

## INTRODUCTION

### The Background of the Present Study

Few controversies in modern Chinese history have lasted longer and involved more scholars than that concerning Lao Zi 老子 the man, and the book called the *Laozi* 老子. The debate begun by Liang Qichao 梁啟超 in the beginning of this century, for example, has lasted for many years, has engaged dozens of scholars, and has produced texts totaling half a million words.<sup>1</sup> And the battle is still continuing, both in China and in the West.

#### 0.1 The debates concerning Lao Zi and the *Laozi*

Together with Confucius, Lao Zi, whose name has also been written as Lao Zi, is probably the most eminent figure in Chinese history. Both figures are very familiar to the West. The book that bears Lao Zi's name, the *Daodejing* 道德經, has been translated far more often than any other work of Oriental literature.

According to the traditional opinion, Lao Zi lived at the end of Chunqiu 春秋 (Spring and Autumn) period and was an elder contemporary of Confucius.<sup>2</sup> But some scholars argue that Lao Zi dates from the Zhanguo 戰國 (Warring States) period,<sup>3</sup> while others even deny the historicity of a person such as Lao Zi.<sup>4</sup>

One well-known theory, represented mainly by Liang Qichao and Feng Youlan 馮友蘭,<sup>5</sup> denies the tradition of Sima Qian 司馬遷. This theory is presented in various ways, but the two of the most popular points, which have strongly influenced the Western world, are, 1) that Sima Qian was unsure about the materials he wrote concerning Lao Zi; and, 2) that the *Laozi* was not written by Lao Zi, the contemporary of Confucius, Spring and Autumn Period at the end of the Spring and Autumn Period, but consists instead of a collection by many later scholars during the middle or end of the period of the Warring States.<sup>6</sup>

#### 0.2 The chronological table

Concerning the concepts of Chunqiu and Zhanguo, five main theories emerge concerning the ending year of the Spring and Autumn Period, *i.e.*, the year before the starting year

<sup>1</sup> Chan 1963: p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> See Sima Qian s.a.: *Shiji: Laozi zhuang*.

<sup>3</sup> Feng 1964: pp. 249-256.

<sup>4</sup> D. C. Lau 1963 and 1982: p. 131.

<sup>5</sup> Feng 1964: pp. 249-256. See also *Gushibian* 1933.

<sup>6</sup> Creel 1970: p. 5. Waley 1958: p. 127. Needham 1956: p. 36. Kaltenmark 1975: p. 15. Giles 1923: p. 59.

of the Warring States Period. They are as follows:<sup>7</sup>

1. 481 BC, *i.e.*, the 14th year of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公. Lü Zuqian's 呂祖謙 *Dashiji* 大事記 of Song (宋) dynasty begins also this year, which was done in order to continue the records in the *Chunqiu* 春秋, which ends in the same year.

2. 475 BC, *i.e.*, the first year of King Yuan of Zhou 周元王. Sima Qian's *Shiji*. *Liuguo nian biao* 史記六國年表 begins from this year.

3. 468 BC, *i.e.*, the first year of King Zhen of Zhou 周貞王. Both Lin Chunpu's 林春溥 *Zhanguo jinian* 戰國紀年 and Huang Shisan's 黃氏三 *Zhoujibianlue* 周紀編略 in the Qing 清 dynasty begin from this year.

4. 403 BC.<sup>8</sup> Sima Guang's 司馬光 *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒 of the Song dynasty employs this point of view.

5. 480 BC. This is the opinion of D. C. Lau.<sup>9</sup>

The present work accepts the first opinion, *i.e.*, that the Warring States Period begins from 480 BC. The Spring and Autumn Period, therefore, falls before 480. The chronological table used in the present work is as follows:

Eastern Zhou Dynasty, 770 to 256 BC.

A. The Spring and Autumn Period, 772 to 481 BC.

Confucius, 551 to 479 BC.

B. The Warring States Period, 480 to 222 BC.

Mo Zi, *fl.* fifth century BC.

Mencius, *fl.* fourth century BC.

Shen Dao, the middle of the fourth to the first quarter of the third century BC.

Zhuang Zi, the middle of the fourth to the beginning of the third century BC.

Xun Zi, the latter half of the fourth to the middle of the third century BC.

Hanfei Zi, d. 233 BC.

Qin Dynasty, 221 to 207 BC.

Western Han Dynasty, 206 BC to 8 AD.

*Huainanzi*, compiled c. 140 BC.

Sima Qian, the *Shiji* (Records of the Historian), completed c. 90 BC.

The *Liji*, compiled by Dai Sheng (*fl.*, first century BC.)

Liu Xiang, the *Shuoyuan*, presented to throne, c.16 BC.

Wang Mang (Xin Dynasty), 9 to 23 AD.

Eastern Han Dynasty, 25 to 220 AD.

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<sup>7</sup> Yang Kuan 1983: p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Chan 1963: p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> D. C. Lau 1982: p. 143.

### 0.3 The new position opposing the tradition

The new position concerning Sima Qian's *Shiji*, is that Sima Qian was unsure about the materials which he wrote concerning Lao Zi, thus, Sima Qian's record cannot be trusted. Feng Youlan, for example, is of this opinion.<sup>10</sup> And especially in the West this opinion is still very popular.

#### 0.3.1 The opinions which are against the tradition of Sima Qian 司馬遷

This work will not discuss all of the theories which oppose the tradition of Sima Qian but will concentrate on that which influences the Western world. An important representative of such an opposing opinion is Feng Youlan, who taught that Sima Qian was not sure about who Lao Zi was and when he lived.<sup>11</sup> Influenced by him, directly or indirectly, many Western scholars have followed him in believing that Sima Qian was not certain about his subject. Kaltenmark, for example, says:

Thus Ssu-ma Ch'ien frankly admits to uncertainty: all the material he has managed to gather about Lao Zi is so vague and contradictory that he cannot draw a single definite conclusion from it.<sup>12</sup>

Related to this opinion, many western scholars think that the book of *Laozi* was written much later, perhaps not long before 300 BC, *i.e.*, in the middle or end of the period of the Warring States. Thus, Kaltenmark says,

If Lao Dan, a contemporary of Confucius, is the author, as tradition says he is, the work dates from the sixth century BC. However, most scholars believe that the Lao Zi cannot have been written at so early a date, and various other dates have been proposed. Western scholars generally plump for the end of the fourth century BC or the beginning of the third century, but their arguments are rather vague. Recent work in China and Japan (the Japanese analyses are particularly thorough) has proved the following points beyond doubt: (1) that the existing text cannot have been written by Lao Dan, the contemporary of Confucius; (2) that a text similar to the one we possess existed at the end of the Warring States Period; (3) that many aphorisms found in the *Tao Te Ching* were well known in Chinese philosophical circles from an early date and were not always attributed to Lao Dan.<sup>13</sup>

