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TEXTUAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CH'ING DYNASTY BOOKS

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1. Introduction

Chinese textual scholarship is conventionally subdivided into four disciplines: (1) *pan-pen hsüeh* 版本學, descriptive bibliography (usually including sigillography and palaeography); (2) *chiao-k'an hsüeh* 校勘學, textual criticism; (3) *mu-lu hsüeh* 目錄學, which includes enumerative bibliography as well as cataloguing; (4) *tien-ts'ang hsüeh* 典藏學, roughly equivalent to library science.[1] Such a conception of the field differs markedly from western definitions of textual scholarship: whereas cataloguing and library science are included, scholarly editing—considered by some the culmination of textual scholarship—is conspicuously absent. Moreover, there is no room for textual bibliography in the scheme. In fact, there seems to be no Chinese word for 'textual bibliography.' In discussing this discipline, therefore, I shall take a western scholar's definition of the term as a point of departure. In the words of D.C. Greetham,

> it is therefore the study of the textual implications and results of this process of making a bibliographical artifact which I believe should most properly be called textual bibliography.[2]

What does this mean for Chinese textual traditions? As the contributions to this volume illustrate, sinologists may encounter a wide variety of texts from an equally broad span of time. These texts differ not only in their language and contents, but also in their carriers: they may be carved on bones, cast onto bronze vessels, written on wooden or bamboo strips, sewn together with cords, or on silk, like the famous excavations from Ma-wang tui.[3] Later texts would be

1 Cf. the four volumes of Ch'eng Ch'ien-fan 程千帆 / Hsü Yu-fu 徐有富, *Chiao-ch'ou kuang-i* 校讎廣義, Chi-nan 1998, which bear those four titles.

2 D.C. Greetham, *Textual Scholarship. An Introduction*, New York/London 1994, 272.

3 Useful introductions to these are provided by Edward L. Shaughnessy (ed.), *New Sources of Early Chinese History. An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts*,

written on paper, rolled up as a long scroll or, from about the 9th century onward, folded and bound in 'sutra' or 'whirlwind' style. All these texts being hand-written, printed books began to proliferate in Sung times (960–1279). These woodblock prints (or, occasionally, movable type prints) were usually bound in codex form, employing either 'butterfly binding' or 'wrapped-back binding.'[4]

With the writing materials, calligraphy changed. From the clumsy scratchings on bone developed the rather curvilinear bronze script, which in turn was modified during the reign of king Hsüan 宣 (r. 827/25–782) to form the Great Seal script 大篆, or Chou *shu* 籀書.[5] Bamboo and wood, again, gave rise to different calligraphic styles, eventually unified as Lesser Seal script 小篆 by Li Ssu 李斯 (†208 BC). With the spread of paper as writing material, this script was once more replaced by "clerical script" (*li-shu* 隸書) and standard script (*k'ai-shu* 楷書).[6]

The outward appearance of a Chinese text, therefore, is ultimately dependent on its bibliographical carrier. Moreover, writing material may even influence the literary form of texts. The very expression 'lapidary style' testifies to this phenomenon: writing on stone brings about terse, polished texts. By the same token, the use of bamboo strips, which could only contain a very limited number of characters, while promoting short textual units, may well have impeded the development of long literary genres.

In short, texts were made to fit their carriers. This even extends to the very details of wording: already on bronze inscriptions it is apparent, that, as a rule, every line (or rather: column) had to be completely filled; there were to be no

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Berkeley 1997, and Tsuen-hsuin Tsien, *Written on Bamboo and Silk: The Beginnings of Chinese Books and Inscriptions*, Chicago 1962.

4 The most exhaustive treatment of the subject is given by Tsien Tsuen-hsuin, *Paper and Printing* [=Joseph Needham (ed.), *Science and Civilisation in China,* vol. 5:1], Cambridge 1985. For a short introduction cf. Liu Kuo-sun/Cheng Ju-ssu, *The Story of Chinese Books*, Peking 1985.

5 The traditional attribution of this sript to a scribe Chou 史籀 (Hsü Shen 許愼, *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* 說文解字 [1st cent.], ed. Peking 1979, 1a) may be spurious. However, refinement of calligraphy is clearly observable on bronze vessels dated to the era of king Hsüan; cf. the unpublished catalogue of bronze inscriptions by Ulrich Unger, esp. Nos. 71 and 72. I am grateful to Prof. Unger for granting me access to his private catalogue.

6 On Chinese Writing, see William G. Boltz, *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System* [American Oriental Series, vol. 78], New Haven 1994, and Ch'iu Hsi-kuei 裘錫圭, *Chinese Writing*, tr. Gilbert Louis Mattos / Jerry Norman, New Haven 2000.

blank spaces at the end of an inscription.[7] Interestingly, a similar rule seems to have applied to bamboo strips: "there was a stylistic convention, or preference, for having a full syntactic stop, i.e. the end of a sentence, at the end of either every strip, or every second or third strip."[8] This means that bamboo strips would carry 22, 23, or 24 characters—no more and no less.

