature—*Guo que* 國權則,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/guoque.html>, last accessed: February 23rd, 2017.

documentary materials and were elaborated very detailed. Other annalistic works deal with limited parts of Ming dynasty only, e.g. the *Longfei jilüe* 龍飛紀略 (Short Chronicle of the Dragon's Rise) of 1542 or 1544 by Wu Pu 吳朴 (fl. 1539-1550) covering the period from 1352 to 1402, Fan Shouji's 範守己 (1542-ca. 1611) *Huangming Suhuáng wàishǐ* 皇明肅皇外史 (Unofficial History of the Respectful Emperor of the Great Ming) of 1582 which encompasses the Jiajing 嘉靖 period (1521-1567) using material not included in the veritable records, and the *Chongzhen changbian* 崇禎長編 (Extended Records of the Chongzhen Reign) by Wang Ji 王楫 from early Qing supplementing the *Mingshilu* by dealing with the Chongzhen period (1628-1644) for which no veritable records exist.⁶⁹⁶

In addition to the annalistic works, also many historical compilations in the composite or biographic-thematic style (*jizhuanti*) were written, taking the *Tongjian jishi benmo* 鑑紀事本末 (Historical Events of the Comprehensive Mirror in their Entirety)⁶⁹⁷ from Southern Song as model. The *Mingshi jishi benmo* 明史紀事本末 (Historical Events from the Ming Period in their Entirety) by Gu Yingtai 谷應泰 (1620-1690), for example, took many and also rare sources into account making it “one of the most reliable early works on Ming history.” Moreover, there is a wide range of different treatises in the composite style often focusing on a certain period of time and classified in the *shibu*-section as *bieshi*, such as Wang Shizhen's works.⁶⁹⁸ As another or specific category, the biographical records stand out. Many of them were composed in Ming time, often not clearly distinguishing between history and literature because of their purpose of paying respect to the dead. The most important collections of biographies are Jiao Hong's *Guochao xianzheng lu* 國朝獻徵錄 (Evident (Worthies) of Our Dynasty) and Gu Sili's 顧嗣立 *Huangming wenhai* 皇明文海 (Sea of Letters of the Imperial

⁶⁹⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 758f; “Chinese Literature—*Chongzhen changbian* 崇禎長編,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/chongzhenchangbian.html>, last accessed: February 23rd, 2017.

⁶⁹⁷ “Chinese Literature—*Tongjian jishi benmo* 通鑑紀事本末,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/tongjianjishibenmo.html>, last accessed: February 23rd, 2017.

⁶⁹⁸ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 759f.

Ming). Likewise, many works also include biographical sections in which personalities were evaluated, e.g. Li Zhi's *Cangshu* and *Xu Cangshu*.⁶⁹⁹

As noted before, there are many other works asserting to have a historical background and covering historical topics. Therefore, this chapter does not claim to present a thorough depiction of all categories of history writing in Ming dynasty. The next chapters approach the most important feature of Ming historiography, namely the historical criticism which emerged in a large scale in this time. The aim is to analyze the emerging critical tendencies by presenting examples of eminent Ming time historians and their privately composed works, which represent and clearly show the modern trends in late Ming time historiography. Furthermore, the innovative statements about how not to write history (the critical part) are complemented by considerations about how to write history (the theoretical part) by taking into account and taking as a model Liu Zhiji's ideas in his *Shitong*.

⁶⁹⁹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 760f, 763.

11. The Critical Part: A Survey of the Development of Critical Tendencies Towards Historiography in Late Ming Dynasty

The development of historiography often is measured by examining the rising of new genre styles or the potential of critical voices; and this is a very modern point of view because criticism is often—definitively justifiably—equaled to freedom of thought. Looking at the case of Ming dynasty historiography, the critical potential at first sight does not seem to be overwhelming. In the *shiping* 史評 section (historical critique), in the *Siku quanshu* only two works out of 22—namely the *Xueshi* 學史 (see chap. 11.1) and the *Shijiu* 史糾 (see chap. 11.9)—are listed dating from Ming dynasty. In contrast, for example, from Song dynasty thirteen compilations are to be found.⁷⁰⁰ This obfuscates the fact that in Ming dynasty there was, indeed, a tremendous increase in the production of historical works, especially in the field of *shiping*-literature. In fact, according to Achim Mittag about 64 out of the 122 *shiping* compilations which are mentioned in the *cunmu* 存目 edition of the *Siku quanshu* are from Ming dynasty.⁷⁰¹ This clearly depicts the increasing historical criticism in Ming China. Indeed, this movement had already started in Song dynasty—especially the critique of ancient classics and history books—, but it did gain momentum in Ming dynasty. This rediscovery or re-appraisal of the category of *shiping* literature, thence, was a main feature of Ming time historiography.

What was the criticism all about? Influenced by the current public discourse on truth, the question of what is right and wrong was transferred to historiography. Accompanying this discourse, a lot of critical tendencies and attitudes arose among scholars, and the rediscovery of the *Shitong* and of *shiping*-works in general were manifestations of this ongoing discourse about history writing, as it was already raised as a subject. The origin of the modern (critical) tendencies in Ming time historiography was the criticism towards the official history writing. To name but a few Wang Shizhen, He Qiaoxin, He Liangjun and the grand secretary Zhang Juzheng reflectively

⁷⁰⁰ Mittag (2002), p. 17.

⁷⁰¹ Mittag (2002), p. 18.

contemplated and evaluated official historiography; their reaction consisted of serious critique towards official historiography and—at least valid for the first three—a concentration on private historiography. In the process of critical analysis two kinds of critique appeared, namely criticizing historical writings and criticizing historical happenings, which in many cases were intertwined. The critique of official historiography was extended to critical arguments not only about Ming time official history but also about official histories of former ages. Assessing Ming time official writing was paralleled by critical voices towards Neo-Confucianism as the prevalent orthodox ideology, while the evaluation of former history works led to the question whether the classics could be regarded as history works and to judging statements about the classics in general. Of special significance for the critique of compilations was a critical approach concerning the sources of texts. The following analysis of emerging tendencies towards a critical analysis of history works, the classics, Neo-Confucianism and the sources used in historiography will disclose modern trends turning up in late Ming time historiography and show that Ming historians, indeed, broke through the autocratic and dictated way of thinking.

This chapter addresses the depiction of the development of critical tendencies towards historiography from mid to late Ming period on the basis of an exemplary analysis of certain historians and their writings. One of the first leverage points of this critical approach is the critique towards the Chinese classics and especially towards official historiography and the Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史) which was omnipresent in the private realm of scholarly discussion. As mentioned before, with the newly awakened awareness of particular rules which have to be followed when writing history, also former history works came into re-evaluation. In the course of this evaluation, historians broke through the limits of dictated thinking. These significant considerations happened in small treatises or even in monographs. Some of them will be introduced in the following chronologically. One of the first example of such a single work about the evaluation of ancient history writings is Shao Bao's 邵寶 (1460-1527) *Xueshi* 學史.

11.1 Shao Bao—Early Historical Criticism and his *Xueshi* 學史

Shao Bao 邵寶 was a scholar from Wuxi in the Jiangnan area. In 1484, he received his *jinshi* degree and nine years later became vice-director and then director of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu* 戶部). Afterwards he was promoted several times and held posts in the province. When acting as Investigating Vice-Censor in charge of education in Jiangxi, he was very popular and was known for caring about the irrigation system and having restored the White Deer Grotto Academy (*Bailu shuyuan* 白鹿書院), whose basis was the practice of pursuing knowledge. After occupying the post of an investigation commissioner in Zhejiang, in 1509 he was promoted Right Vice-Censor-in-Chief and Director-General of Grain Transport; two years later he inquired to be dismissed from his official posts. Shao Bao was highly praised by contemporaries because of his great literary talent concerning prose and poem. In contrast to later mentioned scholars of the Ming, Shao Bao was a disciple of the dominating Cheng-Zhu Confucianism. The topics of his writings are manifold, to name but a few these are the *Jianduan erylü* 簡端二餘, the *Dingxing shushuo* 定性書說, the *Caozheng juyao* 漕政舉要, the *Huishanji* 慧山記, the *Rongchun tangji* 容春堂集, and his Study on History (*Xueshi* 學史), which will be the focus of the study on Shao Bao.⁷⁰²

*The Xueshi*⁷⁰³

The *Xueshi* 學史 (Study on History) by Shao Bao is one of the first works concentrating on the assessment of history works in Ming dynasty. According to the abstract in the *Siku quanshu*,⁷⁰⁴ Shao compiled the work during his time as Vice-Censor in charge of education in Jiangxi. The structure of the *Xueshi* is very interesting because it follows the Chinese ancient calendar. It is arranged in twelve plus one chapters, according to the

⁷⁰² *Wanxing tongpu* 萬姓統譜, *juan* 103, p. 2865. Ling Lizhong (2013), “Expressing Innate Knowledge of the Good: The Implied Meaning in Guo Xu’s ‘An Old Lady Feeds the Hero,’” in Shane McCausland and Yin Hwang (eds.), *On Telling Images of China: Essays in Narrative Painting and Visual Culture*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 125ff; Fung, Stanislaus (2003), “Movement and Stillness in Ming: Writings on Gardens,” in Michael Conan (ed.), *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, p. 249.

⁷⁰³ For the table of contents, see Appendix V.3.

⁷⁰⁴ For the translation of the abstract of the *Xueshi* in the *Siku quanshu*, see Appendix V.2

twelve earthly branches⁷⁰⁵ (*dizhi* 地支), so to say “months”, plus one part named *run* 閏 which represents an additional month inserted into the lunar calendar. In his arrangement, Shao Bao started with the beginning of spring, with the third month of the cycle, namely *yin* 寅. After the twelfth branch *hai* 亥 the order is continued with *zi* 子, the first month. The *run* follows at the end, so to say after the second branch (*chou* 丑). Even within these “months” the association with the calendar is uphold: While *yin* 寅 (third month), *chen* 辰 (fifth month), *wu* 午 (seventh month), *wei* 未 (eighth month), *you* 酉 (tenth month), *hai* 亥 (twelfth month) and *chou* 丑 (second month) each have thirty chapters—referring to the thirty days of a month—, *mao* 卯 (fourth month), *si* 巳 (sixth month), *shen* 申 (ninth month), *xu* 戌 (eleventh month), *zi* 子 (first month) and the extra month *run* 閏 each have twenty-nine chapters.

The single chapters consist of citations from classics and former history works which were commented by Shao Bao. These comments are always initiated by the words *ri gezi yue* 日格子曰 (“Master Rige says”). In the *Xueshi* “Rigezi” was Shao Bao’s pseudonym; the Qianlong preface explained this name by expressing that Shao Bao to the utmost adopted Cheng Yi’s 程頤⁷⁰⁶ saying “Today investigate one thing, tomorrow investigate one thing” (今日格一物，明日格一物); thereof the name “Master of daily investigating” (*Rige zi* 日格子) emerged. Using this schema of citation and annotation, he commented on every kind of classical work from Zhou until Yuan dynasties. The most cited and annotated ancient works are the *Shiji* 史記 (altogether 77 appearances) and the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (68 appearances). Moreover, he also examined parts of, e.g., the *Songshi* 宋史 (34 citations), *Tangshu* 唐書⁷⁰⁷ (32 citations), *Hanshu*

⁷⁰⁵ “In Chinese Yijing culture, TianGan [天干] Dizhi [地支], the Heavenly Stems and the Earthly Branches, define the time-space axis of the universe and unlock the nature of everything in existence. They are the secret code of the universal way.” The system can be traced back at least to oracle bones from Xia and Shang dynasties. In official records since Western Han dynasty they were used as calendrical reference. Wu Zhongxian and Karin Taylor Wu (2014), *Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches—TianGan DiZhi: The Heart of Chinese Wisdom Traditions*, London: Singing Dragon, p. 4. For more information on the Chinese calendar, see “The Chinese Calendar,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/calendar.html>, last accessed. May 17th, 2017.

⁷⁰⁶ Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107) is one of the Cheng brothers and one of the Six Great Masters of the eleventh century. He was a philosopher and together with his brother Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085) was one of the initiators of Neo-Confucianism.

⁷⁰⁷ This means the *Jiutangshu* as well as the *Xintangshu*.

漢書 (20 citations), *Houhanshu* 後漢書 (18 citations), *Gongyangzhuan* 公羊傳⁷⁰⁸ (17 citations), *Jinshu* 晉書 (14 citations), *Sanguozhi* 三國志 (12 citations) or other popular works. Altogether citations from 49 works from different periods and styles are included, while the official dynasty histories occupy the largest part.⁷⁰⁹

Although it follows a strict structure, namely that of the ancient calendar, the succession of the single passages does not seem to follow any order at all. As the table of content reveals (see Appendix V.3), the passages are rather confused: *Juan* one contains passages mostly from the *Shiji* and the *Zuozhuan*, but also from the *Songshi* and the *Sanguozhi*, *Jinshu* and *Nanshi*. Besides the just mentioned works, the second *juan* also includes texts with comments from the *Gongyangzhuan*, the *Tangshu*, the *Liangshu* 梁書,⁷¹⁰ the *Zizhi Tongjian* and so on. Except from the ninth *juan*, where a reference to then *Zuozhuan* is missing, and the twelfth, where no part from the *Shiji* is included, every *juan* contains passages from the *Shiji* and the *Zuozhuan* which proves their importance to the author. In general, the diversity of works included increases with the number of *juan*. As the whole *Xueshi* appears as a collection of notes made during the study of the mentioned works, the just mentioned fact leads to the suggestion that Shao Bao started his studies on ancient works with the *Shiji* and the *Zuozhuan* and—maybe due to references—over the time took other works into account. Accordingly, the *Xueshi* can be seen as a report about Shao Bao’s studies on history.

Concerning the content, the evaluation of the text passages is very different and contains various ways of assessing. For example, in his first *juan* in the case of “The Family Records of Duke Zhou of Lu”⁷¹¹ from the *Shiji* (*juan* 33), Shao Bao only gave additional explanations to the paragraph in the *Shiji*. The original cited passage reads as follows:

⁷⁰⁸ The *Gongyangzhuan* 公羊傳 (The Commentary of Gongyang) is a commentary to the *Chunqiu*.

⁷⁰⁹ For a table of appearances of cited works in the *Xueshi*, see Appendix V.4.

⁷¹⁰ “The *Liangshu* 梁書 ‘Book of the Liang’ is the official dynastic history (*zhengshi* 正史) of the Liang dynasty 梁 (502-557). It was written during the early Tang period 唐 (618-907) by Yao Silian 姚思廉 and is 56 *juan* ‘scrolls’ long, 6 of which are imperial biographies (*benji* 本紀) and 50 normal biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳). Treatises are not included at all.” See “Chinese Literature—*Liangshu* 梁書,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/liangshu.html>, last accessed: February 24th, 2017.

⁷¹¹ For the history of the state of Lu, refer to “Chinese History—The Feudal State of Lu 魯,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/rulers-lu.html>, last accessed: February 24th, 2017.

周公在豐，病，將沒，曰：“必葬我成周，以明吾不敢離成王。”周公既卒，成王亦讓，葬周公於畢，從文王以明予小子不敢臣周公也。

【史記魯世家】⁷¹²

The Duke of Zhou was at Feng and fell ill. When he was about to die, he said: “Make sure to bury me at Chengzhou, so as to make clear that I do not venture to leave King Cheng.” After the Duke of Zhou expired, King Cheng indeed yielded [to him] and buried him at Bi to follow King Wen, so as to make clear that “I, the little one,” did not venture to treat the Duke of Zhou as a vassal.⁷¹³

To the described anecdote Shao Bao’s commentary reads as follows:

日格子曰：葬人之終事也。周公然且謹之而況其生哉！於成周臣道也，成王不敢，當則何以易之於畢子道也。舍臣道而就子道，周公其慰矣夫。⁷¹⁴

Master Rige (Shao Bao) says: The entire affair is about burying men. However, the Duke of Zhou is still very careful about this, and furthermore about his life! [Burying him] in Chengzhou he would be in the position of a vassal. But if King Cheng did not venture [this], how is it correct to change it and [bury him] at Bi like he was in the position of the son? By abandoning the position of a vassal and just [granting him] the position of a master, the Duke of Zhou then was comforted!

Here, Shao Bao appears as commentator making the issue clearer to the reader. However, this is not a critique in the proper sense. In his comment to the “Postface and Autobiography of the Grand Scribe [i.e. Sima Qian]” (*Taishigong zixu* 太史公自序) in the *Shiji*—appearing in the first *juan* of the *Xueshi* as well—another method of commenting is introduced. In this place, a critical approach is perceptible.

⁷¹² *Xueshi* 學史 (History of Studies), by Shao Bao 邵寶, in Wang Yunwu 王雲五 (ed.), *Siku quanshu xunben sanji* 四庫全書珍本三集 3, *shibu* 史部 15, *shiping lei* 史評類, Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書), 1969, *juan* 1, pp. 1b, 2a.

⁷¹³ Translation cited from Nienhauser, William; Sima Qian (2006), *The Grand Scribe’s Records*, Vol. 5.1: *The Hereditary Houses of Pre-Han China, Part 1*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 139.

⁷¹⁴ *Xueshi*, *juan* 1, p. 2a.

太初元年，十一月甲子朔旦冬至，天曆始改，建於明堂，諸神受紀。

【史記太史公自序】⁷¹⁵

[It] was the first year of the era Taichu [i.e. 104 BC].⁷¹⁶ At dawn on the first day of the eleventh month, the day *jiazi* [Dec. 25, 105], the zenith of winter, the calendar of the heavens was first corrected and set up in the Illustrious Hall. All the spirits received the chronology.⁷¹⁷ (*Shiji*, self-preface of the Taishigong)

日格子曰：有天曆有人曆，天曆始十一月甲子朔夜半冬至，如環無窮終則復始太史公所謂天曆，此之謂也。人曆合是而已！故曰夏數得天不得天，不足謂之曆。王者，三正迭建改正，不改曆。⁷¹⁸

Master Rige says: There is the calendar of the heaven and there is the calendar of man. If the calendar of heaven begins at dawn on the first day of the eleventh month, the day *jiazi* [Dec. 25, 105], the zenith of winter, like a ring without an end then again starts the by the *taishigong* so-called calendar of heaven; this is what it is called. The calendar of man equally is true and that is all! Therefore, it is said that the Xia dynasty frequently observed the eternal laws of motion [i.e. the Way of Heaven], but observing the eternal laws of motion cannot be called a calendar. The emperors repeatedly constructed and corrected the Sanzheng,⁷¹⁹ but they did not change the calendar.

In this annotation, a clear critique of the happenings during the ancient dynasties is expressed: Shao Bao accused the Xia dynasty of not providing a true and reliable calendar while only “observing the way of heaven;” even after the three calendar systems of the Xia, the Shang, and the Zhou—each having another first month when the calendric year began—were corrected, they did not adjust the calendar. Only now, at the

⁷¹⁵ *Xueshi*, *juan* 1, p. 7b.

⁷¹⁶ This is the year in which Sima Qian started to write the *Shiji*.

⁷¹⁷ Burton Watson and Sima Qian (1958), *Ssu-ma Ch'ien Grand Historian of China*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 50.

⁷¹⁸ *Xueshi*, *juan* 1, p. 7b.

⁷¹⁹ 1.) Xia let the year begin in the third month, *yin* 寅, (*Xiazheng* 夏正); the Yin or Shang let the year begin in the fourth month, *mao* 卯, (*Yinzheng* 殷正), and the Zhou let the year begin in the fifth month, *chen* 辰, (*Zhouzheng* 周正)—the sanzheng are the “three first months.” See “Terms in Chinese History—Calendar, Chronology, Astronomy,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/calendar.html>, last accessed: February 24th, 2017.

time of Sima Qian in the year 105 the calendar finally was corrected. Again, Shao Bao here gave an additional explanation to a short statement. Another example is the next paragraph from the Confucius' biography from "the Biographies of the Feudal Houses and Eminent Persons" in the *Shiji*. Shao Bao included this passage and its comment in the first *juan*.

孔子至陳，主於司城貞子家。歲餘，[...] 有隼集於陳廷而死，楛矢貫之，石砮，矢長尺有咫。陳潛公使使問仲尼。仲尼曰：隼來遠矣，此肅慎之矢也。[...] 孔子居陳三歲。【史記孔子世家】⁷²⁰

When Confucius reached [the state of] Chen, he lived at the home of Sicheng Zhenzi [a senior official]. After some years, there was a hawk gathering in the court of Chen and then dying because an arrow-thorn wood arrow passed through it. Concerning the arrow, its length was eight inches. When Duke Min of Chen asked Confucius [about it], Confucius replied: If the hawk comes from far away, then it is the arrow of the Suzhen.⁷²¹ Confucius lived at the place of [the Duke of] Chen for three years. (*Shiji*, biography of the hereditary family of Confucius)

日格子曰：吾以是知孔子之未嘗為陳侯周臣也。使誠為臣者隼之問曷為不於廷，而使使即其所主乎！又曷為其不召乎！大史公不曰：仕。陳而曰：居陳三歲其不為陳臣也。明矣，然則孟子何以言之？孟子之言蓋著貞子之為臣也。善擇其君而非待人與癰疽者比也。而孔子之所王正矣。司城宋官名貞其諡也。蓋賢大夫春秋時大夫出而仕鄰國者多有之。⁷²²

Master Rige says: I, therefore, know that Confucius was never Chen Houzhou's⁷²³ subject. That he asked about the hawk why it was not in the court makes him [i.e. Chen Houzhou] actually become the subject, and makes the former one therefore become the master! Moreover, why did he not call for him! The great historian [i.e. Sima Qian, the author] did not say: "He served as an official." Instead, the [Duke of] Chen said:

⁷²⁰ *Xueshi*, *juan* 1, pp. 3a-b.

⁷²¹ Suzhen 肅慎 refers to an ancient nationality in the North-East; also called Nüzhen.

⁷²² *Xueshi*, *juan* 1, p. 3b.

⁷²³ Chen Houzhou 陳侯周 was a man from the *Chunqiu* period; he was also called Chen Huai Gongzi 陳懷公子.

He resided three years there but did not act as a subject of [the state of] Chen. If this is clear, then why did Mengzi say this?⁷²⁴ Mengzi's saying hides the loyal person and lets him become a subject. One [has to] choose his monarch well, and not serve a man comparable to an ulcer. But Confucius' sovereign was upright; Sicheng, an official from Song dynasty [in the Warring States period], had the "Loyal one" as posthumous title. Such virtuous senior officials [also appear] in the *Chunqiu* time. Senior officials going out and serving as an official [elsewhere], these are many in the neighboring countries.

Again, Shao Bao here provided additional explanations to a passage from the *Shiji* and, hence, elucidated the meaning behind this short episode illustrated above. The question raised is about the status of the person of Confucius in the state of Chen. Shao pointed out that Confucius did not serve as an official in the state of Chen, so he was not a subject of the state of Chen. The interesting part in this critique is that Shao, here, went one step further and took into account other sources, namely the *Book of Mencius* (Mengzi 孟子); he revealed that this book used a wrong interpretation resulting in a wrong depiction of the person of Confucius.

In general, the *Xueshi* appears as a yet uncoordinated early approach to historical criticism. In most cases, it provides the reader with additional information to stories and

⁷²⁴ Shao Bao here refers to a passage in the *Mengzi* in the chapter 'Wan Zhang shang' 萬章上 by Mengzi. In the eighth paragraph, Wan Zhang asked: "Some say that Confucius, when he was in Wei, lived with the ulcer-doctor, and when he was in Ch'i, with the attendant, Ch'i Hwan; was it so?" (或谓孔子于卫主痼疽，于齐主侍人瘠环，有诸乎?) Mengzi then replied: "No; it was not so. Those are the inventions of men fond of strange things. 2. When he was in Wei, he lived with Yan Ch'au-yu. The wives of the officer Mi and Tsze-lu were sisters, and Mi told Tsze-lu, "If Confucius will lodge with me, he may attain to the dignity of a high noble of Wei." Tsze-lu informed Confucius of this, and he said, "That is as ordered by Heaven." Confucius went into office according to propriety, and retired from it according to righteousness. In regard to his obtaining office or not obtaining it, he said, "That is as ordered." But if he had lodged with the attendant Chi [i.e. Ch'i] Hwan, that would neither have been according to righteousness, nor any ordering of Heaven. 3. When Confucius, being dissatisfied in Lu and Wei, had left those States, he met with the attempt of Hwan, the Master of the Horse, of Sung, to intercept and kill him. He assumed, however, the dress of a common man, and passed by Sung. At that time, though he was in circumstances of distress, he lodged with the city-master Ch'ang, who was then a minister of Chau, the marquis of Ch'an. 4. I have heard that the characters of ministers about court may be discerned from those whom they entertain, and those of stranger officers, from those with whom they lodge. If Confucius had lodged with the ulcer-doctor, and with the attendant Chi Hwan, how could he have been Confucius?" ("否，不然也。好事者为之也。于卫主颜雠由。弥子之妻与子路之妻，兄弟也。弥子谓子路曰：'孔子主我，卫卿可得也。'子路以告。孔子曰：'有命。'孔子进以礼，退以义，得之不得曰'有命'。而主痼疽与侍人瘠环，是无义无命也。孔子悦于鲁卫，遭宋桓司马将要而杀之，微服而过宋。是时孔子当厄，主司城贞子，为陈侯周臣。吾闻观近臣，以其所为主；观远臣，以其所主。若孔子主痼疽与侍人瘠环，何以为孔子？") For the original, refer to *Mengzi* 孟子, *juan* 卷 9, pp. 156f. The translation derives from Legge (1960), Wang Chang PART I, Chapter VIII, pp. 365f.

happenings told in the original texts. At the same time, this additional information contain a very distinctive and differentiated view on happenings. Shao Bao concentrated on the first way of criticizing history, namely the critique of historical happenings themselves (in contrast to the critique on how historical events are depicted, namely how history is actually written). Therefore, Shao can be regarded as one of the first scholars occupying himself with historical criticism. Furthermore, for the evaluation of the described happenings he used other references and sources as additional material which was a very modern approach for his time. His works can be regarded as the prelude to the historical criticism which was to follow. The main actor of this process was the already mentioned Wang Shizhen.

11.2 Zhu Yunming—Criticizing Neo-Confucianism

Another person to be named as one of the first representatives of this new critical attitude was Zhu Yunming 祝允明 (1461-1527), *zi* 字: Xizhe 希哲, also called Zhu Zhishan 祝枝山, from Changzhou 長洲 in Suzhou. Zhu was a very intelligent child who already at the age of eight began to write poems. During his studies of the classics, he irritated his teachers with his unorthodox thinking and skepticism towards Neo-Confucianism. In 1492, he received his *juren* degree with commendation, but failed in later examinations. Thus, he spent his time at home studying, reading and engaging in scholarly activities. Together with his *littérateur* colleagues Xu Zhenqing 徐禎卿 (1479-1511), Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559) and Tang Yin 唐寅 (1470-1523; also called Tang Bohu 唐伯虎),⁷²⁵ he occasionally went on trips to acquire inspiration. In 1515, he was appointed magistrate of Xingning 興寧 in Guangdong where he distinguished himself by his fair and constructive behavior. Five years later, Zhu was promoted to be assistant prefect of Yingtian 應天 (today's region of Nanjing) where he was responsible for financial matters. Due to his bad health condition, he returned home and devoted the last years of his life to scholarly affairs and literature. Zhu is considered an eminent intellectual of his time, for he did not agree with common thoughts, questioned values and norms of Confucianism and criticized social standards; Zhu

⁷²⁵ These four scholars were called the “Four great southern talents” of the Ming (*Jiangnan sida caizi* 江南四大才子), namely: Tang Bohu 唐伯虎, Zhu Yunming 祝允明, Wen Zhengming 文徵明 and Xu Zhenqing 徐禎卿.

addressed criticism to Xunzi, Mengzi and the Duke of Zhou and attempted the Song Neo-Confucianism. In the modern novel *Zhu Zhishan fengliu shi* 祝枝山風流史 (The Romance of Zhu Yunming), he is characterized as “a romantic belle-lettres, unorthodox thinker, and just administrator.”⁷²⁶

Consequently, Zhu Yunming was a distinctive early representative of the emerging syncretic ideas, while not being influenced by Wang Yangming. In particular, he criticized the conception of history in Neo-Confucian thoughts. Among other things, he compiled a work about eminent people in Suzhou (*Chenghua jian Sucai xiaozuan* 成化間蘇材小纂, 1499) only by using reliable sources, such as epitaphs or curricula vitae. His work *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* 祝子罪知錄 (Master Zhu’s Record of Errors Understood), written in 1522, shocked the Ming time world: In this work he criticized formerly sage men and praised neglected personalities. His self-preface in the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* reads the following:

敘曰：允明異夫近代學士，辨之弗明，輒措安之，往往視古人臧否事為應趨，背勸懲，每至朱紫易採，土炭倒衡，非盡由其不思，抑黨同比周，迷棄本情，怵勢以乏勇也。於是素所研攬，好惡必察，平心反復，群而不黨。姦醜既辯，予奪皎然。其間，慕善若懿親，疾奸猶至仇。烝民秉彝，回鑒即得，何必強抑皇畀，偏逐時情者哉！然以為至當無二，未決諸否，期就有道，積久弗露。今焉日月逝矣，河清幾時？一日翩然取一二大者發列之，命曰《罪知》。或有往昔譏評，懸符鄙見，同心之言，其臭如蘭，亦頗條撮梗係而輔之。然斯本自心師，非勞旁啟，故時復爾，弗藉繁援。又如朝章風草，理絕從違，世務蒿睥，談非容易，不忘言者，具在《通》、《雜》二篇，茲亦不及。噫嘻！⁷²⁷

The [self-]preface says: [Zhu] Yunming is a different man from the recent scholars, but distinguishing him is not clear. And at once placing to settle him one often sees that ancient men’s passing judgments on affairs is applied too hasty, and rewards and punishment are reversed; everything in the extremes right and wrong is exchanged and gathered;

⁷²⁶ *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 392-396.

⁷²⁷ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *zixu* 自序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=13>, last accessed: April 5th, 2016.

and soil and charcoal are weighed in a reverse order. Not all follow this and do not think [themselves]; but [in general] one unites with those having the same ideas and is cordial to mean persons; and confused one loses one's original affections. [The reason is that] one fears power because one lacks courage. Thereupon, [only] that which is ordinary is studied and monopolized; [but instead] the good and the bad should be scrutinized. And keeping calm and tautologically repeating [things] makes one sociable but not a partisan. [Instead] what is pretty and what is ugly [should] be debated completely; and award and punishment [must be] clear and correct. In this period now, one admires the good like the closest relative, and hates the evil like the utmost enemy. The masses have an ordinary nature; and hence, the result namely is a refusing of examining [things]; why must one strongly repress what the emperor abandons, and stubbornly follow the current affections! But, I consider the most appropriate is being unique, and to be outstanding and negate the harmonious [way]. The time [now] just offers a way, and over a long period of time it did not show up. Today how can sun and moon pass away, and when is there clear water in the Yellow River? I on one day took trippingly (i.e. one after another) one or two great [persons] and began arranging them, then I assigned [the title] *Zuizhi*. Perhaps in former days it would [face] censuring, but anxiously it is [written] according to my opinion, and the words are of the same mind [as mine]. Its bad smell is like [the one of] an orchid [to me], also rather strips were gathered up and branches connected and I helped with this. However, this book [comes] from my heart as master, and I am not weary to give explanations on the side; therefore, time restores this, not making use of the manifold help. Moreover, for example the rules of the imperial palace are like grass in the wind, and the principles are obeyed or rejected by any means, and current affairs appear [to be followed] blindly. Talking is not easy, [hence] do not forget the one who talks. This is provided in the two chapters 'Tong' and 'Za,' which does also fail to reach it [adequately]. Dear me!

In the self-preface of his *Master Zhu's Record of Errors Understood*, Zhu Yunming very excessively and with empurpled words explained the difficulty with dictated opinions about which scholar is appreciated and who is dismissed. In this case, when that "which is ordinary is studied and monopolized," it is not helpful and honest to keep

calm and follow the predominant trend. Instead, “the good and the bad must be scrutinized.” Zhu’s main topic was the blindly following of stipulated doctrines, which is continued throughout the whole work. In the last paragraph of his preface he, furthermore, made the most important statement and admitted that it was dangerous to offend official moral principles but it was essential anyway:

是耶？非耶？我不敢知。蓋宇宙茫茫，終歸腐亡，聊自信以行志，
無論知不知，毀譽禍福，雖然將怒罵者滔滔焉，亦聽之而已矣。⁷²⁸

So what is right? And what is wrong? I do not dare to know. The cosmos is boundless and indistinct; and in the end all will rot and die. [One has to be] somewhat self-confident to act wildly in defiance of the [official] law [i.e. to follow one’s own moral]. No matter if one knows or does not know, if one praises or blames misfortune and fortune, cursing furiously, though, is magnificent! I also heard that and that is all!

In this passage, Zhu Yunming confessed that he, as well, did not know the ultimate answer to the question about what is right and wrong. Moreover, he ascribed a general rottenness to the universe. For that reason, disobeying to the predetermined and propagated principles of the government, angrily cursing it and revolting was magnified and encouraged by Zhu Yunming.

These parts of his *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* very distinctly exhibit his all-embracing critique of the official doctrine, i.e. in this time Neo-Confucianism. In particular, he criticized the blind following of principles dictated by the ruling elite and the court, especially in regard to history writing. Therefore, his reflections also covered the questions whether the classics could be regarded as history works, and, furthermore, in which way the orthodox Neo-Confucianism influenced history writing. Hence, Zhu Yunming is a good and very protruding example for this critical attitude emerging from mid Ming times on and fully developing with Wang Shizhen and late Ming historians. Wang Shizhen himself praised Zhu Yunming’s works and wrote a preface to Zhu Yunming’s most famous work (i.e. the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*):

開眼界于片言，竄齒餘于千古，好而知其惡，惡而知其美，殆庶幾
焉。若曰：同不足以標勝，姑以異為奇。其不然，其不然，倒道而

⁷²⁸ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, zixu* 自序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=14>, last accessed: February 28th, 2017.

言，君子弗言也。要使束修之儒，顧影自畏，善雖小而務聚，慝雖細而必捐，則君子表微之功於斯為大。或曰：尚父戮華士而周公咎之，顏回攫釜而孔子疑，聖哲相信之[素]，目擊之事而猶爾爾，又況其紛如者乎，安用存？雖然天下而無是非可也。天下而有是非也者，與其過而亡，寧過而存。磨鑿考衡，揆遐剔幽，小人恐矣，君子則否。夫然則知我罪我奚恤焉？祝子所為，綜是非之案，斷而命曰《罪知》者，意如此。[...]⁷²⁹

One sees new things in a few words, and revises the former ages in the ancient times. One is good but knows the evil, [or] one is evil but knows the beauty—this may, thus, be so. One might say: “Altogether this is not enough to mark a triumph because tentatively one regards the different as strange.” This is not so; this is not so. The gentleman does not speak words which are thus an inversion of the [proper] course.⁷³⁰ He wishes to employ scholars who restrict revising, and has a high opinion of himself and self-respect; if there is something good—even if it is small—he strives to gather it; [or] if there is something evil—even if it is slender—he has to abandon it; in that case, the gentleman models a tiny achievement here as great. Someone says: Shangfu [i.e. Jiang Ziya] killed Hua Shi⁷³¹ and the Duke of Zhou punished him. Yan Hui grabbed the cauldron⁷³² and Confucius doubted him. Saints and sages believe in

⁷²⁹ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, xu* 序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=3>, last accessed: April 6th, 2016. The beginning of this preface is translated in chapter 9.

⁷³⁰ This sentence also appears in the *Zhuangzi yi* 莊子翼, *juan* 卷 4, *tiandao* 天道 13, p. 360663c, whereof there is a translation available by James Legge. See Legge (1962), *Part I: The Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu, The Writings of Chuang Tzu (Books I-XVII)*, book XIII. vi., Thien Tao, or the Way of Heaven, sec. 5., p. 337.

⁷³¹ Hua Shi 華士 was a recluse living in the state of Qi 齊 of Western Zhou period (*Xizhou* 西周, 1046-771 BC) on the fief of Jiang Ziya 姜子牙 (also called Lü Shang 呂尚 or Duke Tai of Qi/ *Qi taigong* 齊太公; eleventh century). He was killed at the order of Jiang Ziya because he said that he had much influence in Qi, but did not follow Jiang Ziya's request to pay him a courtesy visit. Therewith, Jiang said, Hua also offended the Zhou king, as Jiang Ziya was his representative. This story is included in the *Hanfeizi waichu shuo zuoshang* 韓非子 外儲說右上, *di sanshisi* 第三十四, *shuo yi* 說一.

⁷³² This is a story from the *Chunqiu*. Yan Hui was Confucius' favorite disciple. The story behind the saying “Yan Hui grabbing the cauldron” (*Yan Hui jue zeng/fu* 顏回攫甕/釜) is the following: “When Confucius fell on hard times between Chen and Cai, for seven days he had not eaten a single grain, and even his soup of wild herbs had no gran to thicken it. Day and night Yan Hui 顏回 searched for grain and when he finally got some, he prepared a fire and started to cook. When the grain was nearly cooked, Confucius looked over at Yan Hui only to see him quickly grab some of the grain and eat it. Confucius pretended not to have noticed. Before long the food was ready to eat, and having called Confucius, Yan Hui served him the food. At this point, Confucius got to his feet and said, ‘Today I dreamt about my

the original composition [of things], and the affairs seen with one's own eyes furthermore are like this. Moreover, the circumstances being such disorderly like that, how can [the original composition] be used and preserved? Even so it can be that there is no right or wrong in the world. Concerning the [suggestion] that there is right and wrong in the world: rather than just pass by and de cease, one would rather pass by and exist. Polishing and examining [i.e. reviewing], studying and judging, rejecting, abandoning and sorting out the dark and secret [things]—mean men fear this, gentlemen then not. That being so, why do I care about if one understands me or criticizes me? What Master Zhu engages in is a comprehensive answer to what is right and what is wrong. But decidingly assigning the title *Errors Understood* [to it], his intention was like that.

Finally, Wang Shizhen here portrayed Zhu Yunming as a careful reviewer and a man who avows for his conviction of right and wrong, regardless the official opinion or the consequences of opposing the official doctrine. Furthermore, the problem of right and wrong in regard to human nature is addressed by adducing prominent examples like the story of Confucius and his favored disciple Yan Hui 颜回. This anecdote describes a misunderstanding leading to unfair judgment, whereupon Confucius concluded that one should not trust one's own eyes and that sometimes it is very difficult to get to know someone to a degree, when you fully trust this person. In the end, this text serves the purpose to accentuate the difficulty of the determination of what is right and wrong, and here even leaves the great Confucius “humbled into admitting that he had judged Yan Hui unfairly [...]”⁷³³

Zhu Yunming was a pioneer and trendsetter concerning the question of what is right and wrong in history writing which was to develop into a theme occupying a large part of the scholarly world in the second half of Ming dynasty. On that account, Wang

father. As this food is clean I will make an offering of it to him.’ Yan Hui replied, ‘You cannot do that. Just a moment ago some dust from the smoke got into the steamer. As it would have been inauspicious to have thrown the food away, I grabbed the soiled portion and ate it.’ Confucius sighed and said: ‘That which one believes is one's eyes, and yet there are times when one cannot even believe one's eyes. That which one relies upon is one's heart, and yet there are times when even it is unreliable. My disciple, remember this. Knowing people is certainly not easy, hence to know this is not difficult; rather, it is how you come to know them that is difficult.’ John Makeham (1998), “Between Chen and Cai: Zhuangzi and the Analects,” in Roger T. Ames, *Wandering at Ease in the Zhuangzi: A Postmodern Critique*, Albany (NY): Suny Press, p. 82.

⁷³³ Makeham (1998), p. 83.

Shizhen in the last part of his preface said about Zhu Yunming: “Among the above and below, the present and the past [persons], he propagates tiny evils and, hence, is the great master of what is right and wrong.” (其間上下今昔，闡揚微慝，是非之宗匠也⁷³⁴) In the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* there is a very appropriate abstract about the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*. It reads the following:

明祝允明撰。允明有《蘇材小纂》，已著錄。是編乃論古之言。其舉例有五，曰舉，曰刺，曰說，曰演，曰系。舉曰是是，刺曰非非，說曰原是非之故，演曰布反復之情，系曰述古作以證斯文。⁷³⁵

It [i.e. the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*] is written by [Zhu] Yunming. He already wrote the [*Chenghua jian*] *Sucui xiaozuan*. This work [here] discusses ancient sayings. He gives five examples [for evaluation]. He speaks of commending, he speaks of criticizing, he speaks of explaining, he speaks of expatiating, and he speaks of appending. “‘Commendation’ is [called] to approve what is correct. ‘Censure’ is [called] to repudiate what is wrong. ‘Explanation’ is [called] to get to the origins of that which causes right and wrong. ‘Expatiation’ is [called] revealing the circumstances in all their aspects. ‘Appending’ is quoting old writings to verify ‘this culture.’”⁷³⁶

These five terms of evaluation also appear throughout Zhu’s work. The text starts with commending or praising (*ju* 舉), for example, Confucius and the Yellow Emperor. This commendation comes along with explanations (*shuo* 說) and appending (*xi* 系). Then the detailed critique or censoring (*ci* 刺) towards Shang Tang 商湯 (1675-1646 BC) and Zhou Wu 周武 (1046-1043 BC)⁷³⁷ (“Tang and Wu are no wise men” / 湯武非聖人⁷³⁸),

⁷³⁴ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, xu* 序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=6>, last accessed: April 6th, 2016. The beginning of this preface is translated in chapter 9 and in this very chapter p. 235.

⁷³⁵ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 124, *zibu* 子部 34, vol. 24, p. 47, *zajia lei cunmu yi* 雜家類存目一, *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* 祝子罪知錄.

⁷³⁶ The part in quotation marks is a cited translation of terms by Christian Murck. See Christian Murck (1978), “Chu Yunming (1461-1527) and Cultural Commitment in Su-chou,” Dissertation at the Faculty of Princeton University, vol. 2, p. 305. There is also a detailed explanation to the translation of *siwen* 斯文, namely as “this culture” in contrast to the rather narrow translation “this text.” (vol. 2, pp. 305f.)

⁷³⁷ The two founders of the Shang 商 and the Zhou 周 dynasties are regarded as being good and faithful rulers.

and many other persons regarded as *shengren* 聖人 (wise men) follows. Afterwards again explanations and expatiations or elaborations (*yan* 演) succeed this critique. Interestingly, the paragraphs which presented beginning with praise and critique are put higher than the explanations, the expatiations or the appending passages. In detail the first paragraphs look as follows:

舉曰或請于 國家，宜廟宓犧炎黃，與孔子偕祀，

Commending I say: When a certain person is invited in the country, one [should] in the suitable temple quietly sacrifice to the mystical Hot Emperor and the Yellow Emperor; together with them one [should] sacrifice to Confucius.

說曰凡民既富方穀，故庶富而後教，何獨遺初功者，

Explaining I say: Since the masses are already rich in the aspect of grain, hence, numerous were wealthy [at first] but afterwards [need] instructions; why leave behind in solitude the ones who had achievements in the beginning?

系曰先代亦郡縣通祠三皇，乃專于醫，亦非，

Appending I say: Also, former generations in prefectures and counties had ancestral temples for the three Primordial Sovereigns together; then some specialized in medicine, and [others] also did not.

刺曰湯武非聖人

Criticizing I say: Shang Tang and Zhou Wu are no sages.

說曰臣不得放弑亂君，子不得放弑頑父，萬物不得傾易可憾之天地，

Explaining I mean: The subjects are not allowed to banish or commit regicide on a chaotic ruler. The children are not allowed to

⁷³⁸ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=101>, p. 101, last accessed: April 8th, 2016.

banish to commit patricide on a stupid father. All living things are not allowed to overturn and change the regrettable universe.

演曰夫子書述誓誥武成，存其迹也，伯禽秦穆亦

存焉，安必盡聖乎，亦非以殷後姬臣而稱存之，書

聖賢言事皆錄者，它日亦未始專稱二君聖，二君

固賢者過之者也，[...]。⁷³⁹

Elaborating I say: The book of the master narrates the *shigao* chapters [about the speeches and announcements] and the *wucheng* chapter,⁷⁴⁰ and gathers their traces. Bo Qin⁷⁴¹ and Duke Mu of Qin⁷⁴² are also gathered; [hence] they securely must be sages to the utmost! Also, it does not take many honorable women and subjects, and appraisingly gathers them. Concerning the book which records all the words and affairs of the sage men in this book, on that day, also, it is not necessarily concentrated on praising two monarchs as sage men. The two monarchs were, indeed, sage men and ones who go beyond that [...].

Zhu Yunming went on with further elaborating the case and giving more examples to this topic until he started a new critique with “Yi Yin⁷⁴³ is not a loyal official, [hence]

⁷³⁹ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=25>, pp. 25f, last accessed: April 13th, 2016.

⁷⁴⁰ *Shigao* 誓誥 is the collective name for chapters in the *Shangshu*, namely the speeches chapters, e.g. ‘Ganshi’ 甘誓 (The Speech of Gan; from the Book of Xia 夏書) and ‘Qinshi’ 秦誓 (The Speech of Qin; from the Book of Zhou 周書), and the announcement chapters, e.g. ‘Tanggao’ 湯誥 (The Announcement of Tang; from the Book of Shang 商書) and ‘Shaogao’ 召誥 (The Announcement of Duke Shao; from the Book of Zhou 周書); ‘Wucheng’ 武成 (The Successful Completion of the War) is also a chapter of the *Shangshu*, namely from the Book of Zhou 周書. For further information, see “*Shangshu* 尚書 or *Shujing* 書經,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/shangshu.html>, last accessed: April 13th, 2016.

⁷⁴¹ Bo Qin 伯禽 (r. ca. 1042-997 BC) is seen as the founder of the State of Lu 魯 in Zhou dynasty and was the eldest son of the Duke of Zhou (*Zhou gong* 周公; eleventh century). For more information on the state of Lu, see “Chinese History—The Feudal State of Lu 魯,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/rulers-lu.html>, last accessed: February 10th, 2017.

⁷⁴² Qin Mugong 秦穆公 (r. 659-621 BC), Duke Mu of Qin, ruled the state of Qin 秦 during the Zhou 周 dynasty (ca. 1046-256 BC). For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Qin Mugong 秦穆公, Duke Mu of Qin,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personsqinmugong.html>, last accessed: February 10th, 2017.

⁷⁴³ Yi Yin 伊尹 (1648-1549 BC) was a famous and highly appreciated minister of Shang dynasty who helped overthrowing the brutal King Jie 桀 of Xia 夏 dynasty (17th until 15th century BC). For more

he cannot be called a sage man” (伊尹不臣，不可謂之聖賢。⁷⁴⁴), followed by explanations and appended information. In the first *juan*, furthermore, there are critical statements about Mencius (“Mencius is no wise man” / 孟子非聖人⁷⁴⁵), which is continued in *juan* two. Furthermore, in the first part he cited and displayed books and authors which used to be rejected, e.g., the *Zhuangzi*,⁷⁴⁶ the *Hanshu* or the *Yizhoushu* 逸周書⁷⁴⁷ and authors like Wang Chong 王充,⁷⁴⁸ Liu Zhiji 劉知幾, Yuan Jie 元結⁷⁴⁹ or

information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Yi Yin 伊尹,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsyiyin.html>, last accessed: April 2nd, 2016.

⁷⁴⁴ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=52>, p. 52, last accessed: April 8th, 2016.

⁷⁴⁵ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=101>, last accessed: April 8th, 2016.

⁷⁴⁶ *Zhuangzi* 莊子 is one of the classics of Daoism, compiled in the Warring States Period (*Zhanguo* 戰國; fifth century-221 BC) and ascribed to Zhuang Zhou 莊周 (ca. 369-286 BC). For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Zhuangzi* 莊子 ‘Master Zhuang,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/zhuangzi.html>, last accessed: April 2nd, 2016.

Zhu Yunming included a passage from the *Zhuangzi* from the chapter *rangwang* 讓王 (Kings Who Have Wished to Resign the Throne; in *zapan* 雜篇, “miscellaneous chapters”). Original from *Zhuangzi yi* 莊子翼, *juan* 卷 7, pp. 360724c-360725a. For a translation, see Legge (1962), *Part II: The Writings of Chuang Tzu (Books XVIII-XXXIII), The T'ai Shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions, Appendices I.VIII*, book XXVIII. vi., Zang Wang, or Kings who have wished to resign the Throne, sec. p, pp. 162f. In the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, the passage is to be found in the first *juan*, *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=31>, pp. 31f., last accessed: April 14th, 2016.

⁷⁴⁷ The *Yizhoushu* 逸周書 (Superfluous [Chapters of the] Book of Zhou or Lost Book of Zhou) is a history work covering the Western Zhou period from King Wen 周文王 (r. 1099-1050 BC) to King Jing 周景王 (r. 544-520 BC). In other sources this book is called *Zhoushu* 周書 (Book of the Zhou) or *Jizhong zhoushu* 汲冢周書 (Book of Zhou from the Tomb of Ji). Sometimes it is regarded as a collection of discarded documents which were not included in the *Shangshu* 尚書, as it shows a parallel structure to a part of the latter work. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Yizhoushu* 逸周書,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/yizhoushu.html>, last accessed: April 2nd, 2016.

⁷⁴⁸ Wang Chong 王充 (27-97 AD) was a philosopher of Eastern Han dynasty (25-220 AD) and the author of the *Lunheng* 論衡, a critical treatise to the misinterpretation of the Confucian classics by the *jinwen* 今文-school (New Text School). For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Wang Chong 王充,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/persons/wangchong.html>, last accessed: April 2nd, 2016.

The passage cited by Zhu Yunming derives from Wang Chong’s *Lunheng* 論衡, *juan* 卷 *qi* 七, *yuzeng pian* 語增篇, p. 155. In the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* the passage is to be found in the first *juan*, *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=34>, pp. 34ff, last accessed: April 14th, 2016.

⁷⁴⁹ Yuan Jie 元結 (719-772) was a poet from Tang dynasty and “produced a small if significant body of poetry that self-consciously rejected modernist tendencies.” *CCL*, p. 356.

Han Yu 韓愈⁷⁵⁰ as examples for open speech.⁷⁵¹ Concretely, he cited a passage from the chapter *yigu* 疑古 (doubting antiquity) from Liu Zhiji's *Shitong*; it reads the following:

又曰湯誥云：“湯伐桀，戰于鳴條。”又云：“湯放桀于南巢，唯有慚德。”而《周書·殷祝》篇稱“桀讓湯王位”云云。[...]此則有異于《尚書》。如《周書》之所說，豈非湯既勝桀，力制夏人，使桀推讓，歸王于己。蓋欲比迹堯、舜，襲其高名者乎？又按《墨子》云：湯以天下讓務光，而使人說曰：湯欲加惡名于汝。務光遂投清冷之泉而死。湯乃即位無疑。然則湯之飾讓，偽迹甚多。考墨家所言，雅與《周書》相會。[...]夫[...]《書》之作，本出《尚書》，孔父翦截⁷⁵²浮詞，裁成雅誥[...]。去其鄙事，直云“慚德”，豈非欲滅湯之過，增桀之惡者乎？⁷⁵³

Moreover, one says that [Shang] Tang ordered: “[Shang] Tang attacked [Xia] Jie⁷⁵⁴ and led war in Mingtiao.”⁷⁵⁵ Additionally, he said: “[Shang] Tang banished [Xia] Jie to Nanchao,⁷⁵⁶ only being ashamed of his moral deficiency.” But in the *Yinzhu*⁷⁵⁷ chapter of the *[Lost] Book of Zhou* [i.e. *Yizhoushu*] it says “[Xia] Jie let [Shang] Tang take the royal throne” and so on [...] This then has differences to the *Shangshu*. For example, what is said in the *[Lost] Book of Zhou* is that: Is [Shang] Tang not already victorious over [Xia] Jie, [and] powerful governing the Xia people,

⁷⁵⁰ Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) was a poet from Tang dynasty who “became famous for evolving a prose style (*guwen* 古文, ‘ancient-style prose’) that attempted to imitate pre-imperial works (often in highly eccentric and original ways) and which would eventually in smoother form become the standard prose style for Song dynasty writers and those who came after.” *CCL*, p. 356; also see pp. 356f.

⁷⁵¹ Yang (2001), pp. 36f.

⁷⁵² The original passage in the *Shitong* spells it the other way around, namely 截翦.

⁷⁵³ Originally, this passage derives from *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇 *juan* 卷 *shisan* 十三, *yigu* 疑古 *di san* 第三. In Zhu Yunming's work it can be found in *juan yi*, *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33038&page=36>, pp. 36f., last accessed: April 14th, 2016.

⁷⁵⁴ King Jie 桀 of Xia 夏 dynasty (ca. 1728-1675 BC), the last ruler of Xia dynasty, was considered to be a tyrant.

⁷⁵⁵ I.e. a mountain ridge near Anyi 安邑 county in today's region of Shanxi province.

⁷⁵⁶ I.e. today's region of Chaohu 巢湖 city in Anhui province. The ancient name derives from the fact that this place lay south of ancient central China territory.

⁷⁵⁷ The *Yinzhu* chapter of the *Book of Zhou* describes the accession of power by Shang Tang, ending the tyrannical rule of the last King of Xia dynasty. (殷祝, 就殷商之事所发的祝愿。殷商之事, 指汤放桀而就君位的事。 See *Yizhoushu* 逸周書, *juan* 卷 9, *Yinzhu jie liushiliu* 殷祝解第六十六)

causing [Xia] Jie to modestly decline [his position as king], and putting the position of the king on himself? Did he wish to follow in Yao and Shun's [footsteps] and receive their great reputation?" Again, it is noted in the *Mozi*: "[Shang] Tang took whole China transferred it to Wuguang,⁷⁵⁸ and caused people to say: [Shang] Tang wished to increase the bad reputation over you. Wuguang, thereupon, went to a deserted spring and died. [Shang] Tang then ascended the throne without any doubts [from the people]. But then concerning Tang's deceived transfer [of power], the false signs were many. Studying the sayings of the Mohist school, it often matched with the *[Lost] Book of Zhou*. Moreover, the writing of this *Book* originally derived from the *Shangshu*; Confucius cut off unfounded remarks and accomplished a refined speech. Dispatching these mean matters, he directly said, "being ashamed of his moral deficiency;" and did one not desire to extinguish [Shang] Tang's transfer and increase [Xia] Jie's evils?

The cited passage shows many distinctive features: Zhu Yunming deliberately chose a citation from Liu Zhiji's *yigu* chapter because of its profound criticism of sources. The story of King Tang of Shang and the circumstances around his succession to the throne is depicted very differently in several sources. For that reason, one must carefully compare the sources to get as close to the truth as possible. As source criticism was one of the main topics of Ming time history writing and its "transformation," it is no wonder that Zhu Yunming extracted this part. Also, the criticism towards the classics (or "doubting of ancient history works") in this part of the *Shitong* in general exemplarily illustrates a main topic of the Ming time discussion about history writing. Furthermore, Zhu Yunming once more emphasized the great importance attached to Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* in Ming dynasty. Certainly, criticizing the classics was not an easy attempt in Neo-Confucian Ming dynasty. Zhu recognized that independent minds were afraid of the pressure coming from the orthodox and autocratic institutions. In the explanation to his critique of Mencius—"Criticizing I say: Mencius says that people are born with a good character; Xunzi says that people are born with an evil character—both are wrong." 刺曰孟軻云性善，荀況云性惡，皆非—in *juan* two he declared:

⁷⁵⁸ Wuguang was a high person in Xia dynasty, but no detailed data about his life are known. He refused the honor to be trusted to govern the country and then lived in seclusion. See *Handian* 漢典, <http://www.zdic.net/c/1/9e/180204.htm>, last accessed: April 18th, 2016.

以聲與勢而從焉，而強訥焉而不敢盡焉者，後代之言性乎。今天下學士，或抱哲姿、蓄廣學，終不敢言性惡者，豈皆中誠哉？言之必獲戾，以為儒家罪人，此病聲也！附孟而吠荀、楊、皇甫、司馬氏者遍四海，閱數百年，萬萬喙，吾敢以一舌抗之乎？是病勢也！⁷⁵⁹

Why does one follow those with a [strong] voice and power? But what if one strongly stammers? And what if one does not dare to try ones best?—This is the speaking of the human nature of later generations! Concerning today’s scholars of the world, they probably adopt a philosophical attitude and grow extensive learning, but in the end, they do not dare to name the ones having a bad nature; how can they all be honest? If they named them, they would certainly commit an offense, and would erroneously be considered to be offenders of the Confucian [believes]—this is a harmful reputation! [People] agreeing with Mengzi, but barking at Xun[zi], Yang[zi],⁷⁶⁰ Huangfu,⁷⁶¹ and Sima [Qian] are everywhere in the whole country and pass through many hundred years and hundred million mouths; do I with one single tongue dare to resist them? This is harmful power!

In this paragraph from his *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, Zhu Yunming named the two evils of the contemporary scholarly world: “harmful reputation” (*bing sheng* 病聲) and “harmful power” (*bing shi* 病勢). These emerge from the already mentioned prevailing (false) attitude towards particular scholars of the past like Xunzi, Yangzi, Huangfu or Sima Qian who are unjustly dismissed in favor of Mencius—and trained scholars do not dare to object to these developments. Nonetheless, Zhu admits that it would cause trouble to scholars to reveal their true feelings and name and shame highly appreciated scholars—interestingly Zhu himself assumes that the scholars’ true feelings have to correspond to his own attitude and is only repressed by the predominant Neo-Confucian thought. Although Zhu is right with postulating an orthodox and prevalent mindset predefined by the ruling elite, he on the other hand depicted his own opinion as being the one and only

⁷⁵⁹ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *er* 二, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33039&page=2>, last accessed: April 14th, 2016.

⁷⁶⁰ I.e. Yang Zhu 楊朱 (440-360 BC), scholar of the Warring States period (475-221 BC).

⁷⁶¹ Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐 (215-282) was a scholar, literati and physician during Eastern Han (25-220) and Western Jin 晉 periods (265-420). His writings include works about acupuncture and a series called *Records of Emperors and Kings* (*Diwang shiji* 帝王世紀).

true notion. Nevertheless, his venture is a critical, innovative and daring approach, and cannot be underestimated.

Moreover, in this part he also censored Emperor Taizu 太祖 of Song (927-976)—the founding emperor of Song dynasty—and his successor Emperor Taizong 太宗 of Song (939-997). In general, he criticized the mistakes of persons and awarded or dismissed them; e.g. he awarded the brothers Bo Yi 伯夷 and Shu Qi 叔齊,⁷⁶² Wu Geng 武庚,⁷⁶³ Guan Shu 管叔 and Cai Shu 蔡叔,⁷⁶⁴ and dismisses Guan Yiwu 管夷吾,⁷⁶⁵ Yan Guang 嚴光,⁷⁶⁶ Wang Gui 王圭⁷⁶⁷ and Wei Zheng 魏征.⁷⁶⁸ In the third *juan*, Zhu continued criticizing the general evaluation of personalities prefaced by the words:

⁷⁶² The two brothers Bo Yi and Shu Qi (together called Yi Qi 夷齊) lived at the end of Shang dynasty and the beginning of Zhou dynasty; they were loyal to the last Shang king. The two are regarded as examples of filial piety because when Shu Qi, the younger brother, was chosen to be his father's (the lord of Guzhu 孤竹 from the family Motai 墨胎) successor, he refused, while Bo Qi, the elder one, accepted it. Therefore, they "are venerated by the Confucians as an example of ministers displaying righteousness and loyalty." See "Persons in Chinese History—Bo Yi 伯夷," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personsboyi.html>, last accessed: April 4th, 2016.