These opinions are not only those of Kaltenmark but are also favored by many Western scholars, *e.g.*, Herrlee G. Creel, Arthur Waley, Joseph Needham, and Lionel Giles, etc.<sup>14</sup>

Waley, for example, says concerning Lao Zi's names, birth place, office, the two events (the visit of Confucius and the journey to the West), the two tentative identifications (with Lao Lai Zi and the Grand Historian DAN 儋), and the genealogy of descendants,

<sup>10</sup> Feng Youlan 1964: p. 249 reads: "老子这部书相传是老子所作的。老子是谁？是甚什么时期的人？关于这些问题，在汉朝初年，就有不同的说法。司马迁也不敢决定哪个说法必定对，哪个说法必定错。他作韩非老子列传，只把当时不同的说法都记载下来，不作十分肯定的判断。"

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Kaltenmark 1969: p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Kaltenmark 1969: p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Creel 1970: p. 5. Waley 1934: p. 108 reads "In short, Ssu-ma Ch'ien's 'biography' of Lao Tzu consists simply of a confession that for the writing of such a biography no materials existed at all." Needham 1956: p. 36. Kaltenmark 1975: p. 15. Giles 1923: p. 59.

that all of these amount to "a confession that for the writing of such a biography no materials existed at all".<sup>15</sup>

Joseph Needham in the 1970's also said: "There has been extensive discussion concerning his probable date. The authoritative view, expressed by Fung Yu-lan(I), is that the old accounts (such as that in the *Shih Chi*, ch.63) which made Lao Tzu a...6th century contemporary of Confucius, must be given up, and that the *Tao Te Ching* must be considered a Warring States document...The subsequent discussion is worth reading, but the general conclusion is that the life of Lao Tzu is to be placed within the -- 4th century, and that the *Tao Te Ching* may be dated not long before -- 300, i.e., about the time when Aristotle was old and Epicures and Zeno were young."<sup>16</sup> Herrlee Creel says: "Nevertheless a growing body of scholarship supports, with careful and impressive documentation, the statement of Fung Yu-lan that both the *Chuang Tzu* and the *Lao Tzu* 'are really collections of Taoist writings and sayings, made by differing persons in differing times, rather than the single work of any one person.'"<sup>17</sup> Creel based his statements mainly on the work of Xu Dishan, Gu Jiegang, Takeuchi Yoshio and Feng Youlan, as he indicated in his book in note 2 on page 2.<sup>18</sup> However, the opinion of these scholars was a minor input among various theories, just as was the case in the time of *Gushibian* from the 1920s to 1940s. It is quite dangerous to draw conclusions from just a few scholars while ignoring many others.

In the 1990s William G. Boltz says: "Ssu-ma Ch'ien (?145-?90 BC) gives what purports to be a biography of Lao tzu in *Shih Chi* 63, identifying him as an archivist serving the Chou court, a native of Ch'u, surname Li 李, with the given name either Tan 聃 or Erh 耳. None of this can be historically documented, and indeed Ssu-ma Ch'ien's biography of Lao tzu contains virtually nothing that is demonstrably factual; we are left no choice but to acknowledge the likely fictional nature of the traditional Lao tzu figure."<sup>19</sup> Boltz's opinion here disagrees with Sima Qian or, at least, casts doubt on his records concerning Lao Zi. Boltz repeats on the same page D. C. Lau's theory: "To assign authorship of the *Tao te ching* to Lao tzu is to say no more than that some respectable soul compiled, if not singly composed, the text. It says nothing about who that figure may have actually been, or when the compilation was achieved."<sup>20</sup>

Some scholars, thus, have suggested that Lao Zi was not a historical figure at all. D. C. Lau, for example, sums up his discussion about whether Lao Zi was a historical

<sup>15</sup> Arthur Waley 1934: p. 108.

<sup>16</sup> Needham 1975: pp. 35-36.

<sup>17</sup> Creel 1970: pp. 1-2.

<sup>18</sup> See Creel 1970: p. 2 note 2, which reads: "Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, 65. The most voluminous collections of evidence on the composite nature of the *Lao Tzu*, known to me, are: Xu Dishan 許地山, *Tao Chiao shih* 道教史, I (Shanghai 1934), 23-27. Gu Jiegang, "Cong Lüshichuqiu tuice Laozi zhi chengshu niandai" in Luo Genze ed., *Gushibian*, IV Beijing 1933), 462-520. Takeuchi Yoshio, *Roshi Genshi*, translated in *Xianqin guji kao* II: pp. 273-308.

<sup>19</sup> See Loewe 1993: p. 270.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

figure who lived in the sixth century BC as follows: "There is no certain evidence that he was a historical figure."<sup>21</sup>

Graham also disagrees with the traditional opinion and has argued carefully to establish an opposing opinion. He, however, accepted some part of the record by Sima Qian and believes that Lao Dan is a contemporary of Confucius. Nonetheless, he does not think Lao Zi was the author of the book *Laozi*.<sup>22</sup>

How have these new opinions become so popular? Are they closer to the truth than the tradition of Sima Qian? This is the question which is the focus of this work.

### 0.3.2 The source of the new opinions

Centuries since Sima Qian wrote in his *Shiji* that Lao Zi was a contemporary of Confucius and the author of a book expounding the doctrine of the Dao 道 (Way) and its *de* 德 (virtue), the Chinese have accepted this account without question. His was, after all, the earliest biography of Lao Zi. As a new rationalistic spirit emerged in the Song 宋 dynasty (960-1297), however, a number of Neo-Confucianists began to question this tradition.<sup>23</sup> Ye Shi 叶适 (1150-1223) definitely rejected the tradition<sup>24</sup> and Zhu Xi 朱熹 was puzzled by it.<sup>25</sup> In the eighteenth century, as the critical and skeptical spirit grew in strength among Chinese scholars, many of them, especially Wang Zhong 汪中 (1744-94) and Cui Shu 崔述 (1740-1816), revolted against the traditional account.<sup>26</sup> But it was Liang Qichao's publication of a critical review of Hu Shi's 胡适 *Zhongguo zhexue shi dagang* 中国哲学史大纲 (Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy) in a 1922 newspaper that touched off the long and bitter controversy. Hu Shi had upheld the tradition about the man and the book, but Liang threw it overboard. Since then, hardly a scholar with anything to say about them has failed to take a position. Thus, dating from this event, opposition to the tradition became popular. Wing-Tsit Chan had to say, for example, in 1963 that "the point has been reached that in some circles in the West, as well as in China, a scholar is considered outdated if he upholds the tradition."<sup>27</sup>

The situation is still the same, especially in the Western world. As above mentioned, the recent work of Needham and Loewe still follows the theory of Feng Youlan (and Liang Qichao). Thus, in 1922 Chen Guying 陈鼓应 said, in his article "Lun Laozi shu zuo yu Zhanguo zhi mo 论老子书作于战国之末"<sup>28</sup>, "... (Liang Qichao) confused Lao

<sup>21</sup> D. C. Lau 1963 and 1982: p. 131.

