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Roger T. Ames, editor

Between History and Philosophy

Anecdotes in Early China

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and

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Acknowledgments

This book is the outcome of a delightful workshop that took place on May [illegible] and June 1, 2013, in the Blue Room of City Hotel Nieuw Minerva, which is located in an authentic sixteenth-century warehouse along one of the numerous canals in Leiden, The Netherlands. During two intensive days, more than a dozen scholars from a variety of nations and affiliations presented and discussed the various functions of anecdotes in early Chinese texts: Carine Defoort, Heng Du, Paul R. Goldin, Lisa Indraccolo, Rens Krijgsman, Ting-mien Lee, Wai-yee Li, Andrew Seth Meyer, Jens Østergård Petersen, Yuri Pines, Sarah A. Queen, Elisa Sabattini, Christian Schwermann, Newell Ann Van Auken, and Paul van Els. The audience included guests from places near and far, such as Ivana Buljan, Xi Hu, Simon Hürlimann, and Burchard Mansvelt Beck, as well as many Leiden University staff and students. We thank all those who were present for their comments and questions, which enriched the workshop and helped shape the present volume in significant ways.

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History without Anecdotes

Between the *Zuozhuan* and the *Xinian* Manuscript

YURI PINES[1]

The importance of anecdotes in pre-imperial and early imperial historiography is self-evident. They permeate most of the texts later classified as histories (*shi* 史), such as *Guoyu* 國語 (Discourses of the States) and *Zhanguoce* 戰國策 (Stratagems of the Warring States), as well as many of the masters (*zi* 子) texts, such as *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Yan), *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals of Mr. Lü), or significant portions of *Han Feizi* 韓非子 (Master Han Fei); and they dominate even some of the canons (*jing* 經), e.g., the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (Zuo Commentary). In addition, anecdotes frequently surface in collections of unearthed manuscripts, most notably that of the Shanghai Museum.[2] Indeed, David Schaberg may be close to the point in his assertion that the anecdotes formed "the basic form of historical narrative—and therefore the basic stuff of historical knowledge itself."[3] The recent spur in the interest in anecdotes, demonstrated by the present volume, comes then as no surprise.

That said, a word of caution is needed. Our understanding of early Chinese historiography may be significantly skewed due to the low rate of survival of pre-imperial historical texts. Sima Qian司馬遷 (ca. 145–90 BCE) famously lamented the destruction of scribal records (*shiji* 史記) of the Warring States Period 戰國 (453–221 BCE) by the Qin Dynasty 秦 (221–206 BCE).[4] Yet Qin biblioclasm aside, more texts might have been lost due to the lackluster interest in their content by members of educated elite. It may be plausibly assumed that as for those historical texts that were purely informative, and lacked either entertaining or didactic qualities, or, alternatively, canonical status (as did the *Chunqiu* 春秋 [Spring and Autumn Annals] of the state of Lu 魯 and its commentaries), the possibility that they would be cherished enough to be transmitted for generations was minuscule indeed.[5]

In this chapter I want to explore the somewhat neglected non-anecdotal strand of early Chinese historiography. I believe that only through proper understanding of this strand will we be able to contextualize the anecdotes within the corpus of pre-imperial and early imperial historical and quasi-historical writings. By speaking of non-anecdotal historiography, I plan to focus not on the laconic annalistic tradition represented by the Lu *Chunqiu* (and, possibly, a few related texts, such as the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年 [*Bamboo Annals*]),[6] but rather on longer narratives which lack the essential characteristics of the anecdotes, as depicted by Schaberg in his seminal paper. I shall start my discussion with the *Zuozhuan*, which may be considered a fountainhead of many of the historical anecdotes scattered in the texts from the Warring States and well into the Western Han Dynasty 西漢 (202 BCE–9 CE). I want to demonstrate that aside from individual anecdotes or "chains of anecdotes," insightfully analyzed by Schaberg,[7] the *Zuozhuan* contains lengthy narratives that are more informative and much less entertaining or moralistic than the anecdotes, and that these narratives and the anecdotes may have targeted different audiences. Then, I shall shift to the newly published historical text from the Qinghua (Tsinghua) University 清華大學 collection, named *Xinian* 繫年 (Sequence of Years) by its present-day editors. I shall show that, like significant segments of the *Zuozhuan*, the *Xinian* does not target the educated elite as a whole but provides working historical knowledge for policymakers, and that it may be representative of an important yet neglected genre of informative and non-didactic history. By analyzing the *Xinian*, its possible audience, and the reasons for its disappearance, I hope to highlight the diversity of early Chinese historiographic traditions, and to fine-tune our understanding of the anecdotes and their role in pre-imperial historical lore.

The Riddle of Boredom: Non-anecdotal Narratives in the *Zuozhuan*

The *Zuozhuan* is the single largest pre-imperial historical text, and it can be rightly considered the fountainhead of traditional Chinese historiography. The text purportedly comments on the canonical *Chunqiu* annals, but instead of focusing on discerning the "subtle message" of the *Chunqiu*, it aims to provide a broader historical context for the laconic entries of the latter. There is no doubt that the *Zuozhuan* incorporated abundant materials from earlier historical texts prepared in the major polities of the Spring and Autumn Period 春秋 (770–453 BCE); but the precise nature of these early texts and the degree of the editorial intervention by the *Zuozhuan* author(s) are still very much debated.[8] My goal here is to not to address these debates (in which I have taken part in the past), but to focus on some of the less frequently discussed segments of the *Zuozhuan*.

As is well known, the *Zuozhuan* comprises many hundreds of narrative segments: some are very brief (just a few dozen graphs), while others are quite complex and span many years of the narrative.[9] These building blocks of the *Zuozhuan* had a highly different afterlife. Some were incorporated into later collections of anecdotes and retold many times; others were all but forgotten. One of the possible reasons for the marked differences in their circulation, is the literary qualities of these narratives. Some are highly engaging and easily catch the eye of either the traditional or modern reader;[10] others are quite boring and, except for a few experts and professional exegetes, are rarely noticed at all. Yet it is to these boring stories I want to turn now, as I believe that they can provide more clues about early Chinese historiography.

Let us take, for instance, the story of the rebellion of Hua 華 and Xiang 向, two major ministerial lineages from the state of Song 宋. Both were branch lines of the Song ruling lineage; yet as it often happened in the Spring and Autumn Period, the increasing tension between them and Duke Yuan of Song 宋元公 (r. 531–517 BCE) pushed them to a violent insurrection. The rebellion spanned three years (522–520 BCE), and became one of the most spectacular events in the history of the late Spring and Autumn Period. First, it profoundly shattered the state of Song, starting with the massacre of many of its princes, and ending with the partial extermination and partial expulsion of both rebellious lineages, the members of which for generations constituted the crème de la crème of the Song elite. Second, this rebellion had strong ramifications across the borders of Song, causing military or diplomatic intervention from most of the powerful states of that age, including Jin 晉, Chu 楚, Qi 齊, and Wu 吳, in addition to Song's tiny neighbors, Cao 曹 and Wei 衛. Third, the rebellion had a fascinating plot, with intermittent successes of each of the fighting parties and spectacular displays of largesse and treachery, cowardice and courage. Fourth, it generated immense personal dramas, including most notably that of Hua Feisui 華費遂, the Grand Marshal of Song who first assisted Duke Yuan in quelling the rebellion, driving one of his own sons into exile, but then was forced to join the rebels almost against his will, because of a fratricidal struggle between two of his remaining sons. In short, the story of the Hua and Xiang rebellion could easily become a literary masterpiece of—let me exaggerate a little—quasi-Shakespearean proportions.