⁷⁶³ Wu Geng (also called Lu Fu 祿父) was the son of the last King of Shang dynasty, namely King Zhou 紂. When King Wu of Zhou (Zhou Wuwang 周武王) founded the Zhou dynasty, he divided the territory into three fiefs and bestowed the fief of Bei 邶 upon Wu Geng. For more information, see "Persons in Chinese History—Zhou Wuwang 周武王, King Wu of Zhou," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personszhouwuwang.html>, last accessed: April 4th, 2016.

⁷⁶⁴ Guan Shu Xian 管叔鮮 (?-1113 BC) and Cai Shu Du 蔡叔度 (r. 1046-? BC) were two brothers of the Duke of Zhou (Zhougong 周公; eleventh century); together with another brother Huo Shu Chu 霍叔處 and Wu Geng they started the "Rebellion of the Three Guards" (*Sanjian zhi luan* 三監之亂) against the Duke of Zhou. For more information, see "Chinese History—The Feudal State of Lu 魯," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/rulers-lu.html>, last accessed: April 4th, 2016.

⁷⁶⁵ Guan Zhong 管仲 (d. 645 BC) or Guan Yiwu (also called "Master Guan," *guanzi* 管子) from the *Chunqiu* period (770-fifth century BC) was the counsellor of Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (r. 685-643) and considered to be the first legalist state philosopher. For more information, see "Chinese Literature—*Guanzi* 管子 'Master Gua,'" at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/guanzi.html>, last accessed: April 4th, 2016.

⁷⁶⁶ Yan Guang also known as Yan Ziling 嚴子陵 (ca. 38 BC-41 AD) was a hermit from Han dynasty who was close to Emperor Guangwu 光武帝 (r. 25-57 AD).

⁷⁶⁷ Wang Gui from Wanling 宛陵 in today's region of Anhui province was a poet from the end of Song, beginning of Yuan dynasty.

⁷⁶⁸ Wei Zheng (fl. 641-656) was an official at the court in Tang dynasty. Among other duties, he supervised the compilation of the biographies in the Book of Sui (*Suishu* 隨書) and of the bibliography *Suishu jingji zhi* 隋書經籍志 included in the *Suishu*. For more information on these books, see "Suishu 隨書," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/suishu.html> and "Chinese Literature—*Suishu jingji zhi* 隋書經籍志," <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/suishujingjizhi.html>, last accessed: April 4th, 2016. Xiang Yannan (2005), p. 110.

“Criticizing I say: The contemporary praising and blaming of ancient persons shows many mistakes.” (刺曰今世予奪古人多誤⁷⁶⁹) His exemplifications in this part vary much in regard to their length: Sometimes the examples only consist of a short statement and an attached explanation; sometimes the explanation and expatiation occupy more than a whole page and even up to ten pages. *Juan* four is divided in sections of citations, each being introduced by a particular argument: “Hiding the wrong [due to] being close to one party [i.e. being partial]” (*nifei jindang* 匿非近黨⁷⁷⁰), “Concealing the good [due to] being close to the mean” (*meishan jin ke* 沒善近刻⁷⁷¹), “Approving the good by blaming the deficient” (*shan shan guoduan* 善善過短⁷⁷²), and “Disliking the evil by celebrating the excelling” (*wu’e guoshan* 惡惡過長⁷⁷³); these are followed by quotations by many personalities, mostly from Song dynasty, which support the respective argument: e.g. the reformer Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086), the scholar Chen Shan 陳善 (n.d.), the politician and scholar Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039-1112), the scholar Wang Mingqing 王明清 (fl. 1163-1224), the scholar Zhang Shunmin 張舜民 (fl. 1065-1094), and Kong Pingzhong 孔平仲 (fl. 1065). *Juan* five goes on in criticizing personalities, again supported by citations from different authors. For example, Zhu Yunming criticized Zhao Pu 趙普 (922-992) from Northern Song dynasty (“Zhao Pu is a traitorous minister” 趙普叛臣⁷⁷⁴) or the formerly cited Wang Anshi 王安石 (“Wang Anshi is a criminal subject, a subject who amassed wealth illegally” 王安

⁷⁶⁹ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *san* 三, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33039&page=66>, last accessed: April 13th, 2016.

⁷⁷⁰ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *si* 四, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=2>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

⁷⁷¹ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *si* 四, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=29>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

⁷⁷² *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *si* 四, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=39>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

⁷⁷³ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *si* 四, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=43>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

⁷⁷⁴ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *si* 四, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=49>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

石姦臣，聚斂之臣⁷⁷⁵). Furthermore, the author dared to criticize the “sacred” Zhu Xi, Cheng Yi and Neo-Confucianism in general. About Zhu Xi he noted the following:⁷⁷⁶

刺日程頤朱熹經師君子，時之賢人，或稱過之更以疑累。⁷⁷⁷

[...] 謂與先儒並可也。謂先儒之駁者不及，其精時有過之，與之上下亦可也。必以為集大成，都廢前烈，前無古人，後無來者，後百千年，一守不遷，不知可不可也？抑不知果能如所望否？又不知後有起而標置、分北、潤益之，亦如今之於昔人者否也？⁷⁷⁸

Criticizing I say: Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi are teachers of Confucian classics and men of noble characters, the sages of this time. Or some say that they underwent a process and transformed into doubtful and weary [characters].

[...] To name them [i.e. Zhu Xi, Cheng Yi] together with the ancient Confucians equally is appropriate. To call them opponents of the ancient Confucians fails to reach [what they are] because their spirit in their era exceeds this; [to name them] together with them superior and inferior is also appropriate. Certainly, to regard them as the culmination [point], [means] abandoning all the worthies of past generations, [and thinking that] in the past there were no precedents, and afterwards there will be none to follow. The last one hundred thousand years one [principle] protected and constant—I do not know whether this is possible! Or not knowing the consequence, is this like what is hoped for? Moreover, if one does not know the starting point for “the after,” but marks the rating, differentiates, and profits from it, is this also nowadays [done] by the people of the past?

In this part, it can be observed how there is still a careful pondering between criticism and appreciation. At the beginning, Zhu Yunming clarified that Zhu Xi and Cheng Yi can be placed side by side with the honorable ancient literati. Nevertheless, Zhu’s

⁷⁷⁵ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *si* 四, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=55>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

⁷⁷⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 730; Ch’ien (1986), p. 28; Yang (2001), pp. 36f.

⁷⁷⁷ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *wu* 五, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=61>, last accessed: March 14th, 2017.

⁷⁷⁸ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu, juan* 卷 *wu* 五, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=63>, last accessed: April 14th, 2016.

critique is innovative and modern-minded, as Zhu Xi was considered untouchable before; however, he here commiserated that due to Zhu Xi's and Cheng Yi's prominence all other important Confucians and persons of the ancient past and of the time after Zhu Xi are forgotten or neglected, which is a reflective view on the predominant Neo-Confucianism. In general, he dismissed the notion of delimiting Zhu Xi from other people of the past, but to see him and the Cheng brothers in one row with other great scholars. In sum, their reputation and their teachings are belittled, even doubted, and ancient sages and doctrines are put into focus again.

Comparable to the former critical statements, Zhu again used citations by other scholars in order to undergird his opinion. To name but a few, these are Zhou Mi 周密 (1232-1298), Ye Shaomeng 葉紹翁 (Southern Song time, i.e. 1127-1279), or Lu Rong 陸容 (1436-1494). Thereafter, he addressed himself to *Daoxue*⁷⁷⁹ (Criticizing I say: “Daoxue is of course good; [but] its falsification must be debated.”⁷⁸⁰ 刺曰道學固善，其偽不可不辯。⁷⁸¹). *Juan six* (*Lunshi shang* 論釋上) and seven (*Lunshi xia* 論釋下) are dedicated to Buddhism. Then the eighth *juan* starts with: “Commendation: The language is extremely [elegant] in the Six Classics⁷⁸² and [very] basic in Tang prose. Concerning studying literature, I respond to go [away] from Tang and strive for the classics,” (舉曰文極乎六經而底乎唐學文者應目唐而求至乎⁷⁸³); it praises the Six Classics and blames the model of the Tang literature which was generally applied. In *juan nine*, poetry is praised, while the last *juan* concerns itself with spirits and demons and other miscellaneous affairs.

Primarily, the *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* represents an example of scholarly discussions in the second half of Ming dynasty. It clearly shows the awakening spirit of criticizing formerly untouchable works, attitudes and personalities. As shown in this work, Zhu

⁷⁷⁹ *Daoxue* is another name for the Neo-Confucian School of principle (*lixue* 理學).

⁷⁸⁰ Murck (1978), vol. 2, p. 315. For a comprehensive explanation and partly translation of this part, see Murck (1978), vol. 2, pp. 314-330.

⁷⁸¹ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *wu* 五, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33041&page=82>, last accessed: March 15th, 2017.

⁷⁸² The term the “Six Chinese Classics” refers to the Five Classics mentioned before, namely *Yijing*, *Shijing*, *Zhouli*, *Shujing* and *Chunqiu*, and adds the Classic of Music (*Yuejing* 樂經).

⁷⁸³ *Zhuzi zuizhi lu*, *juan* 卷 *ba* 八, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=33045&page=2>, last accessed: March 15th, 2017.

Yunming's writing did not stand as a single prominent treatise, but rather is one example of many—together embodying the modern conquest of what is right and wrong. Christian Murck very trenchantly described the person of Zhu Yunming. From his evaluation of the *Zhu zi zuizhi lu*, Christian Murck concluded:

He [i.e. Zhu Yunming] is primarily concerned with right and wrong. Here he is not an archivist, preserving documents or customs or anecdotes for the delectation of the contemporary reader and the information of the future historian. Nor is he a narrative historian describing a sequence of events, nor an institutional historian analyzing the functions and evolution of political and social structures. He is often concerned with issues in intellectual history, but he is not a philosopher exploring complex moral issues. Chu Yun-ming instead casts himself in the role of a critic, or, in a context more familiar to traditional China, in the role of judicious historian, meting out definitive praise and blame according to time-honored criteria of moral judgment.⁷⁸⁴

11.3 Lu Shen—The *Shitong* and His Conception of History

Building on the study of Lu Shen's 錄深 (1477-1544; see chap. 5.1) commentary to the *Shitong*, i.e. *Shitong huiyao* 史通會要, Lu Shen can be regarded as a good example and representative of Ming time historiography because he united main currents and scholarly ideas of Ming dynasty. The changes in the conception of history in this time become evident, among other things, through his contributions. Lu Shen devoted himself to the examination of Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* with the claim of recording the certifiable truth and with a critical analysis of official and ancient historiography as a whole. With his evaluation of the *Shitong* 史通 Lu Shen corresponded to another—already mentioned—trend in the history writing of Ming dynasty: He occupied himself with a work belonging to the—hitherto—neglected *shiping* 史評-category and caused the *Shitong* to emerge from the shadows. Lu Shen did not initiate the trend of the recovery of *shiping*-literature, but he promoted it strongly. When he started his research on Liu Zhiji's work, he had already gained a reputation as an eminent historian. Accordingly, his attention paid to this work encouraged the occupation and the

⁷⁸⁴ Murck (1978), vol. 2, p. 306.

“renaissance” of the *Shitong* on a small scale and of the *shiping*-literature on a large scale. In the last section of the *Congpian* 叢篇-chapters of his *Shitong huiyao* 史通會要, Lu Shen drew on the *Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補⁷⁸⁵ *juan 7* (underlined parts) and in this course brought up for discussion the ongoing *gonglun* which manifested his position in the currents of Ming time historiography:

丘文莊公浚之論史官其畧曰：天下不可一日無史，亦不可一日無史官也。百官所任者一時之事，史官所任者萬世之事。

唐宋宰相皆兼史官，其重如此我朝，⁷⁸⁶

Qiu Wenzhuang Jun⁷⁸⁷ discusses historiographers in his summary: Everywhere under heaven there cannot be one day without history, also there cannot be one day without historiographers. Appointed officials of all ranks [deal with] the matters of one period of time; appointed historiographers [deal with] the matters of all ages.

The prime ministers of Tang and Song dynasties all concurrently were historiographers. This was important like in my own dynasty.

法制可謂簡要矣。然是職也，是非之權衡，公議之所系也，若推其本，必得如元揭傒斯所謂有學問文章、知史事而心術正者，然後用之，則文質相稱、本末兼該足為一代之良史矣。

⁷⁸⁵ The *Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補 (Supplement to the ‘Abundant Meanings of the Great Learning’) “is a treatise on statecraft from the Confucian perspective written by the Ming period (1368-1644) scholar Qiu Jun 丘濬. Although from the title it seems to be a philosophical exegesis of the Confucian classic *Daxue* 大學 ‘The Great Learning,’ it is concerned with history and practical politics.” It is an investigation on historiographical works and a practical guide to the *Daxue* in regard to governing a state while the Song time *Daxue yanyi* 大學衍義 by Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 (1178-1235). See “Chinese Literature—*Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補 ‘Supplement to the ‘Abundant Meanings of the Great Learning,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/daxueyanyibu.html>, last accessed: May 26th, 2017.

The part referred to in this passage derives from *Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補, *juan* 卷 7.

⁷⁸⁶ *Shitong huiyao xia* 史通會要下, *Congpian qi* 叢篇七, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 154.

⁷⁸⁷ Qiu Jun 丘濬 (1421-1495), *zi* 字: Zhongshen 仲深, was a litterateur, politician and economist from Ming dynasty. For further information, see An Jian 安健 (2013), chapter “Qiongzhou qicai Qiu Jun” 琼州奇才丘浚 (Qiu Jun, the rare talent from Qiongzhou).

深又嘗聞之王文恪公鏊曰：臺諫者一時之公論史官者萬世之公論也。並名言云。⁷⁸⁸

Institutions can well be called concise and to the point. However, concerning their duty, it is the weighing of good and bad and the relating to a public discussion. If its basis is investigated, there must be called Yuan time Jie Xisi [1274-1344] who studied essays, knew historical events and [had] the intention [to act] straightforwardly; and then using this, [only] then the ornamental and the real match, the fundamental and the incidental both should satisfy [requirements] for a good historian of one generation.

[I, Lu] Shen once heard what Wang Wenge Gong Ao [i.e. Wang Ao; 1450-1524] said: The Censors and Remonstrators [deal with] the *gonglun* of one period of time; but historiographers [deal with] the *gonglun* of one generation after another. And this is a celebrated dictum.

The key points in this part are, firstly, the description of a good historian. In this context, the duty of historiographers of the “weighing of good and bad” (*shifei zhi quanheng* 是非之權衡) is especially interesting. Secondly, out of a conversation Lu Shen cited Qiu Jun’s “definition” of the public discourse (*gonglun* 公論) in connection to historians, and made clear that historiographers have to discuss the *gonglun* of all ages; hence, they have to take into account the *gonglun* respectively to the time they deal with. Lu Shen’s reference to the crucial concept of the public discourse in his commentary to Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* portrays him as an active and leading figure in the discourse of Ming historiography and a representative of ongoing processes. The importance he attached to Liu Zhiji’s thoughts, consequently, is indicative for the renaissance of the *Shitong* and its topicality of the advancing developments in Ming dynasty.

Evaluating History—The Chuanyi lu

Besides the *Shitong huiyao*, Lu Shen also included his *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄 (The Record about Propagating Doubts)⁷⁸⁹ in the *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集 (An Unofficial Manuscript Collection of [Stories happened at] Yanshan). Lu Shen here listed ideas

⁷⁸⁸ *Shitong huiyao xia* 史通會要下, *Congpian qi* 叢篇七, in *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集, p. (885-) 154.

⁷⁸⁹ For a further translation of the last part, see Appendix V.10.

about history writing, and like Shao Bao and Zhu Minggao 朱明鎬 (see chap. 11.9) criticized former history works and classics like the *Yugong* 禹貢, the *Mengzi* 孟子 (Book of Mencius), the *Lunyu* 論語 (Analects of Confucius), the *Daya* 大雅 (Major Odes),⁷⁹⁰ the *Tongzhi* 通志 (Comprehensive Treatises),⁷⁹¹ the *Xintangshu* 新唐書 (New Book of Tang) and more and moreover cited from these works. He also drew on the *bieji* 別集 (individual belles-lettres), e.g. on Su Che's 蘇轍 *Luancheng ji* 樂城集 from Song dynasty, on the *Lequan ji* 樂全集 by Zhang Fangping 張方平 (1007-1091), on the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Rites of Zhou) and a commentary to the *Zhouli* (i.e. the *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮註疏) by Gu Gongyan 賈公彥 (Tang dynasty). Furthermore, this work also showed mythological tendencies in Lu Shen's ideas about history and about evaluating the past which will be sketched in chapter 13. At the beginning of this compilation, he stressed the historians' importance, expressed his appraisal towards them, and, furthermore, ascribed literary and historical talent to a few emperors while emphasizing the difference between the learning of noble men and commoners.

史稱高貴。才慧夙成，好問尚詞，即其幸學與諸博士論難，信然。
自古末世之君多文采，若隋煬、陳、唐兩后主最雋，然不過華靡藻
麗耳。至深於經術，莫如高貴。人主之學，與韋布異，不能不為之
浩嘆。⁷⁹²

The historian is called noble and valuable. He naturally accomplishes ability and wisdom, is fond of asking all sorts of questions and values words; namely he [has] a favor for studying and debating with all the court academicians, indeed. Since ancient times [until] the monarch of the last era they gathered many literature; for example, Emperor Yang of Sui [Sui Yang di 隨陽帝; 569-618] and the two last emperors of Chen

⁷⁹⁰ The *Daya* 大雅 (Major Odes) is a part of the *Shijing* 詩經.

⁷⁹¹ *Tongzhi* 通志 (Comprehensive Treatises) by Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162).

⁷⁹² *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄 (Record about Propagating Doubts), by Lu Shen 陸深, in Wang Yunwu 王雲五 et al. (eds.), *Congshu jicheng chubian* 叢書集成初編 (Book Collection Compendium—the Beginning), vol. 332, Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshu guan 商務印書館發行, 1935-1940, p. 1. Interestingly, in the *Yanshan waiji* 儼山外集 edition of the *Chuanyi Lu* (*juan* 卷 1-2) only this sentence is missing. This could point at the fact that this statement was interpolated in a later revision, between statements about the *Yugong* and the *Mengzi*.

dynasty⁷⁹³ [i.e. Chen Shubao 陳叔寶; 553-604] and Southern Tang dynasty⁷⁹⁴ [i.e. Li Yu 李煜; 937-978] were very talented; however, they were luxurious, extravagant and splendid! They went very deep into the knowledge of the classics; one might as well say they were noble and valuable. The studying of the sovereign is different to the commoners' dresses; hence, one cannot but be greatly touched by this.

As the title of the *Chuanyi lu* suggests, the work mainly deals with the evaluation of accounts, behaviors and customs of the past. Therefore, Lu Shen here directly doubted descriptions of happenings without explicitly stating from where he gathered these descriptions and information.

戴記月令。又見於呂氏春秋。或云。漢儒雜采呂書以記禮。或云本禮經之舊文也。呂書勦取之。據不韋之書。月令特優。⁷⁹⁵

They [i.e. the “historians”] respectfully recorded the *Yueling*;⁷⁹⁶ and yet, they look on the *Lüshi Chunqiu*.⁷⁹⁷ Some people say: Han dynasty scholars mixedly gathered Lü's book in order to record rites. Some people say: The original Book of Rites is an ancient book. Hence, Lü's book plagiarized it by adopting it, and seized the book by [Lü] Buwei; but the *Yueling* is excellent.

Lu Shen distinguished himself by being able to differentiate and evaluate closely: Although the *Lüshi Chunqiu* can be seen as a plagiarism, it has some advantages and useful information; therefore, one should not neglect the book as a whole. As it becomes apparent, the *Record of Propagating Doubts* is a collection of thoughts and ideas; sometimes it appears that Lu did not apply an overall structure, at all. The main theme is, indeed, “propagating doubts” about several issues and subjects of the past. In

⁷⁹³ The Chen dynasty (*Chenchao* 陳朝, 557-589) was one of the Southern dynasties in the time of the Nanbeichao 南北朝 (Northern and Southern Dynasties), and was destroyed by the Sui dynasty.

⁷⁹⁴ The Southern Tang dynasty (*Nan Tang* 南唐, 937-976) was one of the Ten Kingdoms (*Shi Guo* 十國) which followed the Tang dynasty.

⁷⁹⁵ *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄, p. 2.

⁷⁹⁶ *Yueling* 月令 is a chapter in the Book of Rites (*Liji* 禮記).

⁷⁹⁷ *Mr. Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* is a collection of treatises about “cosmological matters” written by Lü Buwei 呂不韋 from the time of the Northern and Southern Dynasties (fifth century until 221 BC). See “Chinese Literature—*Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 ‘Spring and Autumn of Master Lü,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/lueshichunqiu.html>, last accessed: June 16th, 2017.

order to do so, he drew on very specific examples of the past to strengthen his point of view without further theorizing the topic. However, the *Chuanyi lu* sometimes presents itself as skipping from one topic to another. After having treated the case of the historian and giving an example of a doubtful classic of the past, Lu goes on with articulating the proper behavior of sovereigns by engaging an example concerning Emperor Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (r. 626-649) and the Song dynasty:

唐太宗即位。從封德彝言。於是疏屬王者降為公。德彝之言曰。爵命崇則力役多。以天下為私奉。非至公之法也。⁷⁹⁸

When Emperor Taizong of Tang dynasty ascended the throne, he followed the speakings of Feng Deyi.⁷⁹⁹ Thereupon, the collateral relatives and kin of the king were degraded to dukes. The words of Deyi are: If the rank [of a person] is assigned very high, there is a lot of corveé [serving him]. He uses the whole world for his personal interest and orders. This is not the way [of acting] in public.

宋制。親王之子。不封郡王。親王既沒。不立嗣王。⁸⁰⁰

Under the rule of the Song, the sons of hereditary princes of the first rank were not bestowed with the title of Commandery Prince [rank below the rank of a hereditary prince of the first rank]. The title of a hereditary prince of the first rank later on disappeared and there was no adopting of an heir to the king.

It gets clear that Lu Shen in his *Chuanyi lu* applied two kinds of historical critique, mentioned by Byongik Koh:⁸⁰¹ He criticizes the way of historical writing, respectively gives instructions how to write history, and he criticizes historical events themselves, respectively doubts the correctness of the records about them.

As remarked in the case of the Lu Shen's research about the *Shitong*, one of his main concerns was the problem of trustful sources for historical writing; certainly, for the writing of history the sources are crucial. In the course of Ming dynasty the veritable

⁷⁹⁸ *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄, p. 2.

⁷⁹⁹ Feng Lun 封倫 (568-627), *zi* 字: Deyi 德彝, was chancellor during the reigns of Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618-626), and Emperor Taizong of Tang dynasty.

⁸⁰⁰ *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄, p. 3.

⁸⁰¹ See Koh, Liu (1956), p. 27.

records (*shilu* 實錄) were made accessible; but before the Jiajing period (1521-1567) they were available only for a small circle of people. Lu Shen did not enjoy the pleasure of free accessibility to these rich sources. Therefore, he described in his *Yanshan ji*:

生遭文明之盛，策名登庭，獲接故老，聆祖宗之休懿，又為史官，
觀累朝實錄，金匱石室之藏，於是乎稽事實，考治化，得以沿流風
，觀俗尚”。⁸⁰²

Concerning the flourishing of the Shengcao civilization, by writing the name on a bamboo slip (on appointment to a post) one enters the main palace hall and is able to join the venerable elder listening to the beauty of the ancestors' [words]. In addition, as historiographer one observes tiredly the dynastic veritable records. In the safe depository for the storing of documents one then investigates the facts, inspects the governing by stressing morality and is capable of following traditional customs and observes common conventions.

Lu Shen's desire to join the exclusive circle of persons having access to the valuable sources of the *shilu*, his transfigured idea of the ideal which these persons, namely the historiographers, embodied and their essential tasks of “investigating the facts” (*ji shishi* 稽事實) and “inspecting the governing in terms of morality” (*kao zhihua* 考治化) become apparent in this passage. Furthermore, in this description Lu very clearly illustrated the tasks and duties of a historian official. According to him, the same as for Liu Zhiji, “recording the facts” is one of the most important tasks of an historian. Likewise, he also advocated the opinion that an historian should evaluate good and bad governance “in terms of morality” without being influenced by, e.g., dependencies towards an emperor. Lu Shen here established rules for historiographers which disclose the most important tasks when writing history and thereby followed Liu Zhiji's claims for a good historian. Later in his career Lu Shen was able to copy parts of the veritable records. In a letter to his family, he wrote:

寄回《聖政記》一部，十二本，此即《太祖實錄》，要熟看，中間
頗有誤字錯簡，闕疑可也。⁸⁰³

⁸⁰² *Yanshan ji* 儼山集 (A Manuscript Collection of [Stories happened at] Yanshan), from *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *jibu* 集部 (non-canonical works), *bie ji lei* 別集類, *Ming Hongwu zhi Chongzhen* 明洪武至崇禎, *Yanshan ji* 儼山集, *juan* 卷 82, *bei* 碑 (Stone tablets), *Yun Song fujun bei* 筠松府君碑 (Stone Tablet of magistrate Yun Song).

[Today,] I send back to you one part of the *Sheng Zhengji*⁸⁰⁴—twelve chapters—, these namely are the Veritable Records of Emperor Taizu (*Taizu shilu*). It is requested to look very skillfully because in-between there are a lot of false characters and misplaced passages; and, therefore, it leaves unsettled questions.

This statement proves that, at least, the Veritable Records of Emperor Taizu, i.e. the Hongwu Emperor (1368-1398), must have been circulating at that time.⁸⁰⁵ It might be reasonably assumed that during the time of Lu Shen the veritable records were distributed more and more. Yet, it is not evident in which extent the *shilu* became accessible to a wider public, who had access to these sources and if this access was formally approved. Additionally, in this passage another aspect is revealed, namely the topic of the reliability of the *shilu*. Lu spoke of “carefully reading” because the veritable records had “a lot of false characters and misplaced passages” (*youyou wuzi cuojian* 頗有誤字錯簡). He did not elaborate more on this, neither did he note in which context these deficiencies appeared. However, this statement was a first step towards source criticism which was advanced greatly in Ming dynasty. In summary, Lu Shen can be considered a great forerunner in historiography as he touched upon the most significant topics in this realm, namely characteristics of a good historians, consideration on history writing in general, source criticism and the relation between the *gonglun* and history writing.

11.4 He Liangjun—Classic versus History Work

Another representative of the critical approaches in Ming dynasty was He Liangjun. He Liangjun 何良俊 (1506-1573), *zi* 字: Yuanlang 元朗, came from Huating 華亭 in Songjiang 松江. After receiving a good education and finishing the University of Nanjing, he failed to pass higher examinations, which was a fiasco for him—especially because his younger brother became a *juren* and then a *jinshi*. Because of his misfortune and the death of his wife, he got mentally and physically ill, and was able to recover. In 1550, he completed his first comprehensive book about citations from the classics. With

⁸⁰³ *Yanshan ji* 儼山集, *juan* 卷 96, *Jiangxi jiashu shiyi shou* 江西家書十一首 (Eleventh letters to home from Jiangxi).

⁸⁰⁴ The *Hongwu shengzhengji* 洪武聖政記 was written bei Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381). It covers memorials from the time of the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor (1328-1398).

⁸⁰⁵ Qian (2010), p. 111.

his writings, he wanted to compensate his failure in the civil examinations and prove that he, indeed, possessed the qualities to enter officialdom. Thanks to contacts in the government in Beijing, he received a post as chief clerk (*kongmu* 孔目) in the Nanjing Hanlin Academy in 1553. Five years later he concluded his official career. After living in Suzhou from 1561 on, he returned to his hometown Zhelin to oversee the rebuilding of his family house. The years before his death he occupied himself with composing a collection of his miscellaneous notes in 30 *juan*, called *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, which was printed with movable letters in 1569. His work as a writer was not only a collocation of his contribution to scholarship—i.e. works concerning historical criticism, classics, music, painting and so on—, but also a repository of records about contemporary affairs.⁸⁰⁶

The Siyou zhai congshuo 四友齋叢說

The *Siyou zhai congshu* 四友齋叢說 (Collected Chatter from the Four Friends Studio) follows the ancient categories of literary works: It is divided into four *juan* about *jing* 經 (classics), 13 *juan* about history works (*shi* 史), one *juan* about miscellaneous records (*zaji* 雜紀), two *juan* about masters (*zi* 子), two *juan* about Buddhism and Daoism (*Shi-Dao* 釋道), one *juan* about literary pieces (*wen* 文), three *juan* about poems (*shi* 詩), also three *juan* about documents (*shu* 書), and another nine *juan* with different topics; altogether 38 *juan*. At the end there is a *juan* follows where he investigated literature (*kaowen* 考文) and a *juan* about reading history (*dushi* 讀史). In contrast to Shao Bao and Zhu Minggao, He Liangjun did not apply the method of “citation—comment,” but rather wrote a continuous text evaluating works which appeared noteworthy to him. The first *juan* of the history section is introduced by:

史之與經，上古元無所分。如《尚書》之堯典，即陶唐氏之史也。其舜典，即有虞氏之史也。大禹臯陶漢“益稷”、“禹貢”，即有夏氏之史也。“湯誓”、“伊訓”、“太甲”、“說命”、“盤庚”，即有殷氏之史也。“泰誓”、“牧誓”、“武成”、“金縢”、“洛誥”、“君牙”、“君奭”諸篇，即有周氏之史也。孔子修書，取之為經，則謂之《經》。及太史公作《史記》，取之以為五帝三王紀，則又謂之《史》。何嘗

⁸⁰⁶ *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 515ff.

有定名耶？陸魯望曰：《書》則記言之史，《春秋》則記事之史也。記言記事，前後參差。曰經曰史，未可定其體也。案經解則悉謂之經，區而別之，則《詩》、《易》為經，《書》與《春秋》實史耳。及孔子刪定六經之後，天下不復有經矣。⁸⁰⁷

Historical works go together with the classics; in the remote ages originally, they were not separated. For example, the [chapter] “Yaodian” in the *Shangshu* namely is the history of Taotangshi [i.e. Emperor Yao]; its [chapter] “Shundian” namely is the history of Youyushi [i.e. Emperor Shundi]; [the stories about] Dayu and Gao Tao⁸⁰⁸ expansively in the “Yiji” and the “Yugong,” namely are the history of the Xia [dynasty]; the [chapters] “Tangshi,” “Yixun,” “Taijia,” “Shuoming” and “Pangeng” [in the *Shangshu*] are namely the history of the Shang [dynasty]. The “Taishi,” the “Mushi,” the “Wucheng,” “Jinteng,” “Luogao,” “Junya,” “Junshi” [of the *Shangshu*]⁸⁰⁸—all these chapters are namely the history of the Zhou [dynasty]. When Confucius compiled [his] books, he took it [i.e. the *Shangshu*] and made it a classic; then it was called *jing*. And when Taishigong [i.e. Sima Qian] wrote the *Shiji*, he took it [i.e. the *Shangshu*] and regarded it to be a record about the Five Emperors and Three Kings; then on the other hand it was called “a history work.” How can it be that it is denominated [so differently] like that? Lu Luwang [i.e. Lu Guimeng 陆龟蒙; d. 881] said: “Concerning the *Shangshu*, the records of sayings then are historical accounts; concerning the *Chunqiu*, the records of facts then are historical accounts. Between the records of sayings and the records of facts there has been a disparity from the beginning to the end. Calling it a classic or calling it a history work cannot determine its substance. When examining the commentaries of the classics, then it is completely called classic. When classifying it and then distinguishing, then the *Shijing* and the *Yijing* are classics; and the *Shangshu* and the *Chunqiu* are [actually] history works. And after Confucius had revised and finalized the Six Classics, in the world there were no more classics.

⁸⁰⁷ *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, *juan 5, shi yi* 史一, p. 41.

⁸⁰⁸ Gao Tao 皋陶 was a virtuous minister of Shundi and the beginning of the Xia dynasty.

He Liangjun very precisely elaborated the confusion about the denomination of ancient history works. He stressed the inconsistency in the categorization of, e.g., the *Shangshu* as a classic or a history work. This was a common discussion in the world of historians and also a topic in Liu Zhiji's considerations; furthermore, it is an expression of the contemplation about characteristics of history works. The passage continues:

而周天王及各國皆立史官，如周有史佚太史，僖內史過內史叔興叔服，虢有史囂，衛有史華，晉有史蘇史狐史墨，魯有史克，世掌史事而遂有專史矣。當時各國皆有史。⁸⁰⁹

Moreover, the kings of the universe and all the states established historiographers; for example, the Zhou dynasty had the court historian Shi Yi; [the state of] Dan had Neishi Guo, Neishi Shuxing, [Neishi] Shufu; [the state of] Guo had Shi Yin; the Wei had Shi Hua; the Jin had Shi Su, Shi Hu, Shi Mo; Lu had Shi Ke. The generation is in charge of the historical events but the successors have the focus on the history. At that time, every state had a historian.

By naming ancient court historians, He Liangjun emphasized the importance attached to history writing and hereby the role of the historiographer even in ancient times, “every state had a historian.” Afterwards he named some influencing histories of smaller states, and then proceeded to the *Shiji*:

太史公《史記》，為歷代帝王作十二本紀，為朝廷典章作八書，為年歷作十表，為有士者作三十世家，為賢士大夫作七十列傳。其凡例皆以己意創立，而後世作史者舉不能違其例，蓋甚奇矣。《史記》起自五帝迄於漢武，蓋上下二千四百一十三年之中，而為諸人立傳僅僅若此。今觀書中諸傳欲去一人，其一人傳中欲去一事，即不可得。真所謂一出一入，字挾千金。春藏之石室副在人間，實不為過。若後人作史，無穢冗濫，去一人不為少，增一人不為多。今宋元史中，苟連去數十傳，一傳中削去數事，亦何關於損益之數哉。⁸¹⁰

Taishigong [i.e. Sima Qian] in his *Shiji* for the emperors of the past dynasties created twelve *benji*, for the court decrees and regulations he

⁸⁰⁹ *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, *juan 5, shi yi* 史一, p. 41.

⁸¹⁰ *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, *juan 5, shi yi* 史一, p. 43.

created eight books, for the year-by-year history ten tables, for scholars thirty biographies of hereditary families, and for distinguished men and literati seventy biographies. This order [for history works] originated from its own course, and historians of following generations held it up not being able to disobey this order. How very strange! The *Shiji* starts from the time of the Five [mythological] Emperors and goes up to Han Wu[di]. So, it covers [happenings] in two thousand four hundred thirteen years; and for all people barely establishes biographies. When observing [these] in books today, all biographies want to get rid of one person; in the biography of this one person one wishes to get rid of one affair, even though this cannot be achieved. In fact, it is called one-out-one-it; the characters embrace [something] extremely precious. The stone chamber for keeping books fits in the human world, it truly is ok. If later generations write history, it is without mean, superfluous and redundant [words]. If one person is removed, it does not become less; if one person is added, it does not become more. In contemporary histories of Song and Yuan times they respectfully connected and removed more than ten biographies; in one biography they cut removing many affairs; so how about increase and decrease of the number [of biographies]?

He Liangjun here alluded to the fact that later histories followed the model of the *Shiji* in taking over the exact amount of, e.g., biographies in history works, which is not appropriate at any time. Rather, one should accept that it does not depend on exactly copying the structure of the *Shiji*. In other words, He criticized the blindly following of the assumed ideal of earlier history works. Afterwards, he continued evaluating history works, i.e. the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu* and the *Sanguozhi*, concluding: “Concerning all history works from the time before Tang, the *Jinshu* alone is extremely disorderly because it was completed by many people.” (自唐以前諸史，唯《晉書》最為冗雜，正以其成於眾人之手也⁸¹¹) In contrast, the *Songshu* was only accomplished by one person, and thus is impressive. He Liangjun here also followed Liu Zhiji’s thoughts that history works should be written by one or few persons only, not—as it was the common practice—by a large group of people in the Bureau of History. In the last chapter, He explained why he wrote his work:

⁸¹¹ *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, *juan* 5, *shi yi* 史一, p. 47.

我朝名臣即言行錄所載諸公，大率皆是矣。但其所載，皆用墓志碑文以及餞贈序記之語編入。此等皆粉飾虛美之詞，且多是套子說話。以之入於史傳，後人其肯信之乎？如李文毅，英宗時為國子祭酒。以廂房前柏樹枝柯蔽覆，妨士子肄業，遂剪去數條。王振素忌其剛直，² 枷於監門。石大用率監生數千人號救請代，幸而獲免。但當真書其事，今但取《古穰雜錄》云「王振怒其持儒禮，構以罪」，又取羅倫跋帖語云「文毅見辱，石大用代死」。觀者終不得其始末，豈得謂之實錄耶？[...] 故摭其實而著之篇。⁸¹²

Important officials of our dynasty are the gentlemen who record the books recording the words and deeds of sages; generally, all are correct. But concerning that which is recorded, it all includes recorded words from epigraphies of tomb memorial tablets as well as composition presented as farewell gifts. Those kinds all gloss over empty and beautiful words; only many are the conventional method of telling stories. Using this it enters the historical transmission—will later generations be willing to believe this? For example, Li Wenyi at the time of Emperor Yingzong [r. 1435-1449] became the Chancellor of the National University [*guoxue* 國學]. Because the branches of the cypress in front of the wing-room covered [the view], it hindered the candidates of civil service examinations to learn a profession; thereupon he cut out a number of twigs. Wang Zhen always was jealous of this upright and outspoken [person]; thereupon, he falsely accused [Li Wenyi] of the crime of daring to cut down the ancient wood of a Confucius temple; he [had to wear] a cangue in prison. Shi Dayong commanded students in the imperial academy more than thousand to help and requested to take [Li Wenyi's] place, luckily, he won and [Li Wenyi] was dismissed. But seriously wrote this affair, today only take the *Gurang zalu* which says: “Wang Zhen became furious about this opposing of Confucian rites, and formed this crime.” Moreover, taking Luo Lun's [1431-1478] postscript notice it says: “[Li] Wenyi met with an insult, Shi Dayong died in his place.” How could this be called a veritable record? [...] Therefore, I gathered these facts and wrote this piece of paper.

⁸¹² *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說, *juan* 38, *xu shi* 續史, p. 345.

With his *Siyou zhai congshuo*, He Liangjun contributed to the ongoing discourse about history writing in Ming dynasty. He joined the discussion about ancient history works, and also called into question the differentiation between a classic and an actual history work. Furthermore, in the last paragraph he put his focus on the representation of important officials of his own dynasty, namely in epigraphs on their tomb stones or alike. According to him, these portrayals are embellished, do not depict the whole picture and are, in fact, not able to act as an historical transmission. As these presentations do not appear trustworthy and on that account will not be believed by later generations, He Liangjun wrote this record to rectify the facts. His statement speaking for itself reveals his intention when writing the *Siyou zhai congshu*, and therewith the author joined the series of critical historians in Ming dynasty.

11.5 Wang Shizhen—The Most Important Ming Time Historian

After He Liangjun the most famous historian of Ming dynasty followed: Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590), *zi* 字: Yuanmei 元美, *hao* 號: Fengzhou 鳳州, from Taicang 太倉, was one of the most important and influential historians of Ming dynasty. His disciple Dong Fubiao 董復表 said about him: “Concerning the abundance of contemporary historiography, there is nobody going beyond my teacher [i.e. Wang Shizhen].” (當代史學之富，無踰先生⁸¹³) At the age of seventeen, he passed the provincial examination, four years later he received the degree of a *jinshi*. After having climbed the ladder of ranks in Beijing for ten years, he became surveillance vice commissioner in Qingzhou 青州 in Shandong province far away from the capital because the grand secretary Yan Song 嚴嵩 (1480-1565)⁸¹⁴ nursed a grudge against him. Still in Beijing, together with Li Xianfang 李先芳 (1511-1594),⁸¹⁵ Wang Zongmu 王宗沐 (1523-1591)⁸¹⁶ and the

⁸¹³ *Yanzhou shiliao yin* 兗州史料引, by Dong Fubiao 董復表, in *Yanzhou shiliao* 兗州史料, by Wang Shizhen, *juan shou* 卷首, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=150674&page=36&remap=gb>, last accessed: August 30th, 2017.

⁸¹⁴ For further information, see *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1586-1591.

⁸¹⁵ Li Xianfang 李先芳 (1511-1594) was a Ming time politician from Puzhou in today's region of Henan, Puxian 濮縣. He received his *jinshi* degree in 1547 and was a member of a society of poets.

⁸¹⁶ For further information, see *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1438-1441.

Seven Later Masters,⁸¹⁷ he was a member of a literary circle which was very popular at this time. There he also got to know Li Panlong 李攀龙 (1514-1570),⁸¹⁸ with whom he became known as the leading figure of the renaissance movement *guwenci yundong* 古文辭運動 (“return to ancient style”).⁸¹⁹ They propagated the “revival of the ancient,” so to say—concerning prose—the style of the Qin and Han dynasties,—concerning poetry—the style of Han, Wei and mid Tang dynasties. After his transfer out of the capital and his father’s dead, he stayed at his hometown designing gardens until 1567, when the new Longqing 隆慶 Emperor, Zhu Zaihou 朱載堉 (r. 1567-1572), was enthroned. Afterwards he had posts as surveillance commissioner at different places; because whenever he was called to take an influential position, the censor Yang Jie 楊節 (fl. 1568) would denounce him. Consequently, Wang Shizhen returned to his native place and stayed there for another decade. As an independent and influential scholar, he and the grand chancellor Zhang Juzheng (see chap. 6.1.1) developed a mutual hostility. Following the syncretistic thoughts of his days, Wang, furthermore, engaged himself in studies of Buddhism and Daoism, became a disciple of the Daoist Tanyang Zi 曇陽子 (or Wang Daozhen 王燾貞, 1558-1580), and, thence, was accused of heterodoxy by Zhang Juzheng. Despite all of these denunciations and accusations, he was “the most influential literary figure of the time, and had many followers, besides being an official of some note.”⁸²⁰

During his lifetime, he produced a vast amount of literature on very different topics, one third of which being historical publications. With his promotion of the renaissance of ancient works, Wang contributed to an increased appreciation of literature in general by labelling it “the highest human accomplishment.” Due to this condition he contributed to the already mentioned popularization and increased

⁸¹⁷ The Seven Later Masters or *houqizi* 後七子 included Liang Youyu 梁有譽, Li Panlong 李攀龍, Wang Shizhen 王世貞, Xie Zhen 謝榛, Zong Chen 宗臣, Xu Zhongxing 徐中行, and Wu Guolun 吳國倫.

⁸¹⁸ For further information, see *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 845ff.

⁸¹⁹ The Ancient Literature Movement started in mid Ming. “The movement advocated people should read some classic literary works earnestly.” For further information, see, for example, Li Xiangyao’s 李祥耀 (2009) article “Lun Mingzhongqi Wuzhong de ‘guwenci’ yundong” 论明中期吴中的“古文辞”运动 (Study on the Ancient Literature Movement of Wuzhong in the Mid-Ming Dynasty), *Jiangnan Daxue Xuebao (Journal of Jiangnan University)* 1, pp. 131-134, 148.

⁸²⁰ *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1399ff.

prominence of other kinds of books as well, such as drama and fiction.⁸²¹ Wang Shizhen's transmitted historical treatises can mainly be divided into four categories: (1) the collection of historical data, like his *Ming yeshi hui* 明野史匯 (A Collection of Ming Time Unofficial History), his *Huangming mingchen wanyan lu* 皇明名臣琬琰錄⁸²² (Record about the Gentlemen's Character of Important Officials from Imperial Ming) or his *Tianyan huilu* 天言匯錄 (Collected Records of Heavenly Sayings); (2) records about gathered jottings, e.g. his *Yanshantang shi xiaolu* 弇山堂識小錄 (Recorded Small Records from the Yanshan Studio), his *Guochao congji* 國朝叢記 (Collected Notes about the Current Dynasty), his *Shaoyang congtan* 少陽叢談 (Random Talks from the Crown Prince' Palace) or his *Huangming shengshi shu* 皇明盛事述 (Narrations about Grand Occasions in the Imperial Ming); (3) writings like the *Jiajing yilai shoufu zhuan* 嘉靖以來首輔傳 (Biographies of Senior Grand Secretaries Since Jiajing Reign), the *Jinyi zhi* 錦衣志 (Records about Brocade Clothes), the *Zhongguan kao* 中官考 (Investigation about Officials in the Capital) as well as other various kinds of *zhuan* 傳, *ji* 記, *kao* 考 and *biao* 表; (4) textual criticism like his *Shicheng kaowu* 史乘考誤 (Investigation about Errors in History works).⁸²³

According to quantity as well as quality, the literature by Wang Shizhen can be labelled the peak of Ming historiography. In his works a critical attitude towards source material reaches its full extent. Unlike former historians, he had the honor of having access to the veritable records,⁸²⁴ therefore also his *Yanshantang bieji* 弇山堂別集 (Alternative Records from the Yanshan Studio) from 1590 and his *Yanzhou shiliao* 弇州史料 (Historical Material from Yanzhou) published in 1614 could rely on them. His

⁸²¹ *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1402f.

⁸²² In the *Siku quanshu* the (*Huang*)*Ming mingchen wanyan lu* (皇)明名臣琬琰錄 is ascribed to Xu Hong 徐紘 (fl. 1500); see *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu qi* 史部七, *zhuanji lei* 傳記類, *zonglu zhi shu* 總錄之屬.

⁸²³ Jiang Shengli 姜胜利 (1997), "Wang Shizhen yu 'Shicheng kaowu'" 王世贞与《史乘考误》, *Hainan daxue xuebao shehui kexue ban* 海南大学学报社会科学版 (Social Science Journal of Hainan University) 15:2, p. 43.

⁸²⁴ From the sixteenth century on the veritable records were disseminated even outside the court in hand written copies. See "Chinese Literature—*Mingshilu* 明實錄," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/mingshilu.html>, last accessed: March 15th, 2017.

most interesting work seems to be the just mentioned *Shicheng kaowu* 史乘考誤 (Investigation of the Errors in Historical Works) because it makes clear that he had the knowledge of rightfulness or wrongfulness of sources and of the demand for a critical and selective appraisal of sources. He included his *Shicheng kaowu* in eleven *juan* in his *Yanshantang bieji* 弇山堂別集 (*juan* 20 until *juan* 30). During the period of his creative work many deficiencies in the contemporary historiography became apparent; consequently, he concentrated on works from his own time. Wang named and shamed the Ming national historiography of being the worst of all, for not having anything of relevance to history; that means, reliable sources were missing. He also criticized authors for adapting information from other works without evaluating them before. This attitude distinctly demonstrates his emphasis on the importance of “primary sources.” In the preface he noted, according to the translation by Wolfgang Franke: “National historiography never failed in its task to such an extreme degree as under our dynasty,” which is a direct critique of the official historiography of the Ming dynasty. He proceeded:⁸²⁵

Only when past events needed no more concealment [that is, after the death of a ruler], did the grand secretariat and the Hanlin Academy receive the order to compile the veritable records. The old memorials from the six offices of scrutiny for supervision of the six ministries and from the Bureau of Remonstrance were consulted, and that was all. The records of utterances and actions by the historiographers of the left and of the right [that is, the diaries of activity and repose] are missing. Thus, the compilers of the veritable records had no material upon which they could rely, and therefore they were not in a position to write [...] Worst of all was that those in charge of writing had their private sympathies and aversions. In consequence, even if there was material to rely upon and nothing to evade, they did not wish to write about it. Therefore, what they wrote did not correspond to the facts.⁸²⁶

Wang Shizhen here sharply criticized the habit of writing not corresponding to the facts and writing by taking into account one’s own sympathies and aversions. This behavior is unacceptable in history writing, as objectivity and truthful writing are the foremost

⁸²⁵ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 731f.

⁸²⁶ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 731.

rules. While this levels criticism against the official history writing of his time, Wang then went on criticizing private historiography:

Should we [perhaps] look for that which is missing in the official histories in the unofficial sources? The unofficial histories, however, have three deficiencies. First, they presume upon discord and in many cases make false implications. It is impossible to call the authors of such works fair and honest wise men. They erase from their works sources upon which they look with anger [...] Second, they casually hear information and get entangled in contradictions. These people have grown up as country people and no longer understand the matters of the country officials. They misunderstand the information they have heard and then tell the details [...] Third, they like strange things and in many cases they even invent abstruse things to startle us or to flatter the excellence of the person in question. They make no further investigation and then write the story down [...] It is true that the official historians are unrestrained and are skillful in concealing the truth, but the memorials and statutes they record and the documents they copy cannot be discarded. The unofficial historians express their opinions and are skillful at missing the truth, but their verification of right and wrong and their abolition of taboos against names and things cannot be discarded. The family historians flatter and are skillful in exceeding the truth, but their praise of the merits of the ancestors and the manifestation of their achievements as officials cannot be discarded.⁸²⁷

In this paragraph, Wang Shizhen named three deficiencies of private historiography which say that such kinds of writing emerge from conflicts, hence, are not fair and honest, that sometimes hearsays without verification are recorded, and that sometimes “strange things” are reported without any investigation of their rightfulness. It gets clear that Wang in his *Shicheng kaowu* criticized every kind of history writing from his time, but also praised advantages of each kind of writing. Indirectly, therewith he laid down rules for history writing, which contain the main claim of always recording the truth—a rule which was ranked foremost in Liu Zhiji’s statements as well.

⁸²⁷ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 731f.

Additional to his own writings, Wang Shizhen composed prefaces to many other writings and had co-authorships where he, too, expressed his thoughts about history writing. The *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編 is an example for a work which was written by Yuan Wang's 袁王 and Wang Shizhen together. In his preface to this work—in contrast to his *Shicheng kaowu*—he also adopted a critical attitude towards former history works and named specific rules on history writing.

說者，譏其記繁而志寡。要其書之堅潔整瞻，有非蔚宗所逮者，下此惟廬陵《五代史》凌燦古今，子瞻猶短其作傳有漏，況十九史粉粉籍籍，文成而義不屬者夥邪。稽古史即經也。《尚書》之文是也，自《堯典》至《秦誓》世數，缺有間矣。⁸²⁸

Concerning the [literary style of] *shuo* [i.e. narratives],⁸²⁹ it slanders the annals as being too large, and the treatises as being too scant. I want such books [i.e. history works] to be solid and pure and neat and helpful. There are some which are caught by ancestors who did not possess any literary talent. Among these is Luling's [i.e. Ouyang Xiu] *History of the Five Dynasties* which maltreats brilliant ancient and contemporary [works]; yet, Zi Zhan's [i.e. Su Shi's]⁸³⁰ weak point was that the writings he transmitted had leaks. Furthermore, the nineteen [Standard] histories are totally disorderly and confusing. [Works] being completed but not being connected to righteousness, are they not many? To study ancient history means [to study] the classics. The text of the *Shangshu* is [assumed to be] true. But from the *Yaodian* to the *Qin Shi*⁸³¹ the generations are many and mistakes gain space [in the course of time].

Clearly, Wang here levelled criticism at former history works and establishes rules on how to do good history writing: History works, according to him, have to be not too

⁸²⁸ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, by Yuan Wang 袁王 and Wang Shizhen, Beijing: Beijing shi Zhongguo shuju, 1985, *yuanxu* 原序, p. 4.

⁸²⁹ “Shuo” 說 here apparently points at an ancient literary style. The Ming time scholar Wu Ne 吳訥 (1372-1457) said in his *Wenzhang bianti xushuo* 文章辨體序說 in the *leixu* 類序 that *shuo* is to be understood as an explanation of the argumentation of principles and a narration of the intention. (按: 說者, 釋也, 述也, 解釋義理而以己意述之也。) See Tang Shunzhi's 唐順之 (1507-1560) *Baibian* 稗編, *juan* 75.

⁸³⁰ Su Shi 苏轼 (1037-1101) was a northern Song literate and calligrapher.

⁸³¹ The *Yaodian* 堯典 and the *Qin Shi* 秦誓 are chapters of the *Shangshu*.

long, not too short, but neat and helpful. Wang, furthermore, claims that there have been many authors of history works who “did not possess literary talent.” Among them are Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 who disgraced the classics and Su Shi 苏轼 who transmitted works by omitting parts. Likewise, the Standard Histories (*guoshi* 國史) in total are “disorderly and confusing,” according to Wang, whereby he openly criticized the canonical *guoshi*. Moreover, also the classics display possible sources of error: The *Shangshu*, e.g., was written over a certain period of time, and, thus, mistakes also “gain space in the course of time.” Like Liu Zhiji did in his “outer chapters,” Wang here called into question the authoritative disposition of the classics by attributing to them the potential of making mistakes. Wang Shizhen continued with criticizing Confucius himself:

孔子刪之曰：“式訓來世文不必備云爾！”周衰，孔子從平王四十九年值隱公元年作《春秋》本魯史也。魯前此無史乎！筆削訖二百四十二年；蓋聖人若是其慎也，况春秋未作暨絕筆之後。⁸³²

Confucius erased this [i.e. see above] by saying: “Standard explanations for texts of later generations need not be prepared!” At the decline of the Zhou dynasty, Confucius wrote the *Chunqiu* as the history of [the state of] Lu [starting] from the first year of the Duke Yin [of Lu]⁸³³ [i.e. 722 BC] [after] King Ping [of (Eastern) Zhou]⁸³⁴ had already been in charge for 49 years. The [state of] Lu before that did not have a history! To correct this, he completed [this account] about 242 years [of history]. Now Confucius, thus, acted with care. Furthermore, the *Chunqiu* had not been written until after his last works.

Wang openly objected to Confucius’ opinion that texts of later generations need not to have standardized forms, and, therefore, criticized the sacrosanct person of Confucius. Furthermore, he accused Confucius of not having taken into account in his *Chunqiu* the whole time of Eastern Zhou dynasty by omitting King Ping of Zhou. This does not

⁸³² *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, *yuanxu* 原序, p. 4.

⁸³³ This points at the Duke Yin of Lu (Lu Yin Gong 魯隱公; r. 722-712 BC).

⁸³⁴ King Ping of (Eastern) Zhou (r. 770-720 BC) was the thirteenth king of the Zhou dynasty (*Zhouchao* 周朝, ca. 1046-256 BC) and first king of Eastern Zhou dynasty (*Dongzhou* 東周, ca. 771-256 BC); he moved the capital of the kingdom from Haojing to Luoyang. He is the first Zhou King to be mentioned in the *Zuozhuan*.

correspond to recording the truth, if one claims to write the history of a whole dynasty—omitting and concealing is equal to lying. At last, Wang called into question the direct authorship of the *Chunqiu* as not being written by Confucius, since this work had not been completed before Confucius' death. Therefore, like Liu Zhiji did in his *Shitong*,⁸³⁵ Wang also reprimanded Confucius and his *Chunqiu* in this passage. Especially the criticism against the concealment and the omission of certain facts aroused the blaming by both authors.

列國非無記注。自日尋干戈，若存若亡，迄於秦火，遂茫不可跡；而春秋焰，而猶存此誠大聖人，公論不可滅故史也，而尊曰經與尚書並傳云：自秦以來大義蔑如，迄宋涑水司馬光輯《資治通鑑》。歷十九年而成，書起周威烈王戊寅二十三年，訖五代其中。自周敬王庚申至威烈王戊寅七十餘年不續。⁸³⁶

Various countries did absolutely not have any record or account. Since recently [history accounts were regarded as] weapons of war; they seemed to be collected and then to be destroyed, up to the burning of books [in 213] in Qin dynasty. Thereupon, vastly there could not be any remains. Moreover, the *Chunqiu* was burned [too], but yet they still preserved this honest great sage man [i.e. Confucius], and the public opinion [of this time] could not extinguish this original history [work]. Moreover, honorably it was called classic and together with the *Shangshu* equally handed down saying: From Qin dynasty on the cardinal principles of righteousness were belittled, until the Song time Sima Guang from Sushui compiled the *Zizhi tongjian*; after 19 years, he completed the work. The book starts with King Weilie of Zhou [r. 425-402 BC] in the *wuyin* year, the 23rd year of his reign [i.e. 403 BC], and ends in the time of the Five Dynasties [907-960 AD]. From the *gengsheng* year of [the reign of] King Jing of Zhou [r. 519-477 BC] [i.e. 481 BC] until the *wuyin* year of [the reign of] King Weilie [i.e. 403 BC] more than seventy years it was not continued.

⁸³⁵ For a detailed examination of Liu Zhiji's critique on the *Chunqiu*, see Michael Quirin (1987), *Liu Zhiji und das Chun-Qiu*.

⁸³⁶ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, *yuanxu* 原序, p. 4.

The same as Liu Zhiji, Wang Shizhen after criticizing the *Chunqiu* turned into appraising the same work by calling it an “original history work” and agreeing to its elevation to the rank of a classic. It is not clear whether Wang did so because he really believed in the value of the *Chunqiu* or, as Michael Quirin suggested in the case of Liu Zhiji,⁸³⁷ that the author did so as a mean of self-protection against possible hostilities by disciples of the orthodox Neo-Confucian doctrine. Moreover, Wang praised Sima Guang’s *Zizhi tongjian*, while at the same time pointing at the deficiency that there is a record about the time between the *Chunqiu* and the *Zizhi tongjian*, namely the years between 481 BC and 403 BC.

蓋獲麟以後不復有作者，涑水以意承之而義不敢當，故闕如也。考亭⁸³⁸朱子熹因《通鑑》爲《綱目》，黜魏帝漢，義例嚴正，真是非不謬於聖人。善乎劉永新之言曰：《尚書》言紀傳，《春秋》著編年，溫公取《尚書》之紀傳，史約之，以爲編年《通鑑》，而文⁸³⁹公倣《春秋》大書以爲之綱，三《傳》分註以爲之目；《通鑑綱目》是爲《尚書》、《春秋》之子孫者。審此則公論久定讀，史家舍《通鑑綱目》，其孰從而求之？⁸⁴⁰

Now after all affairs have come to an end, there are no more writers; Sushui [i.e. Sima Guang] with his idea continued it, but its righteousness is not appropriate; hence, it is deficient. Zhu Xi on the basis of the *Tongjian* accomplished his *Gangmu*, where he degraded the Wei and Han emperors; but the outline of the book is serious and principled, and the truly right and wrong is not applied falsely to sage men. Kindly, Liu Yongxin⁸⁴¹ said: The *Shangshu* is written in the biographical [style; i.e. the *jizhuanti*], while the *Chunqiu* is written in the chronological [style; i.e. the *biannianti*]. Wen Gong [i.e. Sima Guang] used the *jizhuan*[-style] of the *Shangshu*, but arranged [the chapters] historically in order to make the *Tongjian* a chronological record. But Wen Gong [also]

⁸³⁷ For this point, see Quirin (1987), chapter 3 (pp. 57-72), especially p. 69.

⁸³⁸ Kaoting is Zhu Xi’s *zhai hao* 齋號, i.e. the name of his studio. In ancient times men of letters were often named by the name of their study rooms or small schools.

⁸³⁹ *Wen* 文 is probably a misspelling for *wen* 溫, referring to Wen Gong 溫公, i.e. Sima Guang.

⁸⁴⁰ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, *yuanyu* 原序, pp. 4f.