<sup>22</sup> A. C. Graham 1986: pp. 111-124, especially in p. 124.

<sup>23</sup> For an account of the thought of these Neo-Confucianists, see Luo Genze, *Zhuzi kaosuo* 诸子考索, pp. 258-261. Luo has written a comprehensive chronological account of the whole controversy (pp. 257-281). A shorter, systematic account is found in *Laozi zhexue taolun ji*: pp. 1-7.

<sup>24</sup> Ye Shi s.a.: *Xixue jiyen* 习学记言: 15:1b.

<sup>25</sup> Zhu Xi s.a.: 74:11b.

<sup>26</sup> Chan 1963: p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> See *Gushi bian* 古史辨 volume IV: p. 305.

Zi 老子 with Lao Lai Zi 老萊子 and Taishi DAN 太史儋”, and he thought that the issue of this identification was not clear in *Shiji* either. This position has had great influence, and some scholars still assert that *Shiji* was not sure about Lao Zi, the man.” Chen continued, “Especially abroad, in reading many prefaces to the English translation of *Laozi* or some English papers involving Lao Zi the man, I find all saying that the record about him in the *Shiji* is not clear. But in fact, the reason for making this kind of mistake is reading the *Shiji* too carelessly.”<sup>29</sup> Liu Xiaogan 刘笑敢 also pointed out that in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and especially in Europe and America, the influence of Liang Qichao is still quite strong.<sup>30</sup>

### 0.3.3 Reasons which make the recent positions popular in the West

What are the reasons favoring the idea of Lao Zi's historicity in China? Since Lao Zi is an important and mysterious figure as a sage in the history of China, the truth concerning him and his book becomes a very interesting question.

Aside from the question of the correctness of the position that Lao Zi is not an historical figure, many other reasons make this opinion still popular in the West. Following are some important ones of them:

The discussion started by Liang Qichao lasted many years and, ended only in disagreement. Chan Wing-Tsit says: “It may safely be said that those who believe Lao Tzu lived in the Spring and Autumn Period and those who believed he lived in the Warring States period are about equal in number.”<sup>31</sup> Feng Youlan's opinion followed the latter position, and Needham says concerning him, “The authoritative view, expressed by Fung Yu-lan(I), is that the old accounts (such as that in the *Shih Chi*, ch.63) which made Lao Tzu a 6th century contemporary of Confucius, must be given up, and that the *Tao Te Ching* must be considered a Warring States document...”<sup>32</sup> This reliance on Feng Youlan arose for two main historical reasons. First, Feng Youlan gained acceptance of the officials during the communist period in the main land of China and thus became an important philosopher.<sup>33</sup> His position was accepted while others were not. Thus,

<sup>29</sup> Chen Guying (General ed.) IV 1994: p. 413.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: p. 419.

<sup>31</sup> Chan 1963: p. 53.

<sup>32</sup> Needham 1975: pp. 35-36.

<sup>33</sup> Feng Youlan has been influenced by the doctrine of Marxism. From the date of his publication of *A History of Chinese Philosophy* to the new version of this book he moved closer to the doctrine of Marxism. Professor Nicolas Standaert from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, has shown this movement. (Cf., his presentation of “The Comparison between Feng Youlan's *A History of Chinese Philosophy* and its New Version” in August 1994 at the conference arranged by the European Association for Chinese Studies in Prague.)

Liu Shaotang 劉紹唐 says: Feng Youlan was one of the four people who have a bad reputation (he was called as *buyaolian* 不要臉 “not wanting face”), because they followed the official idealism too actively. He says:

楊榮國 “緊跟形勢”，忙於寫作講演，降格成為江青等之“御用文人”，為“批林批孔”之急先鋒，奉派至全國各地作“批林批孔”報告，此舉為清義所不容，與馮友蘭(之生)，周一良，

Feng's philosophy gained reknown more easily than the work of others. Second, much research in the Chinese language has not been translated into Western languages, while Feng's works, e.g., *Zhongguo zhexue shi* 中国哲学史 (The history of Chinese philosophy) and *Zhongguo zhexue shi xinbian* 中国哲学史新编 (The history of Chinese philosophy: New edition), and D. C. Lau's translation and research into the *Laozi* have become the main materials accessible to the Western world. These, then, are the main reasons why the opinion opposing the tradition is so popular in the West. Chen Guying has a similar explanation of this phenomenon.<sup>34</sup>

Differing from the Western scholars mentioned above, the author of the present work, based mainly on the research materials available in the Chinese languages, upholds the traditional position. He asserts that Sima Qian was sure about most of the materials which he employed in the biography of Lao Zi. Sima believed that Lao Zi lived at the end of the Spring and Autumn Period and was the author of the book *Laozi*. The following is an argument based on the accounts by Sima Qian which shows that the popular opinion in the West is much less correct than his.

## 0.4 Traditional accounts

### 0.4.1 The account of Sima Qian in *Shiji* and its English translation

Before we proceed any further, we must refer to what Sima Qian says:

老子者，楚苦县厉乡曲仁里人也。姓李氏，名耳，字伯阳，谥曰聃。周守藏室之史也。孔子适周，将问礼於老子，老子曰：“子所言者，其人与骨皆已朽矣，独其言在耳。且君子得其时则驾，不得其时，则蓬累而行。吾闻之，良贾深藏若虚。君子盛德，容貌若愚。去子之骄气与多欲，态色与淫志，是皆无益於子之身，吾所以告子，若是而已。”孔子去，谓弟子曰：“鸟吾知其能飞，鱼吾知其能游，兽吾知其能走，走者可以为网，游者可以为纶，飞者可以为矰。至于龙，吾不能知其乘风云而上天，吾今日见老子，其犹龙邪。”老子修道德，其学以自隐无名为务，居周之久，见周之衰，迺遂去。至关，关令尹喜曰：“子<sup>35</sup>将隐矣，强为我著书。”於是老子迺著书上下篇，言道德之意，五千余言，而去，莫知其所终。<sup>36</sup>

楊寬被稱為“四大不要臉”(另說“四大不要臉”為郭沫若，老舍，馮友蘭，臧克家，姑誌之。)

Yang Guorong follows the official idealism very actively, he has been busy in writing and speaking and has become a "tool-writer" of Jiang Qing and others. Yang has become a pioneer in criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius, he has been sent to make speech over the country. This cannot be accepted by Chinese traditional righteousness. He was called *sida buyaolian* together with Feng Youlan (Zhisheng), Zhou Yiliang and Yang Kuang. (Some also say that *sida buyaolian* are Guo Moruo, Lao She, Feng Youlan and Zang Kejia.) — See "Minguo renwu xiaozhuan. Yang Rongguo 民國人物小傳楊榮國" in *Zhuanji wenxue* 傳記文學. *Zhuanji wenxue zazhishi* 傳記文學雜誌社.No.386 (July 1994), p. 146. The worst reputation one can have in China is given when one is called as *buyaolian* 不要臉 "not wanting face". Given this fact, one can image how actively Feng followed Marxism so that his philosophy gains reknown more easily than the work of others.