Apart from influencing the composition of a text, its physical form also bears upon the way it is decomposed. In bundles of bamboo strips, for example, single strips could loosen and get lost or displaced, something that obviously would not happen to a text written on a paper roll. Similarly, single sheets of paper or whole quires could be misplaced when stitching together a codex book—a very unlikely thing to happen when writing, say, on a stone stele. Furthermore different kinds of script—pre-imperial script, clerical, standard, or cursive script—will give rise to different types of scribal error. A well-known anecdote from the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu* may serve to illustrate this.[9]

> When Confucius' disciple tzu Hsia 子夏 was on his way to Chin, he came through Wei, where he encountered somebody reading a historian's record which said: "The army of Chin, three pigs, crossed the Ho [晉師三豕涉河]." Tzu Hsia said: "That's wrong, it should be: 'on *chi-hai* [己亥].' In fact the characters, 己 and 三 are close in appearance, 亥 and 豕 are similar." Upon arriving in Chin, he inquired about it, and indeed it said: "The army of Chin crossed the Ho on *chi-hai* [晉師己亥涉河]."

Of course, the sentence in the historian's record makes no sense, but neither does tzu Hsia's conjecture, at least on first sight: for the characters 三 and 己 or 豕 and 亥 look rather distinct when written in *k'ai-shu*. However, there are certain types of script in which they actually do look similar. In fact, in tzu Hsia's times they might have been written like this:

7 The same desire to fill up lines is met with throughout the Hebrew Bible, where so-called *litterae dilatabiles*, stretched letters (namely final ם, ת, ל, ה, א) are inserted to this end; cf. Wilhelm Gesenius / E. Kautzsch, *Hebräische Grammatik*, ^{27}1902, 24 (§ 5d).

8 William G. Boltz, "Notes on the Textual Relation between the *Kuo yü* and the *Tso chuan*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 53.3 (1990), 491–502. See also William Boltz' contribution to this volume.

9 *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu chiao-shih* 呂氏春秋校釋, ed. Ch'en Ch'i-yu 陳奇猷, Shanghai 1984, *chüan* 22, 1527.

Only through knowledge of palaeography does tzu Hsia's conjecture become understandable. Given a different script, the error he identified would not have been likely to occur.[10] Evidently, certain scripts give rise to certain types of errors, and one can well imagine that different types of layout or format, methods of composition, copying or proof-reading would have similar effects.

All these are factors involved in the bibliographical process, and they are usually dealt with in analytical bibliography, that is, the study of the process of how a book is produced and how it reached its present condition.[11] However, since they have an obvious effect on the texts themselves, they should also be the concern of the textual critic. It is thus the combination of both disciplines that I will call "textual bibliography": the description of the technical process of producing a book in respect to the effects it has on the text of that book.[12]

I will try to demonstrate the scope of textual bibliography by describing its application to Ch'ing dynasty texts. In order to do this, I will trace the process of literary production in this time as closely as possible and point out its relevance to textual criticism.

2. From Author to Copyist

The inception of every text, of course, takes place in the author's mind. He gets some idea or inspiration that he puts to paper, be it a short note, a *pi-chi*, or a lengthy essay. He may carry brush and paper tucked into his sash and jot down his observations any time or place;[13] or he may sit down regularly and write "daily records" like Ku Yen-wu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), or he may write by fits

10 Consider the case of the rather distinct characters 子 and 易, which are hardly distinguishable on bronze inscriptions:  vs. . Note also 循 vs. 脩 vs. 修!

11 Again, there is no exact Chinese equivalent to analytical bibliography. However, *pan-pen hsüeh*, though mainly concerned with the description of the finished artifact, does devote some attention to the process of book production. For an introduction to the field, cf. Li Chih-chung 李致忠, *Ku-shu pan-pen hsüeh kai-lun* 古書版本學概論, Peking [2]1998.

12 This explicitly includes the production of MSS, as opposed to the definition given by Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, Oxford 1972, 336: "Textual bibliography is textual criticism adapted to the analogous but not identical problems of editing *printed* texts." (Italics are mine.)

13 This habit, probably first attested to in *Lun-yü* 15.6, has often been alluded to in Chinese literature. It is hard to tell, however, whether it was actually practised by many people in Ch'ing times.

and starts at the dead of night, like Tseng Kuo-fan 曾國藩 (1811–1872).[14] But no matter when and where these first jottings were done, they had one thing in common: they were in their first stage private writings, intended for the author's perusal only. Since no one else was supposed to read these first drafts, the authors did not have to take great pains in their handwriting, and they would usually write them in a rough-and-ready draft script, *hsing-shu* 行書 or *ts'ao-shu* 草書. An example of this is given on figure 1.[15]

After this first step, the author might just put his text aside and forget about it; in that case, it will never turn into a book, and there is not much of a process to talk about. However, he might consider his writings worthwhile and look through them again. He will make some corrections, add or delete parts, or transpose passages.[16] The result may be even less pleasing to the eye than the first draft (figure 2); so the author, once he is satisfied with his text, will decide to make a clean copy of it. In most cases, he will not do this himself but have someone else do it for him: a student, a son, a clerk, or a friend who is a good calligrapher.[17] This copy would not be written in *ts'ao-shu*, but in clean, legible *k'ai-shu*—very probably so if the author made the copy himself, and certainly if someone else did it for him.

From all the Ch'ing dynasty manuscripts I have seen, only the authors' originals were written in *ts'ao-shu*: first drafts, letters or diaries will typically be in *ts'ao-shu*.[18] However, as soon as writers copied somebody else's text, they would use *k'ai-shu*.[19] This may well have been a matter of respect, and it seems

14 Cf. Tseng Kuo-fan 曾國藩, *Tseng Wen-cheng kung shou-hsieh jih-chi* 曾文正公手寫日記, 6 vols., Taipei 1965, where frequent note is made of writing late at night.