In light of all this, it is perplexing to discover how indifferent the authors of later texts appear to the turmoil in Song. I have not discovered a single reference to the Hua and Xiang revolt in any of the collections of anecdotes from the Warring States and Han periods. The drama seems to have been lost almost completely, never evoking much interest. Why? Was it because of Song's relative marginality in the late Spring and Autumn Period and thereafter? I doubt this: after all, numerous anecdotes from the lives of comparable polities, such as Zheng 鄭 and Wei 衛, permeate contemporaneous texts. Was it perhaps because the Song events lacked a clear didactic value? I doubt this too. The *Zuozhuan* carefully conveys its negative judgment of both parties: the future head of Hua rebels is derided, eight years before the rebellion, for his lack of decorum, whereas the lord of Song is criticized as "lacking trustworthiness and abundantly relying on his private [henchmen]."[11] While the narrative is too complex to be reduced to the simplistic "good guys vs. bad guys" dichotomy, this is a feature of many other stories in the *Zuozhuan*, as Wai-yee Li has shown.[12] Then why was the story of the Song rebellion all but forgotten?

I think the answer should be sought in certain features of the *Zuozhuan* narrative. Despite my praise of the story's plot, one cannot but feel that in purely literary terms it is not sufficiently engaging. The reason is not just its dispersal among other contemporaneous dramas, which are thickly covered in the Duke Zhao of Lu 魯昭公 (r. 541–510 BCE) section of the *Zuozhuan*, but primarily the abundance of minor details that do not help the reader to focus on the narrative and come at the expense of other, more engaging stories. Much of the narrative is dedicated to information that, for a later reader, might have been all but irrelevant: the date of every major encounter between the rebels and the loyalists is recorded, and so are the names of the otherwise unknown persons who participated in related intrigues and battles; we are also told of every minor location in or near the Song capital which was attacked, besieged, or conquered by one side or the other. What we miss are thicker depictions of the drama. The mass murder of the lord's closest kin at the start of the rebellion and the subsequent murder of the Hua and Xiang hostages by the treacherous Duke Yuan are reported, but there are no traces of intense feelings that these actions could have enticed; Hua Feisui's willingness to sacrifice his kin out of political loyalty is narrated, but the reasons for his ultimate siding with his fratricidal son against the lord a year later are not given; we are duly informed of the names of military leaders of different polities who intervened on Song's behalf, but so little additional information is given that we cannot really estimate how important this intervention was from the point of view of contemporaneous interstate order. The lack of any summary—by a participant, a wise observer, or the *Zuozhuan* narrator (the gentleman [*junzi* 君子])—makes us feel that the story is "incomplete," that it was not sufficiently polished when incorporated into the *Zuozhuan*. Perhaps for this reason it was abandoned by later anecdote-seekers for the sake of other, less dramatic but better narrated events.

A very similar feeling of a "missed drama" is generated by the *Zuozhuan* account of another major turmoil, the rebellion of Prince Zhao 王子朝 in the Zhou 周 royal domain from 521 to 516 BCE (incidentally, the narration of this rebellion starts immediately after the last entry related to the Song revolt). Once again we find all the components of a good drama: a major turmoil which devastated the already crippled royal domain and was quelled only thanks to the intervention by the principal power of that age (Jin); bloody rivalry among royal scions; coalitions of nobles who supported each of the candidates; the murder of an incumbent king; multiple intrigues, treachery, and assassinations; and many others. Prince Zhao's rebellion is duly preceded by several predictions and omens; speeches by participants and foreign observers allow us to assess the reasons for Zhao's failure, and the story ends with a lengthy and eloquently written letter from Prince Zhao, in which he complains bitterly against Jin's decision to support his rivals, and which, in turn, is dismissed by a wise observer from Lu.[13] Yet once again, the story remains largely unnoticed in later texts, and, most oddly, even the Zhou sections of the *Guoyu*, which narrate events from the life of the royal domain in great detail, omit it entirely.[14] And, again, the reason may be the very non-engaging form of much of the *Zuozhuan* narration. To illustrate my point, below is a section from the narrative of the rebellion from its last year, 516:

> Fourth month. The Duke of Shan arrived at Jin to report urgency. The fifth month, on *wuwu* [day 5 of the *ganzhi* cycle],[15] forces of the Liu [lineage] defeated the army of Wangcheng [of Prince

> Zhao] at the [settlement of the] Shi lineage. On *wuchen* [day 15], the forces of Wangcheng encountered the forces of Liu at Shigu, the forces of Liu were utterly defeated. [. . .] Seventh month, on *jisi* [day 17], the Duke of Liu fled together with the [incumbent] king. On *gengwu* [day 18], [they] camped at Qu. Forces of Wangcheng burned down [the settlement of] Liu. On *bingzi* [day 24], the king stayed at the [settlement of the] Chu lineage. On *dingchou* [day 25], the king camped at Wangu. On *gengchen* [day 28], the king entered [his territory] from Xuma. On *xinsi* [day 29], the king camped at Hua. Zhi Li and Zhao Yang of Jin led the army to reinstate the king. They ordered Nü Kuan to guard the Que Pass.
>
> 四月, 單子如晉告急. 五月戊午, 劉人敗王城之師于尸氏. 戊辰, 王城人, 劉人戰于施穀, 劉師敗績. [. . .] 七月己巳, 劉子以王出. 庚午, 次于渠. 王城人焚劉. 丙子, 王宿于褚氏. 丁丑, 王次于萑穀. 庚辰, 王入于胥靡. 辛巳, 王次于滑. 晉知躒, 趙鞅帥師納王, 使汝寬守闕塞.[16]

This narrative has no identifiable didactic or literary value; actually, it is extremely boring and reading it is no more intellectually or esthetically engaging than reading a telephone book. Like the latter, the *Zuozhuan* narrative is highly informative, and may benefit a reader with a good working knowledge of the geography of the Luoyang region and of multiple lineages in the Zhou royal domain. Yet for anybody else—and I assume that this includes the overwhelming majority of thinkers and statesmen from the Warring States period on—this sort of narration can serve at best as a remedy for insomnia. Those used to look at the past as a mirror for the present may well bemoan the abundance of minor details that obscure rather than highlight the potential didactic message of the narrative. Taken from this perspective, and given the absence of alternative, more literarily appealing versions of Prince Zhao's rebellion, we find the subsequent neglect of this event not very surprising indeed.

The question to be asked now is: Who were the addressees of the many lengthy, extraordinarily detailed, and, let us say frankly, quite boring stories from the *Zuozhuan*? Were they the "rulers, thinkers, and their students" identified by Schaberg (entirely correctly in my view) as the main audience of the anecdotes?[17] I doubt it. The very fact that the *Zuozhuan* way of presentation remains exceptional in the entire lore of pre-imperial historical or quasi-historical texts, is not trivial. It indicates a different kind of audience from that of the rest of the anecdotes.

In my eyes, the identity of this audience is not difficult to guess. Only one group would be really interested in these intense details: statesmen from the polity whose history is narrated. For Song aristocrats, any information about the downfall of the Hua and Xiang lineages and their replacement by the members of the Yue 樂 lineage and by others of Duke Yuan's relatives would have been highly meaningful; ditto for the successors of the Liu 劉, Shan 單, and other noble lineages of the Zhou royal domain, who participated in quelling Prince Zhao's revolt. For outsiders in need of a short résumé of the drama, these details are meaningless, but for insiders they are highly valuable. For the sake of comparison we may look at domestic and foreign accounts of parliamentary elections in country X. For a foreign audience, the main issue would be that party A defeated party B, because B was corrupt, detached from the masses, and full of mediocrities, while A was young, determined to improve the people's standard of living, and so on. For insiders, it may be much more important that A received more votes in district Y because of local grievances against the B party representative, while in district Z the B party lost just because of the switch of a local power-holder from one party to another. These details, which would bore the average newspaper reader, are of vital importance to local political analysts who want to gain an in-depth understanding of the political processes in the immediate past of their country.