<sup>34</sup> Chen Guying (General ed.) IV 1994: pp. 415-416.

<sup>35</sup> According to the version of *Zhonghua shuju*, *yu* 予 should be *zi* 子. The present work follows this recommendation.

<sup>36</sup> Guang Ling 關令 is the name of the officer; Yin Xi 尹喜 was the name of a person. There are also

或曰：“老莱子，亦楚人也，著书十五篇，言道家之用，与孔子同时云。”盖老子百有六十余岁，或言二百余岁，以其修道而养寿也。

自孔子死之后百二十九年，而史记周太史儋见秦献公曰：“始秦与周合而离，离五百岁而复合，合七十岁而霸王者出焉。”或曰：“儋即老子。”或曰：“非也。”世莫知其然否。

老子，隐君子也。老子之子名宗，宗为魏将，封於段干。宗子注，注子官。官玄孙假。仕於汉孝文帝。而假之子解为膠西王邛太傅。因家於齐焉。

世之学老子者则绌儒学，儒学亦绌老子，道不同不相为谋，岂谓是邪。李耳无为自化，清静自正。<sup>37</sup>

Lao Zi was a native of Quren hamlet in Li county, in the Ku district of the state of Chu. His surname was Li, his private name was Er, his courtesy name was Boyang, and his posthumous name was Dan. He was an official of the archives in Zhou (the capital). Confucius went to Zhou to consult Lao Zi about rules of propriety. Lao Zi said, "Those whom you talk about are dead and their bones have decayed. Only their words have remained. When the time is proper, the superior man rides in a carriage, but when it is not, he covers himself up and staggers away. I have heard that a good merchant stores away his treasures as if his store were empty and that a superior man with eminent virtue appears as if he were stupid. Get rid of your air of pride and many desires, your instinct manners and lustful wishes. None of these is good for you. That is all I have to tell you."

Confucius left and told his pupils, "I know birds can fly, fish can swim, and animals can run. That which runs can be trapped, that which swims can be netted, and that which flies can be shot. As to the dragon, I don't know how it rides on the winds and clouds and ascends to heaven. Lao Zi, whom I saw today, is indeed like a dragon!"

Lao Zi practiced the Way and its virtue. His learning aims at self-effacement and possessing no fame. Having lived in Zhou for a long time, he realized that it was in decline and left. As he reached the pass, the pass-keeper, Yin Xi, said, "You are about to retire. Please try your best to write a book for me." Thereupon Lao Zi wrote a book in two parts, expounding the ideas of the Way and its virtue in over five thousand words and then he departed. None knew how he ended. Some say that Lao Zi was also a native of Chu. He wrote a book in fifteen parts on the application of Daoist doctrines. It is said that he was a contemporary of Confucius. Probably Lao Zi lived more than one hundred and sixty years--some say more than two hundred years--because he practiced the Way and nourished his old age.

One hundred and twenty-nine years after the death of Confucius, as historians have recorded, Grand Historian DAN of Zhou had an audience with Duke Xian (reigned 384-362 BC) of Qin saying, "First Qin joined with Zhou and then separated. After five hundred years they were united again. Then after seventy years a king of feudal lords appeared." Some say DAN was Lao Zi while others say no. People today do not know who are right.

Lao Zi was a reclusive gentleman. His son was named Zong. Zong became a general in the state of Wei, and was enfeifed at Duangan. Zong's son was Zhu and Zhu's son was Gong. Gong's great-great-grandson was Jia, who was an official under Emperor Xiaowen (reigned 179-157 BC) of the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). Jia's son Jie became grand tutor to Qiong, prince of Jiaoxi, and so made his home in Qi.

Today followers of Lao Zi degrade Confucianism, and students of Confucianism also degrade Lao Zi. "People going different ways do not take counsel from one another." Does this refer to fact? Li Er takes no action and spontaneously transforms himself. He was pure and tranquil and was naturally correct.<sup>38</sup>

#### 0.4.2 Three persons in Sima Qian's record

Viewing the story as a whole, three separate accounts emerge in Sima Qian's records. First is the story about Lao Zi, whom Confucius has visited. He has his names. He has

different opinions concerning this name. Cf., Gao Heng 1973: pp. 165-167.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted from "Shiji laozi zhuan jianzheng 史記老子傳箋正" in *Laozi zhenggu* 老子正詁, by Gao Heng 1973.

<sup>38</sup> The translation is quoted from Wing-Tsit Chan 1963: pp. 36 to 37. The *pinyin* system is used.



gone to the West and left one book in two parts, which speaks about the Way and its virtue. He has a son named Zong. The second is about Lao Lai Zi, who was said to be a native of Chu. He has written a book in fifteen parts dealing with the application of Daoist doctrines. The third is about Taishi DAN (the Grand Historian DAN), who has been confused with the first person, Lao Zi. Concerning this confusion, no one knows the true story.

Of the three separate accounts, the problem giving rise to dispute involves the identity of the first person Lao Zi and of the third person the Grand Historian DAN. Two points are germane to this discussion: One is that it is not possible to know whether DAN was Lao Zi or not. Second is that, according to later interpretations, Zong could have been the son of both Lao Zi and the Grand Historian DAN. Below is a table representing the three persons in Sima Qian's record, which will aid us in discovering the correct opinion the of Sima Qian:

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Lao Zi, the Grand historian DAN, and Lao Lai Zi  
in the records of Sima Qian's *Shiji*

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Lao Zi	The Grand historian DAN	Lao Lai Zi
1. Name: Lao Zi Surname: Li Private names: Er, Dan	1. Name: Taishi DAN Surname: 0 Private name: DAN (same as Dan in pronunciation and meaning)	1. Name: Lao Lai Zi Surname: 0 Private name: 0
2. Nation: Chu	2. 0	2. Nation: Chu
3. Occupation: Historian, archivist	3. Historian (similar)	3. 0
4. Meeting with Confucius *1) <i>Shiji</i> , the biography of Confucius **1) The <i>Zhuangzi</i> **2) <i>Liji.Zengziwen</i>	4. 0	4. 0
5. Book 1) In two parts 2) Speaks about the Way and its virtue	5. 0 *1) <i>Shiji. Qinbenji</i> says that he had no book.	5. Book 1) In fifteen parts 2) Speaks about the application of Daoist doctrines.
6. Learning 1) Takes no action and spontaneously transforms himself. 2) Was pure and tranquil and was naturally correct.	6. 0	6. 0
7. Son Zong ?1) Lao Zi was probably 160 or possibly over 200 years old.	7. 0 § Possibly understood as the son of DAN by later people.	7. 0
?8. Some say that DAN was Lao Zi while others say he was not. Contemporary scholars do not know which is right. No records are found for this reason in <i>Shiji</i> .		