15 For further examples, see the excellent facsimiles in Wang Ho-ming 王鶴鳴 / Ma Yüan-liang 馬遠良 et al. (ed.), *Chung-kuo ku-chi kao- ch'ao- chiao-pen t'u-lu* 中國古籍稿鈔校本圖錄, 3 vols., Shanghai 2000, vol. 1.

16 For such practices in the 20th century, cf. the contribution by Raoul Findeisen in this volume.

17 In his diary of 1861, Feng Fang-ch'i 馮芳緝 (*1833) repeatedly notes that his father, Feng Kuei-fen 馮桂芬 (1809–1874), had him copy his writings. On one occasion, Feng senior even ordered his son to practise his calligraphy. Cf. *Feng Shen-chih hsien-sheng jih-chi shou-kao* 馮申之先生日記手稿, n.p. (MS of the Shanghai library, call no. 035442).

18 Witness, for example, the photographically reproduced diaries by Tseng Kuo-fan (fn. 14) and Chao Lieh-wen 趙烈文 [1832–1893], *Neng ching-chü jih-chi* 能靜居日記, Taipei 1964.

19 Cf. Wang Ho-ming/Ma Yüan-liang (fn. 15), vol. 2 (*ch'ao-pen*), where the great majority of copies are written in *k'ai-shu*, only very few in *hsing-shu*, and none in *ts'ao-shu*.

to have been a consistent principle.[20] For matters of bibliography, this gives us a useful criterion for differentiating autographs from copies: whatever is written in draft script is very likely to be an autograph, whereas later copies will be done in calligraphic script.[21]

As mentioned above, different scripts give rise to different types of scribal error. This is of course true for *ts'ao-shu* vs. *k'ai-shu* as well. Characters that are clearly distinct in *k'ai-shu* may look very similiar and be easily confused in *ts'ao-shu*. The pairs 請 / 清, 孫 / 絲, and 足 / 之 are cases in point. Their *ts'ao-shu* forms may look like this:[22]

請  清  孫  絲  足  之 

This is where textual criticism sets in: Suppose in editing a text we come across a character that does not make any sense, but that is supported by all witnesses (the witnesses being prints or copies). Since conjectures, which run counter to all witnesses, are extremely hazardous and mostly wrong, the editor would be well advised to leave the text unaltered at this point. However, if the nonsense character could be explained by a scribal mistake resulting from a *ts'ao-shu* form, the situation is different. In this case, not only the textual error itself could be accounted for, but also the fact that all witnesses have the same character. Once it slipped into the first copy, it was necessarily adopted by all further copyists, which would not be the case for an error that occurred at a later stage of copying. We thus have three criteria for an emendation: (1) the text makes no sense, (2) the error may be explained by a *ts'ao-shu* form, (3) it can be explained why every witness has the same nonsense character. Therefore, I propose that an editor could and should emend such an error with a good deal of confidence.

20 I was informed by Prof. Martin Gimm from Köln that the same is true for Manchurian manuscripts. To put it pointedly: If one encounters a manuscript done in clean, impeccable handwriting, one knows it is a cheap copy.

21 Note that Chinese bibliography counts both autographs (*shou-kao* 手稿) and fair copies (*ch'ing-kao* 清稿) as authorised copies (*kao-pen* 稿本). The decisive criterion is not whether a text emanated from the author's hand but whether it is "without copying or printing errors" and served as the setting copy (*tsu-pen* 祖本 or *ti-pen* 底本) for printed editions (Wang Ho-ming/Ma Yüan-liang [fn. 15], vol. 1, 10).

22 The rubbings are taken from Ting Tsai-ch'en 丁載臣 (ed.), *Li-tai shu-fa tzu-yüan* 歷代書法字源, Taipei n.d.

3. From Copyist to Author

Let us come back to the production of a book. The author would have his draft copied and the clean copy sewn together. This is an important point: in imperial China one could not buy 'note books' or anything of the like; authors would use loose sheets of paper, spread them out nicely and write on them. Only at the point when a book was *completed* would they have it sewn together. This would most likely be the case with the fair copy. So the latter would be bound while the original draft might remain unbound. Now Liang Ch'i-ch'ao noted that

> when a book was written it had to go to several good friends of the author for a critical checking of its merits and demerits before it circulated at large, and the checking was all carried on by letter. Letters of this kind were all carefully prepared and were in fact works in themselves. Although this practice is occasionally also to be noted in other dynasties, it was particularly strong in the Ch'ing.[23]

So the fair copy would be handed around or sent away. Then the author would receive comments—sometimes written directly into the copy[24]—or get new ideas of his own that he wishes to build into his text. How would he do this? He would take the original draft, still loose sheets, and start changing it once again. One can easily imagine that in this process the *order* of the text could be accidentally changed and that once the author had another copy made the text might turn out reshuffled. In this way, single sheets may become misplaced; but, more likely, whole chapters may be transposed. This is exactly what happened when Feng Kuei-fen rewrote his *Chiao-Pin lu ch'u kao* 校邠廬初稿 in 1862/63 to produce the *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i* 校邠廬抗議. The latter differs significantly in the sequence of chapters. Interestingly, both arrangements were perpetuated by later prints, and even modern editions differ in the order of the book's chapters.[25] Without considering the making of the book, an editor would be at a loss to account for these differences.

23 Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, *Intellectual Trends of the Ch'ing Period* [Shanghai 1921], trans. by Immanuel Hsü, Cambridge, Ma. 1959, 72.