If my guess is correct, that many of the *Zuozhuan* narratives were initially prepared for local consumption (i.e., for a small group of hereditary political practitioners) and only later incorporated into the *Zuozhuan* and immortalized there, this would also explain the ambiguity of the moral message of many of these stories. For an outsider, what is needed from an anecdote is some didactic content: in Schaberg's definition, "substantiating arguments about the workings of the world, particularly the political world." For an insider, the accumulation of details may make a simplistic "good-bad" dichotomy less feasible. For an outsider, historical details matter only "as a complement to rhetorical aims."[18] For an insider they are much more important because they provide crucial clues as to what (supposedly) really happened. Yet an abundance of details dilutes the moral message of an anecdote, just as detailed knowledge of political events in the contemporary world may undermine some of the political clichés promulgated in the mass media. I think this is the major reason why the *Zuozhuan* anecdotes are amenable to multiple interpretations, as noticed by Li Wai-yee.

It should be clarified here that an "informative history" as represented in the above narratives was not necessarily devoid of didactic goals. Its authors could manipulate their information through omissions or embellishments, through tendentious arrangement of the sequence of events or through highlighting certain personages at the expense of others. Moreover, as readers of the dullest annalistic history—the *Chunqiu*—know, even a smallest substitution of a word may well be indicative of hidden "praise or blame." Yet these subtle means of delivering one's message differ fundamentally from those used in the historical anecdotes. The message of the latter is explicit and it can be grasped by an educated person even centuries after the historical context of an anecdote lost its importance. Messages hidden in informative non-anecdotal histories, in distinction, can be fully appreciated only by an insider: a person with intimate knowledge of narrated events. As such an "informative history" has much shorter life span than an anecdotal one, as I shall clarify below.

Going back to the *Zuozhuan*, the above examples suffice to show how some of the *Zuozhuan* narratives differ from the moralizing histories of the Warring States and later periods. Being detailed to the point of boredom on the one hand, and lacking a clear-cut moral message on the other, these narratives make sense only insofar as they were written for the immediate use of local statesmen, and that their incidental incorporation into the *Zuozhuan* dislocated them from their normal surroundings, affording the reader a glimpse of the long-gone genre of early historical works, works of the age when the confluence of history and philosophy was much less evident than in the Warring States period.

Until recently, my argument about the need to look beyond the pure didacticism of the Warring States period anecdotes and to analyze early sources of the *Zuozhuan* as reflecting an "informative" and not just a "moralizing" trend in early Chinese historiography faced the impediment of having to demonstrate examples of such an informative history outside the *Zuozhuan* narrative. Now, although I still lack direct evidence for the primary sources of the *Zuozhuan*, fortunately there exists an example of another piece of non-moralizing history that possibly dates from a time not far removed from that of the *Zuozhuan*'s compilation (ca. fifth c. BCE?).[19] In what follows, by analyzing the *Xinian* narrative, I hope to demonstrate the significance of non-moralizing historiography in early China.

The *Xinian*: Introduction[20]

The *Xinian* is one of the dozens of allegedly Warring States Period manuscripts, which were purchased by Qinghua University at the Hong Kong antiquity market. In its published form the *Xinian* occupies the entire second volume of the Qinghua bamboo manuscript collection.[21] With just over 5,000 graphs, the *Xinian* is a relatively short text. It is divided into twenty-three sections (*zhang* 章) and written on 138 bamboo slips of 44.6 cm to 45 cm in length. Each slip is numbered on its verso, and every section starts on a new slip (that is to say: if a section ends before the end of a bamboo slip, the remainder of that slip is left empty). The slips are generally well-preserved; only in section thirteen parts of slips 63 through 65 are missing. Unfortunately, we have no idea of the text's original mortuary setting: like all Qinghua manuscripts that had supposedly been looted from the mainland, it lacks clear provenance. Conventional wisdom assumes that since all Qinghua texts are written in what is usually called a "Chu script," they might have been looted from a Chu tomb; both the orthography and the radiocarbon analysis of one of the Qinghua slips suggest a date of around 300 BCE, which would make it roughly contemporaneous with the hoard of manuscripts discovered in 1993 at Tomb 1, Guodian 郭店 (Hubei) and the manuscripts in the possession of Shanghai Museum.[22]

The twenty-three sections of the *Xinian* can be divided into three groups according to the different chronologies employed. The first four sections (most of which deal with the Western Zhou 西周 [ca. 1045–771 BCE] period) employ the chronology of the Zhou kings. Of the later nineteen sections, which cover the events from the seventh to the early fourth century BCE, eight date events according to the reigning years of the lords of Jin, ten use the chronology based on the reigning years of the kings of Chu, and one uses both Jin and Chu chronology.[23] Conceivably, these sections came from, respectively, Zhou, Jin, and Chu local histories. That is, like *Zuozhuan* and *Guoyu*, the *Xinian* is based on incorporation of earlier materials; it was not written from scratch.

Scrutiny of the *Xinian*'s language strengthens the above observation. While the editors probably unified the language of their sources, they may have left it unchanged whenever two or more usages were acceptable. For instance, the preposition "with" or "and" can be transcribed as either *ji* 及 or *yu* 與. The former appears ten times in the Zhou and Jin sections, and only once in a Chu section. The latter appears eleven times in Chu sections and only four in those of Zhou and Jin. This geographic difference corresponds to the preponderance of *yu* in Chu manuscripts, which almost never employ *ji*;[24] clearly it reflects the original linguistic differences in the source materials. Elsewhere, the differences are not geographic but temporal. Thus, the *Xinian* transcribes the locative *yu* ("at") particle both with the "solemn" graph 于 (which is more common in early Zhou texts) and with the more "colloquial" graph 於 (which predominates the texts of the Warring States period). In the *Xinian* temporal distribution of both particles is highly visible: the "older" *yu* 于 predominates in earlier sections (28 *yu* 于 versus 1 *yu* 於 in the first four sections, that deal with the Western Zhou, 22 slips), while the "newer" *yu* 於 is much more frequently used in the later part of the text (19 *yu* 於 versus 5 *yu* 于 in the last three sections, 25 slips). This latter pattern strongly resembles the *Zuozhuan*, which also evidently incorporated different *yu* particles from its original sources without unifying their transcription.[25]

These linguistic differences between different sections of the *Xinian*[26] allow two major conclusions. First, they corroborate our earlier suggestion that the *Xinian* is based on incorporation of earlier sources, and these were clearly written sources (otherwise such differences as in transcription of *yu* 于/於 particles would be difficult to explain). Second, it seems highly likely that the *Xinian* is not a forgery but an authentic text. It is inconceivable that forgers—sophisticated as they may be—would be able to reconstruct linguistic changes or barely noticeable geographic differences in the Zhou language. This, in addition to the abundance of new historical information, which is also unlikely to come from a forger's hands, convinces me of the authenticity of the *Xinian*.[27]

Differences in its source materials aside, it is clear that the *Xinian* was composed (and not just transcribed) in the state of Chu. Several features of the text demonstrate its Chu origins with certainty. First, each section of the text (except for the first section, which narrates exclusively Western Zhou affairs) deals with the state of Chu either directly or indirectly, through discussing its primary rivals or allies. Most notable is the state of Jin, whose struggle with Chu occupies the core of the *Xinian*. Second, the geographical perspective of the *Xinian* is obviously biased toward the western part of the Zhou world. For instance, the state of Qin 秦 (an important ally of Chu during much of the period under discussion) is covered much more "thickly" than in other contemporaneous texts,[28] while eastern states, such as Qi and Lu (which played a lesser role in Chu history) are less prominent. The exploits of Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (r. 685–643 BCE) in particular, which occupy pride of place in the *Zuozhuan*, are all but ignored. Third, the Chu affiliation becomes more pronounced in the last sections of the text. For instance, while in earlier sections years are counted intermittently by the reign years of the rulers of Zhou, Chu, or Jin, in the last three sections only Chu dating is employed, even when the narrative deals with Jin. Fourth, while the text readily acknowledges Chu military defeats (see below), it avoids any direct reference to domestic turmoil in the state of Chu, such as the coups that first catapulted King Ling 楚靈王 (r. 540–529 BCE) to the throne and then accompanied his downfall.[29] Fifth, there are ritual indications of the text's respect toward the Chu kings: their deaths are invariably recorded as "passing away" (*jishi* 即世), while this courtesy is not observed with regard to other regional lords.[30] All this suggests that the text was produced in Chu, although it clearly incorporates non-Chu materials.