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- 0 No record in the biography of Lao Zi in *Shiji*.  
 ? An uncertain record in the biography of Lao Zi in *Shiji*.  
 \* A record in parts other than in the biography of Lao Zi in *Shiji*.  
 \*\* A record in places other than in that of Sima Qian.  
 § Later (after Sima Qian's time) possible interpretations
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## 0.5 The source critical aspect of Sima Qian

### 0.5.1 The points of certainty concerning Lao Zi

According to the above account by Sima Qian, Kaltenmark is shown to be incorrect when he said: "all the materials he has managed to gather about Lao Tzu is so vague and contradictory that he cannot draw a single definite conclusion from it."<sup>39</sup> Gathering his material from his extensive travels in different places, Sima Qian was in doubt only concerning some of the materials he procured rather than "all" of it. We can find at least some material about which he had no doubts.

Concerning the three separate accounts which we have noted emerge from the piece translated above, we can find in the story about Lao Zi seven points concerning which Sima Qian was sure.

These points (whether acceptable or not to contemporary scholars is a question which will be discussed in later chapters) are as follows:

1) His names: "Li Er" and "Lao Dan".

2) His native place: Chu.

3) His occupation: archivist.

4) His meeting with Confucius.

5) His teaching: Mawangduia) His practice of the Way and its virtue. b) His aim to achieve self-effacement and to avoid fame. c) His capacity of non-action and spontaneous transformation. The achievement of purity, tranquility, and natural correctness.

6) His book, which expounds the ideas of the Way and its virtue, consists in two parts and over five thousand words.

7) Lao Zi's son Zong: Sima Qian merely said that Zong was the son of Lao Zi; and this statement can be taken to mean he was the son of either Dan 聃 or DAN 儋.<sup>40</sup> When Sima talked about Lao Zi's son, however, he was referring to the Lao Zi whom Confucius visited. For the context of the biography indicates that the name "Lao Zi" always refers to the one who met with Confucius and who wrote the book which expounds in two parts the Way and its virtue.<sup>41</sup> Whether it is possible for this Lao Zi to have the son Sima mentions in *Shiji* may be a debatable issue, but Sima did mean that Lao Zi had such a son.

Among these seven certainties of Sima Qian, two of them seem to be in conflict. Sima says in one place that Lao Zi was the contemporary of Confucius and that the latter had visited him. But in another place Sima says that Lao Zi's son Zong became a general in the state of Wei. And Wei, some scholars argue, existed during the period of the Warring States. Thus, Liang Qichao, for example, says that Zong could not have lived in the period of the Warring States if Lao Zi had lived at the end of the period of

<sup>39</sup> Kaltenmark 1969: p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> Chan 1963: p. 48. Gao Heng 1973: p. 187.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* : p. 49.

Spring and Autumn.<sup>42</sup> The possibility that Lao Zi lived over two hundred years, which some scholars maintain, obviates this point.<sup>43</sup> But, of course, this possibility is hard to be proved as true. This question will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

### 0.5.2 The points of uncertainty concerning Lao Zi

It is true that Sima Qian "frankly admits to uncertainty".<sup>44</sup> But this does not effect those things about which he was sure. That Sima Qian was himself uncertain about his material is indicated by the expression *gai* 盖 "probably", *yue* 曰 "it is said," *mo zhi* 莫知 "none knew," *huo yue* 或曰 or *huo yan* 或言 "some say," and the like. According to these expressions, those things about which Sima Qian was unsure can be clearly differentiated from those things about which he was sure.

Four points of uncertainty in Sima Qian's biography of Lao Zi:

1) Concerning Lao Zi, Sima Qian said: "None knew how he ended." But this statement just means that Sima was not sure about this particular fact and cannot be taken to deny the existence of Lao Zi.

2) Concerning Lao Lai Zi, Sima said: "Some say that Lao Lai Zi was also a native of Chu. He wrote a book in fifteen parts on the application of Daoist doctrines. It is said that he was a contemporary of Confucius." Concerning whether there was such a person Lao Lai Zi and whether he was a contemporary of Confucius, Sima was not sure. But this uncertainty has nothing to do with Lao Zi.

3) Sima Qian was not sure about the final age of Lao Zi. He said, "Probably Lao Zi lived more than one hundred and sixty years--some say more than two hundred years--because he practiced the Way and nourished his old age." This too is an uncertainty concerning only a particular fact and cannot be taken to deny the existence of Lao Zi.

4) Concerning Grand Historian DAN (Taishi Dan 太史儋), Sima said, "Some say DAN was Lao Zi while others say he was not. No one knows who is right." Again, doubt concerning this particular fact does not in itself deny the existence of Lao Zi as a contemporary of Confucius. This problem of identification provides one of the main reasons for Liang Qichao and his followers to doubt the traditional opinion. This will be discussed in detail in a later section of this work.

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<sup>42</sup> This was one of Liang Qichao's six reasons for attacking the traditional opinion in his article "Lun laozi shu zuo yu zhanguo zhi mo". Cf. Zhang Chengqiu 张成秋 1977: p. 80. Cf. Feng Youlan 1964: pp. 249-250.

<sup>43</sup> Many disagreed with Liang Qichao in his own time. We note, for example, Zhang Xu 张煦, Hu Shi 胡适 and Ye Qing 叶青. Cf. Zhang Chengqiu 1977: pp. 81, 85, 90-91.

<sup>44</sup> Kaltenmark 1969: p. 10.

Three points of uncertainty concerning Lao Zi:

Among the above four points, three of them (1, 3 and 4) concerning Lao Zi provided doubt for Sima Qian: Uncertainty concerning how Lao Zi ended, questions concerning the age of Lao Zi, and the problem of the identification of Lao Zi with the Grand Historian DAN.

The record of Sima Qian should not be taken as false in these cases, since no reliable evidence has been found to overturn Sima's record. The new opinions are, after all, more like hypotheses than facts. And Chen Guying has drawn a similar conclusion.<sup>45</sup> According to this analysis of the above table, three persons are mentioned in the record of Sima Qian. Concerning the number of persons with which he was dealing, Sima was sure. What gave rise to uncertainty for him were the three things mentioned above: the end of Lao Zi, the age of Lao Zi (160 to 200 years old), and the identification of Lao Zi with the Grand historian DAN.