24 For example, Chou T'eng-hu 周騰虎 (1816–1862) wrote a laudatory comment right into a fair copy of Feng Kuei-fen's essays and even put his chop: *Ta-chih yüan chai* 達識緣齋, on it. Cf. *I-hsüan han* 議選函 [MS of the Shanghai she-hui k'o-hsüeh yüan, li-shih yen-chiu so 上海社會科學院歷史研究所, no call no.] 53b. The manuscript obviously remained in the Feng family's possession.

25 Compare, for example, the editions of Tai Yang-pen 戴揚本, Cheng-chou 1998 [*Hsing-shih ts'ung-shu* 醒獅叢書], and the Taiwan reprint (Wen-hai 1971), based on the edition Chü-feng fang 聚豐坊, 1897.

Perhaps even more important than such reshuffling are the *changes* in the text that the author would make upon suggestions of friends: he would write them in the margins or between the lines. When the revised draft was later copied once again, these additions were likely to be inserted in small script, just like commentaries. I have studied one text rather intensively that contained a good deal of such commentary-type passages, and as far as I can tell, they were all due to secondary insertions.[26]

Once again, this might be a useful piece of information for an editor who wants to identify successive layers of a text. This being said, it should become clear that identifying such layers is probably the most important task when dealing with a Ch'ing-dynasty text. An editor would be hard pressed to find a single 'original' text, or to pinpoint a 'final intention.' There are no such things to be found in most Ch'ing-dynasty texts. It is the process of writing rather than the product that should be described, since texts were constantly changing. Or, more precisely, they were constantly growing.

Three examples may suffice: When Ku Yen-wu's *Jih-chih lu* 日知錄 was first printed in 1670 it comprised 8 *chüan*, whereas the edition of 1695 amounted to 32 *chüan*; Wei Yüan's 魏源 (1794–1856) *Hai-kuo t'u-chih* 海國圖志 first appeared in 50 *chüan* (1844), later in 60 *chüan* (1847), and finally (1852) in 100 *chüan*;[27] Feng Kuei-fen's *Chiao-Pin lu K'ang-i* had 40 chapters in 1885, and in 1898 it totaled 54 chapters. Ch'ing dynasty books tended to grow over time. The same observation has been made for classical texts,[28] and perhaps it is true for other periods as well. This process of growth would commence during the author's lifetime, and it might continue well after his death. Not only the author added to his text, but also his relatives, friends, students or any editor—and very generously at times. It should be borne in mind that during Ch'ing times there was no such thing as copyright in China (some would argue: even nowadays there isn't), so anybody could copy, alter and even publish any text.

26 Kai Vogelsang, *Feng Kuei-fen und sein Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i*, Hamburg 2001 [*Hamburger Sinologische Schriften*, 2], esp. p. 108.

27 On these books, cf. Arthur W. Hummel (ed.), *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644–1911)*, 2 vols., Washington 1943, pp. 424, and 851 resp.

28 Cf. the 'accretion theory' put forward by E. Bruce Brooks/A. Taeko Brooks, *The Original Analects*, New York 1998, esp. pp. 201–48.

4. Manuscript Circulation

How were texts dealt with by copyists outside the author's purview? The recipients or readers of the text might copy it themselves or, probably more usually, have others copy it for them. This may simply have been a matter of time: a good scribe being able to copy up to 5,000 characters a day,[29] it would take him about three weeks for a text the size of the *Li-chi* 禮記. However, three or more scribes could finish the job in less than a week. The result would be a pristine but—in more than one sense—cheap copy. Since scribes were paid by the amount of text, mistakes due to hasty work are to be expected. If such copies did not undergo proof-reading they are likely to be replete with errors.[30] Most scholars therefore would not settle for a simple copy, and they would go through the text again and collate it themselves. In this process, they would do two things: (1) insert punctuation marks. It is important to know that often the received punctuation most often is not the author's.[31] A scribe may insert punctuation marks in black ink, and during collation they may be added once again in red ink (*chu-pi* 朱筆) by a corrector: as a result, some manuscripts have double punctuation, black and red circles being placed side by side.[32] This should not conceal the fact, however, that neither of them was originally part of the text: they represent the interpretation of its readers.

29 Cf. Yeh Te-hui 葉德輝, quoted in Ch'eng/Hsü (fn. 1), *tien-ts'ang pien*, 229: "A good scribe can write 5,000 characters a day. For every 1,000 characters he receives no more than about 70 to 80 cash. [...] Thus having a book of 100,000 characters copied only costs 7–8,000 cash: how much cheaper than buying a *Han-shu* for 1,000 *tael*!" (1,000 *tael* would have been far more than one million cash.)

30 Such is the case with Yin Chao-yung's 殷兆鏞 (1806–1883) copy of the *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i*: Yin probably had the 40,000 character text copied during a four day visit to Su-chou (cf. *Yin P'u-ching shih-lang tzu-hsü nien-p'u* 殷譜經侍郎自敘年譜 [1909], repr. Taibei 1969, 52b). There are no signs of proof-reading, and indeed, the MS which is now being kept in Paris (Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, call no. D VI-6-1 (1)) is full of mistakes.