As for the dating of the text, here the majority view is that it was produced slightly after the reign of King Dao of Chu 楚悼王 (r. 401–381 BCE), whose posthumous name is recorded in section 23, and whose early years on the throne are the last to be narrated.[31] There are further indications of an early fourth century BCE date: e.g., employment of the personal name (*ming* 名) rather than the posthumous name (*shi* 謚) for several rulers mentioned in the last two sections, which suggests that these sections were composed either during those rulers' lifetime or shortly after they passed away, when their private name had not yet been obliterated by the posthumous one (see further below). As a working hypothesis, I shall treat the text, then, as a Chu product of circa 370 BCE.[32]

The publication of the *Xinian* excited scholars and led to an explosion of studies of the text in China and to a lesser extent in Japan.[33] Many focused on the information that the *Xinian* provides regarding different lacunae in the Zhou history; others explored the text's genre affiliation. With regard to the latter, Li Xueqin's 李學勤 initial assessment that the *Xinian* is "very close to the *Zhushu jinian*"[34] has been rejected by scholars who have pointed out the *Xinian*'s non-chronological structure, which clearly distinguishes it from the annalistic tradition. The twenty-three sections of the *Xinian* are arranged in a roughly chronological order, yet since the narrative in some of them spans a few generations and even a few centuries, the narration in the text runs back and forth in time, which would not be the case in an annalist text. Actually, the genre of the *Xinian* has no ready parallels among the pre-imperial historical texts. Curiously, it most closely resembles the "topical arrangement" style (*jishi benmo* 紀事本末) texts from the late imperial era. Each of the *Xinian*'s twenty-three sections deals with a sequence of events that shaped the "geopolitical" situation in the Zhou world, and each is a narrative unit in its own right.[35] As I shall try to demonstrate, this topical arrangement of the *Xinian* not only distinguishes it from other pre-imperial historical texts but is also directly related to its non-anecdotal nature.

Non-moralizing History: The *Xinian* vs. *Zuozhuan* Narratives

Of the twenty-three sections of the *Xinian*, the narrative in seventeen sections (from the second part of section 4 to the first part of section 20) overlaps partly or fully with that in the *Zuozhuan*. What is the precise relation between the two texts? One scenario that can be easily ruled out is that *Zuozhuan* is secondary to the *Xinian*. It would be highly implausible that its authors relied on the *Xinian*'s brief accounts so as to create a detailed narrative with hundreds of dates, personal names, place names, official titles, and so on, none of which exist in the *Xinian*. An alternative scenario—that the *Xinian*, conversely, abridges the *Zuozhuan* narrative—is what the first impression suggests; but I think this is wrong too. Despite considerable overlap between the two texts, the *Xinian*—as I shall demonstrate below—contains enough independent information to rule out its being merely a *Zuozhuan* abridgement. Moreover, the fact that the *Xinian* never employs the chronology of the state of Lu, which dominates the *Zuozhuan*, is further suggestive of its independent origin. In what follows my working hypothesis is that the both texts shared common primary sources, which I tentatively identify as "scribal records" prepared by Jin and Chu scribes.[36] By comparing the utilization of these sources in both texts, I hope to show that the *Xinian* deliberately omitted moralizing and entertaining aspects of the narratives, while preserving the essence of historical information. This selection distinguishes it not only from the *Zuozhuan*, but, more essentially, from later historical anecdotes. For the sake of comparison, I have selected one short section of the *Xinian*, section 5 which deals with events of 684–680 BCE, and a lengthy section 15, the narrative of which spans the entire sixth century BCE.

> Section 5
>
> Marquis Ai of Cai took a wife from Chen; the Marquis of Xi also took a wife from Chen, who was Xi Gui. When Xi Gui was en route back to Xi, she passed through Cai. Marquis Ai of Cai ordered her to be stopped, saying, "Since she is from the same family [as my wife], she must enter [the city]." Xi Gui then entered into Cai, and Marquis Ai of Cai "wived" her.[37] The Marquis of Xi considered [Marquis Ai] incompliant;[38] then he sent a messenger to King Wen of Chu, saying, "My lord should come and attack us; we shall seek help from Cai, and you can thereupon defeat them." King Wen raised an army and attacked Xi, and Marquis Ai of Cai led his army to save Xi. King Wen defeated him at Shen, and captured Marquis Ai of Cai, returning with him.
>
> King Wen was a guest at Xi, and the Marquis of Cai accompanied him. The Marquis of Xi was serving ale to King Wen. The Marquis of Cai knew that he had been lured by the Marquis of Xi; hence he told King Wen, "The wife of the Marquis of Xi is extraordinarily beautiful; my lord must command to see her." King Wen ordered to see her. The Marquis of Xi refused, but the King insistently ordered to see her. Having seen her, he went back [to Chu]. The next year, he raised an army and invaded Xi. He overpowered it, killed the Marquis of Xi, and took Xi Gui with him to return. She [eventually] gave birth to Du'ao and [the future] King Cheng.
>
> Thanks to this, King Wen opened lands northward beyond Fangcheng, expanded to the Ru River, trained his armies near Chen and thereupon acquired Dun so as to frighten the Marquis of Chen.
>
> 蔡哀侯取妻於陳, 息侯亦取妻於陳, 是息媯. 息媯將歸于息, 過蔡, 蔡哀侯命止之, 【23】曰: 「以同姓之故, 必入.」息媯乃入于蔡, 蔡哀侯妻之. 息侯弗順, 乃使人于楚文王【24】曰: 「君來伐我, 我將求救於蔡, 君焉敗之.」文王起師伐息, 息侯求救於蔡, 蔡哀侯率師【25】以救息, 文王敗之於莘, 獲哀侯以歸. 文王爲客於息, 蔡侯與從, 息侯以文【26】王飲酒, 蔡侯知息侯之誘己也, 亦告文王曰: 「息侯之妻甚美, 君必命見之.」文【27】王命見之, 息侯辭, 王固命見之. 既見之, 還. 明歲, 起師伐息, 克之, 殺息侯, 取【28】息媯以歸, 是生堵敖及成王. 文王以北啓出方城, 圾 (立) 肆 (畛?) 於汝, 改(治?)旅於陳, 焉【29】取頓以贛 (恐?) 陳侯. 【30】[39]

The narrative of the *Xinian* is very close to that of the *Zuozhuan*, where it is divided into two separate anecdotes recorded under the years 684 and

680 BCE. The first of these appears as a comment on the entry in the *Chunqiu*, which records Chu's victory over Cai.[40] This anecdote is reproduced in the *Xinian* very closely, except for a clearer indication that the Duke of Cai "wived," i.e., committed adultery with his sister-in-law (in the *Zuozhuan* it is substituted with a euphemism that the Duke of Cai "did not treat her appropriately as a guest" [*fu bin* 弗賓]). The second anecdote in the *Zuozhuan* is related to another entry of the *Chunqiu*, according to which the Chu army entered the Cai capital in the seventh month of 680 BCE.[41] This anecdote is relatively sophisticated. It starts with the story of the Duke of Cai instigating the Chu attack against Xi, enticing King Wen with the intention of obtaining Xi Gui. Then comes another mini-anecdote (later embellished and modified in the *Lienüzhuan* 列女傳 [Biographies of Exemplary Women]), about the tragic life of Xi Gui as a Chu captive: despite winning King Wen's favor, she refused to speak as a self-imposed punishment for serving two husbands. Then, the *Zuozhuan* explains that after King Wen heeded the suggestion of the Duke of Cai and invaded Xi, he followed with an attack on Cai itself. Finally, the concluding remark by the "gentleman" criticizes Duke Ai of Cai for his malevolent manipulations that brought disaster to his own state.