⁸⁴¹ Liu Yongxin 劉永新 is an ancient literate from the Hongwu reign period (1368-1398).

imitated the great book *Chunqiu* in order to accomplish its *gang* [i.e. guiding principle],⁸⁴² while the three commentaries are divided and annotated in order to accomplish its particular details. [Therefore,] the *Tongjian gangmu* acts as the offspring of the *Shangshu* and *Chunqiu*. When examining this, the public discourse [about what is right and wrong concerning history writings pointing at these works] [lasted] very long and provided a definite reading. If historians had set aside the *Tongjian gangmu*, so who, thus, would have requested it?

Also, Zhu Xi's *Tongjian gangmu* was evaluated by Wang and approved with small restraints. Concerning Sima Guang's *Tongjian*, Wang here explained the historical origin, when stating that it was a descendant of the *Shangshu* and the *Chunqiu*. Interestingly, Wang Shizhen talked about the public discourse which "provides a definite reading" of the mentioned classics from the time of creation until the writing of the *Tongjian*. Therefore, the conception of right and wrong in history writing prevailed through hundreds of years, when looking at the origin of the *Tongjian*.

惟時爲涑水所辟，有京兆劉恕著《通鑑》外紀，起三皇訖周共和，厥後有蘭谿金履祥著《通鑑前編》，起陶唐止威烈，京兆爲蘭谿所譏刺，以自堯而上輕信，百家併可，傳者悉削不錄此則太古載記無繇聞知於史之體。⁸⁴³

But occasionally, that which was eliminated by Sushui [i.e. Sima Guang] was written by Liu Shu⁸⁴⁴ from Jingzhao in the outer record of the [*Zizhi*]

⁸⁴² The *gangmu*-style was first introduced by Sima Guang and was fully applied by Zhu Xi in his *Tongjian gangmu*. It is supposed to display a book "along great guidelines (*gang* 綱 'ropes') that were to be added by particular details (*mu* 目 'meshes')." See "Chinese Literature—*Tongjian gangmu* 通鑑綱目," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/tongjiangangmu.html>, last accessed: March 22nd, 2016.

⁸⁴³ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, *yanxu* 原序, p. 5.

⁸⁴⁴ Liu Shu 劉恕 (1032-1078) was the vice-chief-editor of the *Zizhi tongjian*. He wrote the *Zizhi tongjian waiji* 資治通鑑外紀, the "Outer Records of the *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government*," which is an extension of Sima Guang's work. He was not satisfied with Sima Guang's decision only to start with King Weilie of Zhou (r. 425-402 BC) and, hence, he compiled an extended version describing the time before King Weilie and starting with the Three Primordial Sovereigns. It was recorded by his son, as Liu Shu's extremities were paralyzed due to a stroke and he recounted everything orally. See "Chinese Literature—*Zizhi tongjian waiji* 資治通鑑外紀," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zizhitongjianwaiji.html>, last accessed: March 30th, 2016.

Tongjian; it starts with the Three Primordial Sovereigns⁸⁴⁵ and ends with the Gonghe regency [841-828 BC] of the Zhou dynasty. Thereafter, there is the *Tongjian qianbian* written by Jin Lüxiang⁸⁴⁶ from Lanxi; it starts with Tao Tang [i.e. Emperor Yao 堯; ca. 2356-2255 BC] and stops at [King] Weilie [of Zhou dynasty]. Jingzhao's [i.e. Liu Shu] [work] is ridiculed and slashed by Lanxi [i.e. Jin Lüxiang] because concerning [the happenings] previously from [the time of] Emperor Yao it is credulous [to trust them]. To combine the various schools of thought [with different facts of historical events] is possible; but if the one who transmits in all cases amends and does not record this, then the chronicles of the remote antiquity have no means to know from others about the essentials of history.

Wang Shizhen here approached history works from Song dynasty which cover a time period starting from the mythological beginnings of Chinese history. It seems that Wang agreed with Jin Lüxiang who was of the opinion that happenings from the time before Emperor Yao are not trustfully transmitted and, for that reason, cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, it is not historically correct to include them in history works, as the facts cannot be proven.

蓋闕焉？後此如宋丹稜李燾有《續資治通鑑》，元明州陳樞有《通鑑續編》，我明淳安商輅有《續編宋元綱目》是皆有以足涑水、考亭所不逮。余生也，晚竊有志於史學，於是綜集歷史，削繁就簡，辨誣存真，而一以涑水《通鑑》、考亭《綱目》為歸前乎！⁸⁴⁷

Now what about the deficiencies? After this, for example, there was the *Xu Zizhi Tongjian* by the Song time Li Tao⁸⁴⁸ from Danleng; and there

⁸⁴⁵ The Three Primordial Sovereigns are Fuxi 伏羲 (ca. 2852-2737 BC), Shennong 神農 (ca. 2737-2698 BC) and Huangdi 黃帝 (ca. 2698 BC-2598 BC).

⁸⁴⁶ Jin Lüxiang 金履祥 (1232-1303) was a scholar who gave lectures in different academies. He wrote the *Zizhi tongjian qianbian* 資治通鑑前編, "Past Supplement to the *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government*" which—according to the source used by Ulrich Theobald at *ChinaKnowledge.de*—"was written as a better alternative to Liu Shu's 劉恕 *Tongjian waiji* 通鑑外紀." See "Chinese Literature—*Zizhi tongjian qianbian* 資治通鑑前編," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zizhitongjianqianbian.html>, last accessed: March 30th, 2016.

⁸⁴⁷ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, yuanxu 原序, p. 5.

⁸⁴⁸ Li Tao 李燾 (1115-1184) was a Song time scholar and secretary of the *shiluyuan* 實錄院, the Veritable Records Institute. He wrote the *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編, "a chronicle of a

was the *Tongjian Xubian* by Chen Jing⁸⁴⁹ from Yuanmingzhou [i.e. Ningbo]; and the *Xubian Song Yuan Gangmu* by Shang Lu's⁸⁵⁰ from Chun'an from my own Ming time has satisfied everything which Sushui [i.e. Sima Guang] and Kaoting [i.e. Zhu Xi] did not catch. Concerning my remaining years, I late in my life secretly aim for the study of history; consequently, I comprehensively gathered histories, cut complicated [passages], thus simplified [them]; I distinguished between slanderous [passages] and preserved true [parts]. But throughout I regarded Sima Guang's *Tongjian* and Zhu Xi's *Gangmu* as return to the former!

The deficiencies which are mentioned by Wang Shizhen are—according to him—eradicating by Ming time historians who wrote comprehensive history works similar to Sima Guang's *Zizhi Tongjian* and Zhu Xi's *Tongjian gangmu*. In correlation with these Ming time historiographies, Wang here very humbly exposed his own interest in historiography, which was lived out by him only late in his life. Interestingly, he explicitly explained his methodological approach in evaluating former history works: gathering histories and cutting complicated passages in order to make history more clearly and simplify them. Nevertheless, Wang always highly appreciated Sima Guang's and Zhu Xi's works. This corresponds to the appraisal which these two books

part of the Song dynasty 宋 (960-1279) and a sequel to the landmark history *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒.” The book deals with the time from the reign of Emperor Taizong 宋太宗 (r. 976-997) until the end of the Northern Song dynasty 北宋 (960-1126). Li Tao used very different kinds and a rich number of sources, which makes this work very valuable. See “Chinese Literature—*Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑒長編,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/xuzizhitongjianchangbian.html>, last accessed: March 30th, 2016.

⁸⁴⁹ Chen Jing 陳桎 (fl. beginning of Ming dynasty), also called Chen Cheng 陳檉, from Zhejiang became a Hanlin scholar and wrote many different works following the *Tongjian*-structure. His *Zizhi tongjian xubian* 資治通鑒續編, the “Continuation to the Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government,” is a supplement to the *Zizhi tongjian* both recording happenings before the start of the *Zizhi tongjian* and reaching further after the time of the Five Dynasties (*Wudai* 五代; 907-960 AD)—when the *Tongjian* stops its record—until the Mongol conquest. It is a very important work, as it is the first critical approach towards the history of Song dynasty by pointing out “their failure to control northern China and their unwillingness to withstand the Mongols.” Therefore, this work can be labelled a historical critique by criticizing historical events. See “Chinese Literature—*Zizhi tongjian xubian* 資治通鑒續編,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/zizhitongjianxubian.html>, last accessed: March 30th, 2016.

⁸⁵⁰ Shang Lu 商輅 (1414-1486) from Chun'an in Zhejiang was a poet and historian. He wrote the *Xubian Song Yuan gangmu* 續編宋元綱目 or *Tongjian gangmu xubian* 通鑒綱目續編 (also called *Xu Song Yuan zizhi tongjian gangmu* 續宋元資治通鑒綱目 or shortly *Xu zizhi tongjian gangmu* 續資治通鑒綱目), which was an extension of Zhu Xi's *Tongjian gangmu* into the Song period. See “Chinese Literature—*Tongjian gangmu* 通鑒綱目,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/tongjiangangmu.html>, last accessed: March 30th, 2016. For further information on Shang Lu, see *DMB*, vol. 2, pp. 1161ff.

experienced in Wang's time—which gets evident due to the many Ming time history works being oriented towards these works.

威烈採之京兆蘭谿補其缺後乎！五代因之丹稜、明州、淳安續其終，大要以《綱》爲主，而《鑑》與《目》爲附紀與編其前列者也。搜討參訂羣書悉攷勒成一編名曰《綱鑑會纂》誌備也。⁸⁵¹

Did I not fiercely gather the deficiencies of Jingzhao's [i.e. Liu Shu's] and Lanxi's [i.e. Jin Lüxiang's] supplement! [The history of] the Five Dynasties, therefore, was continued until the end by Danleng [i.e. Li Tao], [Yuan]mingzhou [i.e. Chen Jing] and [Chun'an] Shang Lu. Concerning the main points, I regard the *Gang* [i.e. the main principles or outlines] as principal, but the *jian* [i.e. examinations or the mirror] and the *mu* [i.e. the catalog or the details] as attached records and the part of the book which is in the front position. I scrutinized and investigated, I revised a crowd of books, and all together I examined and tied them in one volume, named *Gangjian huizuan* [i.e. the *Gangjian hebian*], the record prepared [here].

Furthermore, here the origin of the *Gangjian hebian*, which this preface belongs to, is illuminated. After having evaluated the former mentioned works by Liu Shu, Jin Lüxiang, Li Tao, Chen Jing and Shang Lu, Wang disclosed his definition of *gang* 綱 as being the most important part and *jian* 鑑 and *mu* 目 as attachments which are positioned at the leading part of the book. In this way—together with the evaluation of other history works—Wang accomplished the *Gangjian hebian*.

嗚呼！《通鑑綱目》不作，則《尚書》、《春秋》之旨漸微。習《春秋》者進而通乎《尚書》，習《尚書》、《春秋》者推⁸⁵²而及於《綱鑑》，讀《綱鑑》者遡而歸於《尚書》、《春秋》。⁸⁵³

Alas! If the *Tongjian gangmu* had not been written, the meaning of the *Shangshu* and *Chunqiu* would have gradually diminished. The one who reviews the *Chunqiu* proceeding one step further masters the *Shangshu*; the one who reviews the *Shangshu* and the *Chunqiu* proceeding one step

⁸⁵¹ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, yuanxu 原序, p. 5.

⁸⁵² This is probably a misspelling for 進.

⁸⁵³ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, yuanxu 原序, p. 5.

further reaches the *Gangjian* [i.e. the *Zizhi tongjian*]. The one who reads the *Gangjian* tracing its sources then results in the *Shangshu* and *Chunqiu*.

In this paragraph—as it can be stated in general for this preface—Wang one more time followed the Ming time appreciation of the *Zizhi tongjian* and the *Tongjian gangmu*. Furthermore, he explained the coherence between these two Song time works and the *Chunqiu* and the *Shangshu*, which would have been lost, if it was not for the former works. The latter two classics served as the basis and the sources for those works from Song dynasty.

自古迄今帝王、卿相，聖賢、愚、不肖褒貶，較著公論不移其爲義也。迺足以立治，非治治也，治亂也。請以是編爲涑水、考亭之附庸也。可至史斷之辭濫不收美，不遺期於詳確，而止管窺間，附當更俟諸公論焉？

瑯琊鳳洲王世貞撰⁸⁵⁴

Since ancient times up to now the emperors and ministers being virtuous men and fools and unworthy ones are praised and blamed; illumining the topic, the public opinion does not move this to justice. Then, it is sufficient to establish government; but if a wrong government governs, the government is in disorder. Therefore, I request to regard this writing as an attachment to Sima Guang's and Zhu Xi's [works]. It may be that—because the short diction of the best history works is trite—one does not receive their beauty because one does not leave behind to expect a detailed and reliable [account]; but when stopping between these restricted views, and adhering to correctness how does one still wait for all the public opinions [about what is right and wrong]?

Written by Wang Shizhen, style name Fengzhou, from the Langye [Wang clan]

For instance, Wang Shizhen in the last sentences of his preface to the *Gangjian hebian* proclaimed his most important thoughts: Here, he openly criticized the traditional custom of praise and blame because of its probable false evaluation of persons. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of an upright government in the matter of

⁸⁵⁴ *Gangjian hebian* 綱鑑合編, *yuanyu* 原序, pp. 5f.

correct assessment of happenings and persons, since according to him the public discourse is not able to rectify this. Therefore, if one is dedicated to correctness and righteousness, one should not wait for public opinions. This is a very critical approach to the ongoing public discourse. As shown in chapter 9, Wang did, indeed, appreciate the public debate about what is right and what is wrong—even attesting to it providing the right measure (see citation on p. 214)—but he also realized the danger of public opinions, as they are often controlled by current trends and influences. Earlier in this preface Wang stated that “the public opinion [of this time] could not extinguish this original history [writing],” which distinctively accuses the public opinion of being wrong and—in some cases—even doing harm when, e.g., forbidding certain writings. Wrong public opinions partly result from restricted views and false expectations; for example, Wang Shizhen also declared that some of the best “history works” have a trite diction which makes it difficult to detect their value, quality and beauty because this trite diction stands in contrast to expectations towards literature.

Moreover, the whole preface makes clear the importance of the same work, namely the *Gangjian hebian*. After first having stressed the importance of history writing itself and introducing wrong approaches to historiography, Wang repeatedly emphasized the importance and benefit of Sima Guang’s *Zizhi tongjian* and Zhu Xi’s *Tongjian gangmu*, leading to the request to see the *Gangjian hebian* as a continuation of these outstanding works. This preface to the *Gangjian hebian* is representative for many of Wang Shizhen’s works. As it was seen in his preface to Zhu Yunming’s *Zhuzi zuizhi lu* in chapter 11.2, he admired people who revolted against instructed concepts of glorifying Neo-Confucianism and the classics without questioning the rightfulness and wrongfulness of those works and attitudes. Hence, Wang Shizhen is to be regarded as one of the most important historians of his time and active participant in ongoing debates.

11.6 Li Zhi and Jiao Hong—From Philosophy to History

The emergence towards critical dealing with the depiction of happenings of the past and also of the sources used in history writing can partly be traced back to the philosophical development of this time. As displayed, in the former half of Ming dynasty, Zhu Xi's teachings of Neo-Confucianism predominated the intellectual sphere. This philosophy taught the acceptance of tradition and its values; a critical evaluation and a review of validity of sources or the display of past events were therefore excluded.⁸⁵⁵ Wang Yangming's teachings opened the stage for new approaches of the presentation of history and the evaluation of ancient histories. In fact, the discussion about what is right and what is wrong in the school of Wang Yangming enriched ongoing discourses in history writing as well. Therefore, it is no wonder that famous philosophers of that time turned their attention to history writing and endeavored to rectify and refine the realm of historiography. This was not farfetched as the distinction of scholarly fields in ancient China was not strict (see chap. 6.2.1), and scholars occupied themselves in diverse branches. Li Zhi and Jiao Hong—innately being philosophers, but engaging in history—are only two extraordinary examples of this vogue.

Li Zhi

Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), introduced as a radical innovative philosopher in chapter 6.3.1, also appeared as an innovative historian. He was an enthusiastic opponent of the resurgence and imitation of old literary styles and the old masters. "Every generation produces its own literature. Why should stress be laid on the old classics?"⁸⁵⁶ From this perspective he developed his attitude towards history writing, which contains the purport to break with the tyranny of the retrospective in the Confucian conception of history of the never to be achieved ideal of the "ancient sages," according to Wilfried Spaar.⁸⁵⁷ Furthermore, Li always opposed Neo-Confucianism, especially Zhu Xi's historical critique *Tongjian gangmu* 通鑒綱目 (Outlines and Details of the *Comprehensive Mirror*), which officially was held in high esteem in Ming dynasty (see

⁸⁵⁵ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 729f.

⁸⁵⁶ Chan (1982), p. 101.

⁸⁵⁷ Wilfried Spaar (1984), *Die kritische Philosophie des Li Zhi (1527-1602) und ihre politische Rezeption in der Volksrepublik China*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 115f.

chap. 6.3.1). In his *Cangshu* 藏書 (A Book to be Hidden away)—written during the 1580s and published 1599—, which represents a collection of classified biographies of prominent people from Zhou to Yuan dynasties, he constituted new criteria and perspectives in order to assess personalities.⁸⁵⁸ Li Zhi, as well, advocated the idea of the relativity of *shifei* 是非. To this, Wang Shizhen cited him in the preface to Li Zhi's *Cangshu*, i.e. the *Shiji liezhuan zongmu qianlun* 世紀列傳總目前論 (Short Discussion to the Catalogue of the Biographies of the Century). As this discussion trenchantly displays and outlines the most important points of the *gonglun* and therefore is very important for this study, a complete translation of this part follows:

李氏曰：人之是非，初無定質；人之是非人也，亦無定論。無定質，則此是彼非並育而不相害；無定論，則是此非彼亦並行而不相悖矣。然則今日之是非，謂予李卓吾一人之是非，可也；謂為千萬世大賢大人之公是非，亦可也；謂予顛倒千萬世之是非，而復非是予之所非是焉，亦可也。則予之是非，信乎其可也。前三代，吾無論矣。後三代，漢唐宋是也。中間千百餘年，而獨無是非者，豈其人無是非哉？咸以孔子之是非為是非，故未嘗有是非耳。然則予之是非人也，又安能已？夫是非之爭也，如歲時然，晝夜更迭，不相一也。昨日是而今日非矣，今日非而後日又是矣。雖使孔夫子復生于今，又不知作如何非是也，而可遽以定本行罰賞哉！老來無事，爰覽前目，起自春秋，訖於宋元，分為紀、傳，總類別目，用以自怡，名之曰《藏書》。“藏書”者何？言此書但可自怡，不可示人，故名曰《藏書》也。而無奈一二好事朋友，索覽不已，予又安能以己邪？但戒曰：“覽則一任諸君覽觀，但無以孔夫子之定本行罰賞也，則善矣。”⁸⁵⁹

Li Zhi says: “Human judgments [about what is right and wrong] are not fixed quantities. In passing judgments men [also] do not hold settled views.”⁸⁶⁰ If they are not fixed quantities, then [opinions about] this [being] right and that [being] wrong simultaneously emerge and do not

⁸⁵⁸ *DMB*, vol. 1, p. 811.

⁸⁵⁹ *Cangshu* 藏書, *diyice* 第一冊, “Cangshu shiji liezhuan zongmu qianlun” 藏書世紀列傳總目前論, p. 1.

⁸⁶⁰ *DMB*, vol. 1, p. 811.

harm each other. If they do not hold settled views, then advocating this and denying the other one also runs parallel and does not go against each other. But then concerning today's judgments [about what is right and wrong], that it is said that they are my, Li Zhuowu's, individual judgments can be so; that it is said that they are the collective right and wrong for the greatly able and virtuous persons of thousands and thousands of generations can also be; that it is said that I confuse the right and wrong of thousands and thousands of generations, and that, thus, turning around wrong and right represent my wrong and right, that can also be. Then concerning my right and wrong, believing in it is possible! About the former three ages I do not want to talk. The three later ages these are the Han, Tang and Song dynasties. Between [the former and the later] there are more than hundred and thousand years, but only without [a dispute] about right and wrong—how could these people not have judgments about right and wrong? Because all took the [conception] of right and wrong by Confucius as the [ultimate] right and wrong, there is not yet a [true perspective of] what is right and wrong. But then my right and wrong being one individual's [right and wrong], again how could that be? The dispute about what is right and wrong—like times and seasons and day and night alternate—is not agreeable on one [entity]. What is right yesterday, [can be] wrong today. What is wrong today, [can] again be right the day after tomorrow. Although they let Confucius come to life again nowadays, they on the other hand do not know how to write what is wrong and right, and they on the contrary hastily take a fixed edition to carry out punishment or reward! In my old age, there was not such a thing, whence I looked at former items, starting from the *Chunqiu*, ending in the Yuan and Song times, dividing it in [*ben*]*ji* and *zhuan* categories and classifications in order to make myself happy and named it *Cangshu*. So, what is this “Book to be hidden away”? It says that this book can only make myself happy, and cannot be shown to people, therefore it is called “Book to be hidden away.” But unfortunately, one or two good friends demanded to look at it endlessly, how could I then stop it? I only forbid it by saying: “If you look at it then, you let everyone look at it and observe it; only if you do not take Confucius' fixed edition to carry out punishment or reward, then this [book] will be good.”

This citation by Li Zhi aptly illustrates the debate about what is right and wrong. Li Zhi took the position of the relativity of right and wrong in regard to time and persons—that means, “judgments are not fixed quantities.” On the one hand, they differ through the ages, which means “what is right yesterday, [can be] wrong today.” On the other hand, the definition of what is right and what is wrong, in the last consequence, is the individual opinion of each person. Li Zhi himself freely admitted that his conception of what is right and wrong can be regarded as false by someone else. The public opinion about right and wrong can be correct and Li Zhi can err; but it is also possible that it is the other way around. Li Zhi here showed a very reflective point of view which allows a relative approach to the truth. Moreover, this means that he proceeded on the assumption that different people of different ages would have different views on things, e.g. Confucius himself would have another opinion when returning after two thousand years. Ergo, the evaluation of what is right or wrong did not follow universally valid criteria; rather, he saw this fact as a possible source for a fruitful mutual enrichment.⁸⁶¹ Accordingly, Li Zhi refused to accept a “fixed edition” of what is right and wrong only for the sake of being able “to carry out punishment or reward”—this is due to the fact that in this fixed edition Confucius’ conception of what is right and wrong is used and regarded as the one and only true perception. Li Zhi contradicted to such a dictated concept, and, therewith, opposed the official opinion prescribed by the government. Here, in this preface the author also made clear that he did not want his book to be published but some of his friends desired to do it in appreciation of the great work achieved by Li Zhi. However, this was one of the reasons why Li Zhi was arrested and, in the end, the *Cangshu* was prohibited. Nevertheless, Li Zhi’s supporters carried on disseminating Li Zhi’s thoughts and ideas as counterbalance to the official Neo-Confucian doctrine.

As his *Cangshu* only covered the period before Ming, it was continued in the *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書 (A Continuation of a Book to be Hidden away), compiled 1602 advocating the same unorthodox points of view like its predecessor. After Li’s death, Jiao Hong who highly appreciated Li, published the *Xu Cangshu* in 1618. The importance and appreciation dedicated to this revolutionary, innovative, compromising

⁸⁶¹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 732; Spaar (1984), p. 116. This paraphrase partly derives from Wilfried Spaar’s translation of the preface of Li Zhi’s *Cangshu*.

and shocking work is recognizable by the persons having written a preface to the *Cangshu* and *Xu Cangshu*. The former one was prefaced by Jiao Hong, Liu Gongxing 劉東星 (1538-1601), Zhu Shilu 祝世祿 (fl. 1589) and Geng Dingli 耿定力 (1541-?). Jiao Hong praised Li Zhi and his character highly in his preface and—in very ornate language—admired his writing style:

卓吾先生隱矣，而其人物之高，著述之富，如珠玉然，山暉川媚，有不得而自揜抑者，蓋聲名赫赫盈海內矣。或謂先生之為人，與其所為書，疑信者往往相半，何居？余謂此兩者皆遙聞聲而相思，未見形而吠影者耳。先生高邁肅潔，如泰華崇巖，不可昵近，聽其言冷冷然，塵土俱盡，而實本人情，切物理，一一當實不虛，蓋一被其容接，未有不爽然自失者也。 [...] ⁸⁶²

Master [Li] Zhuowu concealed [this book], and he was a high character in literature; he compiled abundantly, [indeed] beautifully written verses: the mountains radiant, the rivers enchanting. But [the situation] has it that one is not allowed [to see it] and he himself hides it from view. Hiding it he gained a high reputation all over the world. It is said that he had the personal character of a gentleman; and what he engaged in was books; if [thereby] doubting and believing often appeared half in half, what was the reason for that? I say that these two altogether hear [themselves] from far away and mutually love [each other], [as] not [even] having seen a shape, but barking at the sound. The master [i.e. Li Zhi] is free and natural, respectful and pure, like Mount Tai and Mount Hua lofty and majestic, [and one] cannot be intimate and close [to him]. Listening to his voice coldly correct, the dust entirely exhausted, and solid my own feelings, corresponding to the law of nature, one by one truthfully and not false. Now one who is received by him as guest was ever disappointed or at a loss what to do.

The *Cangshu* is a history work which discusses and evaluates different aspects of Chinese history. In the first part, namely *shiji* 世紀 (era) Li Zhi discusses the different eras of China's history; chronologically he listed dynasties and states, important noblemen, great men and great monarchs and their exemplary behavior. The second part

⁸⁶² *Cangshu* 藏書, *diyī ce* 第一冊, *xu* 序, “Jiao Xu” 焦序, p. 1.

contains biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳). They are subdivided into biographies of high ministers (*dachen* 大臣), important officials (*mingchen* 名臣), Confucian scholars (*ruchen* 儒臣)—the second subcategory of this category is about literati (*wenxue* 文學), which again is subdivided into study of words (*cixue* 詞學), the study of history (*shixue* 史學), the study of numbers (*shuxue* 數學), the study of classics (*jingxue* 經學) and the study of art (*yixue* 藝學). In the chapter *shixue* in *juan* 32/33, Li Zhi discussed ancient historians such as Sima Qian 司馬遷, Ban Gu 班固, Chen Shou 陳壽 and also Liu Zhiji 劉知幾.⁸⁶³ However, at least in the case of Liu Zhiji, he adopted Liu Zhiji's biography from the *Xintangshu* 新唐書 by only pruning it without adding additional information or an evaluation by himself. Then, Li Zhi continued listing military officials (*wuchen* 武臣), traitorous officials (*zeichen* 賊臣), relatives as officials (*qinchen* 親臣), members of the inner ministerial circle (*jinchen* 近臣) and local officials (*waichen* 外臣).

In his critical evaluation of high personalities from the Warring States period to the Yuan dynasty, Li Zhi at the end of most of the biographical abstracts of a person added a critical commentary introduced by “Li sheng yue 李生曰.” Other biographical treatises already include Li Zhi's criticism and are not followed by a separate statement. In the case of Liu Zhiji a very short statement follows, namely: “Li Zhi says: Concerning the two words of ability and learning, they are developed and obtained clearly and thoroughly, but the locus for discussing the power of insight is not yet provided.” (李生曰：才學二字，發得明徹，論識處尚未具也。⁸⁶⁴) This exemplarily shows the deep criticism towards contemporary history writing which does not provide a space for the required knowledge. Furthermore, this statement depicts the importance

⁸⁶³ In the section *Shixue ruchen zhuan* 史學儒臣傳 (Biographies of Historiography Scholars) one finds biographies of the following historians: Sima Qian 司馬遷, Ban Biao 班彪, Ban Gu 班固—all from Han dynasty—, Chen Shou 陳壽 (from Shu 蜀, today's region of Sichuan, from Jin dynasty)—here he attached a biography of Wang Yin 王隱 (from Jin dynasty)—, Fan Ye 范曄 (from Liu-Song 劉宋 dynasty), Cui Hao 崔浩 (from Northern Wei dynasty, d. 450), Gao Yun 高允 (also from Northern Wei dynasty, 390-487), Wei Shou 魏收 (from Northern Qi dynasty, 507-572), Silian Yao 姚思廉 (557-637), Li Yanshou 李延壽 (n.d.), Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749), Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721)—all from Tang dynasty—, Song Qi 宋祁 / 祈 (from Song dynasty, 998-1061), Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (from Song dynasty, 1104-1162) and Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄 (from Yuan dynasty, 1283-1357). See *Cangshu* 藏書, *shixue ruchen zhuan* 史學儒臣傳, *juan* 卷 40 and 41, di 3 ce, pp. 688-708.

⁸⁶⁴ *Cangshu* 藏書, *shixue ruchen zhuan* 史學儒臣傳, *juan* 卷 41, Liu Zhiji Shitong 劉知幾史通, p. 706.

of Liu Zhiji's work for Ming time critical historians like Li Zhi: Here, he adopted Liu Zhiji's main concepts and followed his requirements for a good historian, namely to have ability (*cai* 才), learning (*xue* 學) and the power of insight (*shi* 識); Li Zhi saw the difficulty for historians in the latter power of insight. This once more underlines the revival of the ideas advocated in the *Shitong*. Li Zhi also drew on Liu Zhiji's ideas in other points, e.g. in his critical evaluation of written biographies; that means his critical attitude towards sources used in ancient history works.

The *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, the *Continuation of the Cangshu*, again is prefaced by Jiao Hong; afterwards a preface by the historian and *Shitong*-commentator Li Weizhen (see chap. 5.4.1) follows. The latter one remarked in his preface to the *Xu Cangshu*: “Master Li has disappeared, and yet his surviving books circulate in large number,” (李卓吾先生沒而其遺書盛傳⁸⁶⁵) which expresses his deep admiration and appreciation towards Li Zhi. The content of the *Continuation of the Cangshu*, as it was mentioned before, deals with Li Zhi's own dynasty, namely the Ming dynasty. Important officials and ministers having rendered outstanding service of different periods of the dynasty and of different departments and duties are examined. In the category of scholar officials (*wenxue gechen* 文學各臣) also Wang Shizhen⁸⁶⁶ is mentioned. At the beginning, Li Zhi prepended a few introducing words before the actual text starts, where he went back in time to Shang and Zhou dynasties and highlighted the important function of the monarchs' loyal ministers:

臣李贄曰。我太祖高皇帝，蓋千萬古之一帝也，古唯湯武，庶幾近之。然武末受命，非周公，則無以安殷之忠臣。湯之受命也晚，非伊尹，則決不能免於太甲之顛覆。唯我。⁸⁶⁷

I, Li Zhi, humbly say: [For] me Taizu Gao Huangdi [i.e. Emperor Gaozu of Han dynasty]⁸⁶⁸ was the one emperor surpassing tens of millions ancients. In antiquity, there are only Emperor Tang [of Shang] and Emperor Wu [of Zhou] almost getting close to him. Although at the end

⁸⁶⁵ *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, *shang ce* 上册, *xu* 序, p. 2.

⁸⁶⁶ See *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, *juan* 卷 26, *shang shu wang gong* 尚書王公, p. 512.

⁸⁶⁷ *Xu Cangshu* 續藏書, *juan* 卷 *yi* 一, *xiaoyin* 小引, p. 1.

⁸⁶⁸ Emperor Gaozu (r. 202-195 BC), born as Liu Bang 劉邦, was the founder of the Han dynasty and its first ruler.

King Wu got the Mandate of Heaven, if it had not been for the Duke of Zhou,⁸⁶⁹ then there would have been no faithful loyal who appeased the Yin dynasty.⁸⁷⁰ [Although] Emperor Tang received the Mandate of Heaven later [in his reign], if it had not been for Yi Yin,⁸⁷¹ then one would have not been saved from Tai Jia's⁸⁷² overturn. That's it for me.

Another important work by Li Zhi is the *Fenshu* 焚書 (A Book to be Burned)—published in the year 1590. Like his *Cangshu*, it incorporates many offensive and challenging ideas concerning many aspects of life. Li Zhi stated in the self-preface:

自有書四種：一曰《藏書》，上下數千年是非，未易肉眼視也，故欲藏之，言當藏於山中以待後世子云也。一曰《焚書》，則答知己書問，所言頗切近世學者膏肓，既中其痼疾，則必欲殺之，言當焚而棄之，不可留《焚書》之後又有別錄，名為《老苦》，雖則《焚書》，而另為卷目，則欲焚者焚此矣。獨《說書》四十四篇，真為可喜，發聖言之精蘊，闡日用之平常，可使讀者一過目便知入聖無難，出世之非假也。信如傳注，則是欲人而閉之門，非以誘人，實以絕人矣，烏乎可！其為說，原於看朋友作時文，故《說書》亦佑時文，然不佑者故多也。

My own books have four kinds: One is called *A Book to be Hidden*, which over circa some thousand years [explains] the right and wrong which is not yet easy to be seen with the naked eye, and therefore I wish to conceal it. The words should be hidden in the mountains waiting for masters of later generations to be spoken. One is called *A Book to Be Burned*, and in that case it answers questions of intimate writings, and the words spoken—which are rather close to modern times—are their vital organs. If in the middle there is such chronic illness, then one certainly wishes to kill it; and[, hence,] the words should be burned and

⁸⁶⁹ [...] who as King Wu's (Zhou Wu Wang 周武王; r. ca. 1046-1043 BC) brother helped overthrowing the Shang dynasty.

⁸⁷⁰ Yin 殷 dynasty is another name for the Shang dynasty (ca. 1600-1046 BC), especially the latter part.

⁸⁷¹ [...] who helped overthrowing the Xia dynasty.

⁸⁷² Tai Jia 太甲 (fl. 1535 BC) was a king of Shang dynasty and Emperor Tang's grandson. Because his reign was despotic, Yi Yin sent him to exile for three years. After he had recognized his mistakes, he could return and was enthroned again.

one should abandon it. After one must not accept the *Fenshu*, again there are other records: One is known as the *Laoku*, though this is the *Fenshu*,⁸⁷³ but if there is something else for the scroll catalogue, then the one who wishes to burn it [should] burn [this book as well]. Only the *Shuoshu*⁸⁷⁴ in forty-four chapters is truly regarded as gratifying, expressing the profound essence of sage words and disclosing the common for everyday use. It can cause the reader to look over it once to conveniently [get] to know how to become a sage without difficulty and that renouncing the world is no mistake. If one believes in [something] like the *zhuanzhu*,⁸⁷⁵ then this is that one wishes a person to close this door, though, not using an attractive person, [but] using a desperate person—how sad can that be! As for this saying, it originally [comes] from watching my friends using the eight-legged essay because also the *Shuoshu* protects the eight-legged essay. However, the ones not protecting it [i.e. the eight-legged essay], hence, are many.

Interestingly, Li Zhi again recognized the explosive nature and topicality of his works; he even alleged that it is reasonable to abandon the *Fenshu* as it contains or reflects the illness of contemporary writings and ideas. To rot this illness, the book has to be burned. Certainly, this statement contains rather ironic conclusions which allude to the common treatment of critical voices in the author's life times. He even provocatively pointed at the title of his book, namely *A Book to Be Burned*, and the fact that the title suggests how to treat this piece of work. Furthermore, Li Zhi concluded that only his *Shuoshu* can be regarded as gratifying, while his other works, the *Cangshu*, the *Fenshu* and the *Laoku* may be burned if one wishes to—another ironical or at least self-critical statement. Besides the fact that the *Shuoshu* shows some Buddhist tendencies advocated

⁸⁷³ *Laoku* 老苦 here seems to refer to another work by Li Zhi; at the beginning he also speaks of four kinds. However, the existence of the *Laoku* is doubted by some scholars, as it is not mentioned in other works or by Li Zhi's friends. Moreover, in the sources only three works by Li Zhi are noted (not four), namely the *Fenshu*, the *Cangshu* and the *Shuoshu*, referred to in the next sentence. Wu Guoping 邬国平 from Fudan University, for example, claims that the *Fenshu* actually consists of the original *Fenshu* and the *Laoku*, which both were united under one title, namely *Fenshu*. Wu Guoping 邬国平 (2004), "Ye tan 'Fenshu' yuanben de wenti" 也谈《焚书》原本的问题 (Again Talking about the Problem of the Original Edition of the *Fenshu*), *Journal of Tsinghua University (Philosophy and Social Science)* 19.2, pp. 45, 47.

⁸⁷⁴ The *Shuoshu* 說書 is the third important work by Li Zhi. It contains one *juan* only.

⁸⁷⁵ *Zhuanzhu* 傳注 directs at the comprehensive analysis and explanation of the wording, the meaning, the historical facts, so to say "the ideology" of ancient books and their commentaries.

by Li Zhi, it, moreover, protects the eight-legged essay favored by the author. In general, this preface very clearly displays Li Zhi's reflected view on the currents in the academic world of his time, for which reason he hoped for later generations to understand his ideas and acknowledge his achievements.

After a second preface again written by his admirer Jiao Hong, collected treatises about philosophy, poetry and prose follow. The fifth *juan* of this work is dedicated to "reading history" (*dushi* 讀史), where Li Zhi analyzed historians and history works from different ages; e.g. the two Caos,⁸⁷⁶ Yang Xiu 楊修 (175-219), the writing *Fansao* 反騷 by the Song time poet Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061), the historical records by Qu Yuan 屈原 (ca. 340-278 BC), Qu Yuan's *Yufu* 漁父, the *Zhaohun*⁸⁷⁷ part in historical works, the poet Kong Rong 孔融 (153-208), "Confucian classics form an integral part" 經史相為表裡, Wang Banshan 王半山 (1021-1086) and the like. Like in Shao Bao's 邵寶 *Xueshi* 學史 Li Zhi used the style of picking seemingly random treatises from ancient works and commenting them. The main point again lies in his extraordinary analysis of historical and philosophical writings in order to point out their deficiencies and assets.

Unfortunately, his innovative standpoint had serious consequences: The publication and dissemination of the *Cangshu* as well as the *Fenshu* were prohibited, after they were published—against Li Zhi's wish. It ended in the author being imprisoned and committing suicide. Hence, it is apparent that in Ming dynasty the Chinese world was not yet ready to overthrow the absolute belief in the doctrine of Neo-Confucianism in favor for true historiography.⁸⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the example of Li Zhi and his admirers also clearly shows that evermore critical voices appeared and developed further the debate about right and wrong in history writing.

⁸⁷⁶ The two Caos point at Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220), the founder of the Wei 魏 dynasty (220-265), and his successor Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226).

⁸⁷⁷ The *Zhaohun* 招魂 (lit. "to call back the spirit from the dead") ceremony is a specific part of some records including historical material; it first appeared in the *Chu ci* 楚辭 (Songs of Chu) by Qu Yuan 屈原 (340-238 BC).

⁸⁷⁸ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 732f; Brook (2005), p. 124.

Jiao Hong

At the same time, Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1541-1620) from Nanjing, who was introduced in chapter 6.3.1 as a leading figure in ongoing intellectual processes in Ming dynasty, as another philosopher engaging in history writing approached the problem of the sources which foremost was expressed by the non-existence of a distinction between different kinds of sources; historical works, narratives and even gossip were all seen alike according to Wolfgang Franke.⁸⁷⁹ By applying the teachings of Chen Baisha and later of Wang Yangming (see chap. 6.3.1), an awareness of the distinction between official documents and hearsays and the insight that even official documents can contain mistakes appeared. While the *Huang Ming tongji* 皇明通紀—written by Chen Jian 陳建, first published in 1555 and covering the first two centuries of Ming dynasty—was still compiled relying exclusively on unreliable miscellaneous records, in the second half of the sixteenth century⁸⁸⁰

[...] a new and more critical attitude became evident among historians. They became gradually aware of the fundamental difference between documentary materials and privately written stories, notwithstanding that documentary materials do not always give truthful information and that the miscellaneous historical writings were in many cases true narratives,

as Wolfgang Franke puts it.⁸⁸¹ This was a feature resembling Liu Zhiji's situation and studies; for the sake of reliable sources, he as well tried to distinguish between different kinds of sources, namely trustworthy ones and implausible ones. Now in Ming dynasty, this upcoming feature was not limited to private history anymore; also government institutions joined this trend and promoted the recording of their activities using their own archive materials. One illustration of this trend is the *Libu zhigao* 禮部志稿 of the Ministry of Rites from 1620 in late Ming dynasty. This tendency towards using more and more documentary sources brought along the compilation of evermore “writings on state affairs” (*jingshi jimin* 經世濟民; “to administer society and to save the masses of the people”)—basically representing the memorials (*zoushu* 奏疏 or *zouyi* 奏議)

⁸⁷⁹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 729f.

⁸⁸⁰ Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 6.

⁸⁸¹ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 730; Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 6.

submitted to the emperor by higher officials to inform him about facts of the state. Such collections of memorials emerged and became quite popular in Ming times; the purpose of serving a practical use instead of only displaying “standards of political morals” was novelty.⁸⁸²

The philosopher Jiao Hong was also famous for his contributions to Ming time historiography, especially in the realm of the critical perception of reliable sources. Already in his early years he gained a reputation for his wide learning, which was proven by him graduating as *optimus* in the palace examinations. Afterwards he was appointed Hanlin compiler first rank and in this position, he was assigned to be the director of the compilation of a history of Ming dynasty in 1594. Unfortunately, the project could not be finished due to the financier’s death. The parts completed until then—the bibliography, biographies of eminent men and so on—were published under separate titles, though. Moreover, Jiao Hong was the lecturer of the emperor’s eldest son and in 1597 he was assigned chief examiner of the metropolitan area, which turned out to be a disadvantage for him because due to denunciations he was lowered in rank and became assistant magistrate in Funingzhou in Fujian. After one year, he retired to dedicate his time to writing only. He was considered to be “the senior figure in the Nanjing scholarly world.”⁸⁸³

His *Guochao xianzheng lu* 國朝獻徵錄 (A Record of the Worthies of the Reigning [Ming] Dynasty) from the year 1594 makes evident the increased awareness of a critical approach towards sources and the emphasis on primary sources. The work contains “a biographical collection of epitaphs, memorial tablets, and obituaries of eminent Ming personalities.” Another catalogue about works written by Ming authors (*Guoshi jingjizhi* 國史經籍志; Biographical Treatise of the [Ming] State History) “reveals his wide reading and bibliographic competence” because it represents one of the most important works in the category of bibliographies.⁸⁸⁴ Besides his role as an exceptional philosopher of Ming time, he as well contributed to the further development

⁸⁸² Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 7.

⁸⁸³ *ECCP* (1943), vol. 1, pp. 145f; Brook (2005), p. 124.

⁸⁸⁴ Wolfgang Franke (1988), pp. 732, 735; Ch’ien (1986), pp. 55f. For more information on the *Guochao xianzheng lu*, see “Chinese Literature—*Guochao xianzheng lu* 國朝獻徵錄,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/guochaoxianzhenglu.html>, last accessed: June 2nd, 2017.

of historiography in that time and like his companion Li Zhi actively took part in the ongoing discourse in the field of historiography. For example, he wrote a treatise called “Discussing History” which is included in his *Danyuan ji* 澹園集. In this essay, Jiao Hong paid attention to the duty of the historian and followed in Liu Zhiji’s footsteps by emphasizing the concept of objectivity, especially in contrast to history writing in former times. Furthermore, he addressed the problem of the habit of history writing in the Bureau of History, especially the problem of different attitudes among the history officials which would result in failure.

論史

史之職重矣，不得其人，不可以語史；得其人不專其任，不可以語史。故修史而不得其人，如兵無將，何以稟令？得人而不專其任，如將中制，何以成功？蘇子謂史之權與天與君並，誠重之也。⁸⁸⁵

Discussing History

The duty of the historian is heavy; if there are not persons with interlinked feelings, then they cannot talk about history. If there are persons with similar ethos but not focusing on their position, they cannot talk about history. Therefore, writing history but not having the same attitude is like an army without a commander-in-chief, how can one report to a superior? The right persons but not focusing on their duty is like a commander-in-chief in the middle of controlling, how can they succeed? Suzi said: The authority of history is equal to the [authority] of the heaven and the emperor is truly important.

In 1594, Jiao Hong was appointed compiler-official and composed a memorial to the throne concerning this topic and consisting of a four-point proposal, namely “Discussion about Four Matters One by One Concerning Writing History” (*xiushi tiaochen sishi yi* 修史條陳四事議) which is included in his *Danyuan ji* 澹園集. Furthermore, in this section he also referred to the *gonglun* (public discourse) and the duties of an historian. The first point of his critique concerned the problem of the “annals” (*benji* 本紀), the second the “biographies” (*liezhuan* 列傳), the third dealt with

⁸⁸⁵ *Danyuan ji* 澹園集, *juan 2*, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=40162&page=51>, last accessed: June 16th, 2017.

the problem of the number of people engaged in writing national history and the fourth point regarded a plea for collecting all kinds of material. He began:⁸⁸⁶

一本紀之當議：「國朝《實錄》代修，如建文、景泰二朝，[...] 向無專紀。景帝位號雖經題復，而《實錄》附載，未為是正。夫勝國之君，人必為紀，以其臨御一時猶難泯沒，所謂『國可滅、史不可滅』也。⁸⁸⁷

— What should be discussed concerning the *benji*: Concerning the representation of the *shilu* of the reigning dynasty, for example [the *shilu*] of the two emperors Jianwen and Jingtai [...] they are all not properly recorded. Concerning Emperor Jingdi with degree of nobility and official title although the topic was arranged repeatedly, his *shilu* is in the appendix [only]. This is not regarded correct. Concerning the rulers of victorious states, people certainly had [specific] records about them because [the fact that] they have ruled at a specific time yet is hard to erase. That is what is called “A state can be extinguished, but its history cannot be extinguished.”

This point includes the demand of recording truthfully without omitting or degrading facts and persons by denying their proper depiction. Likewise, this passage emphasizes the significance of history as something which “cannot be extinguished;” therewith Jiao Hong pointed out the relevance of history writing as well. In the second point which occupies a problem with the biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳), Jiao complained that in these biographies only officials with rank three or higher are introduced, but in fact:

夫史以褒貶人倫，豈論顯晦？若如所聞，高門雖跼蹐亦書，寒族雖夷鱗並詘。何以闡明公道，昭示來茲？謂當貴賤並列，不必以位為斷。一也。⁸⁸⁸

History is there in order to praise and blame every [kind] of person. How could it discuss the luminous and the obscure [characters like this]? For example, even if the illustrious families step on the brave, they are

⁸⁸⁶ Ch'ien (1986), pp. 52ff. There one also finds the following translations paraphrased.

⁸⁸⁷ *Danyuan ji* 澹園集, *juan* 5, “Xiushi tiaochen sishi yi” 修史條陳四事議, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=40162&page=82>, last accessed: June 6th, 2017.

⁸⁸⁸ *Danyuan ji* 澹園集, *juan* 5, “Xiushi tiaochen sishi yi” 修史條陳四事議, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=40162&page=83>, last accessed: June 6th, 2017.

recorded; even if the poor clans raze [evil] loaches, they are shortened [i.e. not recorded]. How does this clarify the “public Way,” and make it clear to all future [generations]? It is to say that the eminent and the humble should [be recorded] side by side; and one should not regard the position as [a mean] for the decision [whether one is recorded or not]. First.

世傳吾學編、名臣錄之類，多係有名公卿，至權姦誤國之人，邪佞欺君之輩，未一紀述。今循此例，使巨惡宵人幸逃斧鉞，史稱櫛杙，義不其然。謂善惡並列，不必以人為斷。二也。⁸⁸⁹

Concerning the transmission through the generations, we studied kinds of records written and describing officials: many are famous high-ranking court officials. But reaching to powerful and treacherous court officials and men who endangered the country, and also kinds of evil persons who withheld the truth from the emperor, there are no records [about such kinds]. Now following this example, this caused that extreme evil criminals luckily escaped capital punishment. History calls them villainous/not fitting to associate with others, but justice is not like that. It is to say that the good and evil [should be recorded] side by side; and one should not regard the person as [mean] for the decision [whether one is recorded or not]. Second.

累朝實錄稟于總裁，苟非其人，是非多謬。如謂方正學為乞哀，于肅潛為迎立，褒貶出之胸臆，美惡係其愛憎。此類寔繁，難以枚舉。至於野史小說，尤多不根。今歷世既多，公論久定，宜乘此舉，亟為改正。三也。⁸⁹⁰

The *shilu* of past dynasties were reported to the Director-general [*zongcai*, i.e. head examiner], but these persons made many mistakes concerning the right and wrong. For example, naming Fang Zhengxue [i.e. Fang Xiaoru 孝孺; 1357-1402] who was [falsely] regarded as

⁸⁸⁹ *Danyuan ji* 澹園集, *juan* 5, “Xiushi tiaochen sishi yi” 修史條陳四事議, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=40162&page=83>, last accessed: June 6th, 2017.

⁸⁹⁰ *Danyuan ji* 澹園集, *juan* 5, “Xiushi tiaochen sishi yi” 修史條陳四事議, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=40162&page=83>, last accessed: June 6th, 2017.

pleading for mercy;⁸⁹¹ Yu Sumin [i.e. Yu Qian 謙; 1398-1457] was [falsely] considered to have welcomed the enthronement.⁸⁹² [Therefore,] when praising or blaming [the historian should] keep out [his] emotions [because] good and evil are connected to [the historian's] love and hate. This kind is truly complicated and difficult to list one by one. As for the unofficial history and fiction, particularly many have no sources. The era of today's history is already a lot and the public discourse is [already] fixed; so, one should take advantage of this move and urgently correct this. Three.

One of Jiao Hong's significant considerations in this second point is the demand for recording the good as well as the evil to clarify the "public way" to future generations. In fact, hiding the portrayal of evil persons would let them escape punishment of an evil depiction of their person in history—the most long lasting punishment of all. In effect, it is an appeal for portraying all kinds of persons regardless of their position or status which the author himself practiced in his *Guochao xianzheng lu*.⁸⁹³ Another substantial request is that historians should "keep out [their] emotions" when writing history; a point which was emphasized by Liu Zhiji as well. As a matter of fact, this is one of the most important points to consider because—as Jiao Hong showed in his example—persons and facts were falsified due to the historian's sympathies or antipathies. In this course, Jiao Hong mentioned that the public discourse about what is right and wrong in history writing for Ming dynasty is already fixed and can be used by historians to write proper history. This correlates to Wang Shizhen's and Li Zhi's statements about the *gonglun* of each generation which can be detected in the history works of this era. If—as in the case of the time of Jiao Hong—the *gonglun* is already completed, historians

⁸⁹¹ Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺 (1357-1402), *zi* 字: Xizhi 希直 or Xigu 希古, was a Confucian scholar. "When the emperor's uncle, Zhu Di 朱棣, the Prince of Yan (Emperor Chengzu 明成祖, the Yongle Emperor 永樂, r. 1402-1424), usurped the throne Fang Xiaoru vehemently criticized the usurper, and was therefore cruelly put to death. His whole family and even his disciples were executed." "Persons in Chinese History—Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Ming/personsfangxiaoru.html>, last accessed: June 6th, 2017.

⁸⁹² Yu Qian 于謙 (1398-1457), was a famous politician of Ming dynasty who repelled the invasion of the Oirats in 1449 and saved the city of Beijing. However, relating to the release of the former Zhengtong Emperor from the Mongols and his coup against the Jingtai Emperor, Yu Qian was accused of plotting against the throne and put to death. Paolo Santangelo (2013), *Zibuyu: "What The Master Would Not Discuss", according to Yuan Mei (1716 - 1798): A Collection of Supernatural Stories*, Leiden: Brill, p. 844, FN 19.

⁸⁹³ Ch'ien (1986), p. 56.

should refer to this opinion when composing history. Edward T. Ch'ien in his work on Jiao Hong, namely *Chiao Hung and the Restructuring of Neo-Confucianism in the Late Ming*, translated *gonglun* as “impartial views of social consensus,”⁸⁹⁴ which apparently is a very accurate interpretation of the *gonglun* as already completed construct of a set of ideas of one generation. Jiao Hong here once again presented himself as an active member of the scholarly world of historiography in Ming dynasty and, in turn, is an example of tremendous ongoing changes in the field of historiography in late Ming China. Edward T. Ch'ien summed up the relevant message in a nutshell:

[...] [I]t is noteworthy that “impartiality” for Chiao Hung was no longer simply a matter of personal virtue, consisting of fairness or lack of bias on the part of the historian. It involved the “impartial views of social consensus” which, according to Chiao Hung, the historian should bring to bear upon his material in rendering “praise or blame.”⁸⁹⁵

11.7 Hu Yinglin—The Question of Forgeries

As made clear, in Ming dynasty special attention was attached to truthful recording and scrutinizing classical historical works. Throughout the ages, works were falsified due to different reasons, e.g. by attachments of moral lectures or by political changes. According to Achim Mittag this trend partly resulted from the culminating “unrestrained drive of forgery fueled by a lucrative book market” (“hemmungsloser, durch einen lukrativen Buchmarkt angeheizter Fälschungsdrang”⁸⁹⁶); many works were claimed to be rediscovered scriptures. This even more nourished the search for the truth in historical accounts and made contemporary critical historians aware of the importance of trustful sources. An expression of this trend towards the detection of falsifications and forgeries is the *Sibu zheng'e* 四部正譌 (Forgeries in the Four Branches) by Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551-1602), which is named to belong to the *bianwei* 辨偽⁸⁹⁷ style, “the critical discussion about the authenticity of a text or a text passage

⁸⁹⁴ Ch'ien (1986), p. 53.

⁸⁹⁵ Ch'ien (1986), p. 54.

⁸⁹⁶ Mittag (2002), pp. 12f.

⁸⁹⁷ According to Achim Mittag, Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 (1892-1980) in his *Evaluations of Ancient Historiography* (*Gushibian* 古史辨) outlined the *bianwei* 辨偽 tradition, which emerged with Liu Zhiji's

[...], whereby ‘authenticity’ generally refers to the authorship attributed to this text or text passage.’⁸⁹⁸

Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551-1602), *zi* 字: Yuanrui 元瑞, came from Lanqi 蘭溪 in Zhejiang. He received his *juren* degree in 1576, but failed to get the *jinshi* degree for at least eight times until 1598. As he disliked the examination system at all, he led a life in retirement and studied history and philosophy, which fit his devotion for reading and collecting books. Wang Shizhen, his mentor, reported that at the age of thirty Hu had already assembled 42,384 *juan* consisting of classics, books on history, philosophy and *belles lettres*.⁸⁹⁹ Hu Yinglin in the first place was not a specialized historian but a scholar or a man of letters, which again is an indication for the widespread interest towards historical criticism through the elite.⁹⁰⁰

The small but considerable treatise by him, the *Sibu zheng'e* 四部正譌, from 1586 survived in his comprehensive collection of miscellaneous notes, *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢 (A Collection of his Library Shaoshi Shanfang) in three *juan*. It is an encyclopedic collection of falsification in history works mentioning many “forgeries” of facts (which were mostly inserted due to moral teaching). This small work represents the critical manner with which he investigated historical books and is considered to be the first monograph dealing with the naming, development and transmission of forgeries. Drawing on his vast library he separated about one hundred works which he identified to be forgeries while applying theoretical criteria to detect falsifications. In this compilation Hu distinguished twenty kinds of forgeries and was the first one to focus on definite forgeries.⁹⁰¹ Here Hu Yinglin, in contrast to Wang

劉知幾 (661-721) critique towards the *Chunqiu* in his *Shitong*, was elaborated with the Tang time Dan Zhu’s 啖助 (d. 770) and Liu Zongyuan’s 柳宗元 (773-819) *Chunqiu* exegesis, proceeded with the Song time scholars Ouyang Xiu, Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162) und Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) as well as with the Ming time scholars Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559) and Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590), until it reached its climax with Cui Shu’s 崔述 (1740-1816) *Kaoxin lu* 考信錄. Mittag (2002), p. 13.

⁸⁹⁸ The original German reads the following: “[...] [K]ritische Erörterungen der Authentizität eines Textes bzw. eines Textpassus [...], wobei sich ‘Authentizität’ generell auf die Autorschaft, die diesem Text bzw. diesem Textpassus zugeschrieben wurde, bezieht,” Mittag (2002), pp. 12f.

⁸⁹⁹ *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 645f.

⁹⁰⁰ Hsu (1983), p. 439. For more information on Hu Yinglin and his literary accomplishments, see, e.g., Jin Guang’s 金光 Ph.D. thesis “Hu Yinglin shixue yanjiu” 胡应麟诗学研究 (The Research on the Poetics of Hu Ying-lin), PhD thesis at Jiangxi Normal University (Jiangxi shifan daxue 江西师范大学), 2007.

⁹⁰¹ *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 645f, Mittag (2002), p. 13; Hsu (1983), p. 440.

Shizhen who focused on Ming dynasty, approached the critical analysis of works throughout the ages. Hsu Kwan-san labelled the *Sibu zheng'e* “the natural product of the continuous efforts of the erudites and bibliographers including, among others, Liu Chung-yuan (773-819), Sung Lien (131-181) and Yang Sh'en (1488-1559).”⁹⁰² This clearly is true, as Hu Yinglin summarized and exemplified the most important points concerning the evaluation of history works. He himself stated in the preface:

凡贗書之作，情狀至繁，約而言之，殆十數種。有偽作於前代，而世率知之者。風后之《握奇》、岐伯之《素問》是也。有偽作于近代，而世反感之者，卜商之《易傳》、毛漸之《連山》是也。有掇古人之事而偽者，仲尼傾蓋而有《子華》，柱史出關而有《尹喜》是也。有挾古人之文而偽者，伍員著書而有《越絕》，賈誼賦鵬而有《鵬冠》是也。有傳古人之名而偽者，尹負鼎而《湯液》聞，戚飯牛而《相經》著是也。有蹈古書之名而偽者，《汲冢》發而《師春》補，《檣杵》紀而《楚史》傳是也。有憚於自名而偽者，魏泰《筆錄》之類是也。有恥於自名而偽者，和氏《香奩》之類是也。有襲取於人而偽者，法盛《晉書》之類是也。有假重於人而偽者，子瞻《杜解》之類是也。有惡其人偽以禍之者，僧孺《行紀》之類是也。有惡其人偽以誣之者，聖俞《碧雲》之類是也。有本非偽，人託之而偽者，《陰符》不言三皇而李荃稱黃帝之類是也。有書本偽，人補之而益偽者，《乾坤鑿度》及諸緯書之類是也。⁹⁰³

Concerning the composition of all the false books, the situation reached numerous. I arranged and named them in almost ten kinds: There are [works] which falsely give record about former ages, and their generation obeys and knows them; Feng Hou's *Woqijing*⁹⁰⁴ and Qi

⁹⁰² Hsu (1983), p. 442.

⁹⁰³ *Sibu zheng'e* 四部正謔 *shang* 上, by Hu Yinglin 胡應麟, in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, *juan* 卷 14, pp. (886–)310f.

⁹⁰⁴ The *Woqijing* 握奇經 by Feng Hou is an ancient classical work about military affairs. For more information, see Cheng Ruming 程如明 (2015), *Zhongguo lishi changshi quanzhidao (jingdian zhencang ben)* 中国历史常识全知道 (经典珍藏本), Beijing: Zhongyang bianyiju 中央编译局 (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, chap. “Bachen bu lie *Woqijing*” 八陣布列《握奇經》. Furthermore, the author Feng Hou as a legendary personage is believed to have been the prime minister of the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi 黃帝; third millennium BC).