31 Many western authors, too, are wont to neglect their punctuation, expecting the editor to normalize it. Take, for example, Rousseaus letter to his publisher as quoted in Gaskell (fn. 12), 339: «Quand j'ai désiré qu'on suivit exactement le manuscrit je n'entendois pas parler de la ponctuation qui y est fort vicieuse. Priez M. l'Abbé Yvon de vouloir bien la rétablir dans les épreuves suivantes.» This has led scholars like W. W. Greg and Fredson Bowers to differentiate between 'substantives' (the words of a text) and 'accidentals' (the punctuation, spelling, etc.). Cf. Greg, "The Rationale of Copy-Text", in: *Studies in Bibliography* 3 (1950–51), 19–36.

32 Additionally, some scholars would 'underline' passages by placing red circles next to all characters.

(2) During collation, of course, mistakes would be corrected. Whereas the author himself would normally use black ink to revise his text, such corrections were usually written in red ink.[33] They could range from the deletion, addition, or transposition of entire paragraphs, the deletion and replacement of characters to the correction of single strokes, the insertion of tiny dashes to indicate reverse order (akin to the marks used in Japanese editions of Chinese texts), or even the mere marking of an erroneous character by circles or innocuous little triangles.[34] Explicit corrections, which not only mark the miswritten character but also supply the correct one, are on the whole unambiguous. Implicit corrections, however, which only mark an error without hinting at the correct reading, may be ambivalent or even misleading. Such correction marks, superscript triangles being the most widely employed ones, merely indicate that there is *something* wrong with the character thus marked—without further specification. Or they could mean even less: not that there necessarily be anything wrong, but only something *remarkable* about the character. In Ch'ing times, triangles, like the *circelli* in the Masoretic bible, were also used to refer to a critical apparatus.[35]

This may create considerable ambiguity: how, for example, should an editor interpret characters like 禄 or 廋 with a small triangular mark next to them? Do they mean that the characters are entirely wrong, *lexicographic* mistakes? Or are they just somewhat miswritten, thus *orthographic* mistakes? It could mean either. In the given examples,[36] 廋 is a lexicographic mistake, the proper reading being 庾, whereas 禄 is just an orthographic variant, a 'vulgar character' (*su-tzu* 俗字) that should be correctly written thus: 祿.[37]

Western editors, far removed in time and space from their texts' original milieu, may find this ambivalence particularly disturbing. But neither did Ch'ing scribes or editors themselves always make proper sense of it. The

33 Red ink had been used for collation since the T'ang dynasty; cf. Susan Cherniack, "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," in: *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54.1 (1994), 5–125, esp. 88–92.

34 For examples of all these techniques, see Wang Ho-ming/Ma Yüan-liang (fn. 15), esp. vol. 3 (*chiao-pen*).

35 Cf. Juan Yuan 阮元, *Shih-san ching chu-shu* 十三經注疏 [orig. 1816], 2 vols., Peking 1980, where they are employed throughout the text.

36 Taken from P'an Wei's 潘霨 (1816–1894) 1879/1880 copy of the *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i*, MS of the Suchou library (no call number), containing 26 chapters in one fascicle.

37 For a list of 'vulgar' or 'variant' characters (*i-t'i tzu* 異體字), cf. Chou Ho 周何 (ed.), *Kuo-yü huo-yung tz'u-tien* 國語活用辭典, Taipei n.d., 2043–76. Note that even in the *Shih-san ching chu-shu* (fn. 35) 'vulgar characters' are occasionally marked by triangles in the text and commented on in the apparatus.

following observations are based on the collation of a 1879/1880 copy of the *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i*, which in turn was used for a printed edition in 1892.[38] In one case the character 親 was marked in the copy with a red triangle, obviously because the original read 觀. However, in the print that was made from this copy, the character 視 appears! Obviously, the compositor misunderstood what the correction aimed at and thus fabricated an error of his own. This is not the only case in which such correction marks were wrongly interpreted, producing numerous errors in the printed text. The following examples may serve to illustrate this process of corruption; the first character appears in the original text, the second, with correction mark, in the copy, and the third in the print edition.

觀→親▽→視
⿰亻敝→⿰亻敝▽→致
洲→州▽→國
至→主▽→其
何具→何其▽→其何
彼→彼役▽→役彼
釣魚→鈞▽魚→鉤魚
強→彊▽→疆

Triangles could mean anything, and consequently the compositor could fabricate any kind of error from them. He could replace a lexicographic error by another one, an orthograpic mistake by a lexicographic one,[39] or even change the position of a wrong character, thus adding a syntactic error to a lexicographic one. What is more, a putative editor having only a witness with the first reading and the printed text at his disposal would be hard pressed to account for some of the variant readings he will encounter: how is 國 to be derived from 洲, or 其何 from 何具? Cumulative errors of this kind may make editorial work extremely difficult. In such cases, one will have to consider the technical details of transmission before reaching an editorial decision.

38 On the MS, see fn. 36. The printed edition was published by *Min-te t'ang* 敏德堂 (copies in Shanghai library: 長 313949–50; Peking library: 社 103/882.3).

39 Note that in the second example there was not even an orthographic mistake to begin with. The copyist merely took over a 'vulgar' form from the original, which the corrector felt urged to mark. The printer took this to indicate a lexicographic mistake and inserted a wholly new word.