It is with regard to this second anecdote that the difference between the *Xinian* and the *Zuozhuan* becomes more pronounced. First, the sequence of events in the *Xinian* differs slightly: the elimination of Xi occurs one year after the first intervention of King Wen against Cai, which means that (adopting the *Chunqiu* chronology), Xi was eliminated in 683 BCE, three years before the Chu incursion into Cai in 680 BCE. This slight change—if not a mistake—may suggest that the *Xinian* author(s) were better informed about the annihilation of Xi than the *Zuozhuan* author(s). Alternatively, it is possible that the *Zuozhuan* transmitted the story of the elimination of Xi to the year 680 so as to strengthen the connection between it and the incursion into Cai on that year, making the two events closely related and thereby strengthening the didactic message, which criticized the lord of Cai's perfidy. These differences are of little importance, but there is a second and more substantial one. The *Xinian* authors eliminate all the moralizing aspects of the *Zuozhuan* story: Xi Gui's chastity, or the lack thereof, is of no interest to them; the machinations of the rulers of Xi and Cai do not merit praise or blame; the focus of the narration clearly lies elsewhere. This focus is fully revealed in the last phrase of the story (which does not exist in the *Zuozhuan* and evidently reflects a distinctive Chu perspective): the Cai-Xi intrigue served as a springboard for Chu's expansion beyond the Fangcheng 方城 line into the Ru 汝 river valley.[42] It is this aspect—and only this aspect—that matters to the *Xinian* authors.

Section 5 may be illustrative of most of the entries in the *Xinian*. An event—or a chain of events, as shown below—is discussed primarily as background material to explain changes in Chu's geostrategic situation. The emphasis may shift from Chu's own actions to that of its rivals and allies (Qin, Jin, Qi, Wu 吳, and Yue 越), but the focus always remains on the changing balance of power. The authors appear to be indifferent with regard to other didactic messages that could be deduced from their narrative. The anecdotal nature of the narrative is not obscured entirely, but it becomes much less pronounced than in the *Zuozhuan*, not to say in later texts that reproduce the same anecdote, such as, in the case of section 5, the *Lüshi chunqiu* and *Lienüzhuan*.[43]

Let us now move to a longer narrative which incorporates several series of anecdote chains that appear in the *Zuozhuan*, namely section 15. In view of its length, I have divided it into two parts. The section states:

> When King Zhuang of Chu ascended the throne [613 BCE], Wu was submissive to Chu. Prince Zhengshu of Chen took as wife a daughter of Duke Mu of Zheng named Shao Kong.[44] In the fifteenth year of King Zhuang [599 BCE], Prince Zhengshu of Chen killed his lord, Duke Ling. King Zhuang led an army and laid siege to Chen. The King ordered the Duke of Shen, Qu Wu, to go to Qin and ask for troops, and getting the troops [Qu Wu] returned. The King entered the Chen [capital], killed Zhengshu, took his wife and gave her to the Duke of Shen. *Lianyin* Xiang the Elder contended with [the Duke of Shen] and seized Shao Kong.[45] When *lianyin* Xiang the Elder was captured at Heyong,[46] his son, Heiyao, also married Shao Kong. When King Zhuang passed away and King Gong ascended the throne [590 BCE], Heiyao died, and Marshal Zifan contended with the Duke of Shen for Shao Kong.[47] The Duke of Shen said: "this is the wife I was given [by King Zhuang]," and married her. The Marshal considered the Duke of Shen incompliant.[48] When the king ordered the Duke of Shen to go to a visit to Qi, the Duke of Shen secretly carried Shao Kong off and left. From Qi he thereupon escaped to Jin, from Jin he went to Wu, thereby facilitating routes of communication between Wu and Jin, and teaching the men of Wu to oppose Chu.

> 楚莊王立，吳人服于楚．陳公子徵舒取妻于鄭穆公，是少𥁕．莊王立十又五年，【74】陳公子徵舒殺其君靈公，莊王率師圍陳．王命申公屈巫蹠秦求師，得師以【75】來．王入陳，殺徵舒，取其室以予申公．連尹襄老與之爭，挩（奪）之少𥁕．連尹戳(捷)[49]於河【76】澭，其子黑要也或（又）室少𥁕．莊王即世，共王即位．黑要也死，司馬子反與申【77】公爭少𥁕，申公曰：「是余受妻也．」取以爲妻．司馬不順申公．王命申公聘於齊，申【78】公竊載少𥁕以行，自齊遂逃蹠晉，自晉蹠吳，焉始通吳晉之路，教吳人反楚．【79】[50]

This lengthy narrative incorporates several accounts, the detailed version of which is present in the *Zuozhuan*. The first section deals with the ultimate *femme fatale* of the *Zuozhuan*, Xia Ji (in the *Xinian* she is named Shao Kong, as explained in the relevant note above), who "has killed three husbands, one ruler, and one son, and has brought one state and two high ministers to their destruction."[51] According to the *Zuozhuan* account, Xia Ji had illicit relations with Duke Ling of Chen and with two of his high ministers, which infuriated her son (or, in the *Xinian*'s version, her husband), Xia Zhengshu, who then assassinated his ruler, causing the subsequent Chu invasion. Xia Ji remained an apple of discord among the leading Chu ministers; their struggle caused one of the most gifted Chu statesmen, Qu Wu (or Wuchen 巫臣), the Duke of Shen, to flee his state; later, as his enemies massacred his family, Qu Wu avenged their death by fostering the Jin-Wu alliance directed against Chu. These complex stories, full of didactic digressions, are compressed in the *Xinian* into slightly more than two hundred words, diminishing thereby their dramatic effect, cutting off substantial details (such as Xia Ji's adultery or the massacre of Qu Wu's family), omitting speeches, and undermining the potential didactic—or entertaining—value of each of the anecdotes involved. What remains is a factual skeleton focusing on a single significant issue: how the course of events turned a member of a Chu royal lineage, Qu Wu, into an arch-enemy of his native state, contributing to a major setback in Chu's strategic position. Yet the true significance for the authors is clearly not Qu Wu's personal case (hence, the story of the massacre of his family is omitted), but, rather the consequences of his actions: the rise of Wu, which becomes the main subject of the narrative in its second part:

> Coming to time of King Ling [of Chu], King Ling invaded Wu. He made the Nanhuai expedition, seized Prince Jueyou of Wu, and thereafter Wu again submitted to Chu.[52] When King Ling passed away, King Jingping [aka King Ping, r. 528–516 BCE] ascended the throne [528 BCE].[53] Junior Preceptor [Fei] Wuji slandered *lianyin* [Wu 伍] She and had him killed. She's sons, Wu Yun and Ji of Wu [Wu Ji] fled and submitted to Wu 吳.[54] Wu Ji led the men of Wu to lay siege to Zhoulai, digging a lengthy moat and filling it with water so as to defeat the Chu army; this is the Moat of Ji's Father.[55] When King Jingping passed away, King Zhao ascended the throne [516 BCE]. Wu Yun became the chief minister (*taizai* 太宰) of Wu; he taught Wu how to cause uprisings among the regional lords [allied with] Chu; thus he defeated the Chu army at Boju and thereupon entered Ying, [the Chu capital].[56] King Zhao returned to Sui; and he fought the Wu forces at Xi (Yi). Prince Zhen of Wu was about to rebel and make trouble for Wu: King Helu of Wu then had to return, and King Zhao thus recovered his state.

> 以至靈王，靈王伐吳，爲南懷（淮?）之行，執吳王子蹶由，吳人焉或（又）服於楚．靈王即世，【80】景平王即位．少師無極讒連尹奢而殺之，其子伍員與伍之雞逃歸吳．伍雞將【81】吳人以圍州來，爲長壑而洍之，以敗楚師，是雞父之洍．景平王即世，昭王即【82】位．伍員爲吳太宰，是教吳人反楚邦之諸侯，以敗楚師于柏舉，遂入郢．昭王歸【83】隨，與吳人戰于析（沂）．吳王子晨將起禍於吳，吳王闔盧乃歸，昭王焉復邦．【84】[57]

The *Zuozhuan* tells in great detail about the brief hegemony of King Ling of Chu 楚靈王 (r. 540–529 BCE), who overawed his neighbors and humiliated Wu by repeated incursions; about the coup against King Ling, the ensuing turmoil, and the subsequent decline in Chu's prestige; about the intrigues of the infamous Chu plotter, Fei Wuji, who caused the downfall of the Wu 伍 lineage; and about Wu Yun's (i.e., Wu Zixu's 伍子胥) subsequent flight to Wu, where he started preparing revenge against Chu, eventually bringing his native country to the verge of annihilation. All these affairs, in addition to the dramatic flight of King Zhao from his capital in 506 BCE and the no less dramatic recovery of his fortunes, are absent from the *Xinian* or shortened to a few words. Gone are individual dramas, moral dilemmas, malevolence and benevolence of rulers and ministers. Nothing should distract the reader from the single thread of the narrative: explaining how the

Wu-Chu conflict unfolded until it peaked with the stunning occupation of the Chu capital by the invading Wu armies in 506 BCE.