Bo's *Suwen*⁹⁰⁵ are such a kind. There are [works] which falsely record about modern times, and their generation opposes and doubts them; Bo Shang's *Yizhuan*⁹⁰⁶ and Mao Jian's *Lianshan*⁹⁰⁷ are such a kind. There are [works] which [supposedly] put in order the affairs of ancient people and are falsified; such cases are: [e.g.] Zhongni [i.e. Confucius] was admired and protected and there was the *Zihua*[zi];⁹⁰⁸ Zhushi [i.e. Laozi] went out of isolation and there was the *Yin Xi*.⁹⁰⁹ There are [works] relying on scriptures of ancient people and they are falsified; such cases are: Wu Yun⁹¹⁰ wrote books but then there is the *Yuejue*⁹¹¹ [which

⁹⁰⁵ The *Suwen* is the first text of the *Huangdi Neijing* 黃帝內經 (The Emperor's Inner Canon), an ancient text of medical issues and Daoist practice constructed in the question (by Huangdi) and answer (by minister Qibo) style. The authorship and the date of origin are not clear. For further information, see "Chinese Literature—*Huangdi neijing* 黃帝內經 'The Inner Classic of the Yellow Emperor,'" at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/huangdineijing.html>, last accessed: May 12th, 2016.

⁹⁰⁶ The *Zixia Yizhuan* 子夏易傳, ascribed to Bo Zhang (507-? BC; *zi* 字: Zixia 子夏), a disciple of Confucius, in one *juan* is an ancient book of dubious authenticity. It is included in the *Wenjingtang congshu* 問經堂叢書 (Collectaneum of the Studio of Questions about the Classics) from Qing dynasty.

⁹⁰⁷ Mao Jian (1036-1094) integrated the *Lianshan yi* 連山易 in his *Shanjing* 山墳, a part of the *Sanjing* 三墳.

⁹⁰⁸ The *Zihuazi* 子華子 in two *juan* is ascribed to Cheng Ben 程本, *zi* 字: Zihua 子華, from *Chunqiu* period (fourth century), who had to leave his home state Jin 晉 and went to the state of Qi where he lived in seclusion. The *Zihuazi* clearly has a Daoist content; still he also appreciated Confucianism, as he also got to know Confucius himself. Confucius regarded him as a virtuous and talented person. However, the *Zihuazi* was only composed after his death from single bamboo slips, and some passages were added by later persons. The work also contains a chapter called "Kongzi zeng" 孔子贈 (*juan shang* 卷上). Today it is quite sure that the *Zihuazi* was lost during Han period and the version circulating from Song dynasty on is a forgery. For more information on the work, see "Chinese Literature—*Zihuazi* 子華子 'Master Zihua,'" at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/zihuazi.html>, last accessed: April 15th, 2017.

⁹⁰⁹ Yin Xi 尹喜 was the mystical commander of the Hanguan 函谷關, a strategic pass, during the time of Emperor Zhao 昭 of Zhou dynasty (?-977 BC) and the chief of the Daoist Louguan school (*Louguan dao* 樓觀道; "Way of the Watchout Tower"). Reportedly, he was responsible for the emergence and composition of the *Daodejing* 道德經, as he forced Laozi to teach him and write down his thoughts. For further information, see "Religions in China—*Louguan dao* 樓觀道, the Way of the Watchout Tower," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Religion/schoolslouguandao.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017. The work *Yinxi* is an attachment to the book *Laozi* 老子 (Master Lao) ascribed to court historian Dan from Zhou dynasty (Zhou taishi Dan 周太史儋), namely Laozi.

⁹¹⁰ Wu Yun points at Wu Zixu 伍子胥 (559-484 BC). He was a senior official and military specialist in the Wu 吳 kingdom (eleventh century-473 BC) of the Spring and Autumn period. For more information, see "Persons in Chinese History—Wu Zixu 伍子胥," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personswuzixu.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹¹ The *Yuejue shu* 越絕書 (End of the Kingdom Yue) deals with the state of Yue of Eastern Zhou period (eleventh century-222 BC) and is compiled by Yuan Kang 袁康 from Han dynasty. For more

contains identical passages]; Jia Yi⁹¹² composed a rhapsody about owls⁹¹³ but then there is the *Heguan[zi]*⁹¹⁴ [which contains identical passages]. There are [works] which pass on the names of ancient people but they are falsified; such cases are: [Yi] Yin “carried a *ding* on his shoulders”⁹¹⁵ and the *Tangye [jingfa]*⁹¹⁶ made it known; “Ning Qi fed the cattle”⁹¹⁷ and the *Xiangniuqing*⁹¹⁸ reported it. There are [works]

information, see “Chinese Literature—*Yuejueshu* 越絕書,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/yuejueshu.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹² Jia Yi 賈誼 (200-168 BC) “was a high minister and famous writer of the early Former Han period (*Qianhan* 前漢; 206 BCE-8 CE) [and] came from Luoyang 洛陽 (modern Luoyang, Henan).” For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Jia Yi 賈誼,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsjiayi.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹³ This is the *Funiaofu* 鵞鳥賦 (Rhapsody of the Owl) by Jia Yi “in which he answers his own questions. Frightened by the appearance of an owl in his room, a bird of mischief, he fears this as a bad omen but convinces himself that life is subject to a constant change determined by Heaven and that fortune-telling has no influence at all. The language of this rhapsody comes from the inner heart and is able to move the reader by its simple and symbolic language.” For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Jia Yi 賈誼,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsjiayi.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹⁴ “The *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子 ‘Master Pheasant Cap’, also written 鶴冠子, is a collection of philosophical treatises from the Warring States period 戰國 (5th cent.-221 BCE).” The author’s real name is not known, but due to sources he must have lived in the third century BC. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Heguanzi* 鶡冠子 ‘Master Pheasant Cap,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/heguanzi.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹⁵ “[Yi] Yin carrying a *ding* on his shoulders” (*Yi Yin fu ding* 伊尹負鼎) refers to a story from the *Shiji* 史記. In the story, Yi Yin as a kitchener explained governing a country via cooking to Emperor Tang of Shang (Shang Tang 商湯; 1675-1646 BC) and then was promoted prime minister. The dialogue and reference to cooking was summarized as carrying a *ding*: “Yin’s name was Aheng. Aheng wanted to meet Tang, but had no opportunity of doing so; he therefore became cook to the prince of Hsin, and while bringing Tang dishes to taste urged him to perfect himself in the way of the ancient kings.” 伊尹名阿衡。阿衡欲奸湯而無由，乃為有莘氏媵臣，負鼎俎，以滋味說湯，致于王道。*Shiji* 史記，“Yin benji” 殷本紀; translation from Herbert J. Allen (1895), “Ssuma Ch’ien’s Historical Records. Chapter III. The Yin Dynasty,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1895, pp. 602f.

These four characters developed into a proverb (*chengyu* 成語) which means to use an opportunity to show someone one’s own abilities and value. For more information on Yi Yin, see “Persons in Chinese History—Yi Yin 伊尹,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsyiyin.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹⁶ The *Tangye jingfa* 湯液經法 (Canonical Methods for Brews and Decoctions) dealing with illnesses and medical formulas is ascribed to Yi Yin. For more information, see Wang Shumin (2005), “*Tangye jingfa* (Canonical Methods for Brews and Decoctions) 湯液經法—A lost text recorded in the Hanshu bibliography,” transl. by Chen Hsiufen, in Christopher Cullen and Vivienne Lo (eds.), *Medieval Chinese Medicine: The Dunhuang Medical Manuscripts*, London: Routledge (Needham Research Institute Series), p. 322.

⁹¹⁷ “[Ning] Qi feeding the cattle” (*Ning Qi fan niu* 甯戚飯牛) refers to a story from the *Lüshi Chunqiu junan* 呂氏春秋, *lisu lan* 離俗覽, *junan* 舉難. In the story, Ning Qi was a poor man who wanted to see Duke Huan of Qi (Qi Huan Gong 齊桓公; 685-643 BC). He went through hardships to come to the court city; but when Duke Huan passed by, he could only see him from afar. Therefore, he started singing

which disregard the reputation of ancient books and they are falsified; such cases are: The *Jizhong* [scriptures]⁹¹⁹ were discovered and the *Shichun*⁹²⁰ was mended; the *Taowu* was recorded and as *Chushi* [taowu]⁹²¹ it was passed down. There are [works] which are dreaded by their own name and they are falsified; Wei Tai's [Dongxuan] *Bilu*⁹²² is such a kind. There are [works] which are disgraced by their own name; He Shi's *Xianglian* [ji]⁹²³ is such a kind. There are [works] which are taken from the past by men and are falsified; [He] Fasheng's *Jin* [zhongxing] *shu*⁹²⁴ is such a kind. There are [works] which are falsified

a sad song at the cattle cart he was travelling on. Duke Huan recognized his extraordinariness and hired him from the place. See *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, *juan* 卷 19, *lisu lan* 離俗覽, *junan* 舉難, p. 284, in *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊, *zibu* 子部, *chubian* 初編.

⁹¹⁸ *Xiangniujiang* 相牛經 (Divination by Cattle) is a text ascribed to Ning Qi. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Xiangniujiang* 相牛經 ‘Divination by Cattle,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/xiangniujiang.html>, last accessed: April 14th, 2017.

⁹¹⁹ See p. 124, FN 350.

⁹²⁰ The *Shichun* 師春 is a collection of divinations matters from the *Zuozhuan* 左傳, also the whole meaning and language is the same as in the *Zuozhuan*. It was discovered in the *Jizhong* tomb together with many other important scriptures. See Meng Wentong 蒙文通 (1997), *Zhongguo zhexue sixiang tanyuan* 中國哲學思想探原, Taipei: Wu-Nan tushu chuban gufen youxian gongsi 五南圖書出版股份有限公司, p. 14.

⁹²¹ The *Chushi taowu* 楚史檮杌 (Historical Annals of Chu) is a history about the ancient state of Chu; the authorship is unknown, but its origin is dated to Song dynasty (960-1279). It is supposed to reconstruct annals from the state of Chu and, thus, used Zhou and Han time sources. *Taowu* refers to the language in Chu which reportedly was used for their own chronicles. Thus, Hu Yinglin here refers to the original chronicles which were then used to create the reconstructed *Chushi taowu*. For more information on the *Chushi taowu*, see “Chinese Literature—*Chushi taowu* 楚史檮杌,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/chushitaowu.html>, last accessed: April 15th, 2017.

⁹²² Wei Tai 魏泰 (Song dynasty), *zi* 字: Daofu 道輔, wrote the *Dongxuan bilu* 東軒筆錄 (Brush Records of the Eastern Study) “during the reign of Emperor Zhezong 宋哲宗 (r. 1085-1100) and is quite harsh in its open critique towards other persons.” Wei Tai used to publish books under other persons' names, not his own. See “Chinese Literature—*Dongxuan bilu* 東軒筆錄 ‘Brush Records of the Eastern Study,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Novels/dongxuanbilu.html>, last accessed: April 15th, 2017.

⁹²³ The authorship of the *Xianglian ji* 香奩集 (Collection of the Aromatic Cosmetic Box), actually, is not proved; some say it was written by Han Wo 韓偓 (842-923; *zi* 字: Zhiguang 致光), some say it was written by He Ning 和凝 (898-955; *zi* 字: Chengji 成績). The content, however, is known; the *Oxford Handbook of Classical Chinese Literature* says about this book: “Han Wo's 韓偓 (ca. 844-923) *Xianglian ji* 香奩集 (Collection of the Aromatic Cosmetic Box) is a fascinating case of gentle eroticism, which are all excluded from Han Wo's ‘regular’ literary collection...” This shows that this work, indeed, is “disgraced by its own name.” See *CCL*, p. 231.

⁹²⁴ He Fasheng's 何法盛 (fl. Liu Song 劉宋, 420-479) *Jin zhongxing shu* 晉中興書 (The Resurgence of Jin dynasty) in 7 *juan* is regarded as an alternative history to the official *Jinshu* 晉書 from 648. As the compilation of the *Jinshu* itself was quite a complicated undertaking due to the difficult political situation during Jin period, many alternative histories existed and were collocated in Qing

and duplicated by men and, hence, they are fake; Zi Zhan's [Su Shi's] *Dujie* is such a kind. There are [works] which are evil to other persons falsely in order to bring disaster to them; [Niu] Sengru's [*Zhou Qin Xingji*]⁹²⁵ is such a kind. There are [works] which are evil to other persons falsely in order to slander them; Sheng Yu's [i.e. Mei Yaochen's] *Biyun[xia]*⁹²⁶ is such a kind. Some volumes [seem] not to be fake and people rely on them but they are false; the [*Huangdi Yinfu jing*] not naming the Three Primordial Sovereigns and Li Quan's [commentary to this work]⁹²⁷ mentioning Huangdi are such kinds. There are books which are fake, men mended them and they are even more false; the *Qiankun zaodu*⁹²⁸ and all books about charms and omens are such a kind.

Hu Yinglin already in the preface mentions many books concerning false statements or false comments and therewith hints at the intention of his *Sibu cheng'e*: detecting, tagging and correcting these mistakes, either being made willfully or unintentionally. Hsu Kwan-san outlined the rules which were drafted by Hu Yinglin “for detecting forgery:”

dynasty only. In fact, Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 considered He Fasheng's work as the finest work on Jin history and neglected the official history. For more information on the *Jinshu*, see “Chinese Literature—*Jinshu* 晉書,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/jinshu.html>, last accessed: April 21st, 2017.

⁹²⁵ Niu Sengru's 牛僧孺 (779-847; *zi* 字: Si'an 思黯) *Zhou-Qin Xingji* 周秦行紀 (A Record of Travels through Zhou and Qin) is a “first-person narrative written from Niu Sengru's perspective.” The author was chancellor under three Tang emperors and was the leader of a political party (“Niu faction”). Niu's authorship is not without question. As the main character's behavior and speech is regarded improper and wrong, some scholars see this as a proof that the tale was written in order to slander Niu in the faction struggle. Zhang Zhenjun and Wang Jing (2017), *Song Dynasty Tales: A Guided Reader*, Singapur: World Scientific, p. 209, FN 29, 30.

⁹²⁶ Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002-1060), *zi* 字: Sheng Yu 聖俞, a poet from Song dynasty wrote the *Biyunxia* 碧雲騶 (Red-and-white stallions of the jade-green clouds), a collection of stories or novellas; in the *Songshi* 宋史 it is categorized among the biographies. For more information on the *Biyunxia*, see “Chinese Literature—*Biyunxia* 碧雲騶 ‘Red-and-White Stallions of the Jade-Green Clouds,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Novels/biyunxia.html>, last accessed: April 25th, 2017.

⁹²⁷ The *Huangdi yinfu jing* 黃帝陰符經 (The Yellow Emperor's Classic of the Secret Talisman) or just *Yinfujing* 陰符經 (Classic of the Secret Talisman) is a Daoist treatise probably from Zhan'guo 戰國 times (fifth century-221 BC) but emerging in Tang times in two editions, one by Li Quan 李筌—in which the main text is 300 characters long followed by a commentary by Li Quan—and one by Zhang Guo 張國—in which the text is 400 characters long. Sometimes, especially by Zhu Xi 朱熹 and Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅, it is considered a forgery by Li Quan. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Huangdi yinfu jing* 黃帝陰符經 ‘The Yellow Emperor's Classic of the Secret Talisman,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/huangdiyinfujing.html>, last accessed: April 25th, 2017.

⁹²⁸ The *Qiankun zaodu* 乾坤鑿度 is work from Han dynasty whose author is not known anymore.

- Check with *Jilüe*⁹²⁹ to see whether it was recorded or when it was first recorded.
- Check with the later bibliographies to trace continuity or change in its recording, if any.
- Check with contemporary works to see whether, when and how it was noticed.
- Check with the works of later generations to see whether, when and how it was quoted.
- Examine the terminology, the phraseology and the manner of expression to see what the style was and what age it might fall into.
- Examine the facts and events it contains to see in what times they actually happened and from this infer its earliest possible date of production.
- Trace the real identity through an investigation of the professed author.
- Trace the real author by investigation of the man who allegedly was responsible for its being known to the reading public or for having passed it down to later generations.⁹³⁰

This listed set of rules very clearly shows modern aspects of source criticism. While Liu Zhiji provided the basis when first criticizing ancient Chinese history works, Hu Yinglin here went one step further and contributed a set of criteria which is to be used for the examination of historical works in order to verify or falsify them. Aspects like “examining the terminology, the phraseology and the manner of expression,” “examining the facts and events it contains,” “tracing the real identity through an investigation of the professed author,” and “tracing the real author by investigation of the man who allegedly was responsible for its being” are criteria for modern source criticism, as well. Borowsky, Vogel and Wunder, for example, name three categories of the historical-critical method: (a) the philological-hermeneutic text criticism—to trace

⁹²⁹ The *Jilüe* 輯略 was the introductory chapter of the seventh category of the *Qilüe* 七略 (Seven Abstracts) which is regarded to be the first and oldest bibliography of China. In this first chapter which was written by Liu Xin 劉歆 (d. 23 AD)—the whole compilation had been begun by his father Liu Xiang 劉向 (79/77-8/6 BC) in 26 BC—38 different schools and masters are listed under which particular works are catalogued in chronological order. For more information, see “Chinese Literature—*Qilüe* 七略,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/qilve.html>, last accessed: April 27th, 2017.

⁹³⁰ Hsu (1983), p. 442.

the authenticity of authorship by using philological resources like the style of writing—; (b) the historical critique—to trace the relation of the source to the contemporary “reality,” so to say to verify the transmitted facts; (c) and criticism of ideology—to trace the author’s intentions due to his political and social environment and, therewith, approach the problem of impartiality.⁹³¹ These approaches correlate with Hu Yinglin’s considerations concerning the evaluation of sources; he primarily dealt with the historical criticism and detected falsification of facts. In some cases, these falsifications can be traced back to the author’s intentions, which then also includes a criticism of ideology: An example for this is the case of Niu Sengru’s 牛僧孺 *Zhou-Qin Xingji* 周秦行紀 (A Record of Travels through Zhou and Qin) which probably was used to slander the alleged author Niu Sengru in order to undermine his position in a faction struggle. In this case—like in other examples by Hu Yinglin—the problem of the *Textsicherung* (i.e. obtaining a secure edition of a text) is touched upon which is also emphasized by Borowsky, Vogel, Wunder in their work *Einführung in die Geschichtswissenschaft I. Grundprobleme, Arbeitsorganisation, Hilfsmittel*.⁹³²

Moreover, in his *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢 Hu Yinglin also included another treatise concerning history writing, namely the *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢,⁹³³ in which he the same as many of his contemporaries called into question former history works, for example the *Hanshu* or the *Houhanshu*, and also happenings and persons in history. Yet, especially Hu Yinglin’s *Sibu zheng’e* is a very good example for the critical approach towards history sources. Furthermore, a development towards evermore systematized methods is to be detected. At the beginning of this critical approach towards history works the main focus lay on the content of history works: Shao Bao and Zhu Yunming as two of the first revolutionists in historical criticism focused on the facts presented in putative history works and commented on the happenings. Hu Yinglin, now, went one step further in the development of the historical criticism and displayed history works as sources of which their authenticity as a source

⁹³¹ Peter Borowsky, Barbara Vogel and Heide Wunder (1975), *Einführung in die Geschichtswissenschaft I. Grundprobleme, Arbeitsorganisation, Hilfsmittel*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, pp. 157f.

⁹³² See Borowsky, Vogel, Wunder (1975), pp. 163f.

⁹³³ *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢, 6 *juan* 卷, in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, *juan* 5-10, pp. (886–)219–(886–)281.

itself first has to be proven. This again shows that Ming time historians made a great progress towards modern historiography and achieved a critical attitude towards former history works.

11.8 Zhang Sui—Looking at More than Thousand Years of History

Besides Hu Yinglin's extraordinary work on methods for source criticism and the other works which mostly criticized ancient history work, there were works reconstructing a general history of China by comprehensively criticizing works throughout the Chinese history. An example of this category is the rather unknown work *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼 (Looking at More Than a Thousand Years) by Zhang Sui 张燧. Zhang Sui (fl. 1585; *zi* 字: Hezhong 和仲) came from Hunan, and after dropping out of the Imperial College (*Guozijian* 國子監) he helped his father in doing business. Besides the just mentioned work he also wrote the *Jingshi qieyao* 经世挈要 (All Important Matters About Statecraft), the *Weijian bian* 未見編 (Compilation About not yet Seen [Things]) and the *Yifa* 易筏.⁹³⁴

The *Qianbai nianyan* in twelve *juan* (published 1614) rather represents reading notes by Zhang Sui, and encompasses the time from pre-Qin until his own time, the Ming dynasty; hence, it is regarded a general history. Zhang Sui possessed a unique learning sight and was highly esteemed by many scholars; therefore, also the *Qianbai nianyan* was widely disseminated and read, even reaching Japan.⁹³⁵ It is a comprehensive work which covers the whole history of China. Moreover, it includes a chapter about historiography, about the classics and a discussion about what is right and wrong in the Standard Histories (*zhengshi* 正史). These chapters met the spirit of the time and joined the already mentioned public discourse—the work, thus, also contains very novel points about the view on history, and is regarded an excellent piece of work. However, the modern scholar Zhu Zhixian also pointed out many similarities to Wang Shizhen's und Hu Yinglin's works and even accused Zhang Sui of quoting without

⁹³⁴ Zhu Zhixian 朱志先 (2015), "Wanming Zhang Sui 'Qianbai nianyan' banben shuyao" 晚明张燧《千百年眼》版本述要 (The Essentials of the Edition of Late Ming Zhang Sui's *Qianbai nianyan*), *Xuezhishi xuekan* 史志学刊 (Journal of History and Chorography) 2.

⁹³⁵ Zhu Zhixian 朱志先 (2015).

pointing out the references.⁹³⁶ Although this behavior is not appropriate in terms of academic writing, it, nevertheless, elucidates the importance of the novel currents, which were initiated by former mentioned scholars like Wang Shizhen, Li Zhi or Hu Yinglin. Moreover, it seems as if this was the purpose of repeating what great scholars had said before. Zhang Sui's effort in compiling such a comprehensive history work and thereby pointing out features of correct history writing was appreciated by later scholars and his contemporaries like Zou Yuanbiao 鄒元標 (1551-1624) who wrote the preface to Zhang Sui's work.⁹³⁷

世有千百年眼其人乎？非眯目阿堵，則泥首典籍作蠹魚耳。眯於利者無足論，即迷于⁹³⁸書籍者，多從耳根入，凡經前人舌餘，即以為定案。而古人言語、古人心神，有人謂然而實不然，有口易而心實難，有跡違而心是者，非有千百年胸次，誰能下上而剖其隱微、晰其源委？張君和仲拮据此書，可謂鉤蹟索隱，起古人相與論辦⁹³⁹，亦必心服。雖然，遂謂為千百年眼⁹⁴⁰則⁹⁴¹未。夫目之所貴者清虛靈爽，睛雖貴也，著目⁹⁴²則翳。古有天眼、道眼、慧眼、法眼，超于⁹⁴³形體外，不以一切言語文字求。和仲乃窮無窮、極無極，有不以

⁹³⁶ Zhu Zhixian 朱志先 (2013), “Wanming Zhang Sui ‘Qianbai nianyan’ yu Wang Shizhen, Hu Yinglin zhushu guanxikao” 晚明张燧《千百年眼》与王世贞、胡应麟著述关系考 (Investigation about the Relationship of Ming Time Zhang Sui's Qianbai nianyan and Wang Shizhen's and Hu Yinglin's Works), *Hubei keji xueyuan xuebao* 湖北科技学院学报 (Journal of Hubei University of Science and Technology) 33.5, p. 40.

⁹³⁷ The following text is based on a scanned version from the Harvard Yenching Institute (hereafter HYI) in the series “National Library of China—Harvard-Yenching Library Chinese rare book digitization project.” The original text was written by Zhang Sui 張燧 and reviewed by Fan Mingtai 范明泰. Online at *Harvard Library Viewer*, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$1i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$1i), last accessed: September 2nd, 2017. However, due to its difficult reading, this handwritten source was reconciled with the version of the *Chinese Text Project* (CTP), <http://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=480747>, last accessed: September 2nd, 2017. In the HYI edition, the radical of the underlined characters is already in *jiantizi*.

⁹³⁸ = 於.

⁹³⁹ In the CTP edition it is 辯, probably a misspelling for 辦.

⁹⁴⁰ In the CTP edition it is miswritten as 艱.

⁹⁴¹ In the CTP edition it is 猶.

⁹⁴² In the CTP edition it is 雲.

⁹⁴³ = 於.

歷數盡者，超天地而獨存，撥雲翳而長清，功誠偉歟！和仲幼好奇，
讀書裡閑，錚錚有聲，吾知其固未可量也，於是乎書以覘之。⁹⁴⁴

萬歷甲寅吉水耀農鄒元標書

Has our era such men [as the author of] the *Qianbai nianyan*? When he does not get money in the eyes [i.e. does not do business], then he kowtows classical books pretending to be a silverfish.⁹⁴⁵ The one who squints at profit is not worth discussing, then he is one who becomes enchanted by literature. Many [things] enter from the ear, [like] all the classics are a remainder from our forefathers' tongues, then they became a final version. But concerning ancient people's spoken words and ancient people's minds, some people call it like that but in fact it is not like that; some mouths are easy, but the mind in fact is difficult; some remains are lost, but the heart is right—there is not more than thousand years in one's mind. So, who could more or less disclose the invisible and elucidate all the details? Sir Zhang Hezhong in straitened circumstances [wrote] this book; [nevertheless,] one may well say he went [deeply] into abstruse [subjects] and expounded the obscure. Raising the ancients, he together discussed [them]; likewise, he certainly was genuinely convinced. Though, thereupon [the book] was not yet called *Looking at More Than Thousand Years*. However, the eyes which honor [this work] are [the ones of] pure and unprejudiced gods and spirits; and the eye [which sees it], though, is honored, [because after] the author has seen it, then the book got concealed. In the past, it had the eye of heaven, the eye of the Dao, the eye of wisdom and the eye of law, and surpassed the form and shape, [but] it did not [meet] all the requests concerning the spoken language and written script. Hezhong then was poor without being poor and extreme without being extreme. [Now] it does not use enumerating to the greatest extent, [but] exceeds heaven and earth and exists alone. It stirs up dark clouds and increases the clarity; its achievements are honest and great. When [Zhang] Hezhong

⁹⁴⁴ The HYI edition is not readable anymore in this place (也。和仲...和仲幼好奇，讀裡閑，...知和仲進未可量，...書以覘之。)。The CTP edition displays a text version which is commonly agreed on in the secondary literature as well. Therefore, here also this version is accessed and translated by underlining the part adopted from the CTP edition.

⁹⁴⁵ ...which can eat through books and scriptures.

was young, he was full of curiosity; he studied in his hometown and his reputation was that he was upright. I know his firmness cannot be estimated enough; therefore, this book [exists] in order to observe this.

Wanli *jiayin* year [i.e. 1614] Zou Yuanbiao from Jishui (Qunong)

The appreciation granted to Zhang Sui is apparent in this preface and is confirmed by many later historians like the philosopher and Ming loyalist Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692)⁹⁴⁶ who said “contemporary men of letters rely on this [work] as a tool for copying indiscriminately” (當時詞人，恃此為稗販之具⁹⁴⁷). Yu Yue 俞樾 (1821-1907)⁹⁴⁸ believed that the *Qianbai nianyan* “brings together scattered and lost [pieces of work] and is profound and detailed because textual criticism moves its discussion; if in the distant one can trace [Liu] Zhiji’s *Shitong*, then near to it are Zhao [Yi’s] [*Nianershi zhaji*]⁹⁴⁹ and Wang Mingcheng’s [*Shiqi shi shangque*].”⁹⁵⁰ (網羅散失，淵博精詳，因考據行其議論，遠可追知幾《史通》，近之則趙氏之《札記》，王氏之《商榷》也⁹⁵¹). Yu Yue here made a clear reference to the *Shitong* and, therewith, ascribed importance to Zhang Sui’s work.

⁹⁴⁶ For more information on Wang Fuzhi, see “Persons in Chinese History—Wang Fuzhi 王夫之,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/personswangfuzhi.html>, last accessed: July 20th, 2017.

⁹⁴⁷ *Guangxu Xiangtan xianzhi* 光緒湘潭縣志 (County Gazetteer of Xiangtan from Guangxu Reign Period [1875-1908]), *juan* 卷 8, *liezhuan* 列傳 40, *Zhang Jiayan zhuan* 張嘉言傳 (Biography of Zhang Jiayan), online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=25977&page=373&remap=gb>, last accessed: May 3rd, 2017.

⁹⁴⁸ For more information on Yu Yue 俞樾, see “Persons in Chinese History—Yu Yue 俞樾,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/personsyuyue.html>, last accessed: May 3rd, 2017.

⁹⁴⁹ “Zhao Yi 赵翼 (1727-1814), a well-known historian during the Qing Dynasty, is famous for his writing, the sketch book of twenty-two historical books (*Nian'er shi zhaji* 廿二史札记), which fully embodies in the characteristics of studying history with the main purpose of politics and economy.” Gao Ping 高平 (2000), “Nian'er shi zhaji jingshi zhiyong de tese” 《廿二史札记》经世致用的特色 (The Features of Zhao Yi’s Historical Book), *Beijing jiaoyu xueyuanbao* 北京教育学院学报 (Journal of Beijing Institute of Education) 14.4, p. 38. For further information, see, e.g., Gao Ping 高平 (2000).

⁹⁵⁰ Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛 (1722-1797) wrote the *Shiqi shi shangque* 十七史商榷 (A Critical Study on the Seventeen Ancient Historical Works). For more information on Wang Mingsheng, see “Persons in Chinese History—Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/personswangmingsheng.html>, last accessed: July 20th, 2017.

⁹⁵¹ Zhu Zhixian 朱志先 (2013), p. 40; original from Zhang Sui 张燧 (1905), *Zhongjiaoben Qianbai nianyan* 重校本千百年眼, Shanghai 上海: Shanghai shixueban 上海史学社.

The content of the *Qianbai niyan* shows some interesting features. Already in the first *juan* Zhang Sui broached the subject of mistakes in ancient history writings. The content here concerns the mythological age of China which is discussed controversially in many history works. However, Zhang Sui in many aspects took the view of modern history.

古史之謬

譙周《古史考》以炎帝與神農各為一人，羅泌《路史》以軒轅與黃帝非是一帝，史皇與蒼頡乃一君一臣，共工氏或以為帝，或以為伯而不王；祝融氏或以為臣，或以為火德之主。楊朱云：“三皇之事，若存若亡；五帝之事，若覺若夢；三王之事，或隱或顯，億不識一；當身之事，或見或聞，萬不識一；目前之事，或存或廢，千不識一。”至哉言乎！⁹⁵²

The mistakes of ancient histories

Qiao Zhou's "Investigation of Ancient History"⁹⁵³ regards Yan Di⁹⁵⁴ and Shennong⁹⁵⁵ together as one person. Luo Mi's "Grand History"⁹⁵⁶ regards Xuanyuan and Huang Di not as one emperor,⁹⁵⁷ Shi Huang and

⁹⁵² *Qianbai niyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 1, [https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$363i](https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$363i), last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁵³ Qiao Zhou 譙周 was a scholar from Jin 晉 period (265-420) who also wrote Confucian treatises like the *Qiao Zhou Faxun* 譙周法訓 (Legal Instructions by Qiao Zhou) and a commentary to the *Lunyu* 論語, namely the *Lunyu zhu* 論語注. "Chinese Literature—*Qiao Zhou Faxun* 譙周法訓 'Legal Instructions by Qiao Zhou,'" at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/faxun.html>, last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁵⁴ Yan Di 炎帝 (The "Red Emperor") is an ancient Chinese deity and "the personification of the processional element fire (*huo* 火) and the south, master of the summer, and assistant to the deity Zhuming 朱明 (i.e. Zhu Rong 祝融)." He is often associated with Shen Nong 神農. "Chinese Mythology—Yan Di 炎帝," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsyandi.html>, last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁵⁵ "Shen Nong 神農, the 'Divine Husbandman,' also called Lord Shen Nong 神農氏, is a mythological ruler of prehistoric China and often named one of the Three Augusts 三皇 or the Five Emperors 五帝." "Chinese Mythology—Shen Nong 神農," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsshennong.html>, last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁵⁶ Luo Mi 羅泌 (fl. 1131-1189), *zi* 字: Zhangyuan 長源, was a Song time scholar. He wrote the *Lushi* 路史 (Grand History) which is often criticized of mixing facts with mythology. See Zhu Xianlin 朱仙林 (2011), "Cong Luomi Lushi kan zhongguo de 'Shenhua lishi'" 从罗泌《路史》看中国的'神话历史,' *Gudai wenxue lilun fa wei—Wenyi pinglun* 古代文学理论发微—文艺评论 10.

⁹⁵⁷ In the *Shiji* 史記 it is said that Huang Di's personal name was Xuanyuan 軒轅. Consequently, Xuanyuan and Huang Di are supposed to be the same person. See "Chinese Mythology—Huang Di 黄帝,

Cang Jie are then one monarch and one subject,⁹⁵⁸ Gong Gong perhaps is regarded as an emperor, or regarded as an earl but not a king.⁹⁵⁹ Zhurong is regarded as subject, and Huode is regarded as the master.⁹⁶⁰ Yang Zhu⁹⁶¹ said: “The matter of the Three Primordial Sovereigns appears to exist and appears to decrease. The matter of the Five (mythological) Emperors⁹⁶² appears to be awakened and appears to be dreamt. The matter of the Three Augusts⁹⁶³ appears to be hidden and appears to be displayed; one hundred million are ignorant of one. The matter of oneself either is seen or is heard; ten thousand are ignorant of

the Yellow Emperor,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personshuangdi.html>, last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁵⁸ According to the *Lushi*, Shi Huang 史皇 and Cang Jie 倉頡 both were ancient Chinese sages; the first one being responsible for the system of painting, the latter one responsible for the creation of script. Other sources name Shi Huang (Emperor of Writing) as a second name for Cang Jie or Shihuang as his tribal name. See “Chinese Mythology—Cang Jie 倉頡,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personscangjie.html>, last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁵⁹ “Gong Gong 共工, personal name Kang Hui 康回, is a mythological hero that tamed the floods. Some sources name him among one of the mythical Three Augusts 三皇. According to the *Shanhaijing* 山海經 he was a descendant of Yan Di 炎帝, the Red Emperor, and a son of Zhu Rong 祝融. He was born in the Yangtze River 江水, had the face of a human but the body of a snake and red hair (according to the *Lushi* 路史).” “Chinese Mythology—Gong Gong 共工,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personscangjie.html>, last accessed: May 6th, 2017.

⁹⁶⁰ “Zhu Rong 祝融, also called Zhu Ming 朱明 ‘the Red-Bright’, Zhu Song 祝誦 or Zhu He 祝和, is a mythological person, a deity and assistant to Yan Di 炎帝, the Red Emperor. Sometimes he is identified with Yan Di (or Chi Di 赤帝) himself.” “Chinese Mythology—Gong Gong 共工,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personszhurong.html>, last accessed: May 8th, 2017. Huode seems to be another name for Yan Di, or a name which can be used for all fire deities.

⁹⁶¹ “Yang Zhu 楊朱 was a philosopher of the Warring States period (5th cent.-221 BCE) and the founder of a schools of thinkers called the Yangist school (*Yang Zhu xuepai* 楊朱學派).” For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Yang Zhu 楊朱,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personsyangzhu.html>, last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

⁹⁶² The Five Mythological Emperors (*wudi* 五帝) are prehistoric Chinese rulers whose existence cannot be proved by reliable sources. Commonly the Five Emperors are: the White Emperor (Bai Di 白帝), called Shao Hao 少昊 or Zhu Xuan 朱宣; the Bluegreen Emperor (Qing Di 青帝 or Cang Di 蒼帝), called Tai Hao 太昊 or Fu Xi 伏羲; the Yellow Emperor (Huang Di 黃帝); the Red Emperor (Chi Di 赤帝), called Yan Di 炎帝, Zhu Rong 祝融 or Shen Nong 神農; the Black Emperor (Hei Di 黑帝 or Xuan Di 玄帝), called Zhuan Xu 顓頊. “Chinese Mythology—The Three Augusts and Five Emperors (*sanhuang wudi* 三皇五帝),” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/wudi-rulers.html>, last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

⁹⁶³ The Three Augusts have a divine nature. They are dated even before the Five Emperors and their constellation is different according to different sources. Namely Fu Xi 伏羲 and Shen Nong 神農 are two of the Augusts, while the third one differs during the years. “Chinese Mythology—The Three Augusts and Five Emperors (*sanhuang wudi* 三皇五帝),” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/wudi-rulers.html>, last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

one. The matter of the present either is preserved or is abandoned;
thousand are ignorant of one.” That is it!

In *juan* one then, Zhang Sui proceeded in elaborating disputes and doubts in ancient times of Chinese history. However, the problem again is his statements about the falseness of former descriptions of happenings without justifying why his depiction is the right one; no sources are referred to. As in this paragraph the content regards Chinese mythological history, the representation of happenings seems to be more interpretation; hence, also the denial of the named texts as being wrong cannot be proven. The next *juan* deal, e.g., with the age of Confucius and the Chunqiu time (*juan* two) and Mengzi (*juan* three).

古書之偽

《本草》，神農書也，中言豫章、朱崖、趙國、常山、奉高、真定、
臨淄、馮翊出諸藥物，如此郡縣，豈神農時所有耶!⁹⁶⁴

The *Shennong bencao jing*⁹⁶⁵ is the book by Shen Nong; in it it says in Yuzhang, Zhuya, Zhaoguo, Changshan, Jugao, Zhending, Linzi, Pingyi⁹⁶⁶ everywhere pharmaceuticals were brought out, [in all] such prefectures and counties; how could all these [prefectures exist] in the time of Shen Nong?

《山海經》，禹、益書也，中有長沙、零陵、桂陽、諸暨，
如此郡縣，豈禹時所有耶!⁹⁶⁷

⁹⁶⁴ *Qianbai niyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 4, p. 4, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$134i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$134i), last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

⁹⁶⁵ “The *Shen Nong bencaojing* 神農本草經 ‘The Holy Husbandman’s classic on roots and herbs’, shortly called *Shen Nong bencao* 神農本草, *Bencaojing* 本草經, or *Benjing* 本經, is an old text on medical herbs and other *materia medica*. It is first mentioned in the catalogue *Qilu* 七錄 by the Liang period 梁 (502-557) scholar Ruan Xiaoxu 阮孝緒. The book went lost during the Tang period 唐 (618-907), but considerable parts were reconstructed from the Ming period 明 (1368-1644) on. [...] Authorship was attributed to the mythical emperor Shen Nong 神農, who was seen as the inventor of herbal medicine.” “Chinese Literature—*Shen Nong bencaojing* 神農本草經 ‘The Holy Husbandman’s Classic on Roots and Herbs,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/shennongbencaojing.html>, last accessed: May 8th, 2017.

⁹⁶⁶ Yuzhang, Zhuya, Zhaoguo, Changshan, Jugao, Zhending, Linzi, Pingyi are ancient place names, namely of ancient counties.

⁹⁶⁷ *Qianbai niyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 4, p. 4, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$134i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$134i), last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

The *Shanhaijing* is a book by Yu [the Great] and [Bo] Yi. In it there are Changsha, Lingling, Guiyang and Zhuji, such prefectures and counties; how could all these [prefectures exist] in the time of Yu [the Great]?

《三墳》，伏羲、神農、黃帝書也，然謂封拜之辭曰策，策始於漢，而冒伏羲氏有策辭可乎。⁹⁶⁸

The *Sanfen*⁹⁶⁹ is a book by Fu Xi, Shen Nong, Huangdi. So, it is said that the phrase for conferring [a title to someone] is called *ce*; *ce* began [to be used] in Han times, but is it [then] possible that the clan of Fu Xi had the phrase *ce*!?”

《爾雅》，周公書也，然其中有云“張仲孝友”，張仲，宣王之臣也，周公安得載之《爾雅》。⁹⁷⁰

The *Erya*⁹⁷¹ is a book by the Duke of Zhou [d. 1032 BC]. So, in it there is said “Zhang Zhong was full of filial piety and brotherly love;” Zhang Zhong was a subject of King Xuan [of Zhou, 841-782 BC;] how could the Duke of Zhou record this in his *Erya*?

《左傳》，丘明書也，然其中有云“虞不臘矣”，夫臘之為節，秦始有之，丘明安得記之《左傳》。⁹⁷²

The *Zuozhuan* is a book by [Zuo] Qiuming. So, in it there is the saying: “[The state of] Yu had no solar-year end sacrifice.” In fact, concerning the solar-year end sacrifice as a festival, at the beginning of

⁹⁶⁸ *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 4, p. 4, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$134i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$134i), last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

⁹⁶⁹ In the times of Xia dynasty, there were four famous writings, the *Sanfeng* 三墳, the *Wudian* 五典, the *Basuo* 八索 and the *Jiuqiu* 九丘, which were named good history works.

⁹⁷⁰ *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 4, p. 5, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$134i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$134i), last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

⁹⁷¹ “*Erya* 爾雅 ‘Approaching the correct’ is a dictionary-like glossary from the Han period 漢 (206 BCE-220 CE). It is one of the Thirteen (smaller) Confucian Classics. The author is not known. Traditionally authorship is attributed so some of Confucius’ disciples who compiled the *Erya* in order to elucidate the meaning of terms appearing in the classical texts.” “Chinese Literature—*Erya* 爾雅,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/erya.html>, last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

⁹⁷² *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 4, p. 5, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$134i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$134i), last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

Qin dynasty it was installed. How could [Zuo] Qiuming record this in his *Zuozhuan*?

There are a lot other examples which reveal inconsistencies in highly esteemed scriptures of the Chinese past. The *Qianbai nianyan* here shows its character as, in fact, “critically looking at more than thousand years of history writing” by scanning many history works as well as classics from ancient times and disclosing their content-related mistakes. Zhang Sui continued with checking Han time currents in *juan 5* and in this course touched upon the subject of the “weighing” of facts by the *Taishigong*

太史公權衡

《史記刺客傳》序聶政事極其形容，殆自抒其憤激云耳。於《年表》則書“盜殺韓相俠累”，蓋太史公之權衡審矣。《田單傳》敘王蠋事，至以齊存亡系一布衣，孰謂太史之“退節義”乎？又如列孔子於世家，列老子於列傳，而且與申、韓相埒，亦曷嘗“先黃老而後六經”哉！然則後人之譏遷者，悉謎語也。⁹⁷³

The assessment by the Taishigong

In the “Biographies of Assassins in the *Shiji*” the outcome of Nie Zheng’s [d. 397 BC] affairs is described; itself is expressed with an outraged saying and that is all! In the “chronological tables” then there is written “robbing and killing chancellor Xia Lei of Han [d. 397 BC];” why did Taishigong [i.e. Sima Qian] not assess and examine this? The “Biography of Tian Dan” narrates Wang Zhu’s [Zhanguo time] affairs, and reaches until [the affair of] the continuation or destruction of [the state of] Qi being related to one [single] commoner⁹⁷⁴—who says that Taishi[gong] “broke off from fidelity and integrity”? However, for example, he lists Confucius in the *shijia* [section], and lists Laozi in the *liezhuan* [section] and, furthermore, together with the chancellors Shen

⁹⁷³ *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼, *juan 5*, p. 7, [https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$175i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$175i), last accessed: May 29th, 2017.

⁹⁷⁴ Wang Zhu 王蠋 was a commoner from Huase 画色 (in today’s region of Linzi district 临淄区, Yaolang village 高阳乡) in the state of Qi 齊. Being a retired official, he was known for being a virtuous man. So when the army of the state of Yan 燕 invaded the state of Qi, it was commanded to encircle Huase without entering it. The commander of Yan was very fond of Wang Zhu and sent him money and bestowed him with a large area of land. However, Wang Zhu said rather than serving the enemy, he would kill himself; so, he hung himself. All the other scholars were deeply moved, fled to Juzhou and there conspired how to recover the lost country. See *Shiji* 史記, *juan 卷 82*, *Tian Dan liezhuan* 田單列傳.

[Buhai],⁹⁷⁵ Han [Fei]⁹⁷⁶ and alike; also how [can one] experience “first [comes] Huang-Lao and afterwards the Six Classics”?⁹⁷⁷ That being so concerning changing the slandering of later generations, [that is] completely squinting the language.

In this passage, Zhang Sui referred to the *Shiji* in order to show how Sima Qian assessed certain happenings in history. Zhang accused Sima Qian of falsely assessing events, for example, ascribing the reconquering and resurrection of the state of Qi to the loyal behavior and model of one single commoner, namely Wang Zhu. Or he doubted Sima's order of placing Laozi in front of the Confucian classics, hence being more important than the latter one. Some of Zhang Sui's examples are forms of interpretation where he had a different opinion from Sima Qian; some stories disclose Sima Qian as delineating happenings in a specific manner to show the importance of morality, fidelity and integrity. This, certainly, does not comply with the standard for historians of only recording the facts without incorporating emotions.

太史公知己

趙汭曰：史遷《平準書》，譏橫斂之臣也；《貨殖傳》，譏好貨之君也。按漢武帝五十年間，因兵革而財用耗，因財用而刑法酷，迨至末年，平準之置，則海內蕭然，戶口減半，戕民之禍，於是為極。遷備著始終相因之變，特以“平準”名書，而終之曰“烹弘羊，天乃雨”。嗚呼旨哉！汭可謂太史公知己矣。⁹⁷⁸

⁹⁷⁵ Shen Buhai 申不害 (ca. 385-337 BC), was a legalist philosopher who was in the position of the prime minister of Marquis Zhao of Han 韓昭侯 (r. 358-333) in the Warring States period (*Zhanguo* 戰國; fifth century-221 BC). “Although the most important contribution of Shen Buhai to the state philosophy of legalism is the penal law (*fa* 法), his vicinity to Daoist thinking is clearly seen in his interpretation of the ruler's role as that of a kind of non-moving pivot in the state system.” “Chinese Literature—*Shenzi* 申子 ‘Master Shen [Buhai],’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/shenbuhai.html>, last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

⁹⁷⁶ Han Fei 韓非 was a legalist philosopher and politician in the Warring States period (*Zhanguo* 戰國; fifth century-221 BC). He wrote the famous *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 (Master Han Fei) which “is the largest and most important of the treatises of the legalist school (*fajia* 法家) of ancient China.” “Chinese Literature—*Hanfeizi* 韓非子 ‘Master Han Fei,’” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/hanfeizi.html>, last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

⁹⁷⁷ The meaning of this phrase from the *Shiji* is that first come Laozi and Zhuangzi, so to say the Daoist school of philosophy, only after that there come the Six Classics, so to say the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius.

⁹⁷⁸ *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 5, pp. 18f., [https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$176i](https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$176i), last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

Close to the Taishigong

Zhao Pang [1319-1369] said: Concerning the “Pingzhunshu” by the historian [Sima] Qian, it slanders subjects who immoderately levied taxes; The “Huozhi zhuan” slanders rulers who merchandise very well. Referring to the fifty years of Han Wudi [r. 141-87 BC], because of his troops then finances spent were high, because of the finances then the criminal law was cruel. Until the end of the dynasty, Bureau of Standards was established, then throughout the country it was desolate: the number of households and total population was reduced by half, the misfortune of killing people—thereupon it went to the extreme. [Sima] Qian when preparing this book from beginning until the end [made] appropriate changes, especially using “pingzhu” to name the book. But in the end, it says: “When [Sang] Hongyang [ca. 155-80 BC] was cooked, the heaven then rained.” Alas, the meaning! [Zhao] Pang can really say that he is a Taishigong intimately.

It gets clear that the *Qianbai nianyan* is a journey through the history of ancient China in which problems of the depictions of historical events as well as historical events themselves are debated and commented by Zhang Sui. The last paragraph even depicts the third stage of commenting, namely the commenting on the evaluation of history works by former historians. Moreover, later on the author went one step further in portraying the problems of historical events; that is, the work tries to illustrate parallels in the behavior of different dynasties. In *juan* ten, for example, it does so with regard to the “problem” of eunuchs in different eras of Chinese dynastic history:

歷代宦寺之禍

自秦以歷漢、唐、宋，其所以滅亡之故，俱出閹宦。嘗試論之。秦若無沙丘之詔，安得有望夷之刃？漢若無蕃、武之戮，安得有董卓之進？唐若無甘露之變，安得有白馬之禍？宋若無滅遼之舉，安得有二帝之行？故劉、項、曹操、朱溫、阿骨打，此滅秦代漢、篡唐蹙宋之人；而趙高、曹節、王甫、仇士良、田令孜、童貫實啟之。上下數千年，敗亡如出一轍。⁹⁷⁹

The eunuchs’ misfortunes of past dynasties

⁹⁷⁹ *Qianbai nianyan* 千百年眼, *juan* 10, p. 21, [https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529\\$363i](https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:23968529$363i), last accessed: May 30th, 2017.

From Qin to the eras of Han, Tang, Song, concerning the reasons for their distinction, all emerged from the eunuchs. I attempt to discuss this: If the Qin did not have the imperial edict of Shaqiu,⁹⁸⁰ how could there have been the killing of Wangyi?⁹⁸¹ If the Han did not have abundant and martial killing, how could there have been the emergence of Dong Zhuo?⁹⁸² If the Tang did not have the Sweet Dew Incident,⁹⁸³ how could there have been the disaster of Baima?⁹⁸⁴ If the Song did not have initiated the extinguishing of the Liao,⁹⁸⁵ how could there have been the

⁹⁸⁰ Shaqiu 沙丘, in today's region of Hebei province, Guangzong district, is the place where Qin Shi Huangdi 秦始皇帝 (r. 246-210 BC) died. After his death, the powerful eunuch Zhao Gao 趙高 (d. 207 BC) and Counsellor-in-Chief Li Si 李斯 (ca. 280-208 BC) falsified Qin Shi Huangdi's testament (i.e. imperial edict of Shaqiu)—which saw prince Fu Su 扶蘇 (d. 210 BC) as the heir to the throne—in order to see their favorite Huhai 胡亥 ascending the throne. Prince Fu Su had to commit suicide and Huhai became the new emperor. Later on, Zhao Gao also liquidated his confederate Li Si and “demonstrated his boundless power” at any occasion. For more information on Zhao Gao 趙高, see “Persons in Chinese History—Zhao Gao 趙高,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personszhaogao.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁸¹ Wangyi 望夷 is the place of the palace of the second emperor of Qin (Er Shi Huangdi 二世皇帝; r. 208-207 BC) dynasty where Zhao Gao—now prime minister and watching the Qin army being defeated—plotted against the emperor, eliminated him and striving to declare himself emperor of Qin.

⁹⁸² Dong Zhuo 董卓 (d. 192) was a minister at the end of Eastern or Later Han period (*Houhan* 後漢; 25-220 AD). As a brutal militarist, he was able to defeat several rebellions. After the death of Emperor Ling (Han Lingdi 漢靈帝; r. 167-188 AD), he became a main character in the plot against the eunuchs, led his powerful troops to the capital and installed the Prince of Chenliu 陳留, Liu Xie 劉協, as the new emperor (Emperor Xian 獻; r. 189-220 AD). Gaining increasing power, he built up his own empire and bestowed himself with the highest official title, the *taishi* 太師 (Grand preceptor). Facing opposition to his abuse of power, he even burned down the capital Luoyang and transferred the capital back to Chang'an. For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Dong Zhuo 董卓,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsdongzhuo.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

⁹⁸³ In mid Tang, the influential reformist group around Li Xun 李訓 (i.e. Li Zhongyan 李仲言; d. 835) and Zheng Zhu 鄭注 (d. 835) emerged which with the secret consent of Emperor Wenzong (r. 827-840) strived to remove the eunuchs' power at court. The conspiracy was uncovered by the eunuchs which led to the bloody *Sweet Dew Incident* (*Ganlu zhi bian* 甘露之變) on December 14th, 835 “in which not only the constituents of the Li-Cheng group and their families but also hundreds of high-ranking officials and government clerks were massacred.” Chen Jo-Shui (2006), *Liu Tsung-yüan and Intellectual Change in T'ang China, 773-819*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature and Institutions), pp. 78f.

⁹⁸⁴ The disaster of Baima 白馬 was an incident at the end of Tang dynasty, where Zhu Wen 朱溫 (or Zhu Quanzhong 朱全忠; 852-912), founder of Later Liang dynasty (*Hou Liang* 後梁; 907-923) of the Five Dynasties (*Wudai* 五代; 907-960), murdered the highest Tang officials and eunuchs.

⁹⁸⁵ “The court of the Song empire 宋 (960-1279) hoped to be able to use the military prowess of the ‘wild’ Jurchens to conquer northern China that was occupied by the Liao empire 遼 (907-1125), a foundation of the proto-Mongolian federation of the Khitans. The Jin armies conquered the Liao empire but continued their campaign and in 1126 occupied the Song capital Kaifeng 開封 (modern Kaifeng, Henan). The Song court fled to the far southwest and established the Southern Song empire in Lin'an 臨安 (modern Hangzhou 杭州, Zhejiang).” “Chinese History—Jin Dynasty 金 (1115-1234),” at

situation of two emperors? Therefore, concerning Liu [Bang],⁹⁸⁶ Xiang [Yu],⁹⁸⁷ Cao Cao,⁹⁸⁸ Zhu Wen, [Wanyan] Aguda,⁹⁸⁹ they are people who extinguished the Qin and Han dynasties, usurped the Tang dynasty and shranked the Song dynasty. But Zhao Gao,⁹⁹⁰ Cao Jie, Wang Fu,⁹⁹¹ Chou/Qiu Shiliang,⁹⁹² Tian Lingzi⁹⁹³ and Tong Guan⁹⁹⁴ really started all this. About some thousand years, [dynasties] were defeated and overthrown exactly the same way.

ChinaKnowledge.de, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/jinn.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁸⁶ Liu Bang 劉邦, *zi* 字: Ji 季, founded the Former Han dynasty (*Qianhan* 前漢, 206 BC-8 AD) and became Han Gaozu 漢高祖 (r. 206-195 BC). He led a group of rebels against the still reigning Qin dynasty and defeated it together with other warlords. See “Persons in Chinese History—Liu Bang 劉邦,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personshangaozu.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁸⁷ Xiang Yu 項羽 (233-202 BC), i.e. Xiang Ji 項籍, “was one of the rebels causing the downfall of the Qin dynasty 秦 (221-206 BC). He became the most powerful warlord but was finally defeated by his competitor Liu Bang 劉邦, the eventual founder of the Han dynasty 漢 (206 BCE-220 CE).” See “Persons in Chinese History—Xiang Yu 項羽,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsxiangyu.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁸⁸ “Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220), posthumous imperial title ‘Emperor’ Wei Wudi 魏武帝, was one of the powerful warlords at the end of the Later Han dynasty 後漢 (25-220). Although Cao Cao’s intention was to protect the under-age emperor of the Han dynasty, his son Cao Pi 曹丕 ended the Han dynasty by his proclamation of the Wei dynasty in 220 CE that was to be one of the so-called Three Kingdoms 三國 (220-280). Cao Cao was not the founder, but the ancestor of the Wei 魏 or Cao-Wei dynasty 曹魏 (220-265). Cao Cao is known as a formidable politician and military leader.” See “Persons in Chinese History—Wei Wudi 魏武帝 Cao Cao 曹操,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsxiangyu.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁸⁹ Wanyan Aguda 完顏阿骨打 (Emperor Taizu of the Jin 金太祖, r. 1115-1122), khan of the people of the Jurchens was the founder of the Jin 金 dynasty (1115-1234). See “Chinese History—Jin Dynasty 金 (1115-1234),” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/jinn.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁹⁰ Zhao Gao was the eunuch responsible for the end of Qin dynasty; see FNs above 980 and 981. See “Persons in Chinese History—Zhao Gao 趙高,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, online at <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/personszhaogao.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁹¹ “Cao Jie 曹節 (died 182 CE), courtesy name Hanfeng 漢豐, was a powerful chief eunuch of the Later Han period 後漢 (25-220 CE).” He plotted together with Wang Fu 王甫 against many persons and emperors during Later Han. See “Persons in Chinese History—Cao Jie 曹節,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personscaojie.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

⁹⁹² Qiu Shiliang was a powerful eunuch in Tang dynasty who benefitted from the *Sweet Dew Incident*, see FN 983 above.

⁹⁹³ Tian Lingzi was an eunuch in Tang dynasty who was powerful during the reign of Emperor Xizong 僖宗 (r. 873-888).

⁹⁹⁴ At the beginning of the twelfth century, “the state finances were administered by [the] eunuch [...] Tong Guan 童貫 who was concurrently in charge of the highest military commands.” See “Chinese History—Song Period Event History,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/song-event.html>, last accessed: May 5th, 2017.

In summary, Zhang Sui as an extraordinary historian of Ming dynasty passed criticism on historical happenings as well as on how the historical happenings were displayed. Hereby, he aimed at revealing inconsistencies, implausible passages and false depictions. Therewith he joined the number of influencing historians and affiliated with the public discourse of what is right and wrong in history and history writing.

11.9 Zhu Minggao—Correcting History Works

At the end of Ming dynasty, the scholar Zhu Minggao 朱明鎬 (1607-1652), *zi* 字: Zhaoqi 昭芑, from Taicang 太倉 in Jiangsu wrote his extraordinary *Shijiu* 史糾,⁹⁹⁵ a further very good example for the influence Liu Zhiji and his *Shitong* had on the historians of Ming dynasty.⁹⁹⁶ In addition, it shows a new and modern critical approach towards history writing which reflects the tremendous repercussions the ongoing intellectual developments had, especially at the end of the Ming dynasty. The *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 described this piece of work as follows:

是編考訂諸史書法之謬，及其事迹之牴牾。上起《三國志》，下迄《元史》，每史各為一編。⁹⁹⁷

This piece of work corrects and checks the errors of the rules of various history books, as well as the contradictions of important events of the past. It begins with the *Sanguozhi* and ends with the *Yuanshi*; each history having its own piece of work.

Besides the criticism against the intensive historical discussion in Ming dynasty, the *Siku quanshu*, though, regarded the *Shijiu* 史糾 as being valuable and worth being incorporated; next to Shao Bao's *Xueshi* (see chap. 11.1) it was the only work from Ming dynasty in the *shiping* section of the *Siku quanshu*. In the *Shijiu*—written in six *juan*—Zhu's aim was the reconnoitering and performing of historical criticism while following Pei Songzhi's 裴松之 *Sanguozhi zhu* 三國志注,⁹⁹⁸ Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* 史通,

⁹⁹⁵ For the abstract of the *Shijiu* in the *Siku quanshu*, see Appendix V.5; for the table of contents, see Appendix V.6.

⁹⁹⁶ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

⁹⁹⁷ *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部 15, *shiping lei* 史評類, *Shijiu* 史糾, p. 1.