It is not correct, therefore, to say that Sima Qian was unsure about "all" the materials which he employed in writing the biography of Lao Zi. For these seven things indicate a certainty that he was dealing with a real historical figure.

We do not have to assume, of course, that Sima Qian was always right in the cases about which he was sure! This is a matter with which we will deal in the coming chapters.

## 0.6 The hypothesis of the present work

The theory of Liang and Feng was, in fact, merely a repetition of many other theories which doubt the tradition of Sima Qian.<sup>46</sup> But why has their theory become so popular in the Western world? Was Sima Qian actually uncertain about what he wrote concerning Lao Zi? When was the book *Laozi* been written and by whom? These are the questions which will be discussed in the present work.

These are old questions concerning the *Laozi*, but several reasons indicate a need for a contemporary reconsideration of them. While the West, *e.g.*, may be enchanted by Feng and his followers, supposing that they represent the true opinion, the surprising fact is that they are not so popular in China.<sup>47</sup> And my own careful study of the debate reveals that Liang's opinion concerning Lao zi and his book was never authoritative but only one of many hypotheses.<sup>48</sup> Thus, the truth of Sima Qian's traditional opinion

<sup>45</sup> Chen Guying (General ed.) IV 1994: p. 437 reads: "In fact, the theories of the *Laozi*, being written during the middle and the end of the period of the Warring States Period, was based on hypothesis rather than on fact."

<sup>46</sup> Concerning the various opinions during the time of the debate from the 1920s to the 1940s, cf. Chan, 1963: pp. 35-52, and 52-53; and Zhang Chengqiu 1977: pp. 79-99.

<sup>47</sup> For example, the important contemporary scholars in China, such as Hu Shi 胡適, Gao Heng 高亨, Ma Xulun 馬敘倫, Ren Jiyu 任繼愈, Zhang Dainian 張岱年 and Chen Guying 陳鼓應, all support the tradition of Sima Qian, though their opinions differ in other respects.

<sup>48</sup> Concerning the various opinions during the time of the debate from the 1920s to the 1940s, cf. Chan

concerning Lao Zi is still an open question.

The present work includes two parts: 1) a study of the *Laozi* and of Lao Zi the man, which is based on the traditional materials. 2) and a study of the bamboo slips *Laozi* and related issues, which is based on both the traditional materials and the sources found in Jingmen in 1994. The work is divided into two parts, the first of which is the basis for the second with an aim toward a more comprehensive work. The second part will involve publication of material concerning a subject about which nothing else has been published. Thus, it can stand as a work in itself as well.

I hypothesize in this work that Lao Zi lived at the end of the Spring and Autumn Period and was a contemporary of Confucius. Further, the ideas of the *Laozi* were his in the main, as can still be seen from the traditional version we now possess. And while we cannot know when the *Laozi's* traditional version was completed, we can be sure that it was at least before the time of Hanfei Zi (d. 233 BC). The original version of the *Laozi*, however, which no doubt differs from the traditional version we now possess, was written at least by the end of the Spring Autumn Period or by the beginning of the Warring States Period, *i.e.*, in the 5th century BC.

The following describes the aims, approach, and primal sources of the first part of this work. I shall also introduce the literature used in this first part and describe the grounds of its continuity.

### 0.6.1 Aim

Three aims define the present work:

1) To make an appropriate historical judgment concerning the *Laozi* the book and Lao Zi the man.

Thus, as mentioned above, I aim to make an appropriate historical judgment concerning the historicity of Lao Zi and of various so-called facts germane to his life (such as his meeting with Confucius) as well as to determine whether he is the author of the *Laozi*. Further, I intend to describe the relationship that obtains between our traditional version of this book and its original version.

2) To make the research of Chinese scholars known to western scholars.

Difficulties in trans-cultural communication have acted to block the transmission of much of the research done in China on Lao Zi and his book. Thus, this work has remained unknown in the West. One of the aims of the present work is to make this research known to western scholars. This research covers a broad field: the *Laozi's* earliest extant edition, discussions of important versions of the work, and the literary analyses of the (the titles, structure, nature of the work, the authorship, and the date). Concerning Lao Zi, the field includes a study of his names, place of birth, occupation, and his meeting with Confucius.

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1963: pp. 35-52, and 52-53. Cf. also Zhang Chengqiu 1977: pp. 79-99.

3) To show the relevance of a recent archaeological discovery, *i.e.*, the Jingmen Bamboo Slips *Laozi*, for resolving many of the issues concerning Lao Zi and his book.

The Jingmen archaeological discovery provides first-hand material of the oldest extant version of the *Laozi*. Important and interesting points will surely emerge as we rely on it to solve some of these historical questions. That is why a separate part has been planned just to deal with these issues. The second part of this work will involve an analysis of this material.

### 0.6.2 Approaches

The present work employs four approaches to the material in order to achieve its aims:

1) The present work will employ much evidence culled from a literary analysis of the Chinese classics to prove its hypotheses.

Concerning the authorship and date of the *Laozi*, *e.g.*, such an analysis uncovers four important issues: 1) Whether the so-called contemporary references to the *Laozi* are genuine. 2) Whether terms such as *renyi*, *shangxian*, and *wancheng zhi zhu* are terms that were employed during the Spring and Autumn Period? Does the argument that they prove that the *Laozi* is a later work succeed? To what period can we assign the use of these terms? 3) Whether the ideas of the *Laozi* are, as Liang and his followers say, too radical for the time of Lao Zi and Confucius. 4) Whether the style of the *Laozi* shows it to be an earlier or a later work.

A literary analysis of the Chinese classics should help to answer questions concerning the authorship, date, and other pertinent issues involving Lao Zi and his book. But this approach is not enough to resolve all of the problems which this work faces.

2) The present work will examine the characteristics of style in the *Laozi* in order to determine its authorship and date.

This approach deals, *e.g.*, with the literary form of the book. Its issues involve whether it is the work of an individual and whether it is in a certain form (poetry, prose, dialogue, canon, etc.). It investigates rhyming patterns, sentence patterns, rhetorical methods, etc.

3) The present work will examine the regional Chu background of the *Laozi* in order to discover pertinent facts concerning its nature, authorship, and date. This investigation involves an examination of the Chu dialect and its customs.

This examination will make possible a contrast of style and regional characteristics among the *Laozi*, *Shijing* and *Chuci*. And this study will help to clarify the authorship and date of the *Laozi*.

4) The present work will prove its hypotheses with the help of the recent archaeological discoveries.