The above examples go to show that even carefully done editions could have their flaws, and corrections may produce errors of their own. To be sure, cases like this are not too common; in general such editions that have been proof-read are fairly reliable.[40] One would expect a similar degree of reliability from 'critical editions' fabricated by collating at least two independent witnesses. Such editions of course existed in Ch'ing times, even in manuscript form. One example is the beautiful copy of the *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i* by Hsieh Chang-t'ing 謝章鋌 (1820–1903).[41] It was produced by collating two manuscripts: the above-mentioned copy by P'an Wei and Feng Kuei-fen's "First Draft" (*Chiao-Pin lu ch'u kao* 校邠廬初稿), which is no longer extant. The edited text always follows the "First Draft", whereas in the upper margin all variant readings of P'an Wei's manuscript are noted, just like one would expect in a critical apparatus. It looks like a carefully done, invaluable copy, and for the most parts it is.—If it weren't for the fact, that in many places the critical notes that are to be expected do not appear: in dozens of instances where the text of P'an Wei's copy differs from that of Hsieh Chang-t'ing's the discrepancy is not noted at all. In other cases, it may be added, the apparatus only gives vague hints like "in this passage P'an's edition has a somewhat different wording" (潘本此段字句有不同) or "the wording occasionally differs, but the general meaning is the same" (字句亦偶有不同，大旨則一). So the 'critical edition' is not that critical after all.[42]

But, more importantly, in one place—and it is a prominent place—Hsieh Chang-t'ing's copy has a strange reading. In the table of contents the title of the

40 I shall leave out the thorny problem of *purposeful* alteration of texts. In fact, the above-mentioned "good friends of the author" that checked the books "merits and demerits" often did not hesitate to change the text, especially to add passages they found fitting. This habit, apparently well established and widespread in Ch'ing times, lies beyond the scope of the present article, for it creates an entirely *new* text that may merit a critical edition itself. Purposeful alterations that occur during the process of transmission can by no means be treated in the same way as alternative readings due to scribal errors: among the latter a *choice* must be made to constitute the edited text, whereas the former must be completely documented in the critical apparatus. For a more detailed discussion, cf. my article "Prinzipien und Probleme einer historisch-kritischen Ausgabe des *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i*," forthcoming in *Oriens Extremus* 43.

41 MS of the Fukien Provincial Library, Fu-chou, (no call number) containing 42 chapters in two fascicles.

42 In a deeper sense, traditional Chinese editions (and even modern ones) are *never* critical, since they do not aim to reconstruct an 'original' text but rather reproduce an extant version, merely adding an apparatus with variant readings. On the—very different—western conception, see D. C. Greetham, *Textual Scholarship* (fn. 2), 347.

book is given as *Chiao-Pin lu ch'u-kao* / *k'ang-i shang* 校邠廬初稿 / 抗議上. The very awkwardness of the title, actually a double title spread over two lines, is suspicious. It becomes even more so considering the fact that Feng Kuei-fen's "First Draft" almost certainly did not contain the word *k'ang-i*. When Feng Kuei-fen first put together his book in 1862, he had not yet given it this title but simply named it *Chiao-Pin lu ch'u-kao*.[43] Sure enough, Hsieh Chang-t'ing's copy lacks the crucial passage in the foreword in which the title *k'ang-i* is explained. Instead, it supplies a marginal note stating that P'an Wei's copy has this passage. There is *no* critical note, however, concerning the book title in the table of contents, which in P'an Wei's manuscript reads *Chiao-Pin lu k'ang-i shang*—without *ch'u-kao*. Had Hsieh Chang-t'ing faithfully copied the title from the "First Draft", one would certainly expect a critical note for the variant reading of P'an Wei's copy. What happened, obviously, is that Hsieh *contaminated* the two titles thus making any critical note obsolete.

So the allegedly 'critical' edition actually gives a contaminated text! It is not the best of editions, it is the worst of editions. In this particular case the contaminated passage is readily identifiable, but how many others are there that do not immediately meet the eye? Only this much is certain: a contaminated witness is useless for textual criticism. A prudent editor should rather rely on two 'cheap' copies than on one apparently 'critical' text.

This sort of contamination might seem shocking to a modern, namely a western textual critic. For a Chinese in Ch'ing times or even nowadays it might not be shocking at all. Looking through modern Chinese studies on descriptive bibliography (*pan-pen hsüeh*), one will notice that the editions that are held in the highest esteem are so-called *po-na pen* 百衲本, 'patchwork editions'. The most famous example is probably the *po-na*-edition of the 24 dynastic histories, which consists of the presumably best extant editions of every history. This may seem acceptable for collectanea (*ts'ung-shu* 叢書) like this, but what about *po-na*-editions of single works? What about a 'patchwork' *Lun-yü* 論語, sewn together from the 'best' extant chapters or passages. This is exactly what western textual critics call a contaminated edition. The Chinese would regard it highly, we would reject it. Again, this is something an editor should be aware of, when looking for a good edition.

43 Cf. the diaries of Tseng Kuo-fan (fn. 14), vol. 3, 1428, and especially that of Chao Lieh-wen (fn. 18), vol. 2, 1119–25, which contains summaries and paraphrases of all 40 chapters of the "First Draft" without mentioning the key word *k'ang-i* nor the foreword in which, in later versions of the text, this term is introduced.