⁹⁹⁸ Pei Songzhi 裴松之 (372-451), from Liu-Song 劉宋 dynasty (420-479) in the south was the first one to compose a commentary to the classic *The Record of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguozhi zhu* 三國

Wu Zhen's 吳縝 *Xintangshu jiumiu* 新唐書糾謬⁹⁹⁹ and Sima Guang's 司馬光 *Tongjian kaoyi* 通鑑考異.¹⁰⁰⁰ Especially, Zhu Minggao apparently followed the style of the Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* which also provided the basis for a discussion about problems concerning historiography. The *Shijiu* shows the author's comprehensive knowledge of history and offers advices for historical writing accomplished by Ming scholars: Among other things, topics reach from the education of historians, the question about traditional or simplified history writing, the style of writing to the compilation of history works by the Bureau of History or the generations of commentaries. Everything is analyzed carefully and put into an overall picture.¹⁰⁰¹ Zhu Minggao examined different classical Chinese works and picked out single parts to comment on. He investigated and commented on the following works, whereas the comments follow the structure of the Standard Histories and are divided into *benji* 本紀, *zhi* 志 and *liezhuan* 列傳 sections. Among other, he researched the following pieces of literature: *Sanguozhi* 三國志, *Songshu* 宋書, *Nanqishu* 南齊書, *Liangshu* 梁書, *Chenshu* 陳書, *Beiweishu* 北魏書, *Beiqishu* 北齊書, *Beizhoushu* 北周書, *Suishu* 隋書, *Xinjiu Wudaishi* 新舊五代史, *Nanbeiershi* 南、北二史, *Songshi* 宋史, *Liaoshi* 遼史 and *Jinshi* 金史. First the original passage is cited, then the comments are introduced by *an* 按 (annotation). Sometimes, Zhu spared the original passages completely and only told his comment while naming the specific work which he referred to. In the first *juan*, for example, Zhu Minggao dealt with the *Sanguozhi* and followed the structure of the original text by first commenting on a passage from the *Weizhi* 魏志, the Book of Wei. The original passage reads:

志注). This commentary is regarded as being very valuable, as it provides much additional and explanatory information to the original text. Hence, it was inherited in later editions of the *Sanguozhi*. For additional information, see “*Sanguozhi* 三國志,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/sanguozhi.html>, last accessed: March 31st, 2016.

⁹⁹⁹ Wu Zhen 吳縝 (fl. 1064-1094) was a Song official who served in Sichuan. His work, the *Xintangshu jiumiu* 新唐書糾謬, is supposed to eliminate mistakes and shortcomings in the *Xintangshu* (New History of Tang).

¹⁰⁰⁰ Sima Guang's 司馬光 *Tongjian kaoyi* 通鑑考異 is the thirty *juan* comprising text-critical apparatus to his *Zizhi tongjian*.

¹⁰⁰¹ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

《志》云建安五年春三月“董承等謀泄，皆伏誅。”¹⁰⁰²

The [Wei]zhi says: [In the Jian'an reign [i.e. 196-219]] in the fifth year in spring in the third month [first month] “Dong Cheng and others plotted and it was divulged, they all admitted it and were executed.”

Zhu Minggao's comments the following:

按：承之謀，深惡吉利之無君也；於吉利為逆，於獻帝為正。今書“伏誅”，伏獻帝之誅乎？伏吉利之誅乎？凡志近事多微詞，以遠禍也；陳壽立太康之世以指建安，直筆何害？尚畏南史之及身哉！

¹⁰⁰³

Comment: [Dong] Cheng's plot was profoundly evil and auspiciously [we] would have been without a monarch. By [gaining] a profit he became a traitor; by revealing it to the monarch he would have become upright. If this book [speaks of] “admitting it and being executed,” [does this mean] by admitting and revealing it to the emperor, they were executed [anyway]? And by admitting it, was it [then] an auspicious execution? Every record approaching this affair has much veiled criticism, because of [its] profound disaster. Chen Shou set [this book] up in the time of Taikang [280-289] using it to point at the Jian'an [reign period], so what would have been the harm to write [the events] down accurately? The valued and respected *Nanshi* received it firsthand!

The interesting part in this passage is that Zhu accused Chen Shou 陳壽, the author of the *Sanguozhi* 三國志, of not recording accurately—and, furthermore, without any need, as the recorded happenings date back one hundred years; therefore, the author was not obliged by imperial control or any other direct influence to falsify the report about these happenings. Maybe the falsification happened due to personal feelings or beliefs, antipathies or sympathies. However, this passage clearly shows Zhu Minggao's critical attitude towards history writing and it is a very suitable example for a concrete critique towards the falsely recording of historical events. The next passage quoted is an

¹⁰⁰² *Shijiu* 史糾 (Entanglements in History), by Zhu Minggao 朱明稿, in Wang Yunwu 王雲五 (ed.), *Siku quanshu xunben sanji* 四庫全書珍本三集 11, *shibu* 史部 15, *shiping lei* 史評類, Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan (*Siku quanshu* 四庫全書), 1969, vol. 1, *juan* 1, *Sanguozhi* 三國志, *Weizhi* 魏志, p. 1a.

¹⁰⁰³ *Shijiu* 史糾, vol. 1, *juan* 1, *Sanguozhi* 三國志, *Weizhi* 魏志, pp. 1a, b.

example for a commentary without repeating the original reference text. The reference text descends from the *Sanguozhi*, as well, and stems from the biography section (*liezhuan* 列傳), namely from the biographies of Dong Zhuo 董卓 (d. 192) and Zang Hong 臧洪 (160-195).

董卓傳臧洪傳

董卓肆毒初，平子源授命本朝皆當入漢紀，不必贅魏志也。史通限斷之說誠，不可易，然則袁紹、袁術、呂布諸傳可無議歟！官渡之戰、徐州之擒魏功爛焉！比事、屬辭勢必連及要以大義折衷。魏志斷自夏侯元讓強，以餘人綴入，不過代後漢載筆耳。至於卓傳術傳之評、松之譏其詞複恨，其未盡此直、瑣瑣、何足云也。¹⁰⁰⁴

Biography of Dong Zhuo¹⁰⁰⁵ and the biography of Zang Hong¹⁰⁰⁶

At the beginning of Dong Zhuo's recklessly poisoning,¹⁰⁰⁷ peacefully Ziyuan [i.e. Zang Hong] gave orders that the present dynasty all together should be included in the [*Hou*] *Hanji*,¹⁰⁰⁸ so they did not need to be repeated in the *Weizhi*.¹⁰⁰⁹ If the general *duanxian*¹⁰¹⁰ -style in

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Shijiu* 史糾, vol. 1, *juan* 1, *Sanguozhi* 三國志, *Weizhi* 魏志, pp. 6a, b.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Dong Zhuo 董卓 (d. 192) was a minister at the end of Eastern Han period (*Houhan* 後漢; 25-220 AD). As a brutal militarist, he was able to defeat several rebellions. After the death of Emperor Ling (Han Lingdi 漢靈帝; r. 167-188), he became a main character in the plot against the eunuchs, led his powerful troops to the capital and installed Prince of Chenliu 陳留, Liu Xie 劉協, as the new emperor (Emperor Xian 獻; r. 189-220). Gaining evermore power, he built up his own empire and bestowed himself with the highest official title, the *taishi* 太師 (Grand preceptor). Facing opposition to his abuse of power, he even burned down Luoyang and transferred the capital back to Chang'an. For more information, see "Persons in Chinese History—Dong Zhuo 董卓," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsdongzhuo.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Zang Hong 臧洪 (160-195) was a general of Eastern Han period and an opponent of Dong Zhuo. He influenced many regional governors to incite a rebellion against Dong with him as their leader. After falling out with the potentate and warlord Yuan Shao 袁紹 (d. 202), Zang Hong died during fights in a city he tried to defend against Yuan Shao. For further information, see "Persons in Chinese History—Zang Hong 臧洪," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personszanghong.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Dong Zhuo poisoned and ordered to poison many of his opponents, the most prominent of them being the dethroned Emperor Shao (Shaodi 少帝, r. 188-189), the Prince of Hongnong (Hongnong wang 弘農王; 176-190), Empress Dowager He (He Huanghou 何皇后; d. 189) and her mother Lady Xian.

¹⁰⁰⁸ The *Houhanji* 後漢紀 or the *Annals of the Later Han* were written Yuan Hong 袁宏 (328-376) from Jin dynasty (265-420) after the end of the dynasty.

¹⁰⁰⁹ The *Weizhi* is the very part of the *Sanguozhi* which Zhu comments on here.

¹⁰¹⁰ *Xianduan* 限斷 is equivalent to *duanxian* 斷限 which points at stylistic rules of a history work, namely delimiting a specific time and a specific era which the book focusses on, hence, determining

historiographies is sincere, and cannot be changed, then the biographies of Yuan Shao,¹⁰¹¹ Yuan Shu¹⁰¹² and Lü Bu¹⁰¹³ all may be [compiled] without [critical] discussion! At the battle of Guandu¹⁰¹⁴ and the capture of Xuzhou the achievements of the Wei¹⁰¹⁵ were brilliant! Comparing the historical facts and the belonging diction, they will certainly be connected and by using the cardinal principles of righteousness they will be compromised. The record of the Wei itself certainly let Xiahou Yuan¹⁰¹⁶ [appear] powerful and together with the rest of the people included him. However, this only represents the writings of the Later Han! As for [Dong] Zhuo's biography, its technique is criticized and loosely ridicule, its statements are repeatedly disliked: They are not in the slightest way honest, they are contemptible and unworthy to tell.

specific beginning and end years of historical events to be recorded. This expression is mentioned in Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* in the chapter *liujia* 六家, p. 16: “其後元魏濟陰王暉業，又著《科錄》二百七十卷，其斷限亦起自上古，而終於宋年。” (“Par la suite, sous les Wei du Nord, Yuan Hui, prince de Jiye, fit composer un *Regeste thématique* en deux cent-soixante-dix livres. Cet ouvrage allait de la haute Antiquité à la dynastie des Song.” Chaussende (2014), p. 17).

¹⁰¹¹ Yuan Shao 袁紹 (d. 202) was a warlord at the end of the Later Han dynasty. He together with He Jin 何進 initiated the planned overthrow of the powerful eunuch clique at the court. When Dong Zhuo rose to power, he fled and (later) together with Zang Hong and others formed an alliance which planned to dethrone Dong Zhuo. After the success and Dong Zhuo's assassination, the alliance separated and Yuan conquered more and more provinces. Controlling most of the northern territory, he dared to challenge the new strong man Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220). For more information on Yuan Shao, see “Persons in Chinese History—Yuan Shao 袁紹, Yuan Tan 袁譚, Yuan Shang 袁尚,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsyuanshao.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰¹² Yuan Shu 袁術 (d. 199) was the younger cousin of Yuan Shao (see FN above) and a warlord of the Later Han dynasty who was defeated by Lü Bo (see FN below) and Cao Cao. For more information on Yuan Shu, see “Persons in Chinese History—Yuan Shu 袁術,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personsyuanshu.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰¹³ Lü Bu 呂布 (d. 198) was a warlord of the Later Han dynasty and a supporter of Dong Zhuo (see FN above). After Dong Zhuo burned down the capital Luoyang, Lü Bo began to mistrust him and planned to assassinate him, which was successful.

¹⁰¹⁴ The battle of Guandu in Henan in the year 200 took place between the warlord Yuan Shao (see FN above) and Cao Cao's 曹操. The latter one overwhelmingly won the battle. For more information on Cao Cao, see “Persons in Chinese History—Wei Wudi 魏武帝 Cao Cao 曹操,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Division/personscaocao.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰¹⁵ The Wei dynasty 魏 (220-265) or Cao-Wei 曹魏 was founded by Cao Cao's 曹操 son Cao Pi 曹丕 (Emperor Wen 魏文帝, r. 220-226); Cao Cao received the posthumous title Wei Wudi 魏武帝 (acting 215-220). For more information, see “Chinese History—Cao-Wei Dynasty 曹魏 (220-265),” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Division/caowei.html>, last accessed: February 17th, 2017.

¹⁰¹⁶ Xiahou Yuan (d. 219) was a high-ranking military general in the service of Cao Cao during the Eastern or Later Han period. His mother descended from the Cao clan.

Zhu Minggao altogether criticized specific biographies in the Book of Wei of the *Sanguozhi*. The first critique concerns the arrangement and the question of which people should be included in which work. As the quarrel about the throne between Dong Zhuo, Zang Hong, Cao Cao, Lü Bu and Yuan Shu concerns the time of the Eastern Han—during all the battles between the warlords there was still a Han emperor—the biographies of these people should be included in the *Record of the Later Han* (*Houhanshu* 後漢書). In consequence, they need not be repeated in the *Record of Wei* (*Weizhi* 魏志), which deals with the succeeding Wei or Cao Wei dynasty (220-265) founded by Cao Cao's 曹操 (155-220) son Cao Pi 曹丕 in 220. In the first place it is a repetition, in the second place it is an assignment of people to a wrong period of time. These are two misconducts which are not supposed to happen in historiography, especially when applying the *duanxian* 斷限-style (see p. 334, FN 1010) of strict delimiting the time period recorded. On that account, he ascribed compiling “without critical discussion” to the authors. Not only the wrong attribution of people is criticized by Zhu Minggao, but also the technique of writing and depiction of these people. Especially Dong Zhuo's biography is named and shamed because “its statements [...] are not in the slightest way honest, they are contemptible and unworthy to tell.” It becomes evident that Zhu Minggao offered criticism in a very harsh way which again represents an open critique against official history writings. With this attitude and courageous attempt to rectify wrongdoings of former and highly appreciated historiographies, he symbolizes a perfect example of the critical mind which arose at the end of Ming dynasty. In the fourth *juan* of his *Shijiu* where he offered criticism on parts of *liezhuan* section in the *Xintangshu* 新唐書, Zhu Minggao also—for the only time—referred to Liu Zhiji directly:

諸王傳

[...] 據傳攻傳其失自見，即劉昫舊文所書不異；身任筆削者獨不可一一是正之而乃沿襲其故耶！吾恐吳兢劉知幾所修之史正復不然。

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Biographies of all kings

¹⁰¹⁷ *Shijiu* 史糾, vol. 3, *juan* 4, *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *Zhuwang zhuan* 諸王傳, p. 13a.

The mistakes of the biography of [Zhu 朱] Ju and the biography of Gong can be seen by oneself; namely the book [i.e. the *Old Book of Tang*, *Jiutangshu* 舊唐書] was written by Liu Xu¹⁰¹⁸ in the old language, but is not different [to this *New Book of Tang*]. The person whose duty it is to correct cannot only one by one correct [single mistakes], and then follow the old practice! I fear that the histories which were written by Wu Jing¹⁰¹⁹ and Liu Zhiji just again are not so.

Zhu Minggao, in this passage identified a serious mistake made by historiographers who were supposed to rectify former history works. As a matter of fact, they only concentrated on specific single mistakes without taking into account changing the general depiction of events; instead they “follow[ed] the old practice” of writing history. Moreover, he accused Liu Zhiji and his contemporary Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749) of acting the same way. This means even if Zhu acknowledged Liu Zhiji’s achievements in the theory of history writing, he at the same time blamed Liu of not applying this new correct way of writing history in his own history works, for example in the *Ruizong shilu* 睿宗實錄 (The Veritable Records of Emperor Ruizong (r. 684 and 710-712)), which he compiled together with Wu Jing. This was a problem with many revised histories; they were only corrected in a specific manner, i.e. in regard to particular happenings or portraying of persons without tackling the basic problem of history writing. Zhu recognized this deficiency and pleaded for a rethinking of how to write history in general; however, the rules for what is right and wrong in history writing are not elucidated in this place.

In the last *juan* the author added a comparison between different history books (*Shushi yitong* 書史異同) and a comparison between the New and the Old History of Tang (*Xin-Jiu Tangshu yitong* 新舊唐書異同). In the first part, he, for example, compared Shen Yue’s 沈約 *Songshu* 宋書 and Li Yanshou’s 李延壽 *Nanshi* 南史.

陶潛傳 (書史同異)

¹⁰¹⁸ Liu Xu 劉昫 (888-947) *zi* 字: Yaoyuan 耀遠 was the author of the *Jiutangshu* 舊唐書 (Old Book of Tang).

¹⁰¹⁹ Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749) worked at the Bureau of History, together with Liu Zhiji. See p. 46, FN 119.

陶潛，字淵明；或雲淵明，字元亮【沈約宋書】 或雲字深明，名元亮【李延壽南史】

南史淵概作深避高祖諱也。李氏以虎為武、以丙為景、以淵為深、以世為代、以民為人 [...] 李氏修史不得不沿襲世尚；愚意後人校史者悉宜改正舊史，即兩漢書亦然否？則莊光終為嚴光、趙談終為趙同矣。

The biography of Tao Qian (Similarities and differences between history books)

Tao Qian, *zi*: Yuanming or is called: Yuanming, *zi*: Yuanliang 【Shen Yue's *Songshu*】 [...]. or is called by his *zi*: Shenming, but named: Yuanliang 【Li Yanshou's *Nanshi*】

In the *Nanshi* “Yuan” categorically is made to “Shen” avoiding the name of deceased Emperor Gaozu [i.e. Li Yuan 李淵]. Li [Yanshou] took “hu” as “wu,” “bing” as “jing,” “yuan” as “shen,” “shi” as “dai” and “min” as “ren” [...] Li [Yanshou] when writing history had to follow the old practice the generation esteemed. According to my humble opinion, later generations who proofread history works are familiar with the suitable amending of old history works; then is it correct concerning the Former and Later Han dynasties? Then Zhuang Guang in the end became Yan Guang and Zhao Tan in the end became Zhao Tong.

Here, Zhu explained the naming of Tao Yuanming in different books due to avoiding of certain characters by some authors. Li Yanshou in his *Nanshi* categorically refrained from using any characters which appear in names of deceased emperors. After this explanation, Zhu then continued listing other authors who did the same, videlicet avoiding the names of deceased emperors. Also the parallels between Wei Zheng's 魏征 *Suishu* 隋書 and Li Yanshou's 李延壽 *Beishi* 北史 are analyzed and commented.

護兒率樓船至滄海云云至遂班師【魏徵隋書】 [...] 率樓船云云至乃旋軍【北史】

Lai Hu'er¹⁰²⁰ commanded large turreted boats reaching the blue sea and so on, until thereupon he returned from victory 【Wei Zheng's *Suishu*】 [...] [Lai Hu'er] commanded large turreted boats and so on, until then he let his troops return 【*Beishi*】

Zhu Minggao commented:

此隋書所紀為實護兒失利，屯師海浦，高建邀戰未嘗喪元，而北史改竄隋書詞，多溢美正以來瑗、來濟同時貴仕耳！時語曰：“世南男作匠，護兒兒作相”厥子柄國乃考自應得佳傳矣。房彥謙瑣瑣卑職因房喬，而立傳演至五六百言魏季景魏長賢魏書本不立傳因魏文貞，而收入北史此史官一時氣習也。

This which is recorded in the *Suishu* is true that after [Lai] Hu'er suffered a defeat, he concentrated the troops at the seashore. [Thereupon,] Gao Jian [i.e. Gao Zhihui 高智慧, d. 590] intercepted and attacked him in a battle not yet having been killed. Nevertheless, the *Beishi* falsified the words of the *Suishu*; it praises excessively and straightly Lai [i.e. Han 韓] Yuan¹⁰²¹ and Lai Ji¹⁰²² at the same time as highly valued officials! At that time, the saying was: “[Yu] Shinan's¹⁰²³ son was an artisan, [Lai] Hu'er's son was a prime minister.”¹⁰²⁴ His son

¹⁰²⁰ Lai Hu'er 來護兒 (?-618), *zi* 字: Chongshan 崇善, from Jiangdu 江都 (Yangzhou, in today's region of Jiangsu) was commander of the naval forces of Sui 隋 dynasty that invaded the Korean kingdom Koguryō from the sea. Victor Cunrui Xiong (2009), *Historical Dictionary of Medieval China*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 329.

¹⁰²¹ Han Yuan (606-659), *zi* 字: Boyu 伯玉, from Sanyuan 三原 in today's region of Shaanxi, was Tang chief minister under Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r. 649-683). “He opposed the deposing of Empress Wang and defended her supporter Chu Suilang 褚遂良” He then was “demoted to a provincial post.” Victor C. Xiong (2009), p. 233.

¹⁰²² Lai Ji 來濟 (610-662) was Lai Hu'er's 來護兒 and was promoted Tang chief minister in 652 and president of the Secretariat in 655. He then was “demoted to a provincial post after being maligned by Xu Jingzong [...]” Victor C. Xiong (2009), p. 329.

¹⁰²³ Yu Shinan 虞世南 (558-638) from Yuezhou 越州 Yuyao 余姚 in today's region of Zhejiang, served under Chen and Sui dynasties before he became Director of the Palace Library under the Tang. Liu Lisheng 劉利生 (2015), *Yingxiang shijia de zhongguo yuansu—shufa* 影響世界的中國元素—書法, Yuan Huawen chuang tushu 元華文創圖書.

¹⁰²⁴ The original passage derives from the *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 105, from Lai Ji's biography (*Lai Ji zhuan* 來濟傳). “Xu Jingzong said: ‘Lai Hu'er's son was minister, Yu Shinan's son was an artisan, how can there be seeds of civil or military [occupations in the genes]?’” (許敬宗曰: “護兒兒作相, 世南男作匠, 文武豈有種 邪?). *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 105, *liezhuan* 30, *Lai Ji zhuan* 來濟傳, vol. 13, p. 4033.

held state power and then inspected his own merited and beautiful biography. Fang Yanqian¹⁰²⁵ as a weak minor official relied on [his son] Fang Qiao [Fang 房玄齡],¹⁰²⁶ but was glorified by the writing of his biography evolving up to 500 to 600 words. Wei Jijing and Wei Changxian¹⁰²⁷ in the *Weishu* originally were not decorated with a biography but relied on Wei Wenzhen's [i.e. Wei Zheng's 魏徵] [biography]. But including them in the *Beishi*, its historiographer [i.e. author] [followed] the common practice at that time.

Zhu Minggao in this passage took a firm stand in favor for the depiction of happenings in the *Suishu* and identified the description in the *Beishi* as being falsified. Through this comparison and illustration of parallels and correlations, Zhu Minggao accomplished an examination and revision and corrected mistakes or left doubtful arguments as they were. Here, the author referred to the angled illustration of persons whose relatives were high-valued officials or the like; so to say, they profited from their relatives' glory and, hence, were glorified themselves. This is again a case of manipulated representation of persons or happenings due to partial personal feelings or dependencies.

Besides these very detailed approaches, Zhu also provided general arguments for gains and losses of whole works. For example, he agreed with the content of Chen Shou's 陳壽 *Sanguozhi* 三國志, but criticized the four principles of this work, namely “not recording the study of his era” (*buzhi lixue* 不志歷學), “not transmitting the (ancestral) line of the women” (*buzhuan lienü* 不傳列女), “not collecting persons of high character” (*busou gaoshi* 不搜高士), “in the genealogy state record not extensively collecting [material]” (*jiacheng guoshi weiji guangcai* 家乘國志未及廣採). Therefore, it becomes apparent that his approach shows a reflective and distinctive character; because Zhu not only detected mistakes but also illustrated the gains and losses of the particular history work. According to the modern scholar Yang Yanqiu 楊艷秋, the

¹⁰²⁵ Fang Yanqian 房彥謙 (547-615), *zi* 字: Xiaozhong 孝冲, from Qinghe 清河 was an official who served under different dynasties. For more information, see Fang Yanqian's biography in the *Suishu* 隨書, *juan* 66, *liezhuan* 31.

¹⁰²⁶ Fang Qiao 房喬 (579-648), *zi* 字: Xuanling 玄齡, was Fang Yanqian's son. He became a high official, advisor to Emperor Taizong of Tang and compiled the *Jinshu* 晉書 (History of Jin Dynasty).

¹⁰²⁷ For the biographies of these two persons, see *Beishi* 北史, *juan* 56, *liezhuan* 44.

Shiji can be seen as establishing a basis for the *kaozheng* 考證-method (see chap. 13), the comparison of texts and the discovering of which edition is the “right” one.¹⁰²⁸

¹⁰²⁸ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 54.

12. The Theoretical Part: Topics of the Ming Time *Shitong*-Renaissance

The chapter on the critical part of Ming time historiography showed many direct or indirect references to, citations of and content-related interferences with Liu Zhiji's ideas expressed in his *Shitong*. For example, as disclosed before, the debate about the good historian (*liangshi* 良史) always played a significant role in Chinese history. Liu Zhiji formulated his three characteristics for a good historian, namely *cai* 才 or *shicai* 史才 which—according to Liang Qichao¹⁰²⁹—relates to the ability of knowing the technique of history writing, *xue* 學 or *shixue* 史學¹⁰³⁰ which means the study or learning of history, and *shi* 識 or *shishi* 史識 which is explained by Liang Qichao as the power of observation or perception of a historian, the most difficult part as it is not to be achieved through plain effort or studying but requires natural talent. In Qing dynasty, Zhang Xuecheng¹⁰³¹ added the quality *de* 德 (“moral feeling”) to this list and thereby was heavily influenced by the Ming time development of the “discourse of the general norm for what is right and what is wrong” (*gonglun* 公論); in this discussion history

¹⁰²⁹ Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929)—according to Tang Xiaobing—was “one of the few modern Chinese thinkers and cultural critics whose appreciation of the question of modernity was based on first-hand experience of the world space in which China had to function as a nation-state [...] Liang was not only a profoundly paradigmatic modern Chinese intellectual but also an imaginative thinker of worldwide significance.” For more information on the person Liang Qichao and his historical thinking, see Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian (1983), *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 (A Chronological Biography of Liang Qichao), Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe; and Tang Xiaobing (1996), *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

¹⁰³⁰ The term also refers to historiography or historical studies in general. According Han Yu-shan, in Jin dynasty the first office responsible for historical studies was established but only in times of Emperor Muzong 穆宗 (821-824) of Tang dynasty the office became relevant because then the historical discipline turned into a “universal requirement in all civil service examinations.” Not before the philosopher Lu Wenchao 盧文昭 (1717-1795) it was included in general classification of history. Han (1955), p. 43.

¹⁰³¹ Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 (1738-1801) was a scholar, especially a historian, from mid Qing dynasty. “For Zhang Xuecheng, the Confucian Classics had a deep relationship with historiography, and only the study of both types of writings would help understanding man, society and the world. The Six Classics, he said, were nothing else than histories and had to be viewed as such, and not as divine books.” “Persons in Chinese History—Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/personszhangxuecheng.html>, last accessed: June 19th, 2017.

became a public issue.¹⁰³² This discussion was also the culmination point of what Liu Zhiji had begun with his condemnation of the historiography of the Bureau of History in his life time. Liu had taken a pioneering role in criticizing official historiography, and Ming time scholars followed his lead. One of the catalyst which brought Liu Zhiji's thoughts in the focus of a large group of Ming time historians were the veritable records (*shilu* 實錄) of the Jianwen 建文 (r. 1398-1402) and Jingtai 景泰 (1449-1457) reigns, which were being criticized of being compiled by taking into account only the legitimation of the reigning emperor.¹⁰³³ In consequence to these unreliable records, scholars did not compile a comprehensive work about methods of history writing themselves, but instead harked back to the *Shitong*. It is proved by the enormous amount of commentaries and the dissemination of the work in this time that the *Shitong* had a significant influence on Ming historiography and the social life of this time.

The considerations about the *Shitong* were manifold: Some scholars included abstracts about Liu Zhiji's work in their books, some referred to Liu Zhiji in the discussion concerning specific problems in history writing. A comprehensive study on the evaluation and reception of Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* in Ming dynasty is to be found in Wang Jiachuan's 王嘉川 *Qingqian Shitong xue yanjiu* 清前《史通》学研究 (The History of Research on the *Shitong* before Qing Dynasty); for this reason, the direct references and evaluation of the *Shitong* will only be touched upon in this chapter very briefly for the sake of completeness and for the sake of rounding out the topic of the deeper meaning of the Tang time *Shitong*-renaissance eight-hundred years later in Ming dynasty.

Additionally to the already discussed commentaries, for example, He Qiaoxin 何喬新 (1427-1502; *zi* 字: Tingxiu 廷秀, from Guangchang 廣昌 in Jiangxi, *jinshi* degree in 1454)¹⁰³⁴ mentioned the *Shitong* in his *He wensu gongwen ji* 何文肅公文集 (Collected Document of He Wensu) under the category of “various histories” (*zhu shi* 諸史) and offered a short description of the content.

¹⁰³² Mittag (2002), p. 24; Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1987), *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* 中國歷史研究法 (Research Methodology in Chinese History), Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, pp. 159f, 164, 167.

¹⁰³³ Mittag (2002), p. 28.

¹⁰³⁴ For more information on the person of He Qiaoxin, see *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 505f.

昔劉子玄著《史通》四十一[九]篇，以商論前史之得失，自遷、固而下，皆譏焉。然觀其書，可予者十有三四，可貶者十有五六。其譏前人之失，謂司馬體失錄煩，謂班固諳練該密，謂項羽不當為本紀，謂陳涉不當為世家，其論確矣。至自述作史之法，乃欲撰都邑志於《輿服》之上，撰方物志於《食貨》之首，增氏族志於《百官》之下，增方言志於《藝文》之外，不亦贅乎！其言曰：“作史有三長，才也、學也、識也。”《史通》一書，貫穿古今，不可謂無學矣。三為史官，再入東觀，不可謂無才矣。“疑古”、“惑今[經]”之類，得非識有所不足耶？有志於汗青者，宜戒焉。¹⁰³⁵

In former times, Liu Zixuan wrote the *Shitong* in 41 [9] chapters in order to discuss and discourse the gains and losses of former history works. From changes to solid matters down, how can all [these works] be slandered! Thus, when investigating these books, three or four [out of] ten can be granted; and five or six [out of] ten can be censured. This slander is the mistake of our predecessors: He names Sima [Qian] whose style fails and whose record is confusing. Or he names Ban Gu whose [record] is very skilled and detailed; or to name Xiang Yu whose [record] is inappropriate to act as a *benji* [basic annals];¹⁰³⁶ or to name Chen She whose [record] is inappropriate to act as a *shijia* [i.e. biography of hereditary family]¹⁰³⁷—these considerations are true. Coming back to the methods for writing history: Then if one wishes to compile a record about the national capital, one [should do it] on the base of “[the treatise] on imperial vehicle and clothing” [in the *Houhanshu*]. If one wishes to

¹⁰³⁵ *Jiao qiu wenji* 椒邱文集, *juan* 卷 2, *zhushi* 諸史, pp. 48f.

¹⁰³⁶ Xiang Ji 項籍 (233-202 BC), *zi* 字: Yu 羽, was a powerful warlord at the end of Qin 秦 dynasty (221-206 BC), among others responsible for the downfall of this dynasty, who in the end was defeated by his opponent Liu Bang 劉邦 (later Han Gaozu 漢高祖; r. 206-195 BC), the eventual founder of Han dynasty. As Xiang Yu apparently was not an enthroned emperor or king, his biography should not be included in the *benji* 本紀 annals, as Sima Qian 司馬遷 did in his *Shiji* 史記 because Sima included also de facto rulers like Xiang Yu. For more information on Xiang Yu, see “Persons in Chinese History—Xiang Yu 項羽,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/persons/xiangyu.html>, last accessed: June 15th, 2017.

¹⁰³⁷ Chen Sheng 陳勝 (d. 208 BC), *zi* 字: She 涉, was a rebel against the Qin dynasty who proclaimed himself king of Greater Chu 張楚. As Chen She apparently was not a member of nobility, his biography should not be included in the *shijia* 世家 section (of the hereditary houses), as Sima Qian 司馬遷 did in his *Shiji* 史記. For more information on Chen She, see “Persons in Chinese History—Chen Sheng 陳勝 or Chen She 陳涉,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Han/personschensheng.html>, last accessed: June 15th, 2017.

compile a record about local products, one [should do it] [following] the lead of “[the treatise on] food and commodities” [in the *Hanshu*]; when adding a record about family clans, one [should look] among “[the table of] officials of all ranks and descriptions” [in the *Houhanshu*]; adding a record about dialects, [one should look] beyond the “[the treatise on] art and literature” [in the *Hanshu*]—so do not use superfluous things! His [i.e. Liu Zhiji’s] words were: “The one who writes history [i.e. the historian] has three characteristics: ability, learning and insight.” The *Shitong* passes through ancient and contemporary [histories]; and it cannot be said that there is no learning [i.e. *xue*] [in it]. [These] three [excellencies] are for historians; when they have already entered again the Dongguan,¹⁰³⁸ they cannot be called not to have ability [i.e. *cai*]. But concerning such kinds as [the chapters] “Yigu” and “Huojin[jing]”, can it be that the insight [i.e. *shi*] somewhat is not enough? The one who is ambitious in historical records, how should he dismiss it?

His thinking displays an impartial reflection on Liu Zhiji’s efforts to establish rules for history writing. Certainly, He Qiaoxin admired Liu Zhiji for his pragmatic and solid approach: He named the critiques by Liu Zhiji towards ancient history works, picked examples from these critiques and enlisted examples on what kind of scriptures to use when writing certain pieces of literature. The conclusion is simple: “Do not use superfluous things!” Furthermore, He pointed at the three characteristics for a good historian which were established by Liu; however, here He Qiaoxin also levelled criticisms or at least raised doubts towards the *Shitong* and Liu Zhiji by denying the “Yigu” and “Huojing” chapters to show enough insight of the author. This claim leads to an accuse levelled by many historians dealing with Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong*: On one hand, Liu Zhiji framed excellent rules for writing history; but on the other hand, he did not consistently obeyed them himself. Nevertheless, the appreciation and intensive occupation with this Tang time work is evident. And there were many more scholars to follow He Qiaoxin in the evaluation of the *Shitong*, which was already touched upon in the last parts.

Furthermore, for example, the scholar Zhu Yunming (see chap. 11.2), when he spent his last days in his hometown, built a pavilion called Huaixingtang 懷星堂; a

¹⁰³⁸ A place in the palace where the history books are written and revised.

section of his collected works from this pavilion deals with the discussion about the matter of history writing and in this course—a few years after He Qiaoxin—Zhu also mentioned the *Shitong* (see Appendix V.7). From his remarks, the vast dissemination of Liu Zhiji's work in mid Ming times becomes evident and, moreover, the critical occupation with this work: Now, the *Shitong* itself was thoroughly scrutinized. In fact, Zhu Yunming claimed that the *Shitong* only poorly had the power to discuss and criticize (*shao you jianji yiping zhi li* 少有簡輯議評之力¹⁰³⁹). Though, it is clear that the *Shitong* provided the basis for these further approaches.¹⁰⁴⁰

The scholar Li Mengyang 李夢陽 as an active participant in the ongoing debate about history writing alluded to Liu Zhiji, as well. Two years after Li Mengyang's death, the *Kongtongji* 空同集 was published, a collection of all of his works including the *Lun shida wang jiancha shu* 論史答王監察書 in which he dealt with history writing (see Appendix V.8). Li named three points of view concerning history writing: (1) The first consideration relates to the objective of historiography which is addressed in the *Shitong* many times. Concerning this issue, Li Mengyang formulated: “Concerning [the topic] of the meaning of writing history, it shows clearly that it came from previous examples; the good and evil are listed one by one. He [i.e. Liu Zhiji] does not advise and he does not warn, he does not narrate.” (作史之義，昭往訓來，美惡具列；不勸不懲，不之述也¹⁰⁴¹) As a matter of fact, this summons up Liu Zhiji's opinion of the aim of history writing which he expressed in the *Shitong*. (2) The second point concerns the explanation of the writing style to which Li Mengyang stated: “His text is preciously concise and furthermore extensive: Concise then because for the reader it is easy [to understand it] everywhere; extensive then [because] from the beginning to the end nothing is left behind.” (其文貴約而該，約則覽者易遍，該則首末弗遺¹⁰⁴²) (3) The third main item listed are the criteria for historians; Li Mengyang remarked: “The ones who did this after him originally lacked the three excellencies.” (後之作者，本乏三長

¹⁰³⁹ *Huaixingtang ji* 懷星堂集, *juan* 12, *Da Zhang Tianfu xiucai shu* 答張天賦秀才書, p. 24.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Wang Jiachuan (2013), pp. 196f.

¹⁰⁴¹ *Kongtongji*, *juan* 62, *Lun shida wang jiancha shu* 論史答王監察書, p. 1099.

¹⁰⁴² *Kongtongji*, *juan* 62, *Lun shida wang jiancha shu* 論史答王監察書, p. 1099.

¹⁰⁴³) With this assertion he appreciated and confirmed Liu Zhiji's "three excellencies" and at the same time criticized all historians after Sima Qian and Ban Gu.¹⁰⁴⁴

The Hanlin compiler Yang Shen 杨慎 (1488-1559, *zi* 字: 用修, from Xindu 新都 in Sichuan) discussed his opinion about the *Shitong* in his *Danqian yulu* 丹铅余录, which was written in 1530, and moreover wrote a preface to the *Shitong pingshi* (see Appendix II.6). Furthermore, Yuan Huang's 袁黄 *Qunshu beikao* 群书備考 names the *Shitong* in the category *shilun* 史論 mentioning some possible reasons for compilation of the *Shitong*, namely the correction of errors in former history works (see Appendix V.9).¹⁰⁴⁵ He Liangjun 何良俊 (see chap. 11.4) included references to Liu's work in his *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友斋丛说 in the chapter *shi yi* 史一. the *Shitong* is also found in the section *shixue* 史學 in the compilation *Zhan shixing li xiaobian* 詹氏性理小辩 by Zhan Jingfeng 詹景鳳. Likewise, Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (see chap. 11.7) included it in his *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房笔丛 in the section of *Shishu zhanbi* 史书佔畢. They all preserved Liu Zhiji's style of writing and analyzing; for instance, they all used the *biannian* as well as the *jizhuan* style and occupied themselves with commenting on former history works—both was suggested by Liu Zhiji.¹⁰⁴⁶ The scholar Yu Shenxing 于慎行 (1545-1608) also included an abstract about the *Shitong* in his *Shitong juzheng lun* 史通舉正論 (see Appendix II.7). Moreover, the already known Jiao Hong (see chap. 6.3.1 and 11.6) said about Liu Zhiji:

山谷稱《史通》、《文心雕龍》皆學者要書，余觀指摘前人，極為精核，可謂史家申韓矣，然亦多輕肆譏評，傷於苛刻。¹⁰⁴⁷

Shangu¹⁰⁴⁸ named the *Shitong* and the *Wenxin diaolong* both to be books one has to read; I observed that [Liu] Zhiji criticized forefathers and

¹⁰⁴³ *Kongtongji*, *juan* 62, *Lun shida wang jiancha shu* 論史答王監察書, p. 1099.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Wang Jiachuan 王嘉川 (2013), pp. 198f.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 51.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Jiaoshi bicheng* 焦氏笔乘, *juan* 卷 3, *Shitong* 史通, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=34985&page=53&remap=gb>, last accessed: June 19th, 2017.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Shangu 山谷 refers to Huang Tingjian (see p. 58, FN 161 and pp. 58f, FN 162) who wrote the work *Shangu daobi* in which the reference to the *Wenxin diaolong* and the *Shitong* (see p. 56) is to be found, namely *Shangu daobi* 山谷刀笔, *juan* 2, *Yu wangli zhi-chengfeng zhifang* 與王立之承奉直方.

[undertook] extremely careful and intensive examinations; one might as well say [like] Shen Buhai and Han Fei. Also he very indiscreetly and presumptuously makes jeering comments and injures pitilessly.

It becomes obvious that direct references to Liu Zhiji and his *Shitong* appeared in many works of Ming time historians. As reminiscent in Li Mengyang's remarks, the Ming time considerations towards this Tang time work also aimed at the discussion of specific topics approached in the *Shitong*. Especially the question in regard to the mastery of an historian were of special interest. He Qiaoxin discussed, e.g., Liu Zhiji's opinion about the three excellencies (*sanchang* 三長) stating that if someone has ability (*cai* 才) and learning (*xue* 學) but insight (*shi* 識) only to some extent, it is not sufficient. Although we find these three virtues in explanations by many historians of that time, there are also further developments or other virtues which are stressed. He Qiaoxin—as known—took Liu Zhiji's ideas into account and generated new characteristics required by historians. He spoke of “clear [understanding]” (*ming* 明), “the way of the truth” (*dao* 道), “wisdom” (*zhi* 智) and “writing” (*wen* 文) which should be the criteria for evaluating an historian:¹⁰⁴⁹

苟非明足以周萬物之理，道足以適天下之用，智足以通難知之意，
文足以發難顯之情，豈足以任其責哉？¹⁰⁵⁰

If it were not that [their] clear understanding is sufficient to encircle the inner essence of all living things, and [their] way of the truth is sufficient to succeed in the application of everything under heaven, and [their] wisdom is sufficient to understand thoroughly the meaning of [things] difficult to understand, and [their] writing is sufficient to manifest emotions difficult to display, [then] how could it be sufficient to appoint these duties to [them]?

The scholar Sun Yi 孫宜 (1507-1556; *zi* 字: Zhongke 仲可, from Huarong 華容 in today's region of Hunan), as well, took Liu Zhiji's excellencies into account and assembled standards for a good historians, namely a historian should have “[...] a heart of thinking philosophically [i.e. see through the right and wrong without being

¹⁰⁴⁹ Wang Jiachuan (2013), p. 195; Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Jiao Qiu wenji* 椒邱文集, *juan* 卷 2, *zhushi* 諸史, p. 39.

influenced by emotions] and of the universal harmony” (*daguan taitong zhi xin* 達觀太同之心) and “an attitude of abandoning oneself and being a follower.” (*sheji congren zhi du* 舍己從人之度) Furthermore, Su Shi remarks that *cai* (ability) “can fix the right and wrong of hundred generations and decide over the distorted and straight of past generations.” (*keyi ding baidai zhi shifei, cai lidai zhi wangshi* 可以定百代之是非，裁歷代之枉直) Sun Yi herewith also approached the problem of writing without any emotions, so to say impartially writing, and emphasized the importance of historians because they are able to determine the view on historical events and persons in the retrospect; the reputation of persons and happenings lies in their hands.¹⁰⁵¹ The famous Ming time calligrapher Zhan Jingfeng 詹景鳳 (1532-1602; *zi* 字: Chetu 車圖, from Xiuning 休寧 in today’s region of Anhui) went one step further, investigated the correlation between Liu Zhiji’s three traits of character for a good historian and further elaborated features of these traits as, for example, ability coming from heaven while learning being able to be achieved by effort:¹⁰⁵²

作史在學博，尤貴識高。蓋該核在學，刪取在識，宣敘在才。才自天成，非由力致；學則可以力求，識非見道明即高，終涉過當，唯道明而見超物表，斯其猶日月之照臨無私故也。¹⁰⁵³

When writing history, the existing learning is vast, especially its valuable insight [is regarded] high. Now when investigating properly there exists learning; when erasing and selecting there exists insight; and when comprehensively narrating, there exists ability. Ability derives from heaven and it cannot be caused by one’s own power. Learning then can [be achieved by] making every effort. And insight without seeing that the way of the truth is clear even though [can be] high [because it] ends the wading beyond the proper limit. Only the way of the truth is clear and appears to exceed the surface of things. Therefore, this is just like the shining of sun and moon out of selfless reasons.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Dunyan* 遁言, by Sun Yi 孫宜, *juan* 卷 7, *shilun* 史論, in *Siku quanshu cunmu zongshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *zibu* 子部, *di* 第 102 *ce* 冊, p. 255. See also Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

¹⁰⁵² Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

¹⁰⁵³ *Zhanshi xingli xiaobian* 詹氏性理小辯, by Zhan Jingfeng 詹景鳳 *juan* 卷 30, *shixue* 史學, in *Siku quanshu cunmu zongshu* 四庫全書存目叢書, *zibu* 子部, *di* 第 112 *ce* 冊, p. 396.

Hu Yinglin then approached the extension of this scheme and added two additional characteristics which had to be fulfilled by good historians, namely selflessness or public spirit (*gongxin* 公心) and honest writing (*zhibi* 直筆):¹⁰⁵⁴

才、學、識三長，足盡史乎？未也，有公心焉，直筆焉，五者兼之，仲尼是也。董狐、南史制作無征，維公與直，庶幾盡矣。秦漢而下，三長不乏，二善靡聞。¹⁰⁵⁵

Ability, learning and insight, are these three characteristics enough for the entire history [writing]? They are not; there is the public spirit and straightforward and honest writing. These five together were praised by Confucius. For the works by Donghu¹⁰⁵⁶ and Nanshi¹⁰⁵⁷ there is no evidence, they are connected to the public [spirit] and straightforward and honest [writing], though, and [regarded as] almost perfect. But under the Qin and Han dynasties there was no lack of these three virtues, [but] these two good deeds were not heard.

Another problem which occupied Ming scholars as well as Liu Zhiji was the question about the number of historians involved in one project of history writing: Writing history in the Bureau of History was still common practice in Ming dynasty. Astonishingly, the attitude towards collective history writing under governmental surveillance had not changed much since the times of Liu Zhiji, too. It is known that Liu Zhiji opposed this way of writing history and praised the *Shiji* and *Hanshu* which had been compiled by only one single person in private work. Most of the important Ming historians had a similar attitude and went along with Liu's point of view that in the Bureau of History they were not able to write history as good as in a private surrounding. Wang Shizhen 王世貞, Zhan Jingfeng 詹景鳳, He Liangjun 何良俊 and Hu Yinglin 胡应麟 are all of the opinion that history should be compiled by only one person. Hu Yinglin expresses in his *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢:

唐以前史一人，而其業精，故史無弗成而無弗善。唐以後史之人二，

¹⁰⁵⁴ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 52.

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢 *yi* 一, *neipian* 內篇 (inner chapters), in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, *juan* 卷 5, p. (886–)220.

¹⁰⁵⁶ See p. 106, FN 291.

¹⁰⁵⁷ See p. 106, FN 292.

而其任重，故史有弗善而無弗成。唐之時，史之人雜而其秩輕，其責小而其謗巨，故作者不必成，成者不必善。¹⁰⁵⁸

Before Tang times, history [was written] by one person, and this profession was refined. Hence, history [writing] was indeed completed and indeed properly [accomplished]. After Tang dynasty, history [writing] was accomplished by two people, and it was an important job. In consequence, there was the case that history [writing] was not completed, but [at least] properly [accomplished]. In Tang times, people writing history were mingled and their ranks were unimportant, their responsibility was small and their defamation huge. Hence, the authors did not have to complete [the works], the completed [works] were not properly [accomplished].

Nevertheless, at least Zhan Jingfeng took into account that a single person can make mistakes as well; hence, it requires a very skilled man to accomplish this task.¹⁰⁵⁹

A further aspect of the *Shitong* is the assessment of ancient history works such as the *Shangshu*, the *Chunqiu*, the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu* and so on. In his chapter *gujin zhengshi* 古今正史 Liu Zhiji presented and evaluated the main history works up to his own times. This motif is present in many Ming treatises, as well, as it was also shown in chapter 11. He Qiaoxin, He Liangjun, Zhan Jingfeng, Yuan Huang or Hu Yinglin, for instance, all follow Liu Zhiji's example in evaluating ancient historiographical works; a special part occupied the engagement in listing and analyzing important commentaries to history works. The Ming dynasty also saw the phenomenon of articles and literary works which especially approached commenting ancient and modern history works. Hereby a very good example is Qu Jingchun's 瞿景淳 *Gujin shixue deshi lun* 古今史学得失论 which discusses the gains and losses of the *jizhuan ti* and *biannian ti*. In regard to the question of the use of the biographical style (*jizhuanti* 紀傳體) or the annalistic style (*biannianti* 編年體), Ming time scholars almost entirely followed Liu Zhiji's concept and even adopted his explanation about those two ancient styles of writing which Liu Zhiji outlined in the chapter *Erti* 二體. However, concerning the topic of the

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢 *yi* 一, *neipian* 內篇 (inner chapters), in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, *juan* 卷 5, p. (886–)224.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 53f.

questions whether the complicated or the simple style should be applied when writing history, it becomes clear that Ming historians did not follow the Liu Zhiji's ideals in every aspect. This is due to the fact that historiography itself constantly became larger and more comprehensive. The precise and brief style advocated in the *Shitong* was just not appropriate and suitable anymore. Hu Yinglin, for instance, criticized the prevalent opinion of writing in a brief style and opposed against Liu Zhiji's ideas in this aspect by espousing the idea of deciding the style of writing through interpretation of the content; what style to use should be decided by analyzing the content and intention of a text. Furthermore, complicated or simple was not to be measured by the amount of words, but should be seen out of the structure and outline of the text.¹⁰⁶⁰

史惡繁而尚簡，素矣。曷謂繁？叢脞冗之謂也，非文多之謂也。曷為簡，峻潔謹嚴之謂也，非文寡之謂也 [...] 較卷軸之重輕，計年代之近遠，秣乎論哉。¹⁰⁶¹

History hates the complicated [style] and esteems the simple [style], the plain. Why is [the former one] called complicated? It is the meaning of “loaded down with trivial details and superfluous [things],” it is not the meaning of “many words.” How is it with the simple [style]? It is the meaning of “bold and concise, careful and precise,” it is not the meaning of “few words.” [...] Comparing whether a scroll is heavy or light and calculating whether the ages are near or far—this is bad in discussing!

It can be concluded that in mid Ming times scholars concerned themselves with the Tang time *Shitong* and from this initial point of view tried to develop new ideas. While not developing a theoretical work about history writing of their own, Ming time scholars in their discussion recalled Liu Zhiji's piece of literature and discoursed the same topics, such as the questions of using the biographical *jizhuan* style or the annalistic *biannian* style, the complicated or simple style, whether history should be compiled by a single person or a group of historians in the Bureau of History. The most essential problems considered were the evaluation of former history works and the characteristics of a good historian. These theoretical considerations were one of the

¹⁰⁶⁰ Yang Yanqiu (2002), pp. 52ff.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Shishu zhanbi* 史書佔畢 *yi* 一, *neipian* 內篇 (inner chapters), in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, *juan* 卷 5, p. (886–)221.

main features of Ming time historiography which was displayed in chapter 11; accordingly, Liu Zhiji's thoughts were dilated and enhanced by ideas from Ming time scholars. The topics of this Ming time renaissance of the *Shitong*, indeed, resembled the subjects considered in the *gonglun*-debate out of which the Ming time *shiping*-works emerged, videlicet, what is right and wrong in history writing. Regarding the discourse on history writing, the recall to the *Shitong* demonstrated another feature in the realm of Ming history writing; namely it exemplifies the revitalization of the *shiping*-literature. In addition, its commentaries joined the newly compiled body of the *shiping*-category of Ming dynasty, which was constituted of the works discussed in chapter 11. In contrast to before, now the *shiping*-category constituted a significant part of the body of literature and was developed further in the course of Ming dynasty. The *Shitong* revival, accordingly, expressed two main currents of Ming dynasty: the development of the category of historical criticism (*shiping*) and the theoretical occupation with the question of how to write history. The emerging critical attitude among historians of that time was a nursery for the rediscovery of the critical and theoretical work of the *Shitong* and in the absence of other theoretical works was welcomed warmly as a guide book for these reflections on history writing or at least served as point of origin for further contemplations.

13. Further Currents of History Writing in Ming Dynasty —An Outlook

In the last chapters, the main features of Ming time historiography were displayed, that is to say the critical attitude in the realm of historiography and the theoretical considerations on how to write history. Apart from this, the historiography of Ming dynasty showed some more minor but interesting and extraordinary features. As the focus of the research lies on the historical criticism of this time—i.e. the *Shitong*-renaissance, the *shiping*-literature and critical voices in Ming historiography—, other characteristics were not taken into account. However, for the sake of painting the most comprehensive picture, further peculiarities of this time are supposed to be addressed very briefly in this chapter—without any claim of completeness or elaboration. Rather, it is supposed to offer thought-provoking impulses for further studies and research on these topics. Accordingly, these problems are to be regarded as an outlook and hypotheses without having been investigated thoroughly.

The Mythological Part: Metaphysical Contents of History Writing

Apparently, Ming time historiography experienced another—kind of contrary—current: a mythological component. This feature derived from philosophical influences on literature; as Judith Berling put it in her work on syncretic religion in Ming dynasty: “The ultimate unity of the Three Teachings was based in the mystical expansion of the sagely mind.”¹⁰⁶² This mystical or mythological component found its expression in two ways: Firstly, history books were ordered according to categories of the Chinese correlative thinking, like the system of the twelve earthly branches (*dizhi* 地支) or the ten heavenly stems (*tiangan* 天干).¹⁰⁶³ One exemplary work ordered corresponding to the *dizhi* is Shao Bao’s 邵寶 *Xueshi* 學史, which was introduced in chapter 11.1. Moreover, in the *Guangxu guangya congshu* 光緒廣雅叢書 edition Hu Yinglin’s 胡應

¹⁰⁶² Berling (1980), p. 218.

¹⁰⁶³ In the traditional Chinese calendar, the twelve earthly branches (*dizhi* 地支)—based on the Jupiter cycle—are combined with the ten heavenly stems (*tiangan* 天干)—a combination of the *wuxing* 五行 and *yin* 陰 and *yang* 陽—to form a sixty year cycle. For more information on the Chinese calendar, see “The Chinese Calendar,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/calendar.html>, last accessed: May 17th, 2017.

麟 *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, which contains the *Sibu zheng'e* 四部正譌 (see chap. 11.7), is arranged in compliance with the *tiangan*.¹⁰⁶⁴ Another example is Chen Jian's 陳建 (1497-1567) *Huangming tongji* 皇明通紀 which uses the sixty year circle, namely the combination of the heavenly stems and the earthly branches as its structure.

Lu Shen's 錄深 *Chuanyi lu* 傳疑錄, discussed in chapter 11.3, shows some mythological tendencies as well. In this work, it is displayed that the two trends—videlicet the recording of historical facts and the inclusion of mythological components—do not at all exclude each other, but rather complement each other. In it, the author stringed together metaphysical ideas and claims for factual history writing. In the beginning of this piece of work, Lu Shen's contemplations about history writings explained in chapter 11.3 are to be found, while at the end the mythological part follows. The author here—in contrast to the examples before—dealt with mythological concepts in the content of the last parts of his work. In fact, he explained the earthly branches, their characteristics and from that the deduction to their names or characters in this part (see Appendix V.10).

Secondly, in the tradition of the (*Zizhi Tongjian gangmu* (資治)通鑑綱目 (The Outline and Detail of the *Comprehensive Mirror for the Aid of Government*; 1172) by Zhu Xi 朱熹 many history works of Ming dynasty were expanded until mythological times, namely until the time of Pangu 盤古, who was considered “the mystical creator of the world.”¹⁰⁶⁵ One of the examples for such an history work is the *Shigang pingyao* 史綱評要 (Highlights of History with Critical Comments; 1613)¹⁰⁶⁶ ascribed to Li Zhi

¹⁰⁶⁴ The Content of the *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢 is the following: (1) 甲部: 經籍會通; (2) 續甲部: 丹銷新錄; (3) 乙部: 史書估畢; (4) 續乙部: 藝林學山; (5) 丙部: 九流緒論; (6) 丁部: 四部正譌; (7) 戊部: 三墳補逸; (8) 巳部: 二酉綴遺; (9) 庚部: 華陽國議; (10) 辛部: 莊嶽委談; (11) 壬部: 玉壺遐覽; (12) 癸部: 雙樹幻鈔. See (*Guangxu guangya congshu*) *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* (光緒廣雅叢書) 少室山房筆叢, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=88775&page=10>, last accessed: September 4th, 2017. However, in the *Siku quanshu* or *Siku biji xiaoshuo congshu* editions, the *tiangan* are not to be found.

¹⁰⁶⁵ For more information on Pan Gu, see “Chinese Mythology—Pan Gu 盤古,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personspangu.html>, last accessed: May 17th, 2017.

¹⁰⁶⁶ For more information on the *Shigang pingyao*, see “Chinese Literature—*Shigang pingyao* 史綱評要,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shigangpingyao.html>, last accessed: May 17th, 2017.

李贄 (see chap. 6.3.1 and 11.6). In general, the whole category of “comprehensive mirrors,” i.e. the *tongjian gangmu* 通鑒綱目,¹⁰⁶⁷ and the *gangjian* 綱鑑 texts¹⁰⁶⁸—according to Nicholas Standaert—“tend to be ‘comprehensive,’ including the early history, from Pangu until the end of Yuan.” These kinds of historical works from Song dynasty, next to the pre-Song texts *Shiji*, *Hanshu* and, e.g., the *Bamboo Annals* were the corpus of texts used generally in Ming historiography. Nicolas Standaert concluded in his *The Intercultural Weaving of Historical Texts*: “Mainstream tradition underwent a new development in the Ming, taking the Song works as a model and extending history both to more recent times (Song and Yuan) and the most distant past. As such, Chinese history became entirely comprehensive.”¹⁰⁶⁹ Furthermore, in late Ming there were efforts to “naturalize anomalies and supernormal events,” which happened through referring to *yin* and *yang* and the five phases.¹⁰⁷⁰ This was a very crucial turn in philosophy which reflected upon many realms of the scholarly field, not at least upon historiography. Certainly, the inclusion of mythological stories about the creation of the world or other anomalies opposed the proclamation of “recording the facts” by the critical voices of Ming dynasty but corresponded to Neo-Confucian thoughts and, hence, was a continuation of trends starting in Song dynasty. As narrated in chapter 6.3.1, the body of thought from Song dynasty prevailed in Ming dynasty as well, at least officially. Maybe, this characteristic was even a reaction to the ongoing public debate about what is right and wrong in history writing, and tried to stand against those modern and critical voices which heralded a critical attitude towards texts without trustful sources.

¹⁰⁶⁷ This category—yet deriving from Zhu Xi’s *Tongjian gangmu* (see p. 89, FN 247)—includes many history works which were based on Zhu Xi’s work, expanded its content or simply followed its style of writing history.

¹⁰⁶⁸ The *gangjian* texts were written in the composite style like the Standard histories and took the *Shiji* as an example. See Nicolas Standaert (2012), “Jesuit Accounts of Chinese History and Chronology and their Chinese Sources,” *East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine (EASTM)* 35, p. 25.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Nicolas Standaert (2016), *The Intercultural Weaving of Historical Texts: Chinese and European Stories about Emperor Ku and His Concubines*, Leiden: Brill (Leiden Series in Comparative Historiography), pp. 32, 42 (citation); Standaert (2012), p. 21. For more information on this topic, see whole Standaert (2016).

¹⁰⁷⁰ Benjamin A. Elman (2005), *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, pp. 4f.

*The Advancing Part: Historiography in the Ming-Qing Transition
and the Jesuits*

The developments and significant new ideas beginning in mid Ming times concerning historiography were the beginning of increasing and significant changes which were about to follow. This mentioned stability throughout the Ming dynasty spanned over the dynastic overturn, for even the Ming-Qing transition, so to say the conquest of Ming China by the Manchu Qing dynasty, happened at a quiet level. Therefore, the traditional ways remained. As Timothy Brook states in his *The Chinese State in Ming Society*:

I have put the Ming and Qing together for a reason: whatever the rupture between the dynasties, the history of the book across them was continuous. Anxieties about dynastic survival changed in 1644; books did not.¹⁰⁷¹

In fact, there were three main features of the Ming-Qing transition period which laid the path for the emergence of “modern” historiography in later ages. Firstly, the discussion on how to write history, so to say, on historical lessons was further developed. One of the main figures of this transition period was Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲, a follower of Ming dynasty but acting in times of Qing dynasty. In fact, Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 (1610-1695) opened a new chapter, when he compiled his *Mingru xue'an* 明儒學案 (Critical Anthology of Ming Confucianists; *MRXA*) in 1676. As Benjamin Elman described, the *xue'an*-genre was established as “an important form of comprehensive analysis and incisive synthesis” and, henceforth, served as “the superior form for dealing with Confucian intellectual history and tracing the development of lines of thought in that tradition.”¹⁰⁷² It was the “first history of Chinese philosophy,” not only biographies.¹⁰⁷³ Furthermore, in this work, Huang Zongxi—as the first one to do so—formulated concrete historical lessons “in order to rectify the habits of empty discussion and learning by intuition which appeared in the later followers of Wang Yang-ming’s school of philosophy.”¹⁰⁷⁴

¹⁰⁷¹ Brook (2005), p. 119.

¹⁰⁷² Benjamin A. Elman (1984), *From Philosophy to Philology*, Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, p. 74.

¹⁰⁷³ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 733.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Teng (1949), p. 133.