Each segment of the *Xinian* narrative is paralleled in the *Zuozhuan*, with two exceptions: the story of Qu Wu's mission to Qin to seek support against Chen in 598 BCE, and the exploits of Wu Zixu's brother, Wu Ji (or, as he is named in the text, Ji of Wu 伍之雞).[58] In both cases I believe, *pace* the editors of Volume 2 of the Qinghua bamboo slips (hereafter: *Qinghua 2*), that this information is wrong and is based on the *Xinian* authors' carelessness. In the first case, it is highly improbable that Chu would seek Qin's assistance against Chen, not only because Chen's location is distant from Qin, but mostly because Chu's invasion of Chen was ultimately unopposed and did not require significant coalition-building. In my eyes, it is likely that the *Xinian* authors conflated this event with a real request of support from Qin by a Chu messenger, Shen Baoxu 申包胥, against Wu in 506 BCE.[59] Perhaps they were misled by the identity between Shen Baoxu's lineage name (Shen 申) and Qu Wu's fief of Shen 申, and transposed the story a century backward in time. As for Ji of Wu, I fully accept Ziju's 子居 assertion that this name is based on a popular etymology of the name of the battlefield where Chu armies were defeated by their Wu adversaries in 519 BCE, Jifu 雞父, which literally means Rooster's (or Ji's) Father.[60] The place name, recorded in the *Chunqiu*, should have existed before the battle of Wu against Chu, but later it might have become associated with Wu Zixu's revenge for his father's death in Chu custody.[61] Since the place name could not be meaningfully associated with Zixu himself, his new brother was invented. It is highly unlikely that such an important personage, if he ever existed, would have evaded the attention of countless historians and literati who retold Wu Zixu's story, turning it into one of the best-known narratives from the late Spring and Autumn Period.[62] Similar carelessness may explain other lapses in the *Xinian*'s narrative, such as misidentification of Xia Ji's son, Xia Zhengshu, as her husband and as a prince (*gongzi* 公子, i.e., a son of one of Chen's rulers). On the other hand, it is possible that the *Xinian* is more accurate than *Zuozhuan* in identifying Xia Zhengshu as Xia Ji's husband and not son, because in terms of Xia Ji's age it is highly improbable that back in 598 she already had an adult son.[63]

Let us leave aside for a moment the issue of the *Xinian*'s historical accuracy and try to understand how the authors utilized their primary sources. As mentioned above, I believe that discrepancies between *Xinian* and *Zuozhuan* rule out direct borrowing of the former from the latter (and, of course, vice versa): no [mis]reading of the *Zuozhuan* would yield such a story as invention of Wu Ji, for instance.[64] On the other hand, the overlap between the two texts

is still overwhelming. An easiest explanation would be that both texts shared a common third source, which their authors modified in accordance with their ideological, esthetic, or other needs. It seems probable that a detailed *Zuozhuan* narrative retained more of the original source material, while the *Xinian* authors were more prone to introduce abridgements.

From comparing both versions we can understand how the *Xinian* authors treated their sources. They compressed the original account, omitted unnecessary details, and also possibly supplemented it with additional information that could have derived from other sources or from oral lore (such as the invention of Wu Ji). In the process, many minor details, such as dates, place names, and official titles, which permeate the *Zuozhuan* narrative, were reduced to an absolute minimum, with reign periods of the Chu kings serving as the primary chronological tool. Moreover, the *Xinian* narration lost most of what should be expected of a chain of anecdotes as analyzed by Schaberg.[65] Because of this compression, the narrative cannot be divided into "single events" with a clear "beginning, middle and end"; gone are the speeches; and no clear means of conveying didactic message are discernible. What remains is a brief and energetic political history. Carelessness regarding minor details should not mislead us: on important matters, the text appears clear and unequivocal. In a few hundred graphs it tells in a nutshell the story of Chu's conflict with Wu; this story is told not for its moral or entertaining qualities but in order to provide working knowledge for a reader who wants to be briefly informed about historical changes in Chu's geostrategic situation. This account is highly informative, and, insofar as we can judge from other sources, fairly accurate.

Many anecdotal collections of the Warring States Period and beyond utilized the *Zuozhuan* or its sources, detaching moralizing anecdotes from lengthier annalistic accounts. The *Xinian* authors likewise abridged the source histories utilized in the *Zuozhuan*, but in marked distinction from other texts, they omitted most of the didactically important aspects of the *Zuozhuan* narrative, retaining primarily the factual skeleton of political history. Readers of the *Xinian* were expected to learn from the text not how to behave, but about what happened in the preceding century or two, and how the past events shape the world in which they are living.

The *Xinian* and Chu Historiography

Let us move now beyond the temporal span covered by the *Zuozhuan*, to those *Xinian* sections which derive in all likelihood from fifth to fourth century BCE Chu historical sources. Sections 20 through 23 are particularly valuable for a historian of early China, because, except for a few opening sentences in section 20, they cover the period from 453 to ca. 396 BCE, which remains a *terra incognita* due to dearth of reliable historical information.[66] A detailed analysis of their rich content deserves a separate discussion; here I shall focus only on what we can glean from these sections about aspects of indigenous Chu historiography. Especially the two last sections are very promising in this regard. As they narrate the events of what was for the *Xinian* authors a recent past, it may be assumed that they are closer in their outlook to the original records done by Chu scribes. For my analysis I have chosen the last section, *Xinian* 23, which narrates Chu's conflicts with Jin (or more precisely with the three successor states of Jin, namely Wei 魏, Han 韓, and Zhao 趙), between 404 and 396 BCE. I have divided this lengthy section into three parts:

> In the fourth year of King Shenghuan of Chu [a.k.a. King Sheng, r. ca. 407–402 BCE],[67] Tian, the Duke of Song, and Tai, the Earl of Zheng, attended the Chu court. The king ordered the Duke of Song to fortify the Yu Pass, and establish Wuyang [fortress?].[68] Qin forces defeated the Jin army at Luoyin in order to help Chu.[69] When King Sheng passed away, King Daozhe [a.k.a. King Dao, r. ca. 401–381 BCE] ascended the throne.[70] The Zheng forces assaulted the Yu Pass, and Lord Huanding of Yangcheng[71] led the forces of the Yu Pass and of the upper parts of the country[72] to repel them. He fought the [invaders] at Guiling, but the Chu armies did not succeed.[73] Jia of Jing (i.e. Jing Jia) and Shuzi Gong were captured and died [there]. In the next year [400 BCE?], Fu[74] Yu of Jin led the Jin and Zheng armies to install Prince Ding.[75] The Duke of Luyang led an army to combat the Jin forces; the Jin forces returned, having failed to install the Prince.
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> 楚聲桓王立四年, 宋公田, 鄭伯駘皆朝于楚. 王率宋公以城榆關, 是 (寘) 武陽. 秦人【126】敗晉師於洛陰, 以爲楚援. 聲王即世, 悼哲王即位. 鄭人侵榆關, 陽城桓定君率【127】榆關之師與上國之師以交之, 與之戰於桂陵, 楚師無功. 景之賈與舒子共戠(捷)而死. 明【128】歲, 晉 (貝+甫) 余率晉師與鄭師以入王子定. 魯陽公率師以交晉人, 晉人還, 不果入王子.[76]

The story starts with depicting the epochal struggle of the late fifth century, which engulfed most of contemporaneous polities and which shaped to a large extent the political map of the Warring States era. It continues the narrative in sections 21 and 22, which narrate the formation of two competing axes: Jin's alliance with southeastern state of Yue, directed primarily against Qi, and Qi's alliance with Chu, directed primarily against Jin. In 403 BCE, Qi suffered a major defeat, in the aftermath of which the three de facto rulers of Jin, heads of the Wei, Han, and Zhao lineages, were officially granted the position of regional lords by the king of Zhou. The narrative in section 23 starts in the immediate aftermath of this event: the attempt of Chu to solicit support of intermediate states of Song and Zheng; Qin's supportive (but inconsequential) assault on Jin in the far west, and the formation of Jin-Zheng alliance directed against Chu. In the background of these events stands domestic struggle in the state of Chu, due to which King Sheng was murdered and succeeded by King Dao; the latter had to fight against his brother (or uncle?), Prince Ding. Yet, as is common in the *Xinian*, domestic troubles of the state of Chu are not narrated in full, and the text's focus remains purely on the state's foreign relations.