Finally a word on the last step in literary production, the printing of the text. Print versions were usually carefully prepared. This reflects the fact that prints were regarded as much more valuable than manuscripts—in Ch'ing times and even nowadays.[44] *Pan-pen hsüeh* is all about prints, not about manuscripts: "The term *pan-pen* was established already in the Sung dynasty and was used in opposition to the term manuscripts [*hsieh-pen* 寫本]."[45] The kind of corrections described above were typically done in preparation of a printed edition. Sometimes layout instructions would be inserted in the margins, sometimes even figures giving the character count of a page, just like the Masoretes did for the biblical text.[46]

Again, this looks like very careful editing—but why exactly was it done? Obviously for fear that some words could be left out when transferring a text from a manuscript to the printing plate. In fact, this was a very real danger, since the layout of manuscripts differed significantly from that of print versions. Manuscripts would typically have 18 to 21 characters to a line, whereas prints would have 23 to 27 characters per line. Such a shift in layout is a definite source of error.[47] A copy is much easier to check if it has the same layout: when a scribe reaches the end of the line in the original but not in the copy, he knows he has missed something. Not so, if the length of lines differs. Then the eye of the copyist is likely to miss the point were it last left the text.

A modern editor may of course look out for gaps that span a multiple of 18 or 21 characters. If they do occur, this might be a hint towards the manuscript a print version was based on. But skipping an entire line does not seem to have been a very common thing to happen, besides it might happen as well when maintaining the same layout. More frequent are omissions within a line, namely when the same word or phrase occurs twice in close proximity. This kind of scribal error, called *homeographon*, is well known to Chinese textual critics and specialists in *pan-pen hsüeh* who, as stated above, primarily dealt with printed

44 The Ch'ing emperors meted out extremely harsh penalties for any single wrong character in imperially commissioned *prints*, not so, however, for imperially commissioned manuscripts. Even prestigious manuscript editions like the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* should therefore be used with caution; cf. the contribution of Hans van Ess to this volume.

45 Ch'eng/Hsü, *Chiao-ch'ou kuang-i* (fn. 1), *pan-pen pien*, 6. Li Chih-chung, *Ku-shu pan-pen hsüeh* (fn. 11), 4–8, tries instead to revive the old term *ch'uan-pen hsüeh* 傳本學 ('study of textual transmission'). This reaction bespeaks the enduring preference of prints over manuscripts.

46 Similar word counts can be found throughout Chinese history: on Ma-wang tui-manuscripts, on T'ang stone steles and in some Sung dynasty prints.

47 This is also true for ancient texts using wooden or bamboo strips of different length; cf. the article by William Boltz in this volume.

texts. Indeed, such errors are much more likely to occur in print versions than in manuscripts. An editor of Chinese texts should certainly take this into account.

This paper has summarized some observations resulting from my own experience with Ch'ing manuscripts and prints, a rather limited experience, indeed. It does not claim to give a full account of the problems involved in textual bibliography, nor that the examples chosen necessarily hold true for all texts of the period. But hopefully it may give Ch'ing scholars an idea of the things that could happen to a text in those times and raise their attention to the pitfalls of their work. Above all this paper wanted to emphasize one point: All facets of a book's history, presentation, and reception are intimately connected. When dealing with a text one is well advised not only to consider its present state, but also the whole process of its production.