Secondly, historical criticism, especially from the perspective of philology, regarding the Confucian classics and former history works experienced new impulse: “The research and writing of many Ming dynasty scholars was a private, sometimes heroic, endeavor to explore the possibilities of what remained an unrecognized and unorganized area of knowledge.” Therefore, many Ming scholars turned to the slogan “lesser learning, that is philology” (*xiaoxue* 小學)—an area of research independent from other intellectual courses. Benjamin Elman identified these new research approaches as “pioneering studies.” The aim was to fully grasp the content of a Confucian classic on a philological level and, in doing so, to get away from the traditional approach of the preoccupation with classics and history. “In this manner criticism achieved a creative role in scholarship.” Precise research now replaced the public lectures on morality and the *Dao*. This significant approach of a systematic analysis was called *kaozheng* 考證 (“search for evidence;” or *shuzheng* 疏證, “verification of annotations”),¹⁰⁷⁵ which was heralded by the critical voices by late Ming scholars evolving into a critical method, as observed before. In fact, Ming academics “laid the ground for future directions of thought...Critical methods triumphed over a more general critical spirit,” which was one of the main achievements of Ming historiography in general.¹⁰⁷⁶

¹⁰⁷⁵ Michael Quirin summarized some definitions of *kaozheng* 考證 or *kaoju* 考據 in his article “Scholarship, Value, Method, and Hermeneutics in Kaozheng: Some Reflections on Cui Shu (1740-1816) and the Confucian Classics.” *Kaozheng* or *kaoju*-scholarship is defined by Paul S. Ropp as the following: “*Kaozheng* (literary ‘search for evidence’) refers to careful textual studies based on minute analysis of language of various extant Confucian texts. The goal of this textual research was to clarify and strengthen the classical Confucian heritage by sifting out the true from the false and determining the true message of the ancient sages, untainted by interpolations and distortions of later periods.” Paul S. Ropp (1981), *Dissent in Early Modern China: Ju-lin wai-shih and Ch’ing Social Criticism*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, p. 43. Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 wrote: “*Kaoju* is a method for the study of old books. It means that one compares books, finds out the discrepancies between them and conducts further enquiries. It is a method for the examination and ordering of old works of history and historical sources. Scholars during the Qing dynasty were very good at the study of old books. As a method of study *kaoju* has existed at all times. During the Qing period however, especially during the Qianlong reign, *kaoju* studies were widely employed in exegetical learning.” (考据, 是研究古书的方法。考据, 即是以此书对彼书。而把这一本书和那一本书的矛盾之所在, 找出来, 加以查考。这是整理古代史书, 史料的方法。清代人们擅长用考据方法以读古书。考据, 作为治学的一种方法, 各代都有。但是, 到了清代, 特别是乾隆当皇帝的时候, 大力提倡经学的考据。) Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 (1983), *Zhongguo Shixue rumen* 中國史學入門 (Introduction to the Study of Chinese History), Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe 中国青年出版社, p. 55. Translation in Michael Quirin (1996), “Scholarship, Value, Method, and Hermeneutics in Kaozheng: Some Reflections on Cui Shu (1740-1816) and the Confucian Classics,” *History and Theory* (Theme Issue: Chinese Historiography in Comparative Perspective) 35.4, p. 36.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Elman (1984), pp. 42ff.

One expression of this new path in Ming dynasty was a different vocabulary. For example, gradually in Mei Zhuo's 梅騫 (1483-1553) *Guwen shangshu kaoyi* 古文尚書考異 (Examination of Variances in the Old Text Documents), in Chen Di's 陳第 (1541-1617) *Maoshi guyin kao* 毛詩古音考 (Examination of Ancient Pronunciation in the Mao recension of the *Poetry Classics*) or in Fang Yizhi's 方以智 (1611-1671) *Wuli xiaozhi* 物理小識 (Preliminary Record of Phenomena and Their Patterns of Occurrence) annotations were now substituted by arguments and analyses. In changing patterns, Ming scholars consistently named Han scholarship as model. Furthermore, a philosophy of the *qi* emerged, and

this turn away from Chu Hsi's philosophy represents for Yamanoi [Yū] a turn from abstract, conceptual thought (*yili* 義理) toward emphasis on concrete verifiable ideas (*kaozheng*). This shift included a turn away from subjective to impartial criteria for thinking and a return to mundane human considerations instead of the transcendental philosophy of *li* 理 [the universal order].¹⁰⁷⁷

Moreover, Benjamin A. Elman researched that

the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* editors noted that Fang I-chih, for example, had been in the forefront of the Ming evidential scholars who had recognized that the empty speculation associates with *Tao-Hsueh* 道學 (a discourse based on *li* 理) had to be replaced by a methodology informed by empirical verification procedures (a discourse based on *ch'i* 氣).¹⁰⁷⁸

In late Ming the phrase “search for truth in actual facts” (*shishi qiushi* 實事求是) was designative for Ming scholars. Especially the genre of “critical essays” (*bian* 辨) was paid attention to because it was regarded as a model for an impartial and detached way of writing. In this course, the main topic and problem was the verification of facts. “Revivalism and fundamentalism (that is, reaffirmation of the original texts and doctrines of classical Confucianism) pervaded the late Ming and early Ch'ing ‘return to antiquity’ (*fugu* 復古) movement.” Benjamin Elman called this new approach “a major reorientation in thought,” which dismissed “the philosophical speculations of Neo-

¹⁰⁷⁷ Elman (1984), pp. 44f.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Elman (1984), p. 45.

Confucianism.” As a matter of fact, scholars of the late Ming and early Qing time bethought of the ancient sources which had not been corrupted by philosophical Neo-Confucian thoughts and used these original sources in order to “reconstruct the classical tradition.”¹⁰⁷⁹ The group who availed itself of these ways of working was called *Fu She* 復社 (Return [to Antiquity] Society); they were known for preferring “concrete studies” (*shixue* 實學) rather than the “empty words” (*kongyan* 空言) of the Neo-Confucian literati. Many of the later members of this group were influenced by the famous scholar-official Xu Guangqi 徐光啟 (1562-1633), who is well-known for his connection to the Jesuit Matteo Ricci.

The efforts towards true evidential method (*kaozheng*) which started in Ming found their high point in the eighteenth century; the critical analysis of sources and historical criticism in general developed further—especially the Jiangnan academic community led the way in this realm. Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛 (1722-1798)¹⁰⁸⁰ was an innovator in Han-Learning (*Hanxue* 漢學) and “contended that a historian should take into account all possible sources available to him.” This also meant the integration of sources such as fiction, poetry and random jottings. Wang Mingsheng formulated the following code:¹⁰⁸¹

Historical facts and clues reveal what [should be] praised and what [should be] deplored. Readers of the Histories ideally should not force the words and arbitrarily draw out [notions of] praise and blame. They must consider the reality to which all facts and clues point ... Then they can proceed to record all the variations [of the facts that they can find].

¹⁰⁷⁹ Elman (1984), pp. 45f.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛 (1722-1797), *zi* 字: Fengxie 鳳喈 or Litang 禮堂 or Xizhuang 西莊, from Jiading 嘉定 (near modern Shanghai) was a scholar, especially historian and philosopher, of the Qing period (1644-1911), and “was called the ‘divine child’ (*shentong* 神童) because of his intelligence.” After a successful but short official career, he preferred to dedicate himself to private studies, especially he was “highly interested in the Han period 漢 (206 BCE-220 CE) interpretation of the Confucian Classics, the so-called *Hanxue* 漢學 ‘Han studies.’ He said that Confucians of the Han period possessed both ‘standards of their own tradition’ (*jiafa* 家法) and that of teaching (*shifa* 師法). The individual standards had went lost during the Tang period 唐 (618-907), and the original teachings of the Han scholars were wholly discarded during the Song 宋 (960-1279), under the influence of the speculative Neo-Confucianism.” “Persons in Chinese History—Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/personswangmingsheng.html>, last accessed: June 26th, 2017.

¹⁰⁸¹ Elman (1984), pp.70f.

When the discrepancies are analyzed one by one, and there is no [remaining] doubt, then after proceeding in this manner they can praise or blame and [still] remain sensitive in such judgments to fair discussions of the empire [...] Generally, the way of scholarship should be sought in facts and not in empty [speculation]. Discussions of praise and blame are merely empty words. The writing of history is the recording of the facts. Overall the goal is simply to ascertain the truth. Besides the facts, what more can one ask for?¹⁰⁸²

To present and depict real history *kaozheng*-historians drew on epigraphy, geography, and linguistic research; impartiality was the great goal. Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728-1804)¹⁰⁸³ followed Wang Mingsheng's attitude and remarked "that historical facts themselves should reveal whom to praise and whom to blame." They systematically carried out an "analysis of historical sources, correction of anachronism, revision of texts, and addition of commentary and supplements," by which they applied methods of classical and literary research. This correlates with the phenomenon of intertwining between the classics and the (Standard) Histories, which started in the seventeenth century. "With the rise in the status of historical studies in Kiangnan almost to parity with classical studies, the demarcation between the universality of the classics and the particularity of the Histories was called into question."¹⁰⁸⁴

Thirdly, the question of the influence of the Jesuits on Chinese historiography remains. As, e.g., Nicolas Standaert pointed out, the Jesuits, who were present in China from the second half of the sixteenth century on, occupied themselves extensively with Chinese historiography; especially the junction of Ming time comprehensive histories reaching far back to mythological times with the history presented in the bible—which was far shorter than Chinese histories—was a pressing issue for them. As a matter of fact, many Chinese scholars, for instance, wrote prefaces to Chinese works by their Jesuit colleagues and collaborated with them. Standaert here named quite a few

¹⁰⁸² Elman (1984), p. 71. The original reads the following: “其事蹟則有美有惡，讀史者亦不必強立文法 [...]” in *Shiqishi shangque* 十七史商榷, xu 序, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=19211&page=3&remap=gb>, last accessed: June 26th, 2017.

¹⁰⁸³ For further information on Qian Daxin 錢大昕, see “Persons in Chinese History—Qian Daxin 錢大昕,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Qing/personsqiandaxin.html>, last accessed: June 26th, 2017.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Elman (1984), pp. 71f.

examples: Guo Zizhang's 郭子章 (1543-1618) preface to Matteo Ricci's *Shanghai yudi quantu* 山海輿地全圖 (Complete World Map; 1600); Wang Xijue's 王錫爵 (1534-1611) preface to Ricci's *Liangyi xuanlan tu* 兩儀玄覽圖 (The World Observing Map; 1603); Cao Yubian's 曹于汴 (1558-1634) prefaces to Sabatino De Ursis (1575-1620) and Xu Guangqi's 徐光啟 (1562-1633) *Taixi shuifa* 泰西水法 (Western Hydraulics; 1612) and to Diego de Pantoja (1571-1618) and Yang Tingyun's 楊廷筠 (1652-1627) *Qike* 七克 (Seven Overcomings; early 1610s); Xiong Mingyu's 熊明遇 (1579-1649) participation in Manuel Dias' (1574-1659) *Tianwen lüe* 天問略 (Questions about Heaven; 1615), and his preface to Sabatino De Ursis' *Biaodu shuo* 表度說 (Explanation of the Gnomon; 1614); or He Qiaoyuan's 何喬遠 (1558-1632) preface to Aleni's *Xixue fan* 西學凡 (Survey of Western Learning; 1623; 1626 Fujian reprint). Concerning the Jesuits influence on Chinese history writing, Nicolas Standaert concluded:

Though these examples do not prove a direct (or mutual) influence concerning the writing of history, they do show that the missionaries functioned in a milieu in which such scholarship was common enough to have prefaces written by or attributed to scholars with whom they were in contact.¹⁰⁸⁵

All of these features, namely the inclusion of mythological stories in history, maybe even mystical tendencies, the juxtaposing of these with concrete factual history writing, the further development of historical lessons, the emergence of the *kaozheng*-method out of critical tendencies in Ming time and, last but not least, the possible influence of the Jesuits on history writing, as characteristics of Ming dynasty historiography are worth to be elaborated and researched further in separate studies.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Standaert (2012), pp. 23f.

VI. THESIS PROVED—THE CONCLUSION

In this research it was disclosed that in Ming dynasty many new features appeared in historiography or, at least, were elaborated. Especially, a critical attitude towards ancient history works, contemporary history writing and even the sources consulted were developed and rose to a level unprecedented before. The rediscovery of *shiping*-literature like the *Shitong* and the emergence of more and more works belonging to this category truly is something peculiar for this time and a very important characteristic on the way to history writing in the modern sense of view. Consequently, it can without doubt be labelled a break with tradition which happened in Ming dynasty.

Evaluation of the Changes in Chinese Historiography

The public discourse about what is right and wrong in history writing (see chap. 9) emerged from the current state of the official history writing which was criticized in more than one perspective: The one-sided depiction of historical events due to the abolition of the *qijuzhu* (Diaries of Activity and Repose) together with a partial portrayal of events due to personal disputes were only two reasons for the contemptuousness of official history writing by many scholars. Some of the scholars who opposed the official way were introduced in this research: Interestingly, nearly all of them¹⁰⁸⁶ originated from the Jiangnan 江南 area¹⁰⁸⁷ which was in more than one perspective a rich area. In fact, the Ming court “depended on Jiangnan for much of its revenue” and “the area was home to many of China’s wealthiest, and most powerful, families.” For that reason, as Harry Miller depicted, “the place was almost ungovernable, for ‘the orders of the Court have no force here.’”¹⁰⁸⁸ Out of this situation, it is no wonder that it was also the Jiangnan area all the libertines in the realm of historiography

¹⁰⁸⁶ Except for Zhang Dingsi, Hu Yinglin both from Hunan and Li Zhi from Fujian who still originated from the southern sphere of the Chinese empire.

¹⁰⁸⁷ The Jiangnan area is the area south of the Yangtze river encompassing the northern part of modern Zhejiang province, the northern part of modern Jiangxi province, the southern part of modern Anhui province and the southern part of modern Jiangsu province, including the important cities Shanghai, Anqing, Nanjing, Zhenjiang, Changzhou, Wuxi, Suzhou, Hangzhou, Ningbo, and Shaoxing.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Harry Miller (2008), *State Versus Gentry in Late Ming Dynasty China, 1572-1644*, London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 39.

stemmed from. As a matter of fact, the tensions and the contradiction between official history writing at the court and new ideas and conventions for history writing presented in this paper reflect the struggle over fiscal matters and governmental power between the court and the “gentry” of the Jiangnan area. In the realm of ideas as well as in the realm of actual power there was a confrontation between the capital and the Jiangnan area.

As the discussed historians originated from this wealthy and powerful region, the *gonglun* about what is right and wrong in history writing which they promoted, indeed, represented a powerful and important instrument and concerned many of the most important scholars of that time. The preoccupation with this question not only embodied an examination of current happenings at the court but also led to an evermore critical attitude to what was done before in historiography. This paper disclosed the emergence of many works belonging to the *shiping*-category in Ming times which constituted something new in the history of Chinese history writing. Never before had this happened in such an extensive way spanning over a whole generation of historians as in Ming dynasty. Interestingly, *shiping*, criticizing history, included two different aspects: criticizing historical events and criticizing historical works. During the course of Ming dynasty, the second aspect became more important due to a growing self-confidence of historians which has to be seen in the context of the economic strengthening of the Jiangnan region, the hotbed of Ming time historical criticism.

Furthermore, another interesting fact is that some of these historiography works imitated the structure of official history without being official and, hence, displayed how history was supposed to be depicted with special regard to the selection of the sources used. The latter point was particularly important as the awareness for reliable sources emanated, namely firstly the distinction between different kinds of sources and secondly the source criticism. Now, it was propagated to question the reliability of references and investigate their trustfulness. Hu Yinglin was the first to establish rules and methods for the handling and the evaluation of sources. Although the criteria for source criticism remained on a low level, and except of Hu Yinglin there was no systematic approach for constituting specific criteria concerning source criticism; this was a further step towards modern history writing. However, already Zhu Yunming, Lu Shen and Wang Shizhen criticized the blind following of stipulated rules concerning the depiction and evaluation of the past. Even though most of the mentioned scholars in

Ming time “only” articulated how not to write history without enouncing how to do it, i.e. formulating standards, this was nevertheless something distinctive and impressive.

One problem remains: Due to their criticism towards former and official history works many authors tried to rectify the representation of certain events and persons in history. Nonetheless, in many cases they themselves did not state why their description was “the correct one.” For example, Zhang Sui in his *Qianbai nianyan* did not provide sources to substantiate his critique towards certain passages in history works. This is the problem of many history books in Ming dynasty. Therefore, it could be insinuated that Ming scholars, as a matter of fact, wrote their own history and in doing so falsified historical events themselves. This accusation is valid notably for the Ming time history works which also covered the mythological times of Chinese history. In other cases, scholars only omitted their sources, the facts nevertheless being true.

Notwithstanding, the most important peculiarity of the progresses in Ming time historiography was the fundamental questioning of former sacrosanct history works: The classics the same as the Standard Histories were called into question and inspected for possible inconsistencies and mistakes. This step back from “blindly following official conventions” towards a reflective and (aspired) impartial examination of works belonging to the category of historiography was the beginning of an in-depth comprehension of the meaning of objective history writing by considering reliable sources. Besides the reviewed authors and works, there are many more examples of Ming historians following this direction. Qu Jingchun 瞿景淳 (1507-1569; *zi* 字: Shidao 師道, from Changshu 常熟 in Suzhou), for example, compiled the work *Gujin shixue deshi lun* 古今史學得失論 in which he discussed the gains and losses of former and contemporary history works; likewise, there was Yuan Huang’s 袁黃 *Qunshu beikao* 群書備考 which questioned philosophical concepts the same as classics and history works (e.g. the *Zhouyi* 周易 and the *Shangshu* 尚書 or the *Chunqiu* 春秋) and also certain types of literature like *zixue* 字學 (Study of Characters), *shufa* 書法 (Manner of Presentation of Facts), *wenzhang* 文章 (Literary Works), *shi* 詩 (Poems) or *fu* 賦 (Rhapsodies). Liang Menglong’s 梁夢龍 *Shiyao bian* 史要編 (Writing About the Essentials of History) and Bu Dayou’s 卜大有 (1512-?) *Shixue yaoyi* 史學要義 (Essentials about Historiography) are further examples of works discoursing history. All

of these works are worth a detailed study as each of them displays very distinctive characteristics of Ming time historiography.

The change of the attitude towards historical sources—manifested, e.g. in the use of documentary accounts as sources, not unreliable miscellaneous records—implies an awakening consciousness about truth and facts, which came along with the ongoing *gonglun* debate. This critical attitude culminated in the *Mingshi* 明史, the Standard History of the Ming, from the beginning of Qing dynasty, which is regarded to be the most dependable and trustworthy Dynastic History of all. One of the chief compilers, Xu Qianxue 徐乾學 (1631-1694), once remarked:¹⁰⁸⁹

家乘野史未可盡信，必本之實錄，而參以他書，庶幾無失，願加博訪之力，無據一家之言。¹⁰⁹⁰

Family records and private historical writings are not wholly reliable; it is necessary to take the veritable records as the fundamental source, and other works for additional reference. [Proceeding this way] there will probably be no defect. Anyone who endeavours to carry out extensive research cannot rely upon the words of only one author.

The works discussed in this paper are, thence, only a selection of representative examples aiming at attesting the thesis pronounced. The choice of these examples served the purpose of providing an overview over the development in Ming dynasty: Starting with Shao Bao as a representative of the beginnings of the emergence of critical voices in mid Ming times, taking into consideration famous scholars of mid and late Ming like Wang Shizhen, Li Zhi and Jiao Hong and ending with Zhu Minggao at the very end of Ming dynasty. The content during this time also advanced from commenting on historical events depicted in former history works, via the discussion about what is right and wrong in history writing and the concrete naming of criteria for source criticism up to an extraordinary work of historical criticism similar to Liu Zhiji's exceptional *Shitong* and referred to as the beginning of the *kaozheng*-method, namely Zhu Minggao's *Shijiu*.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Wolfgang Franke (1968), p. 6.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Danyuan wenji* 憺園文集, by Xu Qianxue 徐乾學 (Qing), *juan* 14, *Xiushi tiaoyi* 修史條議, online at *Chinese Text Project*, <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=93249&page=47&remap=gb>, last accessed: July 23rd, 2017.

As illustrated, Ming history writing embraced many important and controversial topics, for example the commenting on the portrayal of certain historical events, the criticism on the predominant Neo-Confucianism and its conception of history writing, criticizing ancient sacrosanct history works (e.g. the Standard Histories), the public dialogue about distinctive regulations on how to write history, the question of forgeries, the ideal comprehensive history work, the determination of classics and history works and source criticism. These topics were, in effect, new features in the realm of history writing, at least in such a large dimension. The rediscovery, the elaboration and the increase of *shiping*-literature was the most striking new characteristic of Ming time historiography and was expressed through the scholars, their works introduced in the last chapters and the public dialogue about how to write history and—reversely—how not to write history. This critical attitude towards history writing had a bearing on the whole development of historiography in the future, although it was not scholars from the capital to promote it but historians from the south. Nevertheless, due to their origin from the powerful Jiangnan region they had much influence on the history of ideas of Ming dynasty. The new features encouraged by them went against everything what was taught before; the hieratic forms of official history writing were burst open by a wide upheaval of scholars who wanted to reform the thinking about and the way of historiography.

Likewise, Achim Mittag observed that the discourse in the sphere of historical studies was very vivid in Ming dynasty and the influence of the scholar elite beyond the Bureau of Historiography (i.e. in the capital) had never been this large before. For example, the idea of a project for a national history (*guoshi* 國史) came up in Ming dynasty. Unfortunately, it was abandoned soon after its occurrence. But only the idea of a *guoshi* was a landmark in the historiography of late imperial China.¹⁰⁹¹ The concentration on the recording of happenings of their own time (and not of former dynasties) was a peculiarity of Ming dynasty history writing, although there were compendia about former dynasties, as well. This characteristic was due to the ongoing political struggles and internal oppositions in the government which can also be recalled as a reason that nobody in an official position felt responsible for reporting true facts. Scholars, therefore, disapproved official history writing and withdrew into private

¹⁰⁹¹ Mittag (2012), p. 29.

historiography. Consequently, a close connection between class struggles and peasant uprisings becomes obvious—especially in the second half of Ming dynasty—as well as the emergence and intensifying of private history writing.¹⁰⁹²

But, certainly, some transitions in politics influenced the development of history writing, too. Actually, there were two *coup d'états* in Ming dynasty;¹⁰⁹³ but the interesting thing about these coups is the refurbishment in literature: the official historians did not at all record the true facts but rather presented a euphemized version of the happenings which would adulate the new emperor. This nuisance of falsification of facts promoted the establishment of private historiography outside the realm of politics and the court.¹⁰⁹⁴ This emergence and intensifying of private historiography was the breeding ground for the critical approach studied before. In a distance from the court and governmental restrictions and influences scholars were free to express their thoughts about history writings in their private realm. As seen in the case of Li Zhi, nevertheless, they were not immune to official prosecution; but the sheer number of critical works produced by scholars from the Jiangnan area gives testimony of the strengthening of historical criticism.

The Case Study Proved: The Shitong-“Renaissance”

In fact, this critical approach by Ming scholars is what Liu Zhiji as a single person had done or had tried to do 800 years before. In chapter 4, I have laid out the meaning of the *Shitong*, especially for the development of critical thinking in China. However, it was not paid adequate attention to after its appearance. There are some minor works about it from Song dynasty but only in Ming dynasty it received considerable and appropriate recognition. It was the revival or renaissance of the *Shitong*: In mid Ming scholars started to pay attention to Liu Zhiji's *Shitong*, and a few commentaries were written by famous historians of that time which were dealt with in chapter 5. Only by looking at these extensive commentaries it becomes evident that the *Shitong* had a formative influence on Ming historians and historians of later generations.¹⁰⁹⁵

¹⁰⁹² Cang, Wei (1983), pp. 391f.

¹⁰⁹³ Namely these were the *coup d'état* by the Yongle Emperor who had dethroned his nephew, the Jianwen emperor in 1402, and the reinstallation of the Zhengtong Emperor in 1457.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Cang, Wei (1983), p. 390.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 48.

It was no wonder that already in early times Ming historians fell back on a work from their past; because a feature in the style of Ming government was the “change within tradition,” that means Ming time politicians as well as historians returned to models of the past. The renaissance of Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong*, probably, can be regarded as one specification of this reversion to traditional values. Instead of creating something new, the Ming tried to find something fitting their situation in their past—a recurring element in Chinese history. The trait of Ming dynasty to look back at examples in the past covered the political, academic as well as the philosophical realm; Ming time scholars wanted to revive true Chinese achievements after having overthrown the foreign (Mongol) Yuan dynasty. The renaissance of the Liu Zhiji’s work—at least unconsciously—was part of this statement and commitment to the Chinese tradition, to the Chinese “culturalism” as Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig put it.¹⁰⁹⁶

From an economic perspective, the extension of the Grand Canal and the canal system of whole China surely contributed to the revival of the *Shitong*. As Lu Shen at the beginning of Ming dynasty had lamented (see chap. 5.1), the problem with writing reliable history was the access to trustful historical sources, with the expansion of trade ways also the ways of knowledge became more and more diversified: Not only grain and cloth was transported over the Chinese canals, also books and scriptures found their way from one hand to another. The dissemination of books and learning was a consequence of the expansion of the network from south to north. Consequently, in late Ming the situation had changed; therefore, also the dissemination of the *Shitong* itself was expedited. This correlates with the extension of learning through the compilation of encyclopedias, the establishment of libraries and county schools and the acknowledgement of the ideal value of books—aspects which definitely were conducive for the rediscovery of ancient books, especially books which had not been paid attention to previously. Accordingly, the *Shitong* benefited from a general trend of appreciation towards books as carrier of knowledge.

Additionally, the “lowering of the standard”—described in regard to the selection of scholar-officials (see chap. 6.2.1)—is indicative that “scholars of the old school” bethought of Liu Zhiji’s ancient “virtues” of a good historian, the *sanchang* 三長 (three excellencies), videlicet *cai* 才 (ability), *xue* 學 (scholarship or learning), and *shi* 識

¹⁰⁹⁶ See Reischauer, Fairbank and Craig (1960), p. 291.

(power of perception or insight). With this classification and characterization of a good historian (*liangshi* 良史), Liu had set a high standard which now, in Ming dynasty, became relevant again. Probably, Ming scholars even tried to find points of orientation in times of insecurity in regard to their status and role in the system of the Chinese state. Liu Zhiji's clear statements about how to write true history, record faithfully and be a good historian provided guidelines for the behavior of historians.

Moreover, philosophical currents contributed to the rediscovery of the *Shitong*. As revealed in chapter 6.3, there were, indeed, changes in philosophical perspective in Ming dynasty. Although the Neo-Confucianism at first prevailed, it changed its focus. From metaphysical contemplations and concepts like the “Great Ultimate” and “*yin* and *yang*,” the Neo-Confucianists of Ming time stressed the simple life. This correlates with Liu Zhiji's conviction to stick to the facts in history writing. It is most probable that this attitude of recollection of “earthly matters” and the distancing from intellectual and metaphysical facets contributed to the positive reception of Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* in Ming dynasty. Likewise, this corresponds to the author's critical statements concerning, e.g., the School of the *Shiji*—the school of annals and biographies in regard to their depiction of from prehistoric times—in the first chapter *Liuji* 六家 (six schools) of his work. He criticized this school because records about primeval times could not at all be true historical accounts, but are rather to be seen as legendary, mythological and—probably—fictional stories. Sima Qian treated those mythological figures of ancient times as real persons in his account without any proof of sources.

In addition, Wang Yangming's philosophy of “the unity of knowledge and action” mirrors Liu Zhiji's effort to spread the demand for historians of always recording the truth—so to say letting the words (knowledge) be in congruence with what actually happened (action). Wang, the same as Liu Zhiji, stood up for a straight behavior and in his *Chuanxi lu* 傳習錄 announced “I regard what is right as right, and what is wrong as wrong” reflecting Liu Zhiji's thoughts and the ongoing public debate (see chap. 6.3.1). This attitude also led to the appearance of so-called “morality books” (see chap. 6.3.4) which in general raised the question about what is true and false behavior.

One of Wang Yangming's followers, Li Zhi (see chap. 6.3.1 and 11.6) in a next step called into question classics doubting their authenticity “as authoritative sources of

the Sage's teaching."¹⁰⁹⁷ Like Liu Zhiji in his *Shitong* in the chapter "Doubting Antiquity," Li Zhi here directly attacked Confucian classics and Confucian beliefs. The courage to touch sacrosanct classics and the predominant philosophy certainly contributed to the revival of Liu Zhiji's ideas, too, as he had done the same, only standing alone in a time when criticizing the classics still represented a taboo. This new venture of discussing the accurateness of the classical works was part of the so-called "near-revolution in thought" (see chap. 8) which made it possible for scholars to hark back to neglected pieces of literature like the *Shitong* and cleared the way for new perspectives. Moreover, the "Unity of the Three Teachings" and Daoist and Buddhist influences softened the strict Confucian structures which could as well have contributed to the positive resonance towards Liu Zhiji's piece of work. Of course, Daoist perceptions per se did not directly promote the spread of Liu's ideas; rather the opening of the minds and the world of thoughts through those syncretic currents in general supported the revival of the *Shitong*.

In the end, the renaissance of Liu Zhiji's great piece of work certainly was an expression of Ming time currents in historiography: Already in mid-fifteenth century, He Qiaoxin as one of the first Ming scholars introduced the *Shitong* and concluded: "The one who is ambitious in historical records, how should he dismiss it [i.e. the *Shitong*]?" (see chap. 12, p. 325) As laid out in chapter 10.1, the circumstances concerning official historiography which disposed Ming scholars to revert to a historical piece from Tang dynasty were similar: Like Liu Zhiji in Tang dynasty, Ming scholars witnessed a decay of quality of official historiography due to partial sources and subjective influences. The inner turmoil, in which Ming scholars found themselves, strongly resembled Liu Zhiji's situation described in his letter of resignation (see chap. 3.1) and in the *Shitong* itself. Liu regarded himself limited to official standards of history writing without a possibility to express his true thoughts. Nevertheless, he managed to escape this firm political structure by resigning and privately writing the *Shitong*. Accordingly, Ming historians identified themselves with Liu Zhiji as a fellow sufferer and harked back to his ideas; they took him as example for how to flee the circle of official pressure. Furthermore, Liu Zhiji had always pleaded for the independency of historians who were supposed to write down historical facts without

¹⁰⁹⁷ De Bary (1970b), pp. 193, 196.

any influence by powerful officials or the emperor himself. Ming scholars, too, experienced a time of—even greater—official constraints as Confucianism grew stronger in their time and with it the strict and powerful administrative and official system of the state—imposing despotic structures. Their reaction to this development was the public dialogue about what is right and wrong, the emergence of *shiping*-literature and after all the rediscovery of a piece of work which expressed much Ming scholars wished.

In his time, Liu was regarded as insurgent who rebelled against established norms; he doubted the antique classics and, hence, the whole construct of Confucian ideas. Probably, he did not design his *Shitong* to have such a large impact or to be revolutionary—for in his heart he was a Confucian scholar. His aim was to display what went wrong in current and former official history writing. Nonetheless, Liu as an historian started an enterprise which showed traits of a “revolution of thought.” In the realm of historiography, Liu had made a first attempt to break through traditional models; he had opposed the predefined structures of the state concerning historical writing and with his *Shitong* had achieved his own “intellectual independency.” Although his attempts only concerned the domain of history and did not criticize the state, administration and society in general, a certain revolutionary thinking is, in fact, recognizable. Regrettably, Liu Zhiji did not find powerful supporters to bring forth his ideas and, therefore, stood alone. In Ming dynasty, the author’s thoughts and the *Shitong* after eight hundred years of seclusion blossomed out and gained appropriate recognition and appreciation. This study has revealed that influencing and powerful scholars of Ming dynasty, as a matter of fact, accessed this marvelous piece of literature in order to identify true history writing, characteristics of a good historian and to take Liu Zhiji’s thought as a point of departure to reform the history writing of their own time.

Conclusion and Prospect

I have argued that there was a significant break with tradition in Ming dynasty historiography: As it was exemplified in the present study the three main characteristics which prove this break with tradition to have actually happened are (1) the *gonglun*-debate about how to write history, (2) the emergence of many history works classified as *shiping*-literature (i.e. historical criticism) and (3) the reminiscence and renaissance of Liu Zhiji’s *Shitong* as an example for the strengthening of historical criticism and the

rediscovery of formerly neglected works of literature. As Liu Zhiji had sensed in Tang dynasty already, Ming scholars recognized that official historiography contained many false approaches; in consequence, a public dialogue emerged on how to write history, in which historians remembered Liu Zhiji's *Shitong* as supplying many critiques towards official history and ideas for improvement. On that basis, Ming scholars formulated revolutionary ideas on a large scale.

The relevance of this discovery lies in its opposition to the representation of Ming dynasty in other sources. In fact, the history of ideas has never played a significant role in the depiction of this dynasty. If one looks at surveys on Ming time, in general only the economic and political developments are paid attention to, furthermore the arrival of the Jesuits. In contrast, the history of ideas often is neglected or not depicted at all. This is due to the assumption that Ming time history of ideas, especially history writing, did not experience significant changes or developments; moreover, no extraordinary characters formed the thinking in this time. Wolfgang Franke in *The Cambridge History of China* pointed out that “the Ming period witnessed no figure comparable to the great historians of T’ang, Sung, Ch’ing dynasties.”¹⁰⁹⁸ Also, no relevant commentaries to the classics were produced in Ming dynasty. Although it is admitted that some developments anticipated the *kaozheng*-method, a major step in the realm of history writing, Ming historiography in general has been depicted as being rather superficial and without meaningful advancements. At least, addressed features which show the meaning of Ming historiography in a broader sense have not yet been elaborated. For that reason, this common presupposition of the backwardness of Ming historiography in comparison to other times of Chinese history remained and determined the view on Ming dynasty ideas at large; in this research, it was supposed to be rectified by disclosing the “revolutionary” character of currents in Ming time historiography and introducing some of the modern thinkers who shaped the public dialogue about what is right and wrong (*gonglun* 公論). In consequence, this public dialogue eventually led to “a definite measure for appreciating what is good and for dismissing what is evil” according Wang Shizhen or “impartial views of social consensus,”¹⁰⁹⁹ how Edward Ch’ien translated the term *gonglun*. With respect to this extraordinary public discourse,

¹⁰⁹⁸ Wolfgang Franke (1988), p. 776.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Ch’ien (1986), p. 53.

I now prefer Edward Chi'en interpretation, as the question remains how Ming scholars could have objectively evaluated currents of their life time era and establish “a definite measure” for true and false, or how Michel Foucault framed: “[W]hat historical knowledge is possible of a history which itself produces the true/false distinction on which such knowledge depends?”¹¹⁰⁰ In regard to historiography, this was a break with tradition and a step into modernity. Moreover, it was a feature not related to the consideration of few individuals; in fact, in the Jiangnan area these views circulated among a large group of people. The thesis proved in the present study, consequently, provides a major contribution to the re-evaluation of the Ming dynasty as a whole, and, thence, is relevant to realms outside the study of historiography as well.

In the large context, another aspect would be interesting to research. In particular, the *gonglun* as depicted in this paper can—in the broadest sense—be associated with the Western term of “ethics” or specifically morality. Like the *gonglun*, ethics or *philosophia moralis*—how Cicero translated the term “*ethike ηθική*”—deals with the question of how to act good or bad, i.e. moral. It would be an intriguing endeavor to further compare and merge these two concept which both try to establish “a definite norm” of what is good and what is bad.

On that account, the present research is to be seen as an overview touching on relevant works and scholars and incorporating a case study to prove the thesis assumed. As it was pointed out, during the research many works were detected deserving a closer study in order to shed light to their important disposition in the context of the evolution of historiography in China. Accordingly, a further investigation of works addressed in this paper would be an interesting and illuminative task for the study of historiography. Furthermore, the topics approached offer the possibility for an in-depth study of parallels to modern or Western conceptions of history, as well; as remarked, there are quite some resemblances. In sum, this research made an important contribution to the re-evaluation of Ming time historiography and, furthermore, provided many stimulating incentives for further studies.

¹¹⁰⁰ Michel Foucault (1991), “Question of Methods,” in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 82.

APPENDIX

Appendices to PART I

I.1 Ming Emperors

Reign Name	Temple Name	Years of Reign
Hongwu 洪武 Emperor	Emperor Taizu 太祖	1368-1398
(Kang Emperor 康帝 posthumous)	Emperor Xingzong 兴宗	-
Jianwen 建文 Emperor	Emperor Huizong 惠宗	1398-1402
Yongle 永樂 Emperor	Emperor Taizong 太宗	1402-1424
Hongxi 洪熙 Emperor	Emperor Renzong 仁宗	1424-1425
Xuande 宣德 Emperor	Emperor Xuanzong 宣宗	1425-1435
Zhengtong 正統 Emperor	Emperor Yingzong 英宗	1435-1449 and 1457-1464
Jingtai 景泰 Emperor	Emperor Daizong 代宗	1449-1457
Chenghua 成化 Emperor	Emperor Xianzong 憲宗	1464-1487
Hongzhi 弘治 Emperor	Emperor Xiaozong 孝宗	1487-1505
Zhengde 正德 Emperor	Emperor Wuzong 武宗	1505-1521
(Xian Emperor 獻帝 posthumous)	Emperor Ruizong 睿宗	-
Jiajing 嘉靖 Emperor	Emperor Shizong 世宗	1521-1567
Longqing 隆慶 Emperor	Emperor Muzong 穆宗	1567-1572
Wanli 萬曆 Emperor	Emperor Shenzong 神宗	1572-1620

Taichang 泰昌 Emperor	Emperor Guangzong 光宗	1620
Tianqi 天啟 Emperor	Emperor Xizong 熹宗	1620-1627
Chongzhen 崇禎 Emperor	Emperor Sizong 思宗	1627-1644

I.2 Ming Chronology

Table 1: “A Ming Chronology” by Timothy Brook¹¹⁰¹

THE EARLY MING (1368-1450)

- 1368 Zhu Yuanzhang founds the Ming dynasty and enthrones himself as the Hongwu emperor; orders every county magistrate to set up four granaries; cancels the book tax
- 1369 Hongwu orders every county magistrate to open a Confucian school
- 1380 Hongwu purges Chancellor Hu Weiyong and imposes direct imperial rule
- 1381 the *lijia* village registration system is universally imposed
- 1398 death of the Hongwu emperor
- 1400 date of the earliest surviving land-sale contract in the Ming
- 1402 Zhu Di ascends the throne after overthrowing his nephew, the Jianwen emperor, and declares the inauguration of the Yongle reign the following year
- 1405 Zheng He launches the first of his six expeditions into the waters around Southeast and South Asia
- 1415 The Grand Canal is fully restored to use
- 1420 the Yongle emperor confers the name Beijing on his new capital
- 1429 a series of seven customs barriers is installed along the Grand Canal

¹¹⁰¹ Brook (1998b), pp. xiv-xxi.

- 1433 the seventh and last of the great maritime expeditions reaches Africa; cotton appears as a permanent item on the tax registers in Songjiang prefecture
- 1436 a portion of the southern grain tax is commuted to silver; inauguration of the reign of the Zhengtong emperor
- 1449 the rebellion of Deng Maoqi's "silver bandits" in Fujian is suppressed; Beijing officials depose the Zhengtong emperor after he is captured by the Mongols in favor of his brother, who ascends as the Jingtai emperor in 1450

THE MID-MING (1450-1550)

- 1457 restoration of the Zhengtong emperor as the Tianshun emperor
- 1464 marginal people in the hills of the interior province of Huguang rebel
- 1465 massive flooding in central and south China sets off a spate of bridge building
- 1492 the commercial transportation of grain to the northern border in exchange for salt certificates is monetarized
- 1506-21 troubled reign of the Zhengde emperor
- 1506 the local costs of the courier system are met by a tax in silver assessed on landholdings rather than by corvé
- 1525 Ministry of War orders ships of more than one mast on the southeast coast seized, investigated, and destroyed
- 1527 granary quotas are severely reduced, diminishing the state's capacity to relieve famines
- 1538 first in a decade-long wave of severe famines and epidemics sweeps central and southeast China
- 1548 closure of the coast against all foreign trade
- 1549 Portuguese and Chinese begin regular seasonal trading at Sao João Island near Macao

THE LATE MING (1550-1644)

- 1557 Portuguese gain permission to establish a permanent settlement on the Macao peninsula (retroceded in 1999)
- 1567 the ban is lifted on the maritime trade to all but Japan
- 1570 the first commercial route book is published in Suzhou
- 1573-1620 reign of the Wanli emperor
- 1581 Chief Grand Secretary Zhang Juzheng imposes the Single Whip Reform, by which taxes are assessed on land and paid in silver
- 1582 earliest reference to the publishing of private newsheets in Beijing
- 1587 severe nationwide famine
- 1602 the iconoclastic Confucian scholar Li Zhi commits suicide in prison
- 1629 the Chongzhen emperor reiterates the state prohibition against female infanticide; a third of courier stations are closed for lack of funds
- 1638 the Beijing Gazette switches to movable type
- 1641 massive epidemic throughout north and central China
- 1642 Manchus raid into Shandong province
- 1644 rebels capture Beijing and the Chongzhen emperor commits suicide; the Manchus invade and declare the founding of the Qing dynasty

Appendices to PART II

II.1 Abstract of the *Shitong* from the *Siku quanshu*

提要¹¹⁰²

臣等謹案史通二十卷唐劉子元撰。子元本名知幾，避明皇嫌名，以字行。彭城人。弱冠擢進士第，調獲嘉尉，遷鳳閣舍人，兼修國史。中宗時擢太子率更令，累遷秘書監、太子左庶子、崇文館學士。開元初，官至左散騎常侍。後坐事貶安州別駕，卒於官。事迹具《唐書》本傳。

此書成於景龍四年。凡《內篇》十卷，三十九篇，《外篇》十卷，十三篇。蓋其官秘書監時與蕭至忠、宗楚客等爭論史事不合，發憤而著書者也。其內篇《體統》、《紕繆》、《弛張》三篇，有錄無書。考本傳已稱著《史通》四十九篇，則三篇之亡，在修《唐書》以前矣。內篇皆論史家體例，辨別是非。外篇則述史籍源流及雜評古人得失。文或與內篇重出，又或牴牾。觀開卷《六家篇》，首稱“自古帝王文籍，《外篇》言之備矣。”是先有《外篇》，乃擷其精華以成《內篇》，故刪除有所未盡也。子元於史學最深，又領史職幾三十年，更歷書局亦最久。

其貫穿今古，洞悉利病，實非後人之所及。而性本過剛，詞復有激，詆訶太甚，或悍然不顧其安。《疑經》、《惑古》諸篇，世所共話，不待言矣。即如《六家篇》，譏《尚書》為例不純；《載言篇》譏左氏不遵古法；《人物篇》譏《尚書》不載八元、八愷、寒浞、飛廉、惡來、閔天、散宜生，譏《春秋》不載由余、百裡奚、范蠡、文種、曹沫、公儀休、寧戚、穰苴。亦殊謬妄。

至於史家書法，在褒貶不在名號，昏暴如幽厲，不能削其王號也，而《稱謂篇》謂晉康、穆以下諸帝，皆當削其廟號。朱雲之折檻，張綱之埋輪，直節凜然，而《言語篇》斥為小辨，史不當書。蘧瑗位列大夫，未嘗栖隱，而《品藻篇》謂《高士傳》漏載其名。孔子門人，欲尊有若，事出孟子，定不虛誣，而《鑒識篇》以《史記》載此一事，其鄙陋甚於褚少孫。皆任意抑揚，偏駁殊甚。其他如《雜

¹¹⁰² *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部 15, *shiping lei* 史評類, *Shitong* 史通, pp. 1-4.

說篇》指趙盾魚飧，不為菲食，議《公羊》之誣。並州竹馬，非其土產，譏《東觀漢記》之謬。亦多（瑣）屑支離。且《周禮》太史掌國之六典，小史掌邦國之志，則史官兼司掌故，古之制也。子元之意，惟以褒貶為宗，餘事皆視為枝贅。故《表歷》、《書志》兩篇，於班、馬以來之舊例，一一排斥，多欲刪除，尤乖古法。餘如譏《後漢書》之採雜說，而自據《竹書紀年》、《山海經》。譏《漢書·五行志》之舛誤，而自以元暉之《科錄》為魏濟陰王暉業作，以《後漢書·劉虞傳》為在《三國志》中。小小疎漏，更所不免。然其縷析條分，如別黑白，一經抉摘，雖馬遷、班固幾無詞以自解免。亦可云載筆之法家，著書之監史矣。自明以來，註本凡三四家。而訛脫竄亂，均如一轍。此本為內府所藏舊刻，未有註文，視諸家猶為近古。其中《點煩》一篇，諸本並佚其朱點，此本亦同。無可校補，姑仍之焉。

乾隆四十二年五月恭校上

Abstract

The humble minister sincerely recorded the *Shitong* in twenty *juan* which was written by the Tang time Liu Ziyuan. Ziyuan's original name was Zhiji, but he avoided the name which was disliked by Ming Huang [i.e. Emperor Xuanzong of Tang dynasty] and was only known by his alias. He was a man from Pengcheng [today's Xuzhou 徐州 in Jiangsu]. When he was a young man entering adulthood, he was selected as *jinshi* and was transferred to an official post in Huojia [in today's region of Henan]. Then he was promoted palace secretary of the Phoenix Hall [i.e. Secretariat, *zhongshu sheng* 中書省], and simultaneously wrote the National History. At the time of emperor Zhongzong of Tang dynasty, he was selected as Director of the Watches, and in successive promotions became Director of the Palace Library, Left Mentor of the Heir Apparent, and Academician of the Institute for the Veneration of Literature. At the beginning of the Kaiyuan period [713-741], his official post reached the title of Senior Recorder. Afterwards as a punishment for a caused matter, [his rank] was diminished to an Administrative Aide of Anzhou and he became a servant to officials. His achievements are provided in the biographies of the *Tangshu*.

This book was completed in the fourth year of Jinglong [710]. All the “inner chapters” have ten *juan* and 39 chapters; the “outer chapters” have ten *juan* and thirteen chapters. At the time of his post as Director of the Palace Library, together with Xiao

Yuzhong [?-713] and Zong Chuke [?-710] he disputed historical matters not conforming; and they made a firm resolution and yet wrote history. The three chapters of the “inner chapters,” “Decorum” (*titong* 體統), “Error” (*pimiu* 紕繆) and “Tension and Relaxation” (*chizhang* 弛張) are not recorded in this book. Examining the biographies, he wrote the already called *Shitong* in 49 chapters; then three chapters were lost before the writing of the *Tangshu*.

The “inner chapters” all together depict the stylistic rules and layout and the differentiation of right and wrong [to be considered by] historians. The “outer chapters,” on the other hand, describe the origin and development of historical records and short commentaries of the gains and losses of the ancients. The writings [in the “outer chapters”] either are a reappearance of [writings in] the “inner chapters,” or they contradict the latter. Observing the beginning *juan* of the book, [namely] the “Six Schools”-chapters, at first it is stated: “Concerning the documents of the ancient monarchs, they are dealt with in the ‘outer chapters.’” This is the first [appearance] of the “outer chapters,” thus he collected its quintessence in order to complete the “inner chapters,” therefore, the deletion is somewhat not yet exhausted. Ziyuan’s [knowledge] in historiography is most profound; moreover, he had the profession of an official historian over the many of thirty years; furthermore, he had experience as a history compiler [in the Bureau of Historiography] also a very long time.

It [i.e. the *Shitong*] runs through old and new ages, understands thoroughly the advantages and disadvantages, and truly [says] what no later generation should reach. Moreover, the character and foundation is excessively firm; the words again are very sharp and the slandering is excessive, probably in flagrant defiance of its peace. In both the chapters *Yijing* [i.e. *Yigu*] and the *Huogu* [i.e. *Huojing*], the generations [of history works] are all together reviled—one does not need say [more]. Namely the *Liuji*-chapter defames the *Shangshu* as an example for impurity. The *Zaiyan*-chapter defames the Zuo-clan for not obeying the time-honored methods. The *Renwu*-chapter defames the *Shangshu* for not recording the “Eight Brilliant Scholars,”¹¹⁰³ the “Eight Gifted

¹¹⁰³ The *Bayuan* 八元 (Eight Brilliant Writers) are listed in the *Zuozhuan*, namely these are Bo Fen 伯奮, Zhong Kan 仲堪, Shu Xian 叔獻, Ji Zhong 季仲, Bo Hu 伯虎, Zhong Xiong 仲熊, Shu Bao 叔豹 and Ji Li 季狸.

Scholars [of Gaoyangshi],¹¹⁰⁴ Han Zhuo,¹¹⁰⁵ Fei Lian,¹¹⁰⁶ Elai,¹¹⁰⁷ Hong Tian,¹¹⁰⁸ or San Yisheng.¹¹⁰⁹ It defames the *Chunqiu* for not recording You Yu,¹¹¹⁰ Baili Xi,¹¹¹¹ Fan Li,¹¹¹² Wen Zhong,¹¹¹³ Cao Mo,¹¹¹⁴ Gong Yixiu,¹¹¹⁵ Ning Qi,¹¹¹⁶ or [Sima] Rangju;¹¹¹⁷ this especially is absurd and reckless.

¹¹⁰⁴ The *Bakai* 八愷 are the Eight Gifted Scholars of Gaoyangshi 高陽氏 [i.e. Zhuangxi 顓頊; ca. 2514–2436 BC], a mythological emperor and the grandson of the Yellow Emperor. They are listed in the *Zuozhuan*, namely these are Cang Shu 蒼舒, Tui Ai 隤叟, Tao Yan 橐籥, Da Lin 大臨, Mang Jiang 龍降, Ting Jian 庭堅, Zhong Rong 仲容 and Shu Da 叔達. See “Chinese Mythology—Shun 舜,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personsshun.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

¹¹⁰⁵ Han Zhuo 寒浞 is a mythological usurper who killed Houyi 后羿, a mythological archer, and twenty years later arranged that Emperor Xiang 相 (21th century BC) of the legendary Xia 夏 dynasty (ca. 2070-1600 BC) was killed. Forty years after this incident the same fate befell him and he was killed by Xiang’s former prime minister Mi, while Xiang’s son, Shao Kang 少康, triumphed. See, e.g. *Lunyu zhushu* 論語注疏, by Kongzi 孔子, comm. by He Yan 何宴 (Cao-Wei), Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe (Shisan jing zhushu 十三經注疏;10), 1999, *xianwen* 憲問, p. 123.

¹¹⁰⁶ Fei Lian 飛廉 was the Chinese God of the wind, he appeared as a winged dragon with the head of a deer and the tail of a snake.

¹¹⁰⁷ Elai 惡來, the protector of King Zhou 紂 (1075-1046 BC) of Shang 商 dynasty (ca. 1600-1046 BC), was an ancestor of Feizi 非子 (d. 858), the founder of the Qin 秦 state, the later Qin dynasty. Elai was famous for his strength.

¹¹⁰⁸ Hong Tian 閔天 was one of the four friends of King Wen Wang of Zhou 周文王 (1152-1056 BC), honored as founder of Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BC). When the last emperor of Shang dynasty, namely Zhou 紂, imprisoned King Wen Wang, Hong Tian obtained beautiful women and horses and presented them to Emperor Zhou, who was very pleased about that and released King Wen Wang.

¹¹⁰⁹ San Yisheng 散宜生 was high official during Western Zhou dynasty (ca. 1046-771 BC).

¹¹¹⁰ You Yu 由余 was one of the highest officials helping the Qin becoming the powerful leader of the feudal lords during the Spring and Autumn Period (*Chunqiu* 春秋, ca. 770-446/403 BC); originally, he was an official of all various states of the tribesmen of the western border.

¹¹¹¹ Baili Xi 百里奚 was prime minister in the state of Qin during Spring and Autumn period.

¹¹¹² Fan Li 范蠡 (b. 517 BC) was an advisor in the state of Yue 越 during Spring and Autumn period.

¹¹¹³ Wen Zhong 文種 was a famous strategist at the end of Spring and Autumn period; he assisted in governing the Yue state and defeating King Fucha 夫差 of the state of Wu 吳. But because of his great achievements King Gou Jian 勾踐 (496-465 BC) of Wu ordered him to commit suicide.

¹¹¹⁴ Cao Mao 曹沫 was a warrior and official of the state of Lu 魯 during Spring and Autumn period.

¹¹¹⁵ Gong Yixiu 公儀休 was a famous minister of the Lu state during Spring and Autumn period.

¹¹¹⁶ Ning Qi 寧戚 is a person from rom Wei state. In 685, he was honored the title Grand Master (*dafu* 大夫) and later on assisted in ruling the country.

¹¹¹⁷ Sima Rangju 司马穰苴 was a military general in the Qi 齊 state during Spring and Autumn period and became Minister of War (*da sima* 大司馬, hence the name).

As for the manner of presentation by historians, the praise and blame does not depend on the fame [of a person]; befuddled and cruel [sovereigns are depicted] as remote and strict, and one cannot erase such a king's name. But the *Chengwei*-chapter names Emperor Kang of Jin [322-344] and Emperor Mu of Jin [343-361] and the following emperors, and one should erase posthumous titles of all of them. “The breaking of the cage of Zhu Yun”¹¹¹⁸ [and] “the buried vehicle of Zhang Gang,”¹¹¹⁹ [show that] strictly just and impartial personalities of integrity are stern. But the chapter “Words” ousts them for being small differentiations, which the historian should not write down. The status of Qu Yuan¹¹²⁰ was listed as a Grand Master and he never lived as a recluse; but the chapter “Classification of People” names “biographies of high people” and leaves out to record his name. Concerning the disciples of Confucius, it seems [the author] wishes to respect them. But the [recorded] affairs leave out Mengzi, and it is fixed that he is not invented. But the chapter *Jianshi* takes the *Shiji* for recording this one fact—this superficiality exceeds Chu Shaosun [104-30 BC].¹¹²¹ This all is willfully praised and censured, and partiality and contradiction are especially deep. Others like the chapter “Miscellaneous Treatises” refer to Zhao Dun's¹¹²² fish chowder, but not on the account of humble food, rather to discuss the defaming of the *Gongyang[zhuang]*.¹¹²³ [He says] the play bamboo horses from Bingzhou¹¹²⁴ are not its

¹¹¹⁸ Zhu Yun 朱雲 dared to criticize emperor Cheng Di 成帝 (32-5 BC) of Western Han dynasty, so that the latter one imprisoned him, but later amnestied him.

¹¹¹⁹ Zhang Gang 張綱 was an official in Eastern Han and, among others, was ordered to take part in an inspection tour through the country to examine the local administration; all the other people accepted the instructions, but Zhang Gang buried his vehicle in a pavilion in Luoyang city because evil people would block the roads.

¹¹²⁰ Qu Yuan 蘧瑗 was a person from Wei 卫 state during Spring and Autumn period.

¹¹²¹ Chu Shaosun 褚少孫 (104-30 BC), an official from Han dynasty, added anecdotes to the *Shiji* and, hence, was accused of not concentrating on the content, but rather on a “clever speech.” See Martin Kern (2011), *Text and Ritual in Early China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 200ff.

¹¹²² Zhao Dun 趙盾 (d. 601 BC) was an official from Jin 晉 state during Spring and Autumn period. Because he thought his ruler Duke Ling was cruel, he did not pay enough respect. Therefore, the Duke ordered to kill him. When the assassinator arrived at Zhao Dun's house—not guarded at all—and saw him eating a fish soup like a common man, he could not kill him because of Zhao Dun's modesty; hence, the assassinator rather killed himself. However, Zhao Dun became famous because of another story: Later, Zhao's uncle Zhao Chuan assassinated their ruler (Duke Ling), but the historians accused Zhao Dun of having killed his ruler because he failed to punish the murderer. See Harry Miller (2015), *The Gongyang Commentary on The Spring and Autumn Annals: A Full Translation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 149ff.

¹¹²³ The *Gongyang zhuang* is—like the *Zuozhuan*—a commentary to the *Chunqiu*, written by Gongyang Gao 公羊高. For more information, see “*Gongyangzhuang* 公羊傳,” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/gongyangzhuang.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

local products—[that is how Liu] defames the errors of the *Dongguan Hanji*.¹¹²⁵ And how many (trivial) pieces and fragments [he included]! Furthermore, [as recorded] in the *Zhouli*¹¹²⁶ the Grand Scribes manage the six laws¹¹²⁷ of a country, while the Junior Scribes manage the records of a country; then the History Office at the same time takes charge of the state archives—this is the ancient system. The idea of Ziyuan [i.e. Liu Zhiji] was only to take praise and blame as principal aim; all matters left over are regarded as different and redundant. Therefore, in the two chapters “Tables” and “Monographs” the old practices coming from Ban [Gu] and Sima [Qian] were one by one rejected. [Liu] very much desired to leave things out and particularly he opposed the old methods. The rest is like defaming the picking of fragmentary writing in the *Houhanshu*,¹¹²⁸ while [Liu] personally depends on the *Bamboo Annals* and the *Shanhaijing*. He defames the errors of the chapter “Record of the Five Phases” in the *Hanshu*, but personally regards Yuan Hui’s *Kelu*¹¹²⁹ as the work of the Northern Wei [person] [Yuan] Huiye, prince of Jiyin,¹¹³⁰ and the biography of Liu Yu in the *Houhanshu* as included in the *Sanguozhi*. Very few he leaves out [things] by mistake, so even more space [needed for the book] is unavoidable. However, his detailed analysis is long and differentiated; for example, he differentiates black and white [i.e. good and

¹¹²⁴ Bingzhou 並州 encompasses today’s region of Shanxi province and parts of Shaanxi, Neimenggu and Hebei provinces.

¹¹²⁵ *Dongguan Hanji* 東觀漢記 is “an alternative history of the Later Han.” It was compiled under the supervision of Ban Gu. Its origin lies in the biography of Emperor Guanwu 光武帝 (r. 25-57), founder of the Later Han dynasty, and it was expanded continuously. “*Dongguan Hanji* 東觀漢記,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/dongguanhanji.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

¹¹²⁶ The *Zhouli* 周禮, “The Rites of the Zhou,” from Western Zhou dynasty (1046-771 BC) is one of the Three Ritual Classics (*sanli* 三禮)—the other two being the *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Rites) and the *Liji* 禮記 (The Records of Rites). For more information, see “*Zhouli* 周禮,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/zhouli.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

¹¹²⁷ In ancient China, the six laws (*liu dian* 六典) refer to the methods of ruling a country; they include: the law of administration, the law of education, the law of ritual, the law of government, the law of punishment, and the law of affairs/situations.

¹¹²⁸ The *Houhanshu* 後漢書 is the official dynastic history of the Later Han dynasty (25-220 AD).

¹¹²⁹ Yuan Hui 元暉 (d. 519) was a literate and official from Northern Wei dynasty (386-535). He composed the *Kelu* 科錄, a treatise about the time from Fuxi—the legendary founder of Chinese polity—to Jin dynasty.