### 0.6.3 The primary sources

#### 0.6.3.1 Lao Zi and the *Laozi*

Lao Zi has been regarded traditionally as being the elder contemporary of Confucius. The traditional view is based mainly on the records of Zhuang Zi 莊子, Sima Qian, and other Chinese classics. Among these records a supposed meeting between Confucius and Lao Zi plays an important role in establishing information about the person of Lao Zi. Sima Qian's *Shiji* is the earliest historical work that contains an account of such a meeting.<sup>49</sup> According to tradition, Lao Zi wrote the book of *Laozi*, which is also called the *Daodejing*, during the time of Confucius.<sup>50</sup> Later scholars, however, began to doubt the traditional opinion.<sup>51</sup> This skepticism has been followed by many Western scholars and profoundly influences the western world,<sup>52</sup> e.g., D. C. Lau and Needham.<sup>53</sup> I shall deal with such questions in the present work.

The Chinese version of the *Laozi* used in the present study is *Laozi quanyi* 老子全譯. This work has been examined, annotated, and translated (into modern Chinese) by Sha Shaohai and Xu Zihong, who published it in 1990 by Guizhou renmin chubanshe. This version includes reference to the *Laozi*'s various traditional and modern versions, editions, and notes. It also refers to the Mawangdui silk scrolls of the *Laozi*.

Besides this edition, the second part of this study will refer to the version of the *Laozi* discovered in 1994 in Jingmen. This version will be the oldest one at present available.

The English translation of the *Laozi* used in the present work is mainly that of the author himself, though that of D. C. Lau and others are at times employed. D. C. Lau, 1982: *Chinese Classics Tao Te Ching, Wang Bi text and Mawangdui manuscripts*, translated with an Introduction by D. C. Lau. The Chinese University Press, Hong Kong. Four other translations have also been referred to:

1) Chan, Wing-tsit 1963: *The Way of Lao Tzu (Tao-te Ching)*. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., New York.

2) Waley, Arthur 1958: *The Way and its Power, a Study of the Tao Te Ching and its Place in Chinese Thought*. New York.

3) Henricks, Robert G. 1993: *Te-Tao Ching Lao-Tzu*. Translated from the Mawang-tui texts, with an introduction and commentary. Modern Library Edition: New

<sup>49</sup> Sima Qian *Shiji*: *Laozi hanfei liezhuan* and the *Zhuangzi*.

<sup>50</sup> Sima Qian *Shiji*: *Laozi hanfei liezhuan*.

<sup>51</sup> See Cui Shu *Zhusu kaoxin lu*, 1:14a; Liang Qichao, *Laozi zhaxue*, p. 1 and *Liang Rengong xueshu yanjiang ji* I. 18-21. Feng Youlan 1964: p. 249.

<sup>52</sup> See Giles 1923: p. 59; Waley 1934: p. 108; Needham 1956: p. 36; Creel 1970: p. 5; Kaltenmark 1975: p. 15.

<sup>53</sup> D. C. Lau 1982: p. 131, see also p. 129.

York.

- 4) Karlgren, Bernhard 1975: "Notes on Lao Tzu" in BMFEA, vol. 47.

### 0.6.3.2 Other Chinese classics

#### 1) *Yijing* 易經

• *I Ching, Book of Changes*. Translated by James Legge (L). Edited, with introduction and study guide by Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai. HY (From 2nd ed's. Sacred Books of the East, vol. 16, Oxford 1989.) New York: Bantam Books, 1969.

• *I Ching or Book of Changes*. Translated by Richard Wilhem and rendered into English by Vary F. Baynes (WB); foreward by C. G.Jung. Preface to third ed'n. by Hellmut Wilhem.) Routledge & Kegan Paul: London, 1968.

#### 2) *Shijing* 詩經

• *Shih Ching, The Book of Odes*. Bernhard Karlgren. Stockholm, 1974. Cf. also Bulletin of the Museum of Far-Eastern Antiquities (BMFEA), vols 16-17, 1944.

#### 3) *Shujing* 書經

• *Shu Ching, The Book of Documents*. Bernhard Karlgren. Stockholm, 1950. Also in Bulletin of the Museum of Far-Eastern Antiquities (BMFEA), vol. 22, 1950.

#### 4) *Zuozhuan* 左傳

• *The Chinese Classics V: The Chu'un Ts'ew with The Tso Chuen*. (Zuo Qiuming 左丘明), James Legge. Shanghai, 1935. Reprinted from the last editions of Oxford University Press and added to *Shisanjing zhushu fu jiaokan ji* 十三經註疏附校勘記.

#### 5) *The Analects* 論語

• *Confucius, The Analects*. Translated with an Introduction by D. C. Lau, Suffolk.

#### 6) *Mozi* 墨子

• *The Ethical and Political Works of Motse*. Translated from the Original Chinese Text by Mei Yi-pao, London.

7) *Xunzi* 荀子. Zhonghua shuju 中華書局. Beijing.

8) *Zhuangzi* 莊子. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

9) *Chuci* 楚辭. By Qu Yuan 屈原. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

10) *Yinwenzi* 尹文子. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

11) *Shizi* 尸子. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

12) *Wenzi* 文子. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

13) *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

14) *Hanfeizijijie* 韓非子集解. Shanghai guangyi shuju kanxing 上海廣益書局刊行.

15) *Zhanguoce* 戰國策. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

16) *Liji* 禮記. Zhonghua shuju.

### 0.6.3.3 Historical documents

#### 1) *Hanshu* (*The history of Han*) 漢書

• *Hanshu* vol. 6. Ban Gu 班固 zhuan 撰, Yan Shigu 顏師古 zhu 註. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

#### 2) *Shiji* (*The Historical Memories*) 史記

• *Shiji* vol. 7. Sima Qian 司馬遷 (Han dynasty) zhuan, Pei Yin 裴駟 (Song dynasty)



jijie 集解, Sima Zhen 司馬貞 (Tang dynasty) suoyin 索引, Zhang Shoujie 張守節 (Tang dynasty) zhengyi 正義. Zhonghua shuju. Beijing.

3) *Qilue* 七略

• *Qilue*, done by Liu Xiang 劉向 and Liu Xin 劉歆. Zhonghua shuju 中華書局.

#### 0.6.3.4 Archaeological discoveries

##### 1) The bamboo slips of the *Laozi* discovered in No. 1 Chu State Tomb in Guodian Village, Jingmen, Hubei province.

The Jingmen archaeological discovery in 1994 of the *Laozi* written on bamboo slips consists of five books dating back to the Warring States Period (480-221 BC), including the *Laozi*.<sup>54</sup>

"Bamboo Slips of Classics Unearthed" in *Beijing Review*, April 3-16, 1995 reports:

Archeologists were exploring the state-protected tomb, one of a number in the village which is part of Sifang Township, when they made their find.

There were 804 bamboo slips with some 16,000 characters clearly written in ink and seal characters. After examining the texts, experts dated the classics to the mid-Warring States Period. Only rarely has even one complete book been found in the past and the discovery of five together has excited scholars. The books are well preserved and have retained their bright colors and clear, excellent calligraphy.