Let us turn now at the first sentence of section 23. Here (as also in a few phrases of section 22 that narrate the events of 404–403 BCE) the *Xinian* authors dispense with their convention of identifying rulers of the Zhou polities by their posthumous names added to the ducal (*gong* 公) title. Rather, the visiting Song and Zheng leaders (Duke Xiu of Song 宋休公 [r. ca. 403–385 BCE], and Duke Xu of Zheng 鄭繻公 [r. ca. 422–396 BCE]) are identified by their private names and by their ranks in the Zhou system (duke [*gong* 公] for the ruler of Song, earl [*bo* 伯] for the ruler of Zheng).[77] This usage unmistakably resembles the Lu *Chunqiu* and may reflect a common annalistic tradition that was apparently shared by the Chu court scribes. Yet since this is the one of only a very few unmistakably annalistic records in the *Xinian* (others are in section 22), it is likely that it was not directly incorporated from the Chu court annals, but from a more detailed historical source that used the annals and expanded upon them, much as the *Zuozhuan* did to the Lu *Chunqiu*.[78] Editorial efforts of the *Xinian* editors in this case were minimal. They did change the original language from what should have been "The Duke of Song and the Earl of Zheng *attended our court*" (來朝) to "attended the Chu court" (朝于楚), but did not update the names of the visiting leaders, despite the fact that the compilation had obviously been finished *after* the deaths of both rulers of Song and Zheng, when their posthumous names should have been known.[79] Careless editing aside, the record does suggest the existence of an indigenous Chu annalistic tradition, akin to the *Chunqiu* of Lu, as is hinted at in the *Mengzi* 孟子 (Mencius).[80] The *Xinian* continues with narration of the evolution of the Chu-Jin conflict:

> In the next year [399 BCE], Lord Zhuangping of Liang led an army to invade Zheng.[81] Four generals of Zheng—Huangzi, Zima, Zichi, and Zifengzi—led an army to combat the Chu forces. The Chu forces crossed the Fan River and prepared to fight; and the Zheng army fled, entering [the city of] Mie. The Chu army laid siege to Mie, and completely subdued the Zheng army and its four generals, returning with them to [Chu's capital] Ying. Moreover, Chief Minister (*taizai*) Xin of Zheng made trouble in Zheng: Ziyang of Zheng was eliminated, leaving no posterity in Zheng.[82] In the next year [398 BCE], Chu returned the four Zheng generals and their myriad people to Zheng. The Jin forces encircled Lü and Changling, and overpowered these cities.[83] The King [of Chu] ordered Lord Daowu of Pingye to lead an army and invade Jin.[84] He subdued Gao, captured Duke Shejian of Teng[85] and returned to repay the invasion of Changling.
>
> 明歲, 【129】郎 (梁?) 莊平君率師侵鄭, 鄭皇子, 子馬, 子池, 子封子率師以交楚人, 楚人涉氾, 將與之戰, 鄭師逃【130】入於蔑. 楚師圍之於蔑, 盡逾 (降) 鄭師與其四將軍, 以歸於郢. 鄭太宰欣亦起禍於【131】鄭, 鄭子陽用滅, 無後於鄭. 明歲, 楚人歸鄭之四將軍與其萬民於鄭. 晉人圍津, 長陵, 【132】克之. 王命平夜悼武君率師侵晉, 逾 (降) 郜, 戠捷)滕公涉澗以歸, 以復長陵之師.[86]

The story depicts Chu's impressive success in its struggle against Zheng: capture of the entire Zheng army led by Zheng's leading nobles. This success, attained around 399 BCE, did not benefit Chu, though. For whatever reasons, the Chu leaders decided to release their captives and make peace with Zheng, which was then preoccupied with domestic turmoil. The text remains silent as for the reasons for this sudden leniency; but the disappearance of Zheng from subsequent narrative indicates that it was pacified and stopped invasions of Chu. For Chu, however, this did not bring respite.

The tit-for-tat attacks between Jin and Chu continued, culminating in the major conflict between the two states circa 396 BCE, the Wuyang campaign:

> After two years [396 BCE?],[87] Han Qu and Wei Ji led an army and laid siege to Wuyang, to repay the incursion of Gao.[88] The Duke of Luyang led an army to help Wuyang, and fought the Jin army below the Wuyang walls. The Chu army was greatly defeated. Three lords-possessors of the *gui* tablet, the Duke of Luyang, Lord Daowu of Pingye and Lord Huanding of Yangcheng, as well as *youyin* Si of Zhao (Zhao Si) died in that battle;[89] the Chu forces threw away their banners, tents, chariots and weapons, and returned, running like fleeing dogs. The Chen people thereupon rebelled and let Prince Ding back to Chen.[90] Thus the state of Chu lost a lot of walled cities.
>
> When the Chu army was planning to go to rescue Wuyang, the King ordered Lord Daowu of Pingye to dispatch somebody to Chen Hao of Qi to request military help.[91] Chen Jimu [of Qi] led one thousand chariots and followed the Chu army to Wuyang. On the day *jiaxu* [day 11], Jin fought with Chu; on *bingzi* [day 13], the Qi army arrived at Yi and then turned back.
>
> 厭 (薦?) 年, 韓【133】取, 魏擊率師圍武陽, 以復郜之師. 魯陽公率師救武陽, 與晉師戰於武陽之城【134】下, 楚師大敗, 魯陽公, 平夜悼武君, 陽城桓定君, 三執珪之君與右尹昭之竢死焉, 楚人盡棄其【135】旃幕車兵, 犬逸而還. 陳人焉反而入王子定於陳. 楚邦以多亡城. 楚師將救武陽, 【136】王命平夜悼武君李 (使) 人於齊陳淏求師. 陳疾目率車千乘, 以從楚師於武陽. 甲戌, 晉楚以【137】戰. 丙子, 齊師至嵒, 遂還. 【138】[92]

The lengthy struggle with the successor states of Jin ended in a disaster for Chu. Around 396 BCE its army suffered a crushing defeat, which was aggravated by the domestic rebellion of supporters of the ousted Prince Ding of Chu. The text does not conceal the scope of the defeat, nor does it display any lenience toward Chu's international prestige, adding that the "Chu forces threw away their banners, tents, chariots and weapons, and returned, running like fleeing dogs." This frank acknowledgment of Chu's humiliation stays in sharp contrast to the continuous concealment of domestic troubles, such as the regicide of King Sheng and details of Prince Ding's rebellion. It seems that the *Xinian* was not much concerned with Chu's "national" pride.