¹¹³⁰ Yuan Huiye 元暉業 (d. 551), *zi* 字: Shaoyuan 紹遠, prince of Jiyin, was a military official, who, among other things, defended the city of Kaocheng against the troops of the Liang dynasty general Chen Qingzhi 陳慶之, and afterwards was captured by the latter. Later, he was executed by Emperor Wenxuan 文宣 (r. 550–559) of Northern Qi dynasty. See Knechtgen, Chang (2014), vol. 4, p. 2058.

bad/right and wrong], as soon as he selects [a work], even though Sima Qian and Ban Gu did not use many words in order to personally understand things and avoid [so many pages]. Also, one can say he was a specialist of the methods of history writing and the supervisor of writing history books. From Ming time on, there were all together [only] three or four specialists annotating this book. And yet the errors were expelled and investigated, all as if it was one method. This book is an old edition which is stored as a treasury of the imperial palace and has never had annotations—regarding all the experts standing yet for the near ancient past [Song dynasty–1840]. Concerning the chapter *Dianfan* in this work, in all the editions these bright red spots are lost, and this one is the same. If it cannot be proofread or supplemented, leniently it remains like this.

II.2 Table of Contents of the *Shitong*

		Translation by Byongik Koh ¹¹³¹	Translation by Edwin G. Pulleyblank ¹¹³²	Explanations according to Pulleyblank
<i>Neipian</i> 內篇 (Inner Chapters)				
1	<i>Liujia</i> 六家	Sechs Schulen der Historiographie	Six schools (<i>Shujing, Chunqiu,</i> <i>Zuozhuan, Guoyu,</i> <i>Shiji, Hanshu</i>)	“classification of historical works”
2	<i>Erti</i> 二體	Zwei Arten der Geschichts- schreibung	Two Types	
3	<i>Zaiyan</i> 載言	Aufnehmen von Reden	(“dealing with a suggested new division for dynastic histories which was never adopted”)	“section devoted to the different parts of standard annals- biography type of history”
4	<i>Benji</i> 本紀	Annalen	Basic Annals	
5	<i>Shijia</i> 世家	Fürtsenhäuser	Hereditary Families	

¹¹³¹ Koh (1956).

¹¹³² Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 142f.

6	<i>Liezhuan</i> 列傳	Biographien	Biographies		
7	<i>Biaoli</i> 表歷	Tabellen	Tables		
8	<i>Shuzhi</i> 書志	Monographien <i>shu</i> oder <i>zhi</i>	Monographs		
9	<i>Lunzan</i> 論贊	Würdigung	Discussions and Criticism		
10	<i>Xuli</i> 序例	Richtlinie	Prefaces und Rules of Procedure		
11	<i>Timu</i> 提目	Titel	Titles and Headings		
12	<i>Duanxian</i> 斷限	Behandelter Zeitraum	Setting of Limits		“treating of various technical problems faced by historians”
13	<i>Bianci</i> 編次	Einordnung der Kapitel	Arrangement and Order		
14	<i>Chengwei</i> 稱謂	Benennung	Nomenclature		
15	<i>Caizhuan</i> 採撰	Materialsamm- lung	Selection of Material		
16	<i>Zaiwen</i> 載文	Aufnahmen von Belletristik	Recording of Literary Pieces		
17	<i>Buzhu</i> 補注	Kommentare	Supplements and Commentaries		
18	<i>Yinxi</i> 因習	Konvention	Taking over (on the danger of mechanically incorporating earlier texts into later compilations)		
19	<i>Yili</i> 邑里	Heimatort	Localities (of family origin)		
20	<i>Yanyu</i> 言語	Rede	Words		

21	<i>Fuci</i> 浮詞	Überflüssige Ausdrucksweise	Excessive Verbiage	
22	<i>Xushi</i> 敘事	Schilderung	Narration	
23	<i>Pinzao</i> 品藻	Wertmäßige Einstufung	Classification (of people)	
24	<i>Zhishu</i> 直書	Aufrichtige Geschichts- schreibung	Honest Writing	“difficulties of writing truthfully and the dangers of deliberate distortions of the record”
25	<i>Qubi</i> 曲筆	Verfälschte Geschichts- schreibung	Crooked Brush	
26	<i>Jianshi</i> 鑒識	Anerkennung		“on judgments made on various historians by other historians and on mistakes that have been made through seeing non-existent ulterior motives and hidden meanings behind the statements of historians”
27	<i>Tanze</i> 探蹟	Kritische Untersuchung		
28	<i>Moni</i> 摸擬	Nachahmung	Immitation (good and bad) of former models	
29	<i>Shushi</i> 書事	Beschreibung		“things that should and should not be recorded”
30	<i>Renwu</i> 人物	Personen		“people who do and do not deserve to have biographies”
31	<i>Hecai</i> 覈才	Begabung für Geschichts- schreibung		“the difference between literary and historical talents”
32	<i>Xuzhuan</i> 序傳	Zusammenfas- sende Darstel- lungen und Autobiographien	Autobiographical Prefaces	

33	<i>Fanxing</i> 煩省	Schwülstigkeit und Knappheit der Schilderung	Prolivity and Concision	
34	<i>Zashu</i> 雜述	Gemischte Werke	Miscellaneous Minor Writings of a Historical Character	
35	<i>Bianzhi</i> 辨職	Kritische Analyse (meiner) Amtstätigkeit	Qualities Needed for a History Official	
36	<i>Zixu</i> 自敘	Autobiographie	Autobiographical Section	
<i>Waipian</i> 外篇 (Outer Chapters)				
1	<i>Shiguan jianzhi</i> 史官建置	Geschichte der Geschichtsämter	History of History Office	
2	<i>Gujin zhengshi</i> 古今正史	Richtige Geschichte	History of the Standard Histories	
3	<i>Yigu</i> 疑古	Zweifel am Altertum	Suspicious about Antiquity	
4	<i>Huojing</i> 惑經	Fragliches in den Klassikern	Doubts about the Classics	
5	<i>Shenzuo</i> 申左	Bestätigung des <i>Zuochuan</i>		“To demonstrate the superiority of the <i>Tso- chuan</i> over the other commentaries to the Spring and Autumn Annals”
6	<i>Dianfan</i> 點煩	Streichung von überflüssigen Sätzen		“miscellaneous notes which supplement material already contained in the Inner Sections (occasionally showing glaring inconsistencies with what has been said there)”
7	<i>Zashuo</i> 雜說	Miszellen		
8	<i>Zashuo</i> 雜說	Miszellen		
9	<i>Zashuo</i>	Miszellen		

	雜說			
10	<i>Wuxing cuowu</i> 五行錯誤	Kritik am <i>Wuxingzhi</i>		
11	<i>Wuxing cuowu</i> 五行錯誤	Kritik am <i>Wuxingzhi</i>		
12	<i>Anhuo</i> 暗惑	Verborgener Irrtum		
13	<i>Wushi</i> 忤時	Unzeitgemäßes	Against the Times	“Liu Chih-chi’s letter of resignation to Hsiao Chih-chung [...] corresponds to the autobiographical section which ends the first half of the book”

II.3 Table of Contents of the *Shitong huiyao*

<i>Yanshan waiji</i> 儼山外集 <i>juan</i> 卷 24 <i>Shitong huiyao shang</i> 史通會要上		
Name of chapter	Possible Sub-chapters or content	Equivalent in the <i>Shitong</i> ¹¹³³
<i>Jianzhi diyi</i> 建置第一 (Establishment)		<i>Shiguan jianzhi</i> 史官建置 (History of History Office)
<i>Jiafa di'er</i> 家法第二 (Regulations of the Schools [of Historiography])		<i>Liujia</i> 六家 (Six Schools) <i>Erti</i> 二 體 (Two Types)
<i>Pinliu disan</i> 品流第三 (Classes/Grades)		<i>Zashu</i> 雜述 (Miscellaneous Minor Writings of a Historical Character)

¹¹³³ The translations of the chapter titles of the *Shitong* derive from Edwin G. Pulleyblank, see Pulleyblank (1961), pp. 142f.

Yili disi 義例第四 (Examples of Righteousness)	Shi zhi you ji 史之有紀 (i.e. the <i>Benji</i> 本紀, Imperial Biographies)	same
	Shi zhi you zhuan 史之有傳 (i.e. the <i>Liezhuan</i> 列傳, Biographies)	same
	Shi zhi you biao 史之有表 (i.e. the <i>Biaoli</i> 表歷, Tables)	same
	Shi zhi you zhi 史之有志 (i.e. the <i>Shuzhi</i> 書志, Monographies and Treatises)	same
	Shi zhi you li 史之有例 (i.e. the <i>Xuli</i> 序例, Prefaces and Rules of Procedure)	same
	Shi zhi you bie 史之有別 (The Existence of Differences in History)	—
	Shi zhi you duanxian 史之有斷限 (i.e. the <i>Duanxian</i> 斷限, Restrictions)	same
	Shi zhi you timu 史之有題目 (i.e. the <i>Timu</i> 題目, Titles and Headings)	same
	Shi zhi you lun 史之有論 (i.e. the <i>Lunzan</i> 論贊, Discussions and Praises)	same
	Shi zhi you fuchu 史之有附出 (The Existence of Supplementary Lists in History)	—
	Shi zhi you buzhu 史之有補注 (i.e. the <i>Buzhu</i> 補註, Supplements and Commentaries)	same

<i>Dashan waiji</i> 儼山外集 <i>juan</i> 卷 25 <i>Shitong huiyao zhong</i> 史通會要中		
<i>Name of chapter</i>	<i>Possible Sub-chapters or content</i>	<i>Equivalent in the Shitong</i>
<i>Shufan</i> 書凡 (All the Books)		<i>Yanyu</i> 言語 (Words)
<i>Xiuci</i> 修詞 (Writing Words)		<i>Moni</i> 模擬 (Imitation [good and bad] of Former Models)
<i>Xushi</i> 敘事 (Narration)		<i>Zaiwen</i> 載文 (Recording Literary Pieces)
<i>Xiaofa</i> 效法 (Imitations)		<i>Pinzao</i> 品藻 (Classification [of People])
<i>Juanyong</i> 雋永 (Interesting Stories)		—
<i>Pianmu</i> 篇目 (Table of Contents)		—
<i>Dashan waiji</i> 儼山外集 <i>juan</i> 卷 26 <i>Shitong huiyao xia</i> 史通會要下		
<i>Name of chapter</i>	<i>Possible Sub-chapters or content</i>	<i>Equivalent in the Shitong</i>
<i>Congbian yi</i> 叢篇一	<i>zhishu</i> 直書 (write straightforwardly)	
<i>Congbian er</i> 叢篇二	<i>Shufa fanjian</i> 書法繁簡 (Traditional or Simple Calligraphy)	
<i>Congbian san</i> 叢篇三		

<i>Congbian si</i> 叢篇四	<i>Shicai</i> 史才 (Historical Ability)	
<i>Congbian wu</i> 叢篇五	<i>Shiguan xiushi</i> 史館修史 (History of the Bureau of Historiography)	
<i>Congbian liu</i> 叢篇六		
<i>Congbian qi</i> 叢篇七	<i>Qubi</i> 曲筆 (Falsification in Writing)	

II.4 The *Congpian*-chapters

In the following the *Congpian*-chapters are depicted. This part serves the purpose to disclose the structure of the *Congpian* 叢篇-chapters. The marked passages highlight the parts which are identical to the sources named in the footnotes.

叢篇一

夫愛憎之情忘而後是非之論定。故史必修於異代豈？曰：才難而已乎？《堯典》述德標以《虞書》此聖人之志也。重華協帝毋亦身親筆削與禹貢夏后之書也。或曰：伯益所記云。

書之二典不獨記其事，並與其深微之意傳之。蓋當時執筆皆聖人之徒也。又曰：“古之良史，明足以周萬事之理，道足以徧天下之用，知足以通難知之意，文足以發難顯之情。（並曾鞏文）¹¹³⁴

古之王者，代/[世]有史官，以日系月，“屬辭”比事，君舉必書，用存有法，書而不法，是謂空言：蓋褒貶之重慎也。（蘇頌文）¹¹³⁵

國史明乎得失之跡。（詩大序）¹¹³⁶ [In the National Histories the signs of their gains and losses are clear. (*Shidaxu*)]

¹¹³⁴ Yuanfeng leigao 元豐類稿, in 11 juan 卷, from Nan Qi 南齊 by Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019-1083).

¹¹³⁵ From *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, di 第 3 bu 部, juan 卷 253, *Zhangshuo jianxiu guoshi dengzhi* 張說監修國史等制 by Su Ting 蘇頌.

國史之興將明得失，使一代之典，煥然可觀。（溫嶠表）¹¹³⁷

夫勸善懲惡，正言直筆，紀聖朝功德，述忠臣賢士事業，載奸臣佞人醜行，以傳無窮者，史官之職也。（李翱文）¹¹³⁸

夫天[人]之生人也有賢有不肖。若乃其惡可以戒世其善可以示後，而死之日亡得而稱焉，是誰之過與？蓋史官之責也。¹¹³⁹

史之為義也，不隱惡不虛美美者因其美[而一作]“以”。美之，雖有其惡，不加[一作“之”，下同。]毀也；惡者因其惡而惡之，雖有其美，不加[如]譽也。¹¹⁴⁰

史之為用也，記功司過，彰善闡惡，得失一朝，榮辱千載。苟違斯法，豈曰能官。
1141

自古置史官，書事以明鑒戒。人君但為善事，不患史官不書。若所為錯忤，史官縱不書，天下之人書之。¹¹⁴²

因[考]大臣之除罷，而識君子小人進退消長之機[際]；[考]因政事之因革，而識取士、養民、治軍、理財之方。¹¹⁴³（陳君舉文）

別統系以明大一統之義表歲年以[微]仿首時之體辨名號以正名紀即位改元以正始書尊立崩葬以敘始終書篡弒廢徙以討亂賊書祭祀以著吉禮之得失書行幸田狩以著巡遊之荒怠書恩澤制詔以著命令之美惡書朝會聘問以著賓禮之是非書封拜黜罷以見賞罰之當否書征伐戰攻以志用兵之正偽書人事以寓予奪書災祥以垂勸戒¹¹⁴⁴

¹¹³⁶ *Shida xu* 詩大序 from Han dynasty.

¹¹³⁷ *Tongdian* 通典, chap. *Mishujian*·祕書監, speech by Wen Jiaobiao 溫嶠表.

¹¹³⁸ *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, di 第 7 bu 部, juan 卷 634, *Baiguan xingzhuang zou* 百官行狀奏, by Li Ao 李翱.

¹¹³⁹ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, juan 卷 8, chap. 39: *shushi* 書事.

¹¹⁴⁰ Parts from *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, juan 卷 13, chap. 3: *yigu* 疑古.

¹¹⁴¹ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, juan 卷 7, chap. 25: *qubi* 曲筆.

¹¹⁴² *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, juan 卷 222, *zhiguanbu* 職官部 20, p. 3674; in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *zibu* 子部, *leishulei* 類書類, *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽.

¹¹⁴³ *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考, juan 卷 193, *jingjika* 經籍考 20; citing the self-preface (*zixu* 自序) from the *Jianlong bian* 建隆編 by Chen Fuliang 陳傅良.

¹¹⁴⁴ *Ming Wenxian* 明文衡, juan 卷 52, p. 124; in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *jibu* 集部, *zongjilei* 總集類, *Ming Wenxian* 明文衡.

叢篇二

書法之難也有五：煩而不整，一[難]也；俗而不典，二[難]也。書不實錄，三[難]也。賞罰不中，四[難]也。文不勝質，五[難]也。¹¹⁴⁵（袁崧文）

史有三長：才也，學也，識也。（劉知幾文）[The historian [has to] have three excellencies: ability, learning and insight.]

史之敘事也，辨而不華，質而不俚，其文直，其事核，若斯而已可也。¹¹⁴⁶

[Historical narratives are distinguishable but not splendid, characteristic but not vulgar. Its language is straightforward, its affairs are verified]

古之國史，異聞則書。¹¹⁴⁷

國史表言行，昭法式，至於人理常事，不足備列。¹¹⁴⁸

史之為書也，有其事則記，無其事則闕。¹¹⁴⁹

夫直筆者，不掩惡，不虛美，[...]雖然存[其]大體而已。若錄及細碎，如宋孝王、王劭之徒。專言[貌]鄙事，訐以為直，吾無取焉。¹¹⁵⁰

古者刊定一史，纂成一家，體統各殊，指歸咸別。¹¹⁵¹

史以好善為主，嫉惡[為]次之子長孟堅，史之好善者也。南史、董狐，史之嫉惡者也。兼此二長[者]，而重之以文，其惟左氏乎！¹¹⁵²

史官掌修國史[...]。凡天地日月之詳，山川封域之分，昭穆繼代之序，禮樂師旅之事，誅賞興廢之政；皆本起居[...]¹¹⁵³

¹¹⁴⁵ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 8, chap. 28: *moni* 摸擬; originally from Yuan Shansong 袁山松 in the *Houhanshu* 後漢書.

¹¹⁴⁶ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 7, chap. 26: *jianshi* 鑑識.

¹¹⁴⁷ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 3, chap. 26: *shuzhi* 書誌.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 1, chap. 1: *liujia* 六家.

¹¹⁴⁹ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 7, chap. 27: *tanze* 探蹟.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 18, chap. 9: *zashuo xia* 雜說下.

¹¹⁵¹ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 20, chap. 13: *wushi* 忤時.

¹¹⁵² *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 18, chap. 9: *zashuo xia* 雜說下.

¹¹⁵³ *Tangliudian* 唐六典, *juan* 卷 9, *Zhongshusheng* 中書省, p. 193; in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部, *zhiguanlei* 職官類, *guan zhi zhi shu* 官製之屬, *Tangliudian* 唐六典.

夫記事之體，欲簡而[...]詳，疏而不漏。若煩則盡取，省則都損，二者皆過也。

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論史之煩省者，但當求[/ 要]其事有妄載[...], 言有闕書, [...]可矣。必量世事之厚薄, 限篇第以多寡[/ 少], 失其折衷矣。¹¹⁵⁵

張世偉著《馬班優劣論》以為：遷敘三千年事，五十萬言，固敘二百四十年事，八十萬言。非通論也。¹¹⁵⁶

史氏所書，以正為主。[...]若馬卿之《子虛》、《上林》，揚雄之《甘泉》、《羽獵》，班固《兩都》，馬融《廣成》，費矣。¹¹⁵⁷

史論立言。理當雅正。¹¹⁵⁸

表歲以首年，而因年以著統。大書以提要，而分注以備言。使夫歲年之久近，國統之離合，事辭之詳畧，議論之同異，通貫曉析，如指諸掌。名曰《資治通鑑綱目》。¹¹⁵⁹ 粵自紀傳創興，而編年之法廢，細大不捐，猥瑣不綱，而策書之法廢，是非去取由其一隅之見不能不謬於聖人，而懲勸之法又廢矣。¹¹⁶⁰

叢篇三

夫飾言[者]為文，編文[者]為句，句積而章立，章積而篇成。[...]章句之言，有顯有晦。顯也者，繁詞縟說，理盡於篇中；晦也者，省字約文，事溢於句外。¹¹⁶¹

觀太史公之創表也，於帝王則敘其子孫，於公侯則紀其年月，列行縈紆以相屬，編字戢耆而相排。雖燕、越萬[裏]，里而於徑寸之內，犬牙可接；雖昭穆九代，而

¹¹⁵⁴ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 8, chap. 29: *shushi* 書事.

¹¹⁵⁵ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 9, chap. 33: *fanxing* 煩省.

¹¹⁵⁶ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 9, chap. 33: *fanxing* 煩省.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 5, chap. 16: *zaiwen* 載文.

¹¹⁵⁸ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 4, chap. 14: *chengwei* 稱謂.

¹¹⁵⁹ *Yupi Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 御批資治通鑑綱目, *juan* 卷 *shouhang* 首上, *Zhuzi xulie* 朱子序列, pp. 4f; in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部, *shipinglei* 史評類, *Yupi Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 御批資治通鑑綱目.

¹¹⁶⁰ *Yupi Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 御批資治通鑑綱目, *juan* 卷 *shouxia* 首下, *Li Fangzi houxu* 李方子後序, p. 54; in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部, *shipinglei* 史評類, *Yupi Zizhi tongjian gangmu* 御批資治通鑑綱目.

¹¹⁶¹ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 6, chap. 22: *xushi* 敘事.

於方[尺一作“寸”。之中，雁行有敘。使讀[...]。者閱文便睹，舉目可詳，此其所以為快也。¹¹⁶²

史之為道，以古傳今，[...]非以今博古也。¹¹⁶³

如春秋諸國，賦詩[...], 《左氏》[唯]惟錄[...]. 其篇名史漢語在某傳是已。¹¹⁶⁴

史漢作傳多以品類相從如韓非、老子，以其著，書俱有子名，董卓、袁紹並，生漢末。各稱英雄耳。¹¹⁶⁵

莊青翟、劉舍，位登丞相，而班史無錄；姜詩、趙壹，身止掾吏，而謝《書》有傳《後》之修史者不然，位官通顯，必為操筆其立傳也，止具官歷贈典若斯而已乎¹¹⁶⁶

司馬《史記》子云《太玄》皆成一家言傳之以傳世可也，至於短編小說多載傳中甚矣。其煩也若梁孝元撰同姓名人錄一卷是已。

字文初習華風，事由蘇綽。至於軍國詞令，皆准《尚書》。當時風行頗去淫麗，若夫矯枉過正多矣，故其書文而不實雅。而無檢真跡甚寡客氣尤繁雲。¹¹⁶⁷

漢武帝怒司馬遷議已收景武二紀自毀之。

司馬相如傳子長錄其自敘孟堅因之宋書臧質魯爽王僧達諸傳皆孝武自造而敘事多虛。

夫晉、宋以[己]前，帝王傳授，始自錫命，終於登極。其有箋疏[...], 詔策並皆偽飾然款曲頻煩。猶云備其文物也。若梁武之居江陵，齊宣之在晉陽；作史者固宜削之以見例也¹¹⁶⁸

¹¹⁶² *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 6, chap. 7: *zashuo shang* 雜說上.

¹¹⁶³ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 4, chap. 10: *xuli* 序例.

¹¹⁶⁴ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 4, chap. 12: *duanxian* 斷限.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 7, chap. 23: *pinzao* 品藻.

¹¹⁶⁶ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 18, chap. 9: *zashuo xia* 雜說下.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 17, chap. 8: *zashuo zhong* 雜說中.

¹¹⁶⁸ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 18, chap. 9: *zashuo xia* 雜說下.

叢篇四

史才不其難乎，班固之議司馬遷曰：“論大道則先黃老而後六經，序游俠則退處士而進奸雄，述貨殖則崇勢利而羞[賤]貧賤。”傅玄之議固曰：“論國體則飾主闕而折忠臣，敘世教則貴取容而賤直節，述時務則謹詞章而畧事實。[...]”劉知幾之議王孫令狐曰：“論王業則(,)黨悖逆而誣忠義，敘國家則(,)抑正順而褒篡奪，述風俗則矜外夷而陋華夏。”¹¹⁶⁹

君子皆不以為過惟新唐書成表進有曰：“其事則增於前，其文則損於舊。”¹¹⁷⁰議者謂歐宋之失正坐於此元人之進宋史表曰：“聲容盛而武備衰，論建多而成效少。”¹¹⁷¹宋之國是實符斯言（，）我朝丘文莊公¹¹⁷²浚擬題於國學作進元史表¹¹⁷³云：非無一善之可稱終是三綱¹¹⁷⁴之不正聞者亦快之。

叢篇五

監修國史監者，總領之義明立科條，各當任使，則人思自勉，書可立成矣。¹¹⁷⁵

古之國史，皆出自一家，如左氏、司馬氏，故能垂諸不朽。¹¹⁷⁶

漢東觀，大集群儒，著述而制作始可議矣。是以伯度譏其不實，公理以為可焚非過也。¹¹⁷⁷

¹¹⁶⁹ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 8, chap. 29: *shushi* 書事.

¹¹⁷⁰ Zeng Gongliang 曾公亮 (998-1078), *zi* 字: Mingzhong 明仲, *hao* 號: Lezheng 樂正, was a Chinese scholar of the Song Dynasty who helped write the *Xintangshu* and who submitted the completed *Xintangshu* to the throne in 1060. See “*Xintangshu* 新唐書,” online at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/xintangshu.html>, last accessed: September 4th, 2017.

¹¹⁷¹ Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄 (1283-1357), *zi* 字: Yuangong 元功, *hao* 號: Guizhai 圭齋, was a scholar from Yuan time who was involved in the compilation of the *Songshi* 宋史 (History of Song). See “*Songshi* 宋史,” online at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/songshi.html>, last accessed: September 4th, 2017.

¹¹⁷² *Qiu Wenzhuang gong* 丘文莊公 is a work by Qiu Jun 丘濬 (1421-1495) or a reference to him.

¹¹⁷³ *Jin Yuan shibiao* 進元史表 is a chapter of the *Yuanshi*.

¹¹⁷⁴ *Sangang* 三綱 are the cardinal guides of the social order, namely ruler-subject, father-child, and husband-wife.

¹¹⁷⁵ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 20, chap. 13: *wushi* 忤時.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 20, chap. 13: *wushi* 忤時.

¹¹⁷⁷ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 20, chap. 13: *wushi* 忤時.

唐修晉、隋二史仍用眾手志則李淳風於志寧紀傳則顏師古、孔穎達，然用當其才不失所長。

宋修唐書歐陽文忠則表志宋景文公則紀傳各出姓名以示撰述有工拙焉。

五代史成於一人之手，歐陽可以上踵班馬矣。

今史司取士滋多，人自為苟、袁家，自為政、駿。每記事，敷[/ 載一]言，則閣筆相視，含毫不發，頭白可期，汗青無日。¹¹⁷⁸

叢篇六

史官善惡必書，使驕臣賊子懼此權顧輕哉班生受金陳壽求米僕乃視如浮雲耳。¹¹⁷⁹

司馬遷氣本好奇複，因論事遭刑意多憤激故葛洪論之曰：‘《伯夷居列傳》之首，以為善而無報也。’項羽列於本紀，以為居高位者，非關有德也。¹¹⁸⁰論者又謂武帝[...], 表章儒術, [...]而[...], 海內凋弊, 反不若文景[...]-之恭儉其, [...]先黃老而後六經。以此武帝[...]-刻深, 群臣[下]多誅顧當[誅]刑者得以貨免, 其羞貧賤者, 以此其進奸雄者, 蓋嘆時無魯朱家能脫已於禍耳。李方叔謂之用意深遠此類是已。

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陳壽¹¹⁸²嘗為諸葛亮¹¹⁸³書佐，得撻百下，其父亦為亮所髡故蜀志多誣妄云。¹¹⁸⁴

丁儀，丁廙，有盛名於魏，陳壽謂其子曰：可覓千斛米見與，當為尊[公 /]翁作佳傳。丁不與之，[晉 /]竟不為立傳。¹¹⁸⁵

¹¹⁷⁸ *Xintangshu* 新唐書, *juan* 132, *liezhuan* 57, Liu Zixuan [Liu Zhiji], vol. 15, p. 4522

¹¹⁷⁹ Based on Liu Zhiji's words, *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 13, chap. 4: *huojing* 惑經.

¹¹⁸⁰ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 7, chap. 27: *tanze* 探蹟. There this is a quotation from Ge Hong 葛洪, *zi* 字: Zhichuan 稚川, from Jiangsu, “was a famous Eastern Jin period 東晉 (317-420) Daoist master and physician. He was the first scholar who wrote about the practice of alchemy (*liandan* 煉丹) among Daoist circles.” “Persons in Chinese History—Ge Hong 葛洪,” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Division/personsgehong.html), <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Division/personsgehong.html>, last accessed: July 30th, 2017.

¹¹⁸¹ *Shuzhai laoxue congtao* 庶齋老學叢談, by Sheng Ruzi 盛如梓, *juan* 卷 1, p. 30.

¹¹⁸² Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297), *zi* 字: Chengzuo 承祚, was a writer and official from Western Jin dynasty (*Xijin* 西晉, 265-316). His most known work is the *Sanguozhi* 三國志 (The Records of the Three Kingdoms).

¹¹⁸³ Zhuge Liang (181-234) was a military leader and prime minister of Shu Han 蜀漢 (221-263). For more information, see “Persons in Chinese History—Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮,” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html), <http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

¹¹⁸⁴ *Xu Shishuo* 續世說, by Kong Pingzhong 孔平仲, chap. *chouxi* 仇隙.

魏收性憎勝己，喜念舊惡，[甲]名門盛德與之有怨者，莫不被以醜言，沒其善事。遷怒所至，毀及高曾。[...]尚書令楊遵[彥]，一代貴臣，勢傾朝野，收撰其家傳甚美，¹¹⁸⁶

世號穢史收初得楊休之助，因謝曰：“無以報[/ 謝]德，當為卿作佳傳。”又納爾朱榮子金，故減其惡而增其善。前後伏訴者百餘人賴僕射楊素高德正而解

宋朝有朱墨史¹¹⁸⁷

叢篇七

司馬文正公六任冗官，皆以書局自隨[...]。小人欲中傷之[...]，乃倡為[...]，[...]書局之人利尚方筆墨、絹帛及御府果餌、金錢之賜。¹¹⁸⁸

柳子厚曰：冒居館下，近密地，食奉養，役使掌故，利紙筆為私書，取以供子弟費？¹¹⁸⁹

劉知幾曰：史曹[者]，崇扃峻宇，深附九重，雖地處禁中，而人同方外。可以養拙，可以藏愚，或終年卒歲，竟無刪述，而人莫之知也；或輒不自揆，輕弄筆端，而人莫之見也。繡衣直指所不能繩，強項申威所不能及。斯固素餐之窟宅，[屍 /]尸祿之淵藪也。¹¹⁹⁰

丘文莊公浚之論史官其畧曰：天下不可一日無史，亦不可一日無史官也。百官所任者一時之事，史官所任者萬世之事。[...]唐[及]宋宰相皆兼史官，其重[有]如此[者]。[...]我朝[...]法制可謂簡要矣。然是職也，是非之權衡，公議之所系也。[...]若推其本，必得如元揭傒斯所謂有學問文章、知史事而心術正者，然後用之，則文質相

¹¹⁸⁵ *Jinshu* 晉書, *juan* 82, *liezhuan* 列傳 52, *Chen Shou zhuan* 陳壽傳, p. 2557; in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部, *zhengshilei* 正史類, *Jinshu* 晉書.

¹¹⁸⁶ *Shitong* 史通, *waipian* 外篇, *juan* 卷 13, chap. 2: *gujin zhengshi* 古今正史.

¹¹⁸⁷ *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考, *juan* 卷 192, *jingjika* 經籍考 19, *zhengshi: Jinshu* 正史: 晉書.

¹¹⁸⁸ *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考, *juan* 卷 193, *jingjika* 經籍考 20, *Biannian jishi* 編年紀事.

¹¹⁸⁹ *Liu Zongyuan ji* 柳宗元集, *juan* 卷 31, *shu* 書.

¹¹⁹⁰ *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 10, chap. 35: *bianzhi* 辨職.

稱、本末兼該[而]足[以]為一代之良史矣。¹¹⁹¹深又嘗聞之王文恪公鑿曰：台諫者一時之公論，史官者萬世之公論也並名言云。

II.5 Abstract of the *Shitong pingshi* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*

《史通評釋》二十卷：明李維楨評，郭孔延附評並釋。維楨字本寧，京山人。隆慶戊辰進士，官至南京禮部尚書。事蹟具《明史·文苑傳》。孔延始末未詳。《史通》舊刻，傳世者稀。故《永樂大典》網羅繁富，而獨遺是書。其後有蜀本、吳本，文句脫略，互有異同。萬曆中複有張氏刻本，增七百三十餘字。刪六十餘字。復於《曲筆》、《因習》二篇補其殘闕，遂為完書。不知其所增益果據何本。然自是以後，皆以張本為祖矣。維楨因張氏之本，略為評論。孔延因續為評釋，雜引諸書以證之。凡每篇之末標「評曰」字者，皆維楨語；標「附評」字者，則孔延所補也。維楨所評，不出明人游談之習，無足置論。孔延所釋，較有引據，而所徵故事，率不著其出典，亦頗有舛漏。故王維儉以下注《史通》者數家，皆嫌其未愜，多所糾正焉。¹¹⁹²

The *Shitong pingshi* in twenty *juan*—criticized by Li Weizhen from Ming, further criticized and explained by Guo Kongyan. Li Weizhi's courtesy name was Benning; he came from Jingshan. In the *wuchen* year of Longqing reign period [i.e. 1568], he was decorated with the *jinshi* degree. In his official [career], [he went up the position] of the Minister of Rites of Nanjing. The traces of his matters are provided in the *Mingshi*—*Wenyuanzhuan*. [About Guo] Kongyan from the beginning until the end nothing is known. Concerning the old edition of the *Shitong*, its transmission was very rare; because the *Yongle Dadian* brought together various [books], and only left out this book. After this [edition], there was the *Shu*-edition and the *Wu*-edition. The diction is unrestrained, and each has similarities and differences. During Wanli reign period, additionally there was Zhang [Zhixiang]'s block-print edition; it added more than 730 characters, and deleted 60 characters. Moreover, in the two chapters *Qubi* and *Yinxi* he mended the fragmentary [pieces] and succeeded to complete the book. It is not known

¹¹⁹¹ *Daxue yanyi bu* 大學衍義補, *juan* 卷 7, *jian shicong zhi chen* 簡侍從之臣.

¹¹⁹² *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, *juan* 卷 89, *shibu* 史部 45, *shiping* 史評, *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋, p. 87.

on what edition that which he added depends on. However, from then on afterwards all regarded Zhang's edition as the "ancestor-edition." [Li] Weizhen on the basis of Master Zhang's edition slightly commented it; Guo Kongyan on this basis continued to criticize and discuss I, miscellaneously drawing on various books for proving that [i.e. for reference]. Generally, at the end of every chapter there is the label of the characters "ping yue"—they are all Li Weizhen's saying. The label of the characters "fu ping"—they are Guo Kongyan's attachments. That which is criticized by [Li] Weizhen does not show the practice of canvassing by Ming people because it insufficiently establishes discussion. That which is explained by [Guo] Kongyan more offers quotes; but as a characteristic sign for the old practice, he generally did not write his sources of allusion, also it has a lot of errors and leaks. Therefore, the many scholars after Wang Weijian who annotated the *Shitong*, they all disliked that [this edition] was not satisfying, but much was corrected.

II.6 Yang Shen's Preface to the *Shitong pingshi*

楊用脩史通評（楊公名慎）

老泉評劉子玄《史通》云：“世稱其詳且博，然多俚辭俳狀，史之紀事，將復甚乎其所譏誚者。唯子鍊為差愈。吁！其難而然哉！”楊萬裡云：“知幾《史通》毛舉前史，一字必呵。嘗得其所撰《高宗武後實錄》而讀之，意其可拳石班、馬而臧獲陳、范也。及觀其永徽三年事，則曰‘發遣薛延陀’，此何等語邪？天授二年事，則言‘傳游藝死矣’。至長壽二年遣殺流人，則曰‘傳游藝言之也’。游藝之死，至是三年，豈有白骨復肉而游魂再返乎？古人目睫之論，誠有味也。”二公之論當矣。然子玄《史通》妙處，實中前人之膏肓，取節焉可也。黃山谷嘗云：“論文則《文心雕龍》，評史則《史通》，二書不可不觀，實有益於後學焉。”¹¹⁹³

Lao Quan [i.e. Su Xun]¹¹⁹⁴ commenting Liu Ziyuan's *Shitong* said: "The generations called this [work] detailed and extensive; thus, there are many vulgar words and insincere appearances. Concerning the historical chronicles, the author took and

¹¹⁹³ *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋, first scroll (*juan shou* 卷首), *zhuanping* 傳評, *Yang Yong xiu Shitong ping* 楊用脩史通評 (楊公名慎), p. 5.

¹¹⁹⁴ Su Xun 蘇洵 (1009-1066), *zi* 字: Mingyun 明允, also known as Lao Quan 老泉, was a writer from Song dynasty and Su Shi's father.

restored much which [then] is slandered and censured [by him]. Wei Zishu's [*Li* 例] fails to be superior. Hush! This is difficult but so it is!" Yang Wanli [1127-1206] said: "[Liu] Zhiji's *Shitong* cites at random former history works; in a row, they are certainly scolded. Once he obtained the *Veritable Records of Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu* and studied it. He thought that one can punch a stone [when looking at] Ban [Gu's] and Si[ma Qian's] work, but he was happy with obtaining Chen [Shou's] and Fan [Ye's] works. If one observes the affairs in the third year of Yonghui reign period [652], it is said 'the Xueyantuo were deported'¹¹⁹⁵—what kind of evil language is this? [If one observes] the matters of the second year of Tianshou reign period [691], then it is said that 'Fu Youyi¹¹⁹⁶ [d. 691] died.' Until the second year of Changzhou reign period [693] when they exiled and killed persons, it is said that 'Fu Youyi said this.' But [Fu] Youyi's death then was three years ago! How can the bones of the dead have flesh again and as wandering spirits return again? The ancients superficial view really is interesting." The opinion of these two gentlemen is accepted. Thus, concerning the advantages of Zixuan's *Shitong*, truly in it there are the vital organs of the forefathers; so how can one choose sections? Huang Shangu [i.e. Huang Tingjian] once said: "For discussing literature just [read] the *Wenxin diaolong*, for criticizing history just [read] the *Shitong*, these two books cannot be not looked at, in fact they are very profitable in later studies."

II.7 A Part of Yu Shenxing's 于慎行 *Shitong juzheng lun* 史通舉正論

...觀其《史通》所述，自三墳五典之書，南史、素臣之記，兩京三國之纂，中左江右之歷，亦有汲塚古篆，禹穴遺編，金匱之所不藏，西昆之所未備，莫不探厥

¹¹⁹⁵ The Syr Tarduš (Xueyantuo 薛延陀 in Chinese) was a branch of the Turkish federation of the Tölöš (Tiele 鐵勒). For more information, see "Xueyantuo 薛延陀, Syr Tarduš," at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Alter/syrtardush.html>, last accessed: August 27th, 2017. According to the *Xintangshu* (chap. *dili zhi* 地理志), in 652, the rest of the tribe of the Xueyantuo were made to cross the Huanghe and settle at a new place.

¹¹⁹⁶ Fu Youyi 傅游艺 (d. 691) was an official in Tang dynasty, known for being the first one to render a petition for Wu Zetian to overthrow the Tang dynasty and be proclaimed emperor. Because of his support, he climbed the ladder of career within a year until he was promoted chief minister. However, later on he was accused of planning to overthrow Wu Zetian, was arrested and "ordered to commit suicide." See, e.g., Xiong (2009), p. 187.

淵源，總其體系，摺摭押閣，靡有遁形，斯以勤矣。爾其神識融洞，取舍嚴明，操筆有南、董之志，詞有班、馬之文，充其蘊藉，不足稱一代良史哉！...¹¹⁹⁷

Looking at that which is narrated in this *Shitong*, from books like the *sanfen wudian*,¹¹⁹⁸ the *Nanshi*, the records of Su Chen [i.e. Kong Zi's *Chunqiu*], the compilation of the two capitals and the Three Kingdoms, the history of Zhongzuo in Jiangxi, and also there is the seal character of Jizhong, the lost record of the burial place of Yu the Great, the metal bookcase which does not store [anything], the west of Kunlun Shan which is not yet prepared—there is nothing whose origin is not explored. He assembled this setup and collected [the writings] for storage in the pavilion; nothing vanishes; therefore, it is regarded diligent. Thus, his consciousness harmonized thoroughly and he accepted or rejected strictly and impartially. The technique of writing [mirrors] are the records of Nan[shi] and Dong[hu], the diction [mirrors] the works of Ban [Gu] and [Si]ma [Qian]—he poses to be them, cultivated and refined; but is this not enough to call him the good historian of one generation!

II.8 Abstract of the *Shitong xungu* in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*

明王維儉撰。維儉字損仲，祥符人。萬曆乙未進士，官至山東巡撫。事蹟具《明史·文苑傳》。是編因郭孔延所釋重為釐正，又以華亭張之象藏本參校刊定。卷端有維儉題識，稱“除增《因習》一篇，及更定《直書》、《曲筆》二篇外，共校正一千一百四十二字”。然以二本相校，惟《曲筆篇》增入一百一十九字。其《因習》、《直書》二篇並與郭本相同，無增入之語，不知何以云然也。孔延注本，漏略實甚。維儉所補，引證較詳。然黃叔琳、浦起龍續注是書，尚多所駁正。蓋劉知幾博極史籍，於斯事為專門。又唐以前書今不盡見，後人摺摭殘賸，比附推求，實非一二人之耳目所能遍考。輾轉相承，乃能賅備，固亦勢所必然耳。¹¹⁹⁹

¹¹⁹⁷ *Shitong pingshi* 史通評釋 (2006), xu 序, pp. 5f.

¹¹⁹⁸ The *sanfen wudian* are legendary lost historical records from the time before the *Shangshu*, so the most ancient Chinese records.

¹¹⁹⁹ *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要, juan 卷 89, shibu 史部 45, shiping 史評, *Shitong xungu* 史通訓故, p. 88.

Shitong xungu

Written by the Ming time Wang Weijian, [Wang] Weijian's courtesy name was Sunzhong and he was a man from Xiangfu. In the *yiwei* year of Wanli reign period [i.e. 1595], he became a *jinshi*. In his official career, he reached the position of the Shandong provincial governor. His affairs are stored in the *Mingshi* in the "Literary and arts biographies." Composing on the basis what had been explained by Guo Kongyan he laid stress on correcting and revising. Moreover, he took Huating Zhang Zhixiang's concealed edition, proofread it and published a definite edition. In the *juanduan* [i.e. at the beginning of the book] there is [Wang] Weijian's notation, it says "I eliminated and increased [characters] in the *Yinxi* chapter, and revised the two chapters *Zhishu* and *Qubi*, altogether I rectified 1,142 characters." So, taking these two editions, he [achieved] the original state [of the *Shitong*]. But only the *Qubi* chapter is enlarged by 119 characters; these two chapters *Yinxi* and *Zhishu* are equal to Guo [Kongyan's] edition, he did not increase any word; so, it is not known why he said this. Concerning [Guo] Kongyan's annotated edition, its omitting and deleting truly was extreme. That which was mended by [Wang] Weijian is cited as evidence and is rather detailed. However, Huang Shulin [1672-1756] and Pu Qilong [1679-1762] continued to annotate this book. They still had much to criticize and correct. Concerning Liu Zhiji's extremely abundant historical record, here it was specialized on these matters. Furthermore, before Tang times this book today is not completely seen. Later generations collected it incompletely and inquired to compare the attachments. Truly there are no ears and eyes of one or three men which investigated it [i.e. the *Shitong*] everywhere. It was passed through many hands, only then it became concise and comprehensive, certainly this is the matter of course.

Appendices to PART III

III.1 Table of Ming Ratios of Civil Examinations Graduates to Candidates in Nanjing, Hangzhou and Beijing by Benjamin A.

Elman¹²⁰⁰

Nanjing			
Year	Candidates	Graduates	Percent
1393	800	88	11.0
1453	1,900	205	10.8
1492	2,300	133	5.9
1549	4,500	135	3.0
1630	7,500	130	2.0
Hangzhou			
Year	Candidates	Graduates	Percent
1468	1,800	90	5.0
1508	2,800	90	3.2
1582	2,700	90	3.3
1607	3,800	90	2.4
Beijing (at Shuntian)			
Year	Candidates	Graduates	Percent
1531	1,900	135	7.1
1558	3,500	135	3.9

¹²⁰⁰ Elman (2014), p. 205, Table 1.

1609	4,600	140	3.0
1654	6,000	276	4.6

III.2 Compendia and General Reference Works

Table of Core texts in Ming school libraries¹²⁰¹

The classics:	no. of <i>juan</i>
<i>Sishu daquan</i> (Great compendium of the four books)	36
<i>Wujing daquan</i> (Great compendium of the five classics)	68
<i>Xingli daquan</i> (Great compendium on nature and principle)	70
<i>Sishu jizhu</i> ([Zhu Xi's] Annotations to the four books)	26
Legal, administrative, and ritual texts:	
<i>Da Ming ling</i> (The Ming statutes, 1368)	1
<i>Huang Ming zuxun</i> (Ancestral instructions of the imperial Ming dynasty, 1373)	1
<i>Da Ming lü</i> (The Ming code, 1397)	30
<i>Zhusi zhizhang</i> (Handbook of government posts, 1393)	10
<i>Sheli jiyao</i> (Essentials of archery rituals)	1
<i>Da Ming huidian</i> (Comprehensive regulations of the Ming dynasty, 1503)	180
<i>Da Ming jili</i> (Collected rites of the Ming dynasty, 1370, 1530)	53
Hortatory literature:	
<i>Dagao</i> (Grand pronouncements, 1385-7)	1
<i>Jiaomin bangwen</i> (Placard for instructing the people, 1398)	1
<i>Quanshan shu</i> (Exhortation to goodness, 1407)	19
<i>Weishan yinzhi</i> (The blessings of doing good secretly, 1419)	2
<i>Xiaoshun shishi</i> (Testimonies to filiality and obedience, 1420)	2

¹²⁰¹ Brook (2005), p. 109, Table 5.1.

<i>Wulun shu</i> (On the five relationships, 1443)	62
The Jiajing emperor's deliberations:	
<i>Dali jiyi</i> (Deliberations on the great rites controversy, 1525)	4
<i>Minglun dadian</i> (Great compilation on virtue illuminated, 1528)	4
<i>Dayulu</i> (Records of the great imprisonment controversy, 1528)	
Geography and history texts:	
<i>Da Ming yitong zhi</i> (Comprehensive gazetteer of the Ming dynasty, 1461)	90
<i>Daxue yanyi bu</i> (Supplement to <i>Exposition on the Great Learning</i> , by Qiu Jun, 1506)	160
<i>Zizhi tongjian gangmu</i> (Outline of The Comprehensive Mirror as an Aid to Ruling, by Zhu Xi, Chenghua era (1465-87))	59

Appendices to PART V

V.1 List of Historians Mentioned or Discussed in this Chapter (chronologically)

Liu Zhiji	劉知幾	(661-721)
He Qiaoxin	何喬新	(1427-1502)
Shao Bao	邵寶	(1460-1527)
Zhu Yunming	祝允明	(1461-1527)
Li Mengyang	李夢陽	(1473-1529)
Lu Shen	陸深	(1477-1544)
Yang Shen	楊慎	(1488-1559)
Zhang Zhixiang	張之象	(1496-1577)
He Liangjun	何良俊	(1506-1573)
Qu Jingchun	瞿景淳	(1507-1569)
Sun Yi	孫宜	(1507-1556)
Bu Dayou	卜大有	(1512-?)
Wang Shizhen	王世貞	(1526-1590)
Li Zhi	李贄	(1527-1602)
Zhan Jingfeng	詹景鳳	(1532-1602)
Jiao Hong	焦竑	(1541-1620)
Zhang Dingsi	張鼎思	(1543-1603)
Yu Shenxing	于慎行	(1545-1608)
Li Weizhen	李維楨	(1547-1626)
Hu Yinglin	胡應麟	(1551-1602)

Zhang Sui	张燧	(fl. 1585)
Guo Kongyan	郭孔延	(1575-?)
Wang Weijian	王维俭	(fl. 1595)
Zhu Minggao	朱明鎬	(1607-1652)

V.2 Abstract of the *Xueshi* in the *Siku quanshu*

臣等謹案學史十三卷明邵寶撰，寶字國賢，無錫人，成化二十年進士。官至南京禮部尚書，諡文莊，事蹟具《明史·儒林傳》，寶所著有《左鱗》、《容春堂集》諸書俱別著錄。此書乃其為江西提學副使時所作。為卷十有二，以象月；又餘其一，以象閏。每卷或三十條，或二十九條，以象月之有大小。盡取程子“今日格一物，明日格一物”之義名之曰“日格子”。巡撫吳廷舉嘗以上之於朝。書中取自周迄元史事，分條論列，詞簡意該，筆力頗為遒健。其間如記《後漢書》譙玄用弟服去官，戴封用伯父喪去官事，以為辟世與人。不知後漢人情淳樸，其以期功喪解官持喪者，見於史冊，不一而足。蓋風俗使然寶疑為託故而逃，未免失之不考。又論荀彧以為志似管仲，心似召忽，非揚雄之比。其評隲亦為過當。然寶平生湛深經術，持論平正，究非胡寅之刻深、尹起莘之膚淺者所可相擬固不失為儒者之言也。¹²⁰²

I carefully examined the *Xueshi* in 13 *juan* written by Shao Bao (1460-1527), courtesy name Guoxian, a man from Wuxi, receiving his *jinshi* degree in the 20th year of the Chenghua [1484] period. In his official career, he reached [the position of] the Minister of Rites in Nanjing; he had the posthumous title Wen Zhuang. His affairs are provided in the *Biographies of Scholars* in the *Mingshi*. The *Zuoxi* and the *Rongchun tangji* written by [Shao] Bao are books which are entirely different records. This book was composed during his time as Jiangxi Superintendent of Training Assistant Commissioner. As scrolls there are twelve—they are considered to resemble the months. Moreover, there is one additional—it is considered to resemble *run* month. Every scroll either has thirty or 29 items—it is considered to resemble long and short months. Because he entirely applied Cheng Yi's morality of "Today investigate one concrete

¹²⁰² *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, *shibu* 史部 15, *shiping lei* 史評類, *Xueshi* 學史, pp. 1f.

single thing, tomorrow investigate one concrete single thing,” he was called “*Ri gezi*.” The Grand Coordinator Wu Tingju came to know the above mentioned in court. In the book, he took historical facts from the Zhou till the Yuan times; and the separate items are discussed one by one. The wording is simple and the meaning is like the said; the vigor of style is rather strong. Among this, for example, he recorded the [biography of] Qiao Xuan [in the] *Houhanshu* who used the mourning about his brother to leave his official post; and Dai Feng who used the mourning about his uncle to leave his official post affairs—they thought to withdraw from the world and the people. It is not known whether the feelings of this men from Later Han were honest: For the time of accomplishing the funeral arrangements one was dismissed from office and was the one to manage the funeral arrangements. Referring to the history annals, there were many of such cases. Now this custom made it thus that [Shao] Bao suspected to be applied in order to escape [the official post]. Rather to neglect [this custom] was not taken into consideration. Moreover, discussing Xun Yu [163-212 AD] it can be believed to be recorded similar to Guan Zhong [725-645 BC], and centrally similar to Shao Hu [d. 685 BC], but not to be compared to Yang Xiong [53 BC-18 AD]. He [i.e. Shao Bao] evaluated also if they were acting inappropriately. However, [Shao] Bao all of his life had a profound knowledge of the classics, and his presentation of his arguments was fair and just. After all that which can be mutually compared by, neither Hu Yin’s [1098-1156] profoundness nor Yin Qicui’s [Song dynasty] superficiality can indeed still be considered to be words of the Confucianism.

V.3 Table of the Contents of the *Xueshi* by Shao Bao

The following table contains a list of the origins of the citations discussed by Shao Bao. He, in most of the cases, provided the origin by a reference at the end of the citation. However, in some cases this reference is not sufficient. The *Xueshi* as an extraordinary work of Ming historiography is worth to be studied in a separate research. Therefore, here the particular origins of the references are only provided exemplarily and do not claim to be complete—this task could not be accomplished in this study. However, it would be an interesting undertaking to investigate the origins of this citations and Shao Bao’s exact comments on them. Possibly, a pattern of Shao Bao’s selection of citation can be detected in this way.

1 st <i>juan</i>					
		No	Origin of citation as mentioned by Shao Bao	Origin of Citation, Piece of Literature	Particular Origin of Citation in the Piece of Literature (Translation of Shao Bao's Reference)
1	<i>yin</i> 寅	1	史記楚世家	SHIJI ¹²⁰³ 40	The Hereditary House of Chu
		2	史記魯世家	SHIJI 33	The Hereditary House of Lu Zhougong
		3	左傳襄公二十九年	ZUOZHUAN	29th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
		4	左傳昭公四年	ZUOZHUAN	4th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		5	史記孔子世家	SHIJI 47	Biographies of the Feudal Houses and Eminent Persons: The Biography of Confucius
		6	左傳宣公二年	ZUOZHUAN	2nd year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯宣公 (608-591 BC)
		7	史記惠景間侯者表	SHIJI 19	The Chronological Table of the Marquises during the Reigns of Emperors Hui to Jing
		8	左傳文公六年	ZUOZHUAN	6th year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC)
		9	史記留侯世家	SHIJI 55	The Hereditary House of the Marquis of Liu (Zhang Liang 張良)
		10	史記伍子胥傳	SHIJI 66	The Biography of Wu Zixu
		11	左傳昭公二十九年	ZUOZHUAN	29th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		12	史記太史公自序	SHIJI 130	<i>Taishigong zixu</i> "Postface and autobiography of the

¹²⁰³ Translations of the cited passages can be found in Sima Qian and Burton Watson (1993), *Records of the Grand Historian*, 2 vols.

			Grand Scribe [Sima Qian] ¹²⁰⁴
13	宋史英宗本紀	SONGSHI	The Imperial Biography of Emperor Yingzong 英宗 (1032-1067) (<i>juan</i> 13, <i>benji</i> 本紀 13)
14	蜀書諸葛亮傳	SANGUOZHI	“Book of the kingdom of Shu,” the biography of Zhuge Liang
15	左傳襄公三十一年	ZUOZHUAN	31th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
16	史記齊世家	SHIJI 32	The Hereditary House of Qi Taigong (齊太公世家)
17	史記外戚世家	SHIJI 49	The Hereditary Houses of the Families Related to the Emperors by Marriage ¹²⁰⁵
18	史記絳侯世家	SHIJI 57	The Hereditary House of Zhou Bo, the Marquis of Jiang (絳侯周勃世家)
19	吳太伯世家	SHIJI 31	The Hereditary House of Wu Taibo
20	左傳襄公二十九年	ZUOZHUAN	29 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
21	左傳襄公二十二年	ZUOZHUAN	22th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
22	左傳昭公十年	ZUOZHUAN	10th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
23	左傳襄公二十三年	ZUOZHUAN	4th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)

¹²⁰⁴ See “*Shiji* 史記,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

¹²⁰⁵ *Waiqi* Empresses 外戚世家: Empress Lü 呂后, Empress Dowager Bo 薄太后, Empress Dowager Dou 竇太后, Empress Dowager Wang 王太后, Empress Wei 衛皇后, Empress Chen 陳皇后, Lady Wang 王夫人, Lady Li 李夫人, Ms Zhao called Lady Gouyi 鉤弋夫人趙氏. See “*Shiji* 史記,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

		24	晉書卞壺傳	JINSHU	The Biography of Bian Kun ¹²⁰⁶
		25	史記留侯世家	SHIJI 55	The Hereditary House of the Marquis of Liu (Zhang Liang 張良)
		26	宋史司馬光傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of Sima Guang (<i>juan</i> 卷 336, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 95)
		27	南史傅隆傳	NANSHI	
		28	史記齊悼惠王世家	SHIJI 52	The Biography of Prince Daohui of Qi
		29	左傳昭公十五年	ZUOZHUAN	15th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		30	史記秦始皇本紀	SHIJI 6	The Basic Annals of the First Emperor of Qin (r. 246/221-206)

2 nd <i>juan</i>					
		1	史記龜策傳	SHIJI 128	The Biographies of the Guice Diviners
		2	公羊傳昭公二十年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		3	(左傳成公十五年), 左傳成公十六年	ZUOZHUAN	(15 th) 16 th year of Duke Cheng of Lu 魯成公 (590-574 BC)
	mao 卯	4	史記留侯世家	SHIJI 55	The Hereditary House of the Marquis of Liu (Zhang Liang 張良)
		5	唐書狄仁傑傳	TANGSHU	The Biography of Di Renjie in the <i>Xintangshu</i> 新唐書, <i>juan</i> 卷 115, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 40
		6	宋史太祖本紀	SONGSHI	The Imperial Biography of Emperor Taizu 太祖 (<i>juan</i> 卷 1, 2 and 3, <i>benji</i> 本紀 1, 2 and 3)
		7	史記劉敬傳	SHIJI 99	The Biography of Liu Jing in the Biographies of Liu

¹²⁰⁶ Bian Kun 卞壺 (281-328), was a Eastern Jin (*Dong Jin* 東晉; 317-420) politician.

			Jing (and Shusun 劉敬叔孫通列傳)
8	史記東方朔傳	SHIJI 126	The Biography of Dongfang Shuo in the Biographies of Humorists <i>Huaji liezhuan</i> 滑稽列傳 ¹²⁰⁷
9	史記魏豹傳	SHIJI 90	The Biography of Weibao in the Biographies of Weibao and Peng Yue (魏豹彭越列傳)
10	左傳襄公十年	ZUOZHUAN	10 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
11	左傳襄公九年	ZUOZHUAN	9 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
12	史記吳世家, 齊世家, 管蔡世家, 陳世家, 衛世家	SHIJI 31 32 35 36 37	The Hereditary House of Wu (Taibo) 吳太伯世家, the Hereditary House of Qi (Taigong) 齊太公世家, the Hereditary Houses of Guan and Cai, the Hereditary House of Chen in the Hereditary Houses of Chen and Qi 陳杞世家, the Hereditary House of Wei (Kangshu) 衛康叔世家
13	史記趙世家	SHIJI 43	The Hereditary House of Zhao
14	史記留侯世家	SHIJI 55	The Hereditary House of the Marquis of Liu (Zhang Liang 張良)
15	左傳昭公五年, 史記鄭世家	ZUOZHUAN, SHIJI 42	5 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC); the Hereditary House of Zheng
16	公羊傳莊公三十 二年,左傳昭公 十三年	GONGYANG- ZHUAN, ZUOZHUAN; 13 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
17	史記杞世家, 史記吳世家, 陳世家	SHIJI 36 31 36	The Hereditary House of Qi in the Hereditary Houses of Chen and Qi 陳杞世家, The Hereditary House of Wu (Taibo) 吳太伯世家, the Hereditary House of Chen in the Hereditary Houses of

¹²⁰⁷ The humorists are Chunyu Kun 淳于髡, You Meng 優孟, You Zhan 優旃, Dongfang Shuo 東方朔.