Now experts on Chu culture studies say the books throw light on the life of Lao Tzu and his writing, allow further study into Taoism and the culture, philosophy, medicine and other social aspects of the period. They add that the find is also a major contribution to the study of world culture in that early age.<sup>55</sup>

This report can also be found in "Jingmen chutu 'Laozi' deng wubu zhujian dianji 荊門出土<<老子>>等五部竹簡典籍" (Reported by He Feng 何鋒 and Xu Yide 徐義德) in *Zhongguo wenwu bao* 中國文物報 No. 11 (Mach 19, 1995).<sup>56</sup> Detailed information concerning these writings on Bamboo Slips is not yet available, since nothing yet has been published concerning them.

<sup>54</sup> *Beijing Review*, Apr. 3-16, 1995, p. 33.

<sup>55</sup> *Beijing Review*, Apr. 3-16, 1995, p. 33.

<sup>56</sup> 本報訊元月二日從湖北省荊門市博物館傳出重大新聞，館長劉祖信介紹說，荊門郭店一號楚墓發掘整理工作已基本結束，從中發現了<<老子>>等五部戰國時期竹簡典籍。

位于荊門市四方鋪鄉郭店村一組古墓群中的一號楚墓，于1993年8月至10月兩次遭到犯罪份子盜掘，雖及時被公安幹警和文物保護巡邏隊員發現制止，但該墓仍遭受嚴重破壞。在這種情況下，荊門市博物館緊急請示省文化廳等單位，經同意後進行搶救性發掘，隨後，集中人力和財力，在省文物考古專家的指導下，採用先進技術，對發掘的竹簡進行處理，獲得的804枚竹簡，其上16000多字墨書篆文清晰可見，五部完整的古籍呈現在眼前，據有關專家考證，這些竹簡為<<老子>>等五部古代典籍，成書時間在戰國中期。竹簡強度性能好，字跡清楚。據介紹，我國一次性發現先秦時期完整的一部書尚不多見，而像荊門這樣一次發現五部，且保存完好，在全國實屬首例。經過認者研究，出土的<<老子>>與現在出版的老子相比，有兩大特點：一是採用對話體，二是篇幅短，有很高的研究價值。湖北楚文化研究專家們認為，<<老子>>等五部竹簡的出土，對於研究<<老子>>的生平和老子成書過程，對道學甚至當時的文化，思想，醫學等方面的研究，都將提供一手資料。（何鋒，徐義德）

## 2) Mawangdui silk scrolls of the *Laozi*

The followings have been used in the present work:

a) He Jiejun 何介均 and Zhang Weiming 張維明 1982: *Mawangdui hanmu* 馬王堆漢墓 Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社. Beijing.

b) Xiao Han 曉菡 1974: "Chang sha Mawangdui Han mu bo shu gaishu 長沙馬王堆漢墓帛書概述" in *Wen wu* 文物, July, 1974.

c) Hunan sheng bo wu guan 1974: 'Chang sha Mawangdui er san hao Han mu fajue jianbao 長沙馬王堆二二三號漢墓發掘簡報' *Wen wu* 文物, July, 1974, pp. 39-48, 63.

d) Gao Ming 高明 1978: 'Boshu Laozi jiayi ben yu jinben Laozi kanjiao zhaji 帛書老甲乙本與今本老子勘校札記. *Wenwu tzuliao ts'ungk'an* (*Wenwu ziliao congkan* 文物資料叢刊 no. 2, pp. 209-221.

e) Mawangdui hanmu boshu zhengli xiaozu 1976: *Mawangdui hanmu boshu — Laozi* 馬王堆漢墓帛書老子. Beijing.

f) Xu Kangshang 許抗生 1985: *Boshu Laozi zhuping yu yanjiu* 帛書老子註評與研究. Zhejiang renmin chubanshe 浙江人民出版社.

## 0.7 The literature used in the present work

The works used in this study include those written in both Chinese and English, though the main sources are in Chinese. The reason for choosing so many Chinese materials is to fulfill the present work's goal of examining the research of Chinese scholars on the issue of Lao Zi and to introduce this work to the western world. Much has been written in English concerning Lao Zi and the *Laozi*, the titles of which appear in the bibliography. But most of these materials consist of basic introductions to the *Laozi* or else are translations of the text or of the false hypotheses of the "new opinion" which has been foisted upon the West. I have dealt with the Chinese literature directly in an effort to introduce a new study in this area.

The literature concerning the anti-traditional opinions of scholars like Liang Qichao, Feng Youlan, D. C. Lau, and certain Western scholars, has been mentioned in the bibliography along with that which supports the traditional opinions.

Quotations of the *Laozi* are provided mainly by the translation of the author and are taken mainly from the *Chinese Classics Tao Te Ching, Wang Bi text and Mawangdui manuscripts*, translated with an introduction by D. C. Lau in 1982. The author also provides the translations of quotations from other classics, except where otherwise indicated. Some of these translations will be the first offered to the West. Furthermore, the weaknesses of some of the works which have been previously translated will be corrected in this work.

An official biography of Lao Zi (also called Li Er and Lao Dan) is found in Sima Qian's *Shiji*, the first history of the Chinese people (c. 100 BC). This biography has been translated into English by Wing-tsit Chan (1963, pp. 36-37). Many scholars, however, are convinced that this biography does little in terms of identifying the actual author of the *Laozi*. A. C. Graham's article "The Origins of the Legend of Lao Tan" (Graham, 1986) provides an excellent study of the origin of the data found in this biography and of how Lao Zi came to be identified as the author of the *Laozi*. And appendix I to D.

C.Lau's translation, "The Problem of Authorship" (Lau, 1963, pp. 147-162), deals as well with this subject. For the sake of making proper historical and literary judgments concerning Lao Zi, the man and the book, this work gives a detailed analysis of the biography of Lao Zi by Sima Qian. The work moves to challenge the hypotheses of Graham and Lau.

Wing-tsit Chan's *The Way of Lao Tzu* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963) is an important foundation in English for this work and has been heavily relied upon, particularly concerning the issue of Lao Zi. William G. Boltz's article, "Lao tzu Tao te ching" (Michael Loewe, 1993, pp. 269-292) has been useful also in clearing up questions that arise in respect to the different versions of the *Laozi*.

The recent work on the Chu culture employed in the present study is Zhang Zhengming's 張正明 *Chushi* 楚史, "Chu History", which was published in 1995 by Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe.

### **0.8 The continuity of the present work's first stage**

The present study will be extended to a later study (part two of a wider work, as mentioned above) based on the writings on bamboo slips found in 1994 at the Jingmen archaeological site. This work, continuous with the investigations of this study, will greatly aid in clearing up questions concerning Lao Zi and the *Laozi*.