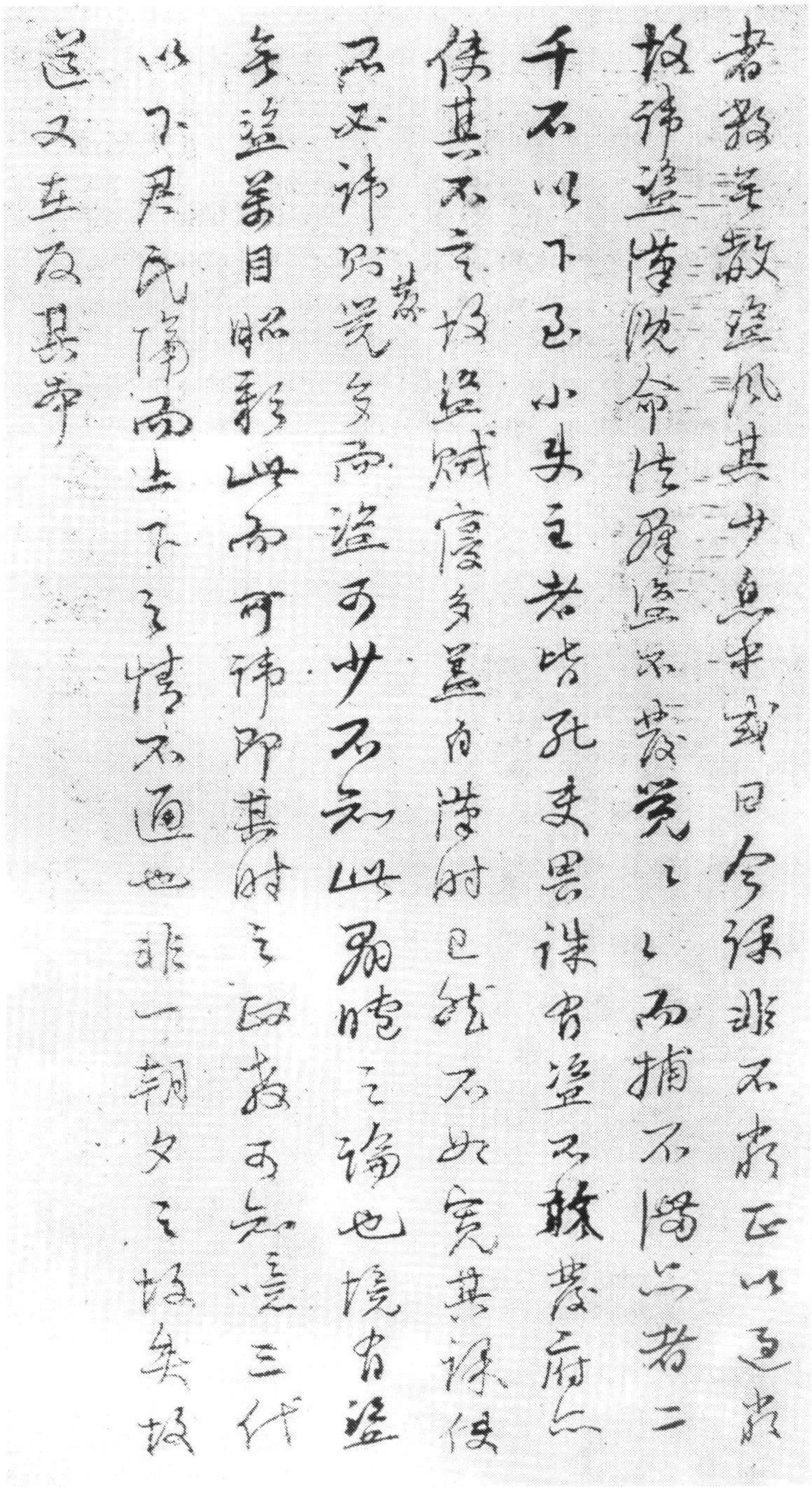

Figure 1: First draft of Feng Kuei-fen's essay 嚴盜課議 ("On tightening the Bandit Quota"), p. 28a of a manuscript booklet entitled 籌防手牘.

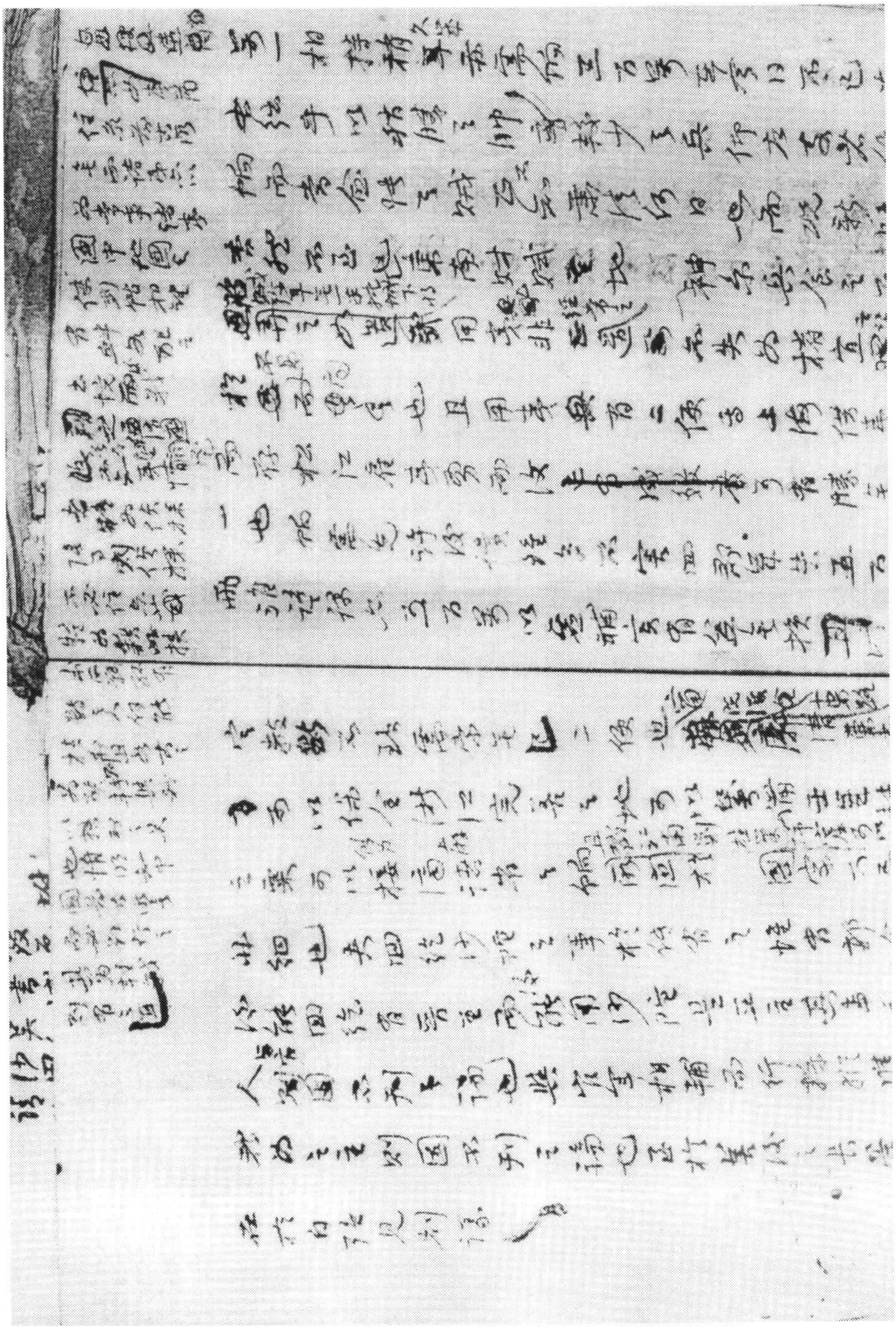

Figure 2: First draft of Feng Kuei-fen's essay 借兵俄法議 ("On borrowing Weapons from Russia and France"), p. 49b-50a of a manuscript booklet entitled 籌防手牘.