				Chen and Qi 陳杞世家
18	左傳昭公元年	ZUOZHUAN		1 st year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
19	唐書張琬傳	TANGSHU		
20	史記文帝紀, 梁書吉玢傳	SHIJI 10, LIANGSHU		The Basic Annals of Emperor Wendi
21	淮南子人間訓	HUAINANZI		
22	史記宋世家○按尚書亦以為殷王元子呂氏春秋雲微子生時母猶妾及為妃而生紂故微子為紂同母庶兄 宋世家注	SHIJI 38		The Hereditary House of Song (Weizi) 宋微子世家 — with an Annotation
23	通鑑唐穆宗二年	ZIZHITONGJIAN		The 2 nd year of Tang Muzong in the <i>Zizhi tongjian</i>
24	通鑑唐宣宗十年	ZIZHITONGJIAN		
25	揚子法言重黎篇	YANGZIFAYAN		<i>Zhongli</i> 重黎 (“Estimating the masses”) of the <i>Yangzi fayan</i> (“Model words by Master Yang”)
26	漢書朱買臣傳	HANSHU		
27	漢書蘇建傳	HANSHU		
28	宋史賓禮志	SONGSHI		Treatise about the Rites (from <i>juan</i> 98, <i>zhi</i> 志 51, <i>li</i> 禮 1, till <i>juan</i> 125, <i>zhi</i> 志 78, <i>li</i> 禮 28)
29	漢書馬武論	HANSHU		

3 rd Juan					
	chen 辰	1	左傳宣公四年	ZUOZHUAN	4 th year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯宣公 (608-591 BC)
		2	史記韓非傳	SHIJI 63	The Biography of Hanfei in the Biographies of Laozi and Hanfei 老子韓非列傳
		3	左傳哀公十五年	ZUOZHUAN	15 th year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494-468 BC)

	4	左傳襄公十年	ZUOZHUAN	10 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
	5	史記商君傳	SHIJI 68	The Biography of Lord Shang
	6	左傳昭公十三年	ZUOZHUAN	13 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
	7	左傳襄公三十一年	ZUOZHUAN	31 st year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
	8	左傳襄公二十五年	ZUOZHUAN	25 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
	9	史記李牧傳	SHIJI	The Biography of Li Mu in the Biographies of Lian Po and Lin Xiangru 廉頗藺相如列傳
	10	史記江都王世家	SHIJI 59	The Hereditary House of the Prince Yi of Jiangdu in the Hereditary Houses of the Five Families (<i>Wuzong</i> 五宗世家) ¹²⁰⁸
	11	晉書康獻褚皇后傳	JINSHU	
	12	唐書代宗睿真皇后傳	TANGSHU	<i>Jiutangshu</i>
	13	唐書王方慶傳	TANGSHU	<i>Jiutangshu</i>
	14	說苑	SHUO YUAN	<i>Shuo Yuan</i> (Garden of Stories) by Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BC)
	15	左傳哀公十六年	ZUOZHUAN	16 th year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494-468 BC)

¹²⁰⁸ “The Five Lines [of the five wives of Emperor Jing, i.e. his sons Liu De 劉德 (Prince Xian of Hexian 河間獻王), Liu E 劉闕 (Prince Ai of Linjiang 臨江哀王), Liu Rong 劉榮 (Prince Min of Linjiang 臨江閔王), Liu Yu 劉餘 (Prince Gong of Lu 魯恭王), Liu Fei 劉非 (Prince Yi of Jiangdu 江都易王), Liu Duan 劉端 (Prince Yu of Jiaoxi 膠西于王), Liu Pengzu 劉彭祖 (Prince Jingsu of Zhao 趙敬肅王), Liu Sheng 劉勝 (Prince Jing of Zhongshan 中山靖王), Liu Fa 劉發 (Prince Ding of Changsha 長沙定王), Liu Yue 劉越 (Prince Hui of Guangchuan 廣川惠王), Liu Ji 劉寄 (Prince Kang of Jiaodong 膠東康王), Liu Qing 劉慶 (Prince Gong of Liu'an 六安共王), Liu Cheng 劉乘 (Prince Ai of Qinghe 清河哀王), Liu Shun 劉舜 (Prince Xian of Changshan 常山憲王)].” See “*Shiji* 史記,” at [ChinaKnowledge.de](http://chinaKnowledge.de), <http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

		16	漢書嚴光傳	HANSHU	
		17	晉書陶潛傳	JINSHU	
		18	左傳僖公元年	ZUOZHUAN	1 st year of Duke Xi of Lu 魯僖公 (659-627 BC)
		19	左傳襄公三十年	ZUOZHUAN	30 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
		20	左傳昭公元年	ZUOZHUAN	1 st year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		21	隋書禮儀志	Suishu	
		22	公羊傳哀公五年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		23	左傳哀公元年	ZUOZHUAN	1 st year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494-468 BC)
		24	宋史李燾傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of Li Tao (1115-1184) (<i>juan</i> 卷 388, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 147)
		25	左傳宣公十五年	ZUOZHUAN	15 th year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯宣公 (608-591 BC)
		26	宋史倪思傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of Ni Si (1147-1220) (<i>juan</i> 卷 398, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 157)
		27	宋史李燾傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of Li Tao (1115-1184) (<i>juan</i> 卷 388, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 147)
		28	史記陳豨傳	SHIJI 93	The Biography of Chen Xi in the Biographies of King Xin of Han and Lu Wan (韓信盧綰列傳)
		29	史記孝文本紀	SHIJI 10	The Basic Annals of Wen the Filial
		30	史記賈誼傳	SHIJI 84	The Biography of Jia Yi in the Biographies of Qu Yuan and Master Jia (屈原 賈生列傳)

4th Juan					
4	si 巳	1	左傳襄公十七	ZUOZHUAN	17 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu

		年		魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
2		史記伯夷列傳	SHIJI 61	The Biography of Boyi
3		史記樂毅列傳	SHIJI 80	The Biography of Yue Yi
4		n/a		
5		n/a		
6		n/a		
7		左傳襄公四年	ZUOZHUAN	4 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
8		宋史交趾傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of the Great Land of Jiaozhi (today's Vietnam) (<i>juan</i> 卷 488 <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 247, <i>Waiguo</i> 外國 4, <i>Jiaozhi</i> 交趾 <i>Dali</i> 大理)
9		左傳莊公十八年, 莊公二十四年	ZUOZHUAN	18 th , 24 th year of Duke Zhuang of Lu 魯莊公 (693-662 BC)
10		史記田叔傳	SHIJI 104	The Biography of Tian Shu
11		史記田叔傳	SHIJI 104	The Biography of Tian Shu
12		史記管夷吾傳	SHIJI 62	The Biography of Guan Yiwu (i.e. Guan Zhong) in the Biographies of Guan Zhong and Yan Ying (管晏列傳)
13		史記管晏列傳	SHIJI 62	The Biographies of Guan Zhong and Yan Ying
14		史記伍子胥傳	SHIJI 66	The Biography of Wu Zixu
15		左傳文公八年	ZUOZHUAN	8 th year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC)
16		左傳文公十八年	ZUOZHUAN	18 th year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC)
17		左傳文公十八年	ZUOZHUAN	18 th year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC)
18		左傳宣公四年	ZUOZHUAN	4 th year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯宣公 (608-591 BC)

		19	通志帝舜紀	TONGZHI	
		20	史記魯周公世家	SHIJI 33	The Hereditary House of Lu Zhougong
		21	左傳隱公三年	ZUOZHUAN	3 rd year of Duke Yin of Lu 魯隱公 (722-712 BC)
		22	左傳莊公六年	ZUOZHUAN	6 th year of Duke Zhuang of Lu 魯莊公 (693-662 BC)
		23	左傳莊公十九年	ZUOZHUAN	19 th year of Duke Zhuang of Lu 魯莊公 (693-662 BC)
		24	左傳宣公四年	ZUOZHUAN	4 th year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯宣公 (608-591 BC)
		25	左傳定公九年	ZUOZHUAN	9 th year of Duke Ding of Lu 魯定公 (509-495 BC)
		26	漢書荀彧傳, 蘇文	HANSHU	
		27	國語楚屈到	GUOYU	
		28	左傳昭公十九年	ZUOZHUAN	19 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		29	韓詩外傳范昭	HANSHIWAIZHUAN	The <i>Fanzhao</i> of the <i>Hanshi waizhuan</i> ¹²⁰⁹

5 th Juan					
5	wu 午	1	穀梁傳莊公三年	GULIANGZHUAN	
		2	穀梁傳隱公五年	GULIANGZHUAN	
		3	史記齊太公世家	SHIJI 32	The Hereditary House of Qi Taigong
		4	左傳僖公九年	ZUOZHUAN	9 th year of Duke Xi of Lu 魯僖公 (659-627 BC)

¹²⁰⁹ “*Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 ‘Outer commentary on the Book of Songs by Master Han’ is a collection of commentaries based on historiographical sources collected by Han Ying 韓嬰.” For more information on this work, see “*Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Classics/hanshiwaizhuan.html>, last accessed: July 30th, 2017.

5	史記齊悼惠王世家	SHIJI 52	The Hereditary House of King Daohui of Qi
6	史記吳太伯世家	SHIJI 31	The Hereditary House of Wu Taibo
7	宋史司馬光傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of Sima Guang (<i>juan</i> 卷 336, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 95)
8	宋史田況傳	SONGSHI	The biography of Tian Kuang (<i>juan</i> 卷 292, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 51)
9	宋史王拱辰傳	SONGSHI	The Biography of Wang Gongchen (1012-1085) (<i>juan</i> 卷 318, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 77)
10	宋微子世家	SHIJI 38	The Hereditary House of Song Weizi
11	宋史劉攽傳	SONGSHI	The biography of Liu Ban (<i>juan</i> 卷 319, <i>liezhuan</i> 列傳 78)
12	宋史邵必傳	SONGSHI	
13	後漢書章帝紀	HOUHANSHU	
14	宋史文天祥傳	SONGSHI	
15	左傳莊公二十八年	ZUOZHUAN	28 th year of Duke Zhuang of Lu 魯莊公 (693-662 BC)
16	左傳隱公元年	ZUOZHUAN	1 st year of Duke Yin of Lu 魯隱公 (722-712 BC)
17	段太尉逸事狀	DUANTAI WEIYISHIZHUANG	
18	柳子厚裴瑾崇豐二陵集禮後序	PEIJINCHONGFENG ERLINGJILIHOUXU	The <i>Peijin chongfeng erling jili houxu</i> by Liu Zihou
19	宋史寇準傳	SONGSHI	
20	通志殷紂本紀	TONGZHI	The Imperial Biography of Emperor Yinzhou in the <i>Tongzhi</i> ¹²¹⁰

¹²¹⁰ “*Tongzhi* 通志 ‘Comprehensive Treatises’ is an alternative arrangement of the official dynastic histories compiled by the Southern Song period 南宋 (1127-1279) scholar and state official Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162).” “Chinese Literature—*Tongzhi* 通志,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Science/tongzhi.html>, last accessed: July 30th, 2017.

		21	宋史胡宿傳	SONGSHI	
		22	宋史丘審傳	SONGSHI	
		23	左傳文公四年	ZUOZHUAN	4 th year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC)
		24	左傳僖公三十三年	ZUOZHUAN	33 rd year of Duke Xi of Lu 魯僖公 (659-627 BC)
		25	宋史趙抃傳	SONGSHI	
		26	史記吳王濞傳	SHIJI 106	The Biography of Liu Pi 劉濞, King of Wu
		27	史記衛青傳	SHIJI 111	The Biography of (Cavalry General) Wei Qing
		28	左傳文公三年	ZUOZHUAN	3 rd year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC)
		29	朱子書偽詔後	ZHUZISHU	The False Imperial Orders of the Book of Master Zhu (Zhu Xi)
		30	宋史張方平傳	SONGSHI	

6th Juan					
6	<i>wei</i> 未	1	史記循吏列傳	SHIJI 119	The Biographies of the Benevolent Officials
		2	錢公輔義田記	YITIANJI	Qian Gongfu (1021- 1072)
		3	隋書音樂志, 五代史王朴傳	SUISHU, WUDAISHI	
		4	唐書劉子玄傳	TANGSHU	<i>Jiutangshu</i>
		5	五代史吳越世家	WUDAISHI	
		6	韓文田氏先廟碑	Miaobei (stone tablet)	
		7	公羊傳僖公二十五年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		8	五代史唐明宗家人傳	WUDAISHI	
		9	史記淮南衡山	SHIJI 118	The Biographies of the [Imperial Princes] of

	列傳		Huainan [Liu Chang 劉長] and Hengshan [Liu Ci 劉賜]
10	魏邴原傳	WEIBINGYUANZHUAN	The Commentary of Wei Bingyuan
11	(楚令尹子南子), 晉書顏含傳	…; JINSHU	
12	韓文董晉行狀	DONGJINXINGZHUANG	<i>Dongjin xingzhuang</i> of the <i>Hanwen</i>
13	史記衛康叔世家	SHIJI 37	The Hereditary House of Wei Kangshu
14	史記漢文帝本紀	SHIJI 10	The Basic Annals of Emperor Wen of Han (The Filial)
15	伊川文集論開樂御宴	LUNKAI LEYUYAN	Lunkai Le Yuyan: The Collected Works of Yichuan
16	宋史鄒浩傳	SONGSHI	
17	史記封禪書	SHIJI 28	Treatise about the Sacrifices to Heaven and Earth
18	史記孟子荀卿列傳	SHIJI 74	The Biographies of Mengzi and Xun Qing (i.e. Xunzi)
19	史記信陵君列傳	SHIJI 77	The Biography of Lord Xinling (魏公子列傳), the son of the Duke of Wei [Lord Xinling 信陵君]
20	史記平原君列傳	SHIJI 76	The Biography of Lord Pingyuan in the Biographies of Lord Pingyuan and Yu Qing (平原君虞卿列傳)
21	史記平原君列傳	SHIJI 76	The Biography of Lord Pingyuan in the Biographies of Lord Pingyuan and Yu Qing (平原君虞卿列傳)
22	後漢書趙苞傳	HOUHANSHU	
23	穀梁傳文公十八年	GULIANGZHUAN	
24	左傳莊公十二	ZUOZHUAN	12 th year of Duke Zhuang of Lu 魯莊公

		年		(693-662 BC)
		25	宋史王臻傳	SONGSHI
		26	宋史徐鹿卿傳	SONGSHI
		27	左傳文公八年, 宣公十八年, 宣公四年	ZUOZHUAN 8 th year of Duke Wen of Lu 魯文公 (626-609 BC), 18 th and 4 th year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯宣 公 (608-591 BC)
		28	禮記檀弓篇	LIJI
		29	左傳昭公十五年	ZUOZHUAN 15 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		30	左傳哀公三年	ZUOZHUAN 3 rd year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494-468 BC)

7 th Juan					
7	shen 申	1	史記張釋之 傳	SHIJI 102	The Biography of Zhang Shizhi in the Biographies of Zhang Shizhi and Feng Tang (史記張釋之傳)
		2	左傳哀公十年	ZUOZHUAN	10 th year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494-468 BC)
		3	左傳成公二年	ZUOZHUAN	2 nd year of Duke Cheng of Lu 魯成公 (590-573 BC)
		4	穀梁傳定公 元年	GULIANGZHUAN	
		5	史記張釋之 傳	SHIJI 102	The Biography of Zhang Shizhi in the Biographies of Zhang Shizhi and Feng Tang (史記張釋之傳)
		6	公羊傳文公 十三年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		7	史記梁世家	SHIJI 58	The Biography of Prince Xiao of Liang (梁孝王世家)
		8	史記齊悼惠	SHIJI 52	The Biography of Prince

	王世家		Daohui of Qi
9	史記絳侯世家	SHIJI 57	The Hereditary House of Zhou Bo, the Marquis of Jiang (絳侯周勃世家)
10	史記外戚世家	SHIJI 49	The Hereditary Houses of the Families Related to the Emperors by Marriage
11	史記外戚世家	SHIJI 49	The Hereditary Houses of the Families Related to the Emperors by Marriage
12	淮南子道應篇	HUAINANZI	
13	左傳僖公三十三年，子墨衰經，敗秦師於殽，獲孟明、西乞、白乙以歸，遂墨以葬文公。晉於是始墨； 史記藺相如傳	ZUOZHUAN; SHIJI 81	33 rd year of Duke Xi of Lu 魯僖公 (659-627 BC) The Biography of Lin Xiangru in the Biographies of Lian Po and Lin Xiangru (廉頗藺相如列傳)
14	左傳哀公十三年	ZUOZHUAN	13 th year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 (494-468 BC)
15	左傳定公五年	ZUOZHUAN	5 th year of Duke Ding of Lu 魯定公 509-495 BC
16	通志魏邴原傳	TONGZHI	
17	左傳僖公三十年	ZUOZHUAN	30 th year of Duke Xi of Lu 魯僖公 (659-627 BC)
18	左傳昭公二十七年	ZUOZHUAN	27 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
19	唐書杜悰傳	TANGSHU	In the <i>Jiutangshu</i> and the <i>Xintangshu</i>
20	左傳昭公二十九年	ZUOZHUAN	29 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510)

				BC)	
		21	左傳昭公十六年	ZUOZHUAN	16 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (541-510 BC)
		22	隋書禮儀志	Suishu	
		23	唐鑑宣宗九年	TANGJIAN	
		24	漢書惠帝紀	HANSHU	
		25	魏書后妃傳	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
		26	公羊傳昭公三十一年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		27	史記楚元王世家	SHIJI 50	The Hereditary House of King Yuan of Chu
		28	公羊傳宣公元年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		29	公羊傳宣公十二年	GONGYANGZHUAN	

8 th Juan					
8	you 酉	1	唐書皇甫無逸傳	TANGSHU	<i>Jiutangshu</i>
		2	唐書孝友傳	TANGSHU	In the <i>Jiutangshu</i> and the <i>Xintangshu</i>
		3	唐書宋璟傳	TANGSHU	In the <i>Jiutangshu</i> and the <i>Xintangshu</i>
		4	唐書裴■ (禾貞)傳	TANGSHU	
		5	唐書狄仁傑傳	TANGSHU	
		6	唐書于志寧傳	TANGSHU	
		7	唐書刑法志	TANGSHU	
		8	國語楚昭王十一年	GUOYU	
		9	國語魯昭公二十二年	GUOYU	
		10	左傳襄公二十	ZUOZHUAN	26 th year of Duke Xiang

		六年		of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
	11	唐書於休烈傳	TANGSHU	
	12	公羊傳僖公八年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
	13	唐書元王孝恭傳	TANGSHU	
	14	公羊傳成公二年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
	15	國語共和十四年	GUOYU	
	16	Missing source But found in: 《後漢書-李陳龐陳橋列傳》, 27	HOUHANSHU	
	17	唐書郭子儀傳	TANGSHU	
	18	唐書鄭綱傳	TANGSHU	
	19	唐書李藩傳, 宋史李沆傳	TANGSHU; SONGSHI	
	20	左傳宣公二年	ZUOZHUAN	2 nd year of Duke Xuan of Lu 魯襄公 (608-591 BC)
	21	五代史萇從簡傳許州富人有玉帶欲之而不可得遣二卒夜入其家殺而取之卒夜踰垣隱木間見其夫婦相待如賓二卒歎曰吾公欲奪其寶而害斯人吾必不免因躍出而告之使其速以帶獻遂踰垣而去不知其所之; 唐書韓偓傳	WUDAISHI; TANGSHU	

		22	唐書崔咸傳	TANGSHU	
		23	公羊傳襄公十九年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		24	五代史安重榮傳	WUDAISHI	
		25	史記酈商傳	SHIJI 95	The Biography of Li Shang in the Biographies of Fan Kuai 樊噲, Li Shang 酈商, Teng Ying 滕嬰 (Xiahou Ying 夏侯嬰), and Guan Ying 灌嬰 (樊酈滕灌列傳)
		26	史記儒林傳	SHIJI 121	The Biographies of the Forest Scholars ¹²¹¹
		27	公羊傳定公十三年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		28	公羊傳文公十三年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		29	晉書四夷焉耆傳	JINSHU	
		30	漢書鍾離意傳	HANSHU	

9 th Juan					
		1	說苑	SHUO YUAN	
		2	唐書鄭朗傳	TANGSHU	
		3	揚雄記雉朝飛操	YANGXIONGJI	Yang Xiong (53 BC-18 AD)
		4	晉書孔坦傳	JINSHU	
		5	史記滑稽列傳	SHIJI 126	The Biographies of Humorists <i>Huaji liezhuan</i> 滑稽列傳
		6	秦初以君甥	DASHIJI	

¹²¹¹ *Rulin liezhuan* 儒林列傳 (The Forest of Scholars): Gongsun Hong 公孫弘, Master Shen (Shen Pei 申培), Yuan Gu 轅固, Han Ying 韓嬰, Fu Sheng 伏勝, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, Master Humu 胡毋. See “*Shiji* 史記,” at *ChinaKnowledge.de*, <http://chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Historiography/shiji.html>, last accessed: July 29th, 2017.

		妻河解題曰 用諸河以求 福也無禮之 甚也魏文侯 使西門豹為 鄴令鄴民苦 歲為河伯娶 婦豹始禁之 時魏與秦鄰 意者染秦俗 與○大事記, 大事記		
	7	史記趙世家○ 程子曰趙襄 子姊為代國 夫人既殺代 王將奪其國 夫人距戰是 也身為代國 夫人社稷無 主獨當其任 義不可棄社 稷以與弟則 戰而段之非 姊殺弟也代 國夫人殺賊 也	SHIJI 43	The Hereditary House of Zhao
	8	晉書羊祜傳	JINSHU	
	9	梁書馮道根 傳	LIANGSHU	
	10	後漢書明帝 紀	HOUHANSHU	
	11	五代史周世 宗本紀	WUDAISHI	
	12	宋言行錄李 迪	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
	13	宋言行錄馬 知節	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
	14	宋言行錄宋 庠	SONGYANXINGLÜ	

	15	宋言行錄張詠	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
	16	宋史范鎮傳	SONGSHI	
	17	宋史杜鎬傳	SONGSHI	
	18	宋言行錄范鎮	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
	19	宋言行錄吳奎	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
	20	宋言行錄韓琦	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
	21	宋史李光傳	SONGSHI	
	22	宋史王旦傳	SONGSHI	
	23	晉書羊祜傳	JINSHU	
	24	晉書苟晞傳	JINSHU	
	25	宋史呂公著傳	SONGSHI	
	26	史記叔孫通傳	SHIJI 99	The Biography of Shusun Tong in the Biographies of Liu Jing and Shusun Tong (劉敬叔孫通列傳)
	27	後漢書王望傳	HOUHANSHU	
	28	後漢書韓稜傳	HOUHANSHU	
	29	解題曰按戰國策秦興師臨周而求九鼎周君使顏率說齊王曰秦為無道欲興兵臨周而求九鼎周之君臣內自計與秦不若歸之大國齊王大悅發師五萬人使陳臣思將以救周	DASHIJI	

			而秦兵罷齊 將求九鼎以 顏率解之而 止○大事記		
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10 th Juan					
10	<i>hai</i> 亥	1	魏志陳矯傳	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
		2	唐書武宗本 紀	TANGSHU	
		3	魏書韓暨傳 韓宣渤海人	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
		4	梁書徐君蒨 傳	LIANGSHU	
		5	魏志盧毓傳	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
		6	唐書高力士 傳	TANGSHU	
		7	魏志陳羣傳	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
		8	魏志陳矯傳	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
		9	後漢書光武 本紀	HOUHANSHU	
		10	金史宣宗本 紀	JINSHI	
		11	金史赫舍哩 良弼傳	JINSHI	
		12	唐書暢當傳	TANGSHU	
		13	唐書吳少陽 傳	TANGSHU	
		14	元史文宗本 紀	YUANSHI	
		15	元史世祖本 紀	YUANSHI	
		16	金史世威贊	JINSHI	
		17	金史五行志	JINSHI	
		18	金史褚承亮 傳	JINSHI	

		19	議南宋書顧 覲之傳	YI'NANSONGSHU	
		20	朱子歐陽公 事蹟	OUYANGGONGSHIJI	<i>Ouyang gongshi ji</i> (past achievements of Ouyang Gong [Ouyang Xiu]), written by (?) Zhuzi [Zhu Xi]
		21	晉書王猛傳	JINSHU	
		22	朱子記孫覲 事	JISUNDISHI	<i>Jisundi shi</i> by Zhu Xi
		23	左傳襄公十 三年	ZUOZHUAN	
		24	朱子歐陽公 事蹟	OUYANGGONGSHIJI	
		25	宋言行錄范 純仁	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
		26	宋史劉子羽 傳	SONGSHI	
		27	漢書荀淑傳	HANSHU	
		28	後漢書荀爽 傳	HOUHANSHU	
		29	後漢書任延 傳	HOUHANSHU	
		30	史記秦本紀	SHIJI 5	The Basic Annals of the Qin dynasty

11 th Juan					
11	zi 子	1	朱子撰陳俊卿 狀	CHENJUNQINGZHUANG	Accusation of Chen Junqing written by Zhu Xi
		2	後魏書張普惠 傳	(HOU)WEISHU	
		3	晉書江彪傳	JINSHU	
		4	宋言行錄曹彬	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
		5	左傳僖公十二 年	ZUOZHUAN	12 th year of Duke Xi of Lu 魯僖公 (659-627 BC)

6	左傳襄公二十九年	ZUOZHUAN	29 th year of Duke Xiang of Lu 魯襄公 (572-542 BC)
7	宋史黃震傳	SONGSHI	
8	宋史呂端傳	SONGSHI	
9	蜀書先主紀	SANGUOZHI (SHUSHU)	
10	蜀志先主傳	SANGUOZHI (SHUSHU)	
11	蜀志先主穆皇后傳	SANGUOZHI (SHUSHU)	
12	魏書司馬芝傳	SANGUOZHI (WEISHU)	
13	漢書文帝紀	HANSHU	
14	後周書唐瑾傳	(HOU)ZHOU SHU	
15	公羊傳成公十六年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
16	淮南子人間訓	HUANANZI	
17	隋書劉字翊傳	SUISHU	
18	隋書劉子翊傳	SUISHU	
19	隋書劉子翊傳	SUISHU	
20	漢書韓王信傳	HANSHU	
21	後漢書楊賜傳	HOUHANSHU	
22	五代史晉本紀論	WUDAISHI	
23	史記韓世家	SHIJI 45	The Hereditary House of Han
24	史記衛世家	SHIJI 37	The Hereditary House of Wei (Kangshu) 衛康叔世家
25	史記淮南王傳	SHIJI 118	The Biography of the Imperial Prince Huainan [Liu Chang 劉長] in the Biographies of the [Imperial Princes] of Huainan [Liu Chang 劉長] and Hengshan [Liu Ci 劉賜]
26	史記周本紀	SHIJI	
27	史記淮南王傳	SHIJI	

		28	後漢書譙玄傳, 戴封傳	HOUHANSHU	
		29	後周書抑慶傳	(HOU)ZHOSHU	

12 th Juan					
12	<i>chou</i> 丑	1	隋書張乾威傳	Suishu	
		2	後魏書郭祚傳	(HOU)WEISHU	
		3	蜀志趙雲傳	SANGUOZHI (SHUSHU)	
		4	唐書溫造傳	TANGSHU	
		5	唐書宗室國貞傳	TANGSHU	
		6	左傳成公元年	ZUOZHUAN	1 st year of Duke Cheng of Lu 魯成公 (590-573 BC)
		7	公羊傳僖公二十一年	GONGYANGZHUANG	
		8	唐書李邕傳	TANGSHU	
		9	後魏書竇瑗傳	(HOU)WEISHU	
		10	朱子不養出母議	ZHUZI YI	Discussion by Zhu Xi about not being raised by a mother
		11	漢書東方朔傳	HANSHU	
		12	漢書韋玄成傳	HANSHU	
		13	漢書陳湯傳	HANSHU	
		14	漢書王尊傳	HANSHU	
		15	隋書何妥傳	Suishu	
		16	漢書車千秋傳	HANSHU	
		17	漢書翟方進傳	HANSHU	
		18	後漢書光武帝紀	HOUHANSHU	
		19	後漢書孝安帝紀	HOUHANSHU	
		20	後漢書皇后紀	HOUHANSHU	
		21	後漢書梅福傳	HOUHANSHU	

		22	後漢書王霸傳	HOUHANSHU	
		23	後漢書承宮傳	HOUHANSHU	
		24	後漢書王丹傳	HOUHANSHU	
		25	晉書載紀劉聰傳	JINSHU	
		26	晉書前涼張軌傳	JINSHU	
		27	晉書前涼張駿傳	JINSHU	
		28	南齊書王智深傳	NANQISHU	
		29	公羊傳桓公十一年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
		30	唐鑑玄宗四年	TANGJIAN	

13 th Juan					
13	<i>run</i> 閏	1	韓詩外傳田過	HANSHIWAIZHUAN	
		2	宋言行錄趙普	SONGYANXINGLÜ	
		3	宋史張浚傳	SONGSHI	
		4	唐書玄宗本紀	TANGSHU	
		5	唐書李藩傳	TANGSHU	
		6	魏書高柔傳	TANGSHU	
		7	朱子記和靖事	ZHUZIJ	Records by Zhuzi
		8	漢書鮑永傳	HANSHU	
		9	漢書張耳傳	HANSHU	
		10	蜀漢本末關侯	SHUHANBENMO	
		11	遜志齋集	XUNZHIZHAIJI	<i>Xunzhi zhaiji</i> by Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺 (1357-1402)

12	後魏書邢虬傳	(HOU)WEISHU	
13	宋史王旦傳	SONGSHI	
14	隋書五行志	SUISHU	
15	蕭何傳, 齊悼惠王傳, 張禹傳, 張禹傳, 陳萬年傳, v 曾孫陳寵傳, 燕刺王旦傳, 王莽傳	HANSHU	
16	漢書劉向傳	HANSHU	
17	左傳昭公七年	ZUOZHUAN	7 th year of Duke Zhao of Lu 鲁昭公 (541-510 BC)
18	韓公復讐狀	HANGONG FUCHOUZHUANG	
19	宋史邵亢傳	SONGSHI	
20	隋書趙綽傳	SUISHU	
21	宋史趙抃傳	SONGSHI	
22	文中子魏相篇	WENZHONGZI	
23	公羊傳僖公二十八年	GONGYANGZHUAN	
24	史記漢武帝本紀	SHIJI	
25	五代史漢家人傳	WUDAISHI	
26	唐書賀魯傳	TANGSHU	
27	史記公孫弘傳	SHIJI	
28	n/a		
29	n/a		

V.4 Table of Appearances of Classical Works in the *Xueshi*

	Origin of Citation	Juan													Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1	<i>Shiji</i>	14	12	7	8	6	9	9	2	3	1	5		2	77
2	<i>Zuozhuan</i>	11	6	12	13	6	4	9	2		1	2	1	1	68
3	<i>Songshi</i>	2	2	3	1	11	3			5	1	2		4	34
4	<i>Sanguozhi</i>	1						1			5	4	1		12
5	<i>Jinshu</i>	1		2			1		1	4	1	1	3		14
6	<i>Nanshi</i>	1													1
7	<i>Gongyangzhuan</i>		2	1			1	4	5			1	2	1	17
8	<i>Tangshu</i>		2	2			1	1	14	1	4		3	4	32
9	<i>Liangshu</i>		1							1	1				3
10	<i>Huainanzi</i>		1					1				1			3
11	<i>Zizhi tongjian</i>		2												2
12	<i>Yangzi fayan</i>		1												1
13	<i>Hanshu</i>		3	1	1			1	1		1	2	6	4	20
14	<i>Shuo Yuan</i>			1						1					2
15	<i>Suishu</i>			1			1	1				3	2	2	10
16	<i>Tongzhi</i>				1	1		1							3
17	<i>Guoyu</i>				1				3						4
18	<i>Hanshi waizhuan</i>				1										1
19	<i>Guliang zhuan</i>					2	1	1							4
20	<i>Houhanshu</i>					1	1		1	3	3	2	7		18
21	<i>Duantai wei yishi zhuang</i>					1									1
22	<i>Peijin chongfeng erling jili houxu</i>					1									1
23	<i>Zhuzi shu</i>					1									1
24	<i>Yitianji</i>						1								1
25	<i>Wudaishi</i>						3		2	1		1		1	8
26	<i>Miaobei</i> 廟碑						1								1
27	<i>Weibingyuan zhuan</i>						1								1
28	<i>Dongjin xingzhuang</i>						1								1
29	<i>Lunkai Leyuyan</i>						1								1
30	<i>Liji</i>						1								1
31	<i>Tangjian</i>							1					1		2

《唐書》、《宋史》則大抵考證同異，指摘複漏。中頗沿襲裴松之《三國志注》、劉知幾《史通》、吳縝《唐書糾謬》、司馬光《通鑑考異》之文。又如《隋書》蘭陵公主忍恥再醮，而身殉後夫取冠列女，顯然乖謬之類，亦未能抉剔無遺。至徐夢莘《三朝北盟會編》本雜採諸，書案而不斷，以備史家之採擇。故義取全收，例無去取。夢莘實未旁置一詞，而明鑄誤以紀述之文為夢莘論斷之語。大加排詆，尤考之未詳。要其參互考證，多中肯綮。精核可取者十之六七，亦可謂留心史學者矣。

Abstract

I carefully examined the six rolls of the *Shijiu* compiled by Zhu Minggao in Ming time. Minggao's courtesy name was Zhaoqi, he was from Taicang. This piece of work corrects and checks the errors of the rules of various history books, as well as the contradictions of important events of the past. It begins with the *Sanguozhi* and ends with the *Yuanshi*; each history having its own piece of work. Is it possible or not that the *Yuanshi* was set not very [accurately]? His own words imitate Zheng Qiao's *Tongzhi*. He did not dare to delete or remove [anything from] the example of the *Tangshu*. If the deficiencies of [works] such as the *Jinshu* and the *Wudaishi* are also not discussed, then one has not yet examined the errors which have been copied, or one collated incompletely. Looking at the end of a chapter he adds one chapter [called] *Shushi yitong* and one chapter [called] *Xin-Jiutangshu yitong*, which are entirely different to the style of the entire [rest of the] book. He is aware that for later generations he collected incomplete manuscripts, but [this] order of arrangement became a [complete] book. [Now] there are many historical works from Ming dynasty. Generally speaking, all eight compared to the rest have achievements. [The author] collected together several works of guiding principle examples, even though unreasonably [stating] opinions; presenting different views on historical persons he to no purpose excessively canvassed. However, [Zhu] Minggao did not write much (as we know), but he did an investigation on all of the histories and pierced through them, and by that he obtained this order. He truly investigated every book one by one—clearly his family lay the foundation [for this]. Concerning the *Sanguozhi* as well as the eight dynasty histories, in this book there is much discussion about the errors of the manner of presentation of the facts, but simultaneously the historical facts are investigated. Concerning the *Tangshu* and the *Songshi* he for the most part did textual research on the similarities and differences and

criticized the repeating and omitting. In his book, he rather follows works like Pei Song's *Sanguo zhishu*, Liu Zhiji's *Shitong*, Wu Zhen's *Tangshu jiumiu* or Sima Guang's *Tongjian kaoyi*. Also for example like [in the story of] the *Suishu* princess Lanling had to endure humiliation of remarrying; but after she sacrificed herself, her second husband aimed to crown each woman [who commits suicide to follow her husband to dead]. Such [behavior] is clearly is absurd; also, one cannot single out [one happening] without omissions. Until Xu Mengshen's [1126-1207] miscellaneous *Sanchao beimeng huibian*, which picks various [topics], official records appear constantly in order to provide the historian [with material] for choosing and selecting. Because justice was to take everything and gather it, cases [were depicted] without any selection. [Xu] Mengshen truly did not yet arrange every single wording, but [Zhu] Minggao mistakenly took the texts objectively reported as the speech judgment by [Xu] Mengshen. He considerably rejected and vilified and falsely examined the unknown. He wanted to do textual research by mingling together [texts] because between many lies the key. But for a careful and intensive examination it is desirable to have six or seven out of ten; one may well say this is a careful study of history.

V.6 Table of Contents of the *Shijiu* by Zhu Minggao

1 st Juan			
SANGUOZHI 三國志 The History of the Three Kingdoms	Wei Zhi 魏志	武帝紀	Annals of Emperor Wu
		董卓傳臧洪傳	Two biographies: one of Dong Zhuo from the sixth chapter (<i>Dong er Yuan Liu zhuan</i> 董二袁劉傳) and one of Zang Hong from the seventh chapter (<i>Lü Bu Zang Hong zhuan</i> 呂布臧洪傳)
		夏侯尚傳	The biography of Xiahou Shang from the 9th chapter (諸夏侯曹傳, "Biographies of the Xiahou and Cao")
		荀彧荀攸賈詡傳	The 10th chapter, three biographies of Xun Yu 荀彧, Xun You 荀攸 and Jia Xu 賈詡
		管寧傳華歆傳	Two biographies: one of Guan Ning 管寧 from the 11th chapter (袁張涼國田王邴管傳, "Biographies of Yuan, Zhang, Liang, Guo, Tian, Wang, Bing, and Guan") and one of

			Hua Xin 華歆 from the 13th chapter (鍾繇華歆王朗傳, “Biographies of Zhong Yao, Hua Xin, and Wang Lang”)
		陳泰傳	The biography of Chen Tai in the 22nd chapter (桓二陳徐衛盧傳). This part of the <i>Shiji</i> mentions a source, namely <i>Pei zhu</i> 裴注 (The Commentary of Pei [Songzhi] 裴[松之])
		盧毓傳	The biography of Lu Yu 盧毓 from the 22nd chapter (桓二陳徐衛盧傳, “Biographies of Huan, the two Chens, Xu, Wei, and Lu”)
		諸葛誕傳	The biography of Zhuge Dan 諸葛誕 from the 28th chapter (王卅丘諸葛鄧鍾傳, “Biographies of Wang, Guanqiu, Zhuge, Deng and Zhong”)
	Shu Zhi 蜀志	蜀志後主紀	The 33th chapter, belonging to the <i>Shushu</i> 蜀書 of the The Later Ruler Liu Shan (r. 223-263) (後主劉禪)
		諸葛瞻傳	The biography of Zhuge Zhan 諸葛瞻, son of Zhuge Liang, in chapter 35 (Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮)
		譙周傳	The biography of Qiao Zhou 譙周傳 from the 42nd chapter (杜周杜許孟來尹李譙郤傳, “Biographies of Du, Zhou, Du, Xu, Meng, Lai, Yin, Li, Qiao, and Xi”)
	Wu Shu 吳志	吳志士燮子徽傳	The biography of Shi Xie 士燮 from the 49th chapter (劉繇太史慈士燮傳, “Biographies of Liu Yao, Taishi Ci, and Shi Xie”) and his son Hui (?).
		周瑜魯肅傳	Two biographies: one of Zhou Yu 周瑜 and one of Lu Su 魯肅, both from the 54th chapter (周瑜魯肅呂蒙傳, “Biographies of Zhou Yu, Lu Su, and Lü Meng”)
SONGSHU 宋書 The History of the Liu-Song	Imperial biographies 本紀	武帝紀	Emperor Wudi (chapter 1-3 of the <i>benji</i>)
		文帝紀	Emperor Wendi (chapter 5 of the <i>benji</i>)
		順帝紀	Emperor Xundi (chapter 10 of the <i>benji</i>)

Dynasty	Treatises 志	律志	Treatise about measures (chapter 1-3 of the <i>zhi</i> ; 志序 律曆上, 志序 律曆上, 律曆下)
		歷志	Treatise about the calendar (see above)
		禮志樂志	Treatise about rites (chapter 4-8) and treatise about ritual music (chapter 9-12)
		天文志	Treatise about astronomy (chapter 13-16)
		符瑞志	Treatise about auspicious symbols (chapter 17-19)
		五行志	Treatise about the <i>wuxing</i> (chapter 20-24)
		州郡百官志	Treatise about of the prefectures and counties (chapter 25-28) and of the state offices (chapter 29-30)
	Biographies 列傳	傅亮傳	The biography of Fuliang from the 3rd chapter (列傳第三 徐羨之 傅亮 檀道濟) of the <i>liezhuan</i>
		謝晦傳	The 4th chapter of the <i>liezhuan</i> : The biography of Xie Hui
		王鎮惡傳	The biography of Wang Zhen'e from the 5th chapter (列傳第五 王鎮惡 檀韶 向靖 刘怀慎 刘粹) of the <i>liezhuan</i>
		劉懷慎長庶子榮祖傳	
		張暢傳	The biography of Zhang Chang
		王微傳	The biography of Wang Wei from the 22nd chapter (列傳第二十二 羊欣 张敷 王微) of the <i>liezhuan</i>
		義康義宣傳及劉湛范曄臧質魯爽沈攸之傳	The biographies of Yi Kang and Yi Xuan from the 28th chapter (列傳第二十八 武二王 彭城王义康 南郡王义宣); the 29th chapter (the biographies of Liu Zhan and Fan Ye); the 34th chapter (the biographies of Zang Zhi, Lu Shuang, Chen Youzhi)
		沈攸之傳	The biography of Chen Youzhi from the 34th chapter (列傳第三十四 臧质 鲁爽 沈攸之) of the <i>liezhuan</i>
		袁粲傳	The 49th chapter (the biography of

			Yuan Can)
		孝義卜天與 列傳	
	自敘		Autobiographical Note

2nd Juan				
NANQISHU 南齊書 History of Qi dynasty of the Southern Dynasties	Imperial biographies 本紀 and Treatises 志	紀志	About the <i>benji</i> 本紀 and the <i>zhi</i> 志	
	Biographies 列傳	褚淵傳	The biography of Chu Yuan in the 4th chapter of the <i>liezhuan</i>	
		高帝十二王 傳		
		蕭遙昌傳	Biography of Xiao Yaochang (d. 498)	
		安陸昭王緬 傳	Biography of Xiao Mian 蕭緬 (454- 491) of the Anlu princes	
		良政傳		
		周顥傳	Biography of Zhou Yong (d. 493)	
		顧歡傳 史臣 論		
		Biographies 列傳	長沙嗣王業 四傳	
	良吏沈瑀傳			
	諸裔傳			
	王僧辯傳			
	CHENSHU 陳書 History of Chen Dynasty of the Southern Dynasties	Imperial biographies 本紀	本紀	
		Biographies 列傳	司馬申傳	Biography of Sima Shen (d. 586)
WEISHU (北)魏書	Imperial biographies	出帝紀		

History of the (Northern) Wei Dynasty	本紀			
	Biographies 列傳	高湖傳		
		崔浩傳		
		司馬叔璠傳		
		源子雍傳		
		薛辨傳		
		羅結傳		
		劉休賓叔父 旋之傳		
		李平傳		
		李崇傳		
		崔休子叔義 傳		
		李彪傳		
		陽固傳		
		尒朱榮傳		
		尒朱兆傳		
		張普惠傳		
		斛斯椿樊子 鵠賀拔勝傳		
		節義傳		
		良吏酷吏傳		
		王叡傳		
		僭晉司馬叡 傳		
		Zixu 自序		Self-preface
		Treatises 志	天象志	
			地形志	
			靈徵志	
			釋老志	

3rd Juan			
BEIQISHU 北齊書	Imperial Biographies 本紀	文襄紀	
	Biographies 列傳	邢邵傳	
		祖珽傳	
		楊休之傳	
		文苑傳	
BEIZHOUSHU 北周書	Biographies 列傳	宇文護傳	
		賀拔傳	
		劉璠傳	
		周諸王傳	
SUISHU 隋書	Treatises 志	諸志	
	Biographies 列傳	韋世康傳	
		房彥謙傳	
NANSHI 南史	Biographies 列傳	趙倫之孫倩傳	
		劉韞傳	
		吉翰杜驥傳	
		義康傳	
		宋文帝諸子傳	
		蕭穎胄傳	
		循吏王洪軌傳	
		隱逸杜京產傳	
		沈昭畧傳	
	Imperial Biographies 本紀	武帝本紀	
	Biographies 列傳	潘妃傳	
		曹景宗督軍援	

		昌義之	
		沈約傳	
		何敬容傳	
		孝義趙拔扈傳	
		隱逸鄧郁傳傳	
		傅綽傳	
BEISHI 北史	Biographies 列傳	胡靈太后傳	
		元諶傳	
		鄭羲傳	
		楊播傳	
		尔朱兆傳	
		尔朱天光傳	
		斛斯椿傳	
		節義傳	
		梁蕭傳	
		高麗諸	
		文宣紀	
		段韶傳	
		邢邵傳	
		儒林張景仁張 彤武傳	
		胡長仁傳	
		恩倖郭秀傳	
		蘇夔傳	
		楊素傳	

4th Juan			
XINTANGSHU 新唐書 New History of Tang	Imperial Biographies 本紀	高祖紀	
		太宗紀	
		高宗紀	

		中宗紀	
		玄宗紀	
		肅宗紀	
		代宗紀	
		德宗紀	
		昭宗紀	
	Tables 表	諸志諸表	
	Biographies 列傳	代宗母吳皇后傳	
		高宗三女睿宗十一女	
		玄宗女	
		諸王傳	
		中宗子殤帝	
		紀傳書名	
		裴寂傳	
		李勣傳	
		長孫皇后歸太宗	
		劉弘基傳	
		薛萬均萬徹契苾何力戰功	
		蕭至忠被誅	
		杜鴻漸傳	
		鄭綱傳李吉甫傳	
		黃巢以皮日休為學士	
	席豫鄭薰傳		

5th Juan			
SONGSHI 宋史	Imperial Biographies 本紀	孝宗紀	Emperor Xiaozong
		理宗紀	Emperor Lizong
		度宗紀	Emperor Duzong
		瀛國公 紀	
	Treatises 志	天文志	
		職官志	
		藝文志	
	Biographies 列傳	向敏中 傳	
		張浚傳	
		曲端傳	
		汪應辰 傳	
		蘇轍傳	
		外裔傳	
		總論	
THE TWO HISTORIES OF LIAO AND JIN DYNASTIES 遼金二史			

6th Juan			
SHUSHI YITONG 書史異同 (comparative discussion about differences and	Biographies 列傳	陶潛傳	Biography of Tao Qian (i.e. Tao Yuanming)
		裴子野傳	Biography of Feizi Ye (469-530)
		袁泌傳	Biography of Yuan Mi
		江總論	General introduction to the Yangtze

parallels of different history works)		書陳梁二史後	Postscript to the two histories of Chen and Liang dynasties	
		宗室元丕傳	Biography of the royal clansman Yuan Pi (i.e. Taba Pi)	
		來護兒傳	Biography of Lai Hu'er	
		書齊周隋書後	Postscript the history books of Qi, Zhou and Sui dynasties	
XIN-JIUTANGSHU YITONG 新舊唐書異同 (a comparison between the New and the Old History of Tang)	Imperial Biographies 本紀	武后紀	Imperial biography of Empress Wu	
		文宗紀	Imperial biography of Emperor Wenzong	
		諸志	All the treatises	
	Biographies 列傳	吳王恪傳	Biography of Li Ke (Wu Wang; 619-653)	
		吳兢傳	Biography of Wu Jing	
		駱賓王傳	Biography of Luo Binwang (640-684)	
		柳公綽傳	Biography of Liu Gongchuo (778-865)	
		書新舊唐書後	Postscript to the two books of the <i>Xintangshu</i> and the <i>Jiutangshu</i>	

V.7 Zhu Yunming on the *Shitong* in his *Huaxing tangji*

其於史也，先取《春秋》內、外《傳》，乃至《史》、《漢》以降，及《宋》、《元》十九正史治之。君紀、臣傳以系事者爾爾，志以系制度時變者爾爾，得失分矣，幾業彰矣，勸戒辨矣。於是他籍系史而今不恆綴之十九編者，如后漢幾家、三國幾家之類，求得而通治之。他如《通鑒》之屬、《史通》之屬，少有簡輯議評之力者繼之。野錄、霸書、私史、小說之徒又繼之。斯可已。今人自幼則以近人所類故事等迨為舉業，便事剿捷，畢工於短簡狹策，若所謂《少微鑒》、《史略》之類，而歷世根本國書罔聞知，倘逢一疑、覓一征，茫無可尋，若固應爾。

吾又不知此何學也。請足不取十九正史者治之，漸以及他；若上所列節本摘編，一閱而去。精評繆斷，收擲剛察，決擇自得，要於有用。大略與治經同也。¹²¹³

[When] one [engages] in history writing, first one takes the inner and outer commentaries of the *Chunqiu*, and even after [starting with] the *Shiji* and *Hanshu*, then [approaches] the *Songshi* and the *Yuanshi*—these nineteen Standard Histories govern this [i.e. the realm of history writing]. Concerning the emperors' annals and the officials' biographies generally relating to affairs and such alike, and concerning the treatises generally relating to the system and its temporal changes and such alike, their gains and losses are divided, subtle achievements are displayed, and advices and warnings are discriminated. Thereupon, other books related to history now are not constantly sewed to the nineteen standard compilations. For example: Concerning such kinds as several families of later Han and several families of the Three Kingdoms, they sought to obtain and mastered to govern them [i.e. the Standard Histories]. Concerning other [works] like the category of the *Tongjian [gangmu]* and the category of the *Shitong*, [only] few having the power to select and gather, discuss and criticize followed them; disciples of miscellaneous historical records, treatises about tyrants, individual writings about history and fiction, moreover, followed them. Certainly, this may be [like that]! Modern people from young age then take categories like narratives by the time which were written by contemporary people as preparatory literary studies for the imperial examination. Even if the affairs destroy the victory, one accomplishes the work in a short note or a specific plan, like the so-called *Shaoweijian* and the *Shilüe*; but the basic credentials of past ages are not heard to be known. If meeting one specific doubt and seeking one specific proof, it can absolutely not be investigated; it appears as this surely must be so. I also do not know how to learn this. The ones asking for fully not taking [into account] the nineteen Standard Histories [nowadays] govern this [i.e. the realm of history writing], and gradually [appear] along with others. If that which is listed on the top is an abridged edition extracted and edited, one reviews it and leaves it. Its essence is criticized, its errors are cut off; it is gathered and thrown away and firmly examined, it is certainly chosen and from itself achieved—he wanted it to be useful. [In sum,] its general idea and the study of the classics is similar.

¹²¹³ *Huaxing tangji* 懷星堂集, *juan* 卷 12, pp. 334f; in (*Qinding*) *Siku quanshu* 欽定四庫全書, *jibu* 集部, *biejilei* 別集類, *Ming Hongwu zhi Chongzhen* 明洪武至崇禎, *Huaxing tangji* 懷星堂集.

V.8 Li Mengyang about the *Shitong* in his *Kongtong ji*

僕嘗思作史之義，昭往訓來，美惡具列；不勸不懲，不之述也。其文貴約而該，約則覽者易遍，該則首末弗遺。古史莫如《書》、《春秋》，孔子刪修，篇寡而字嚴；左氏繼之，辭義精詳；遷、固博採，簡帙省縮。以上五史，讀者刻日可了，其冊可挾而行，可箱而徙。後之作者，本乏三長，竊名效芳，輒附筆削，義非指南，辭殊禁臠，傳敘繁蕪，事無斷落。范曄《后漢》，亦知史不貴繁，然剗精鏹採，著力字句之間，故其言枯體晦，文之削者也。蓋不知古史文約而意完，非故省之言之妙耳。¹²¹⁴

Concerning the meaning of Pu Changsi's history writing, it showed clearly that it came from previous examples; the good and evil are listed one by one. He does not advise and he does not warn, he does not narrate. His text is preciously concise and yet extensive: Concise then for the reader it is easy [to understand] everywhere; extensive then from the beginning to the end nothing is left behind. Ancient history rather are the *Shu[jing]* and the *Chunqiu* which are deleted and mended by Kongzi and whose chapters are few but characters are rather tight [written]. Zuo [Qiuming] continued it and the inner (meaning) and outer (style) appearance [of the text] are accurate and careful. [Sima] Qian and Ban Gu collected vast [materials]; [they] simplified books by omitting and shortening. Concerning the above-mentioned five histories, the reader can finish them on that very day. These books can be relied on and are competent, they can be stored and transferred. The ones who did this after him originally lacked the three excellencies and with dishonest reputation they imitate the excellent and always the postscript is deleted. The meaning is not to guide; the words are separated as their own treasure not to be shared; biographies are narrated very wordy; affairs are not cut off or dropped. Regarding Fan Ye's *History of the Later Han*, it also knows that history is not precious and complicated. The [author] cut the essence and shoveled the spirit. Because he put effort into the writing, therefore the words are decayed and the style is obscure—this is the reduction of language. He did not know the deeds and the meaning of ancient histories. This evident reduction of words is not excellent at all!

¹²¹⁴ *Kongtong ji* 空同集, by Li Mengyang 李梦阳, *juan* 卷 62, *Lun shidawang jiancha shu* 論史答王監察書, pp. 1099f; from (*Qinding*) *Siku quanshu* 欽定四庫全書, *jibu* 集部, *biejilei* 別集類, *Ming Hongwu zhi Chongzhen* 明洪武至崇禎, *Kongtong ji* 空同集.

V.9 Yuan Huang's 袁黃 *Qunshu beikao* 群書備考 about the *Shitong*

觀劉知幾“三長”之說，袁鬆“五難”之說，與夫“三等四患”之說，史其可易作哉？漢有司馬遷繼父談為太史作《史記》，褚少孫補之，裴因解之，班固、蘇子由譏之。班固之父彪嘗續司馬遷《史記》，固因之作《前漢書》，呂東萊以《左傳》擬之，洪容齋以《英》《莖》《咸》《韶》比之，而范曄、鄭樵譏之，雖以曹大家之補志為之羽翼，而顏師古為之注釋，亦不能盡正其訛，此劉知幾所以有《史通》之作也。¹²¹⁵

When paying attention to Liu Zhiji's "three excellencies," Yuan Song's "five difficulties,"¹²¹⁶ Yu Fu's "three grades and four dangers," can history then be written easily? In Han dynasty, there was Sima Qian following his father [Sima] Tan as Grand Scribes writing the *Shiji*. Chu Shaosun [fl. 32-7 or 104-30 BC] supplemented it and Pei Yin [fl. 438] explained it. Ban Gu and Su Ziyou [i.e. Su Zhe, 1039-1112] slandered it. Ban Gu's father Biao had already continued Sima Qian's *Shiji*; and therefore it was followed by the compilation of the *Qianhanshu*. Lü Donglai [i.e. Lü Zuqian, 1137-1181] took the *Zuozhuan* and doubted it. Hong Rongzhai [1123-1202] compared the [chapters about] "Ying [music]" and the "Jing [music]," the "Xian [dance]" and the "Shao [dance]" [of the *Hanshu*]. But Fan Ye and Zheng Qiao slandered it, although they regarded Cao Dagu's [i.e. Ban Zhao 班昭, 45-117] supplements [to the *Hanshu*] as assistance, and Yan Shigu's [581-645] [supplements] as annotations; they also could not exhaust in correcting its errors. This is the reason why Liu Zhiji composed the *Shitong*.

¹²¹⁵ *Qunshi beikao* 群书备考 by Yuan Huang, in *Gujin tushu jicheng* 古今图书集成, *juan* 卷 416, *shibu zonglun* 史部总论 3, p. 72038, from Yang Yanqiu (2002), p. 51. Except of the first sentence, this part is also to be found in the *Jiyuan jisuoji* 寄园寄所寄 by Zhao Jishi 赵吉士 (1625-1703), *juan* 卷 7, "Taji ji" 獭祭寄.

¹²¹⁶ In the *Shitong* it is said: "Yuan Shansong expressed: 'Concerning the difficulties about books there are five: That they are confusing and not neat is the first; that their [language] is vulgar and not classical is the second; that the books are not authentic records is the third; that there is no reward and punishment in it is the forth; and that the language is not of qualitative nature is the fifth. (袁山鬆表示：'書之為難也有五：煩而不整，一難也；俗而不典，二難也；書不實錄，三難也；賞罰不中，四難也；文不勝質，五難也。)' *Shitong* 史通, *neipian* 內篇, *juan* 卷 8, chap. 28: *moni* 摸擬, p. 161.

V.10 Mythological Features in Lu Shen's *Chuanyi Lu* 傳疑錄

子者，孳也，陽氣至此，更孳益而生，故謂之子。丑者，紐也，言居終始之際，故謂之丑。寅者，津也，津者塗之義。正月之時，生萬物之津塗，故謂之寅。卯茂也，言陽氣至此，物生孳茂也，故謂之卯。辰者振動之義，此月物皆震動而長，故謂之辰。巳者，起也，物至此時皆長而起也，故謂之巳。午者，長也，明物皆長，故謂之午。未者，味也，言時物向成，皆有氣味，故謂之未。申者，身也，言萬物皆身體而成就，故謂之申。酉者猶縮之義，此月時物皆縮小而成也，故謂之酉。戌者，滅也，言時衰滅也，故謂之戌。亥者，劾也，言陰陽氣劾收萬物，故謂之亥。¹²¹⁷

The Zi¹²¹⁸ is creating; the vital energy [flows] to it. It further creates and increases and brings into living. Therefore, it is called *zi*.¹²¹⁹ The Chou¹²²⁰ is fixed. It means that it is [at the edge] between the beginning and the end; therefore, it is called *chou*.¹²²¹ The Yin¹²²² is the key point; and it is the way of righteousness. At the time of the first month, it is the way of all living beings being born; therefore, it is called *yin*.¹²²³ The Mao¹²²⁴ is flourishing; it is said that the vital energy [flows] to it. Things are born and created flourishing; therefore, it is called *mao*.¹²²⁵ The Chen¹²²⁶ shakes the meaning; in this month, all the things shake and grow. Therefore, it is called *chen*.¹²²⁷ The Yi¹²²⁸ raises;

¹²¹⁷ *Chuanyi Lu* 傳疑錄, pp. 19f.

¹²¹⁸ This is the first earthly branch: 11 p.m.-1 a.m., midnight, eleventh solar month (7th December to 5th January), year of the Rat.

¹²¹⁹ *Zi* 子 resembles *zi* 孳, it has the same pronunciation.

¹²²⁰ This is the second earthly branch: 1-3p.m., year of the Ox.

¹²²¹ *Chou* 丑 resembles *niu* 紐, *niu* 紐 contains the part *chou* 丑.

¹²²² This is the third earthly branch: 3-5 a.m., first solar month (4th February to 5th March), year of the Tiger.

¹²²³ *Yin* 寅 has a similar pronunciation to *jin* 津.

¹²²⁴ This is the fourth earthly branch: 5-7 a.m., second solar month (6th March to 4th April), year of the Rabbit.

¹²²⁵ *Mao* 卯 resembles *mao* 茂, it has the same pronunciation.

¹²²⁶ This is the fifth earthly branch: 7-9 a.m., third solar month (5th April to 4th May), year of the Dragon.

¹²²⁷ *Chen* 辰 resembles *zhen* 振, *zhen* 振 contains the part *chou* 辰.

¹²²⁸ This is the sixth earthly branch: 9-11 a.m., fourth solar month (5th May to 5th June), year of the Snake.

the things to this time all grow and rise. Therefore, it is called *yi*.¹²²⁹ The Wu¹²³⁰ grows; brightening things all grow; therefore, it is called *wu*. The Wei¹²³¹ is flavor; it is said that at the time when the things approach completion, they all have an odor; therefore, it is called *wei*.¹²³² The Shen¹²³³ is the body; it is said that all living things accomplish their bodies at that time. Therefore, it is called *shen*.¹²³⁴ The You¹²³⁵ is just like the shrinking righteousness. In this month, the things decrease and are finished; therefore, it is called *you*. The Xu¹²³⁶ is extinguishing [things]; it is said in this time there is decline and fall; therefore, it is called *xu*.¹²³⁷ The Hai¹²³⁸ is examining [i.e. exposing one's misdeeds]; it is said that the vital energy of Yin and Yang examines and accepts all living beings. Therefore, it is called *hai*.¹²³⁹

¹²²⁹ *Yi* 巳 resembles *qi* 起, *qi* 起 contains the part *yi* 巳.

¹²³⁰ This is the seventh earthly branch: 11 a.m.-1 p.m., noon, fifth solar month (6th June to 6th July), year of the Horse.

¹²³¹ This is the eighth earthly branch: 1-3 p.m., sixth solar month (7th July to 6th August), year of the Sheep.

¹²³² *Wei* 未 resembles *wei* 味, *wei* 味 contains the part *wei* 未 and has the same pronunciation.

¹²³³ This is the ninth earthly branch: 3-5 p.m., seventh solar month (7th August to 7th September), year of the Monkey.

¹²³⁴ *Shen* 申 resembles *shen* 身, it has the same pronunciation.

¹²³⁵ This is the tenth earthly branch: 5-7 p.m., eighth solar month (8th September to 7th October), year of the Rooster.

¹²³⁶ This is eleventh earthly branch: 7-9 p.m., ninth solar month (8th October to 6th November), year of the Dog.

¹²³⁷ *Xu* 戌 resembles *mie* 滅, *mie* 滅 contains the part *xu* 戌.

¹²³⁸ This is the twelfth earthly branch: 9-11 p.m., tenth solar month (7th November to 6th December), year of the Boar.

¹²³⁹ *Hai* 亥 resembles *he* 劬, *he* 劬 contains the part *hai* 亥.

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