The ending sentences of section 23 are quite exceptional in the text. This appendix breaks the chronological framework of the narrative and goes back to the events that directly preceded the crushing defeat of the Chu armies at Wuyang. The addition might have been done to avoid a pessimistic ending of the text with a defeat that caused Chu soldiers to flee "like dogs" from the battlefield, and which resulted in the "loss of many walled cities" by the Chu side. Yet the appendix was not properly edited; hence it contains two dates of the sexagenary *ganzhi* 干支 (Stems and Branches) cycle, which appear to be transmitted from a lengthier Chu history without being properly edited. Normally, as is well demonstrable in the *Zuozhuan*, the *ganzhi* dates are meaningful only when a month is provided; otherwise they do not allow to date an event.[93] It is technically possible of course that the two dates in the final slip were meant to show that the Qi army missed the battle by two days, but this goal could easily have been achieved without adding the *ganzhi* dating. It is more likely that the editors just transposed the dating from a Chu historical source without modifying it (in that case, the month could have been mentioned in one of the earlier phrases, abridged by the *Xinian* author[s]). This carelessness is a blessing for us: it shows that meticulous dating of events, characteristic of the *Zuozhuan* and its sources, was the rule in Chu court histories as well.[94]

Let us summarize now section 23 of the *Xinian*. The discussion here (as in the preceding section 22) differs from most of the early sections, as it is much more intensive. Almost every year in the ca. 403–396 BCE span covered in this section merits a special entry,[95] and while the dating remains very rough (no months or days are provided), we have more details about the names of the participants and places than is usual in the *Xinian*. Clearly, the abridgment of the original sources was less radical in this case than in earlier sections of the text, perhaps because the events were not too far removed from the date of the *Xinian*'s composition, and details still mattered.

Section 23 in the *Xinian* provides abundant information about battles, alliances, and movements of forces; but it does not contain anything akin to an anecdote. No speeches, no evaluation of the participants' motivations, of their mistakes, of heroism or cowardice, wisdom or folly. Having no *Zuozhuan*-style background, we lack any clue about the reasons for Zheng's break with Chu around 403 BCE or about the role of the fugitive Prince Ding of Chu in this country's conflicts with its neighbors; we know

nothing about the reasons for Chu's lenient treatment of Zheng captives; we do not even know who—if anyone at all—should be blamed for Chu's eventual defeat. This kind of information would be promptly supplied in the majority of the *Zuozhuan* narratives, and it would be essential in any of the later anecdotes. In the *Xinian* it is simply omitted. The authors wanted to inform their readers of military and diplomatic developments that resulted in Chu's debacle, but they were interested neither in teaching a moral lesson, nor in entertaining the reader. If the text contains didactic messages, these are so well hidden that I could not discover them. In my eyes, the text aims simply at providing essential information about events that changed the balance of power between Chu and its adversaries. This is achieved without any visible didacticism.

Summary: Non-anecdotal Historiography

The *Xinian* differs in form from the *Zuozhuan*; it differs from the narrative histories that evidently served as the building blocks of the *Zuozhuan*; and it also differs from collections of anecdotes from the pre-imperial and early imperial ages, which often borrow from the *Zuozhuan* or from its source histories. It represents a different type of history: a narrative devoid of moralizing stories, a narrative with much less pronounced didacticism, a narrative the focus of which is on informing the reader of the evolution of interstate relations in recent centuries.

Who was the audience of the *Xinian*? I would imagine a very limited group of persons: probably leading policymakers, the ruler and his closest advisors, who were in need of working knowledge of the historical background for the current balance of power. This material could particularly benefit them during diplomatic encounters with representatives of other states. In a recent study David Schaberg explored the speeches of the messengers (*shi* 使) and disclosed their common ground with the scribes (*shi* 史): both shared similar training, which "encompassed both ritual formulas and more substantial knowledge of history and official practice."[96] How was "substantial knowledge of history" attained? Some might have studied history in earnest; but many others might have been in need of a brief résumé of major geopolitical shifts in the past rather than of detailed narrative. Such résumés can be compared to modern briefings for a traveling head of the state: not an extensive narrative with plenty of dates, names and events, but a brief summary which presents the most essential information that can be utilized during the diplomatic encounter. I suppose such a summary prepared nowadays may be similar to the *Xinian*.[97]

Following Schaberg's parallel, I may assert that the *Xinian* was a useful asset for a Chu messenger (*shi* 使), but it was probably prepared by professional scribes (*shi* 史). Evidently, the authors extracted their information from much longer narrative histories, which might have been utilized by the *Zuozhuan* composers as well. Judging from the *Zuozhuan*, these histories tried both to inform and to educate or entertain; they probably comprised both detailed accounts of events and moralizing digressions. These latter became particularly significant for later readers, who valued the didactic potential of historical narratives rather than pure information; hence, didactic segments were extracted from earlier narratives and became the core of the anecdote genre. In the age of intense intellectual polemics of the Warring States Period, historical anecdotes became indispensable for ideological manipulation: through tendentious accounts of history, authors could convince the audience of the advantages of their political recipes. Didacticism prevailed, details were sacrificed, and obvious distortions of history became the rule throughout the Warring States Period and well into the early Han.[98]

Informative histories had a much shorter life-span than moralizing anecdotes. As time passed, details of struggles and intrigues among the bygone polities and lineages became increasingly irrelevant for the educated audience. The *Xinian* itself, for instance, would surely be considered anachronistic by about 300 BCE, as the state of Jin became a distant memory akin to the Austro-Hungarian Empire in our days, while Chu became engaged in a bitter struggle with its erstwhile ally, the state of Qin. Perhaps long before the Qin biblioclasm of 213 BCE delivered a coup de grâce to the historical narratives of the vanquished Warring States, such documents as the *Xinian* were already out of circulation. Having outlived their usefulness, they perished from memory, or, what is more likely, were replaced by newer, updated texts, which also disappeared in due time. It took the grand project of the Sima 司馬 family under Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE) to revive intellectual interest in informative history, restoring the glory of the historical genre. Their success, like the success of the *Zuozhuan* before, derived in no small measure from their ability to use historical narrative simultaneously for ideological and informative purposes.

The pervasive position of anecdotes in the historical and quasi-historical lore of the Warring States period has created a wrong impression that they are the "all" in early Chinese history writing. Recent discoveries require a reconsideration of this assertion. Thus, another major quasi-historical work from the Shanghai Museum collection, the *Rongchengshi* 容成氏, demonstrates that an ideological agenda could be served not only by anecdotes but by preparing a "comprehensive" history of the ruling dynasties of legendary and semi-legendary past.[99] The *Xinian* presents another alternative: a brief informative history with minimal, if any, didactic or ideological emphases. Future discoveries may reveal more filiations of early historical genres. Events of the past were recorded, memorized, narrated, embellished, or invented for a variety of political, ideological, and esthetic needs. New discoveries liberate us from the excessive dependence on the ideological production of the Warring States thinkers and from the narrow prism of Han redactors, and allow us to come to terms gradually with immense variety of early Chinese historiography.

Notes

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2. The Shanghai Museum collection comprises several dozen manuscripts allegedly smuggled from the Mainland to Hong Kong antiquities market and purchased by Shanghai Museum in 1994. To date nine volumes have been published; these include more than two dozen individual anecdotes.

3. David Schaberg, "Chinese History and Philosophy," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, vol. I: *Beginnings to AD 600*, eds. Andrew Feldherr and Grant Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 394.

4. See *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997) 15.686. From Sima Qian's lamentation it is clear that historical texts suffered most from the book burning. For different interpretations of Qin's biblioclasm, see Jens Østergård Petersen, "Which Books Did the First Emperor of Ch'in Burn? On the Meaning of *Pai Chia* in Early Chinese Sources," *Monumenta Serica* 43 (1995): 1–52; Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shih-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation* (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 2000), 183–96; Yuri Pines, *Envisioning Eternal Empire: Chinese Political Thought of the Warring States Era* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 180–83.

5. Sima Qian indeed notices that, in distinction from canonical "odes" (*shi* 詩) and "documents" (*shu* 書), "scribal records" were not stored by private individuals (*Shiji* 15.686).

6. For my treatment of the Lu *Annals*, see Yuri Pines, "Chinese history-writing between the sacred and the secular," in *Early Chinese Religion: Part One: Shang through Han (1250 BC–220 AD)*, eds. John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 318–23. For the nature of the *Zhushu jinian*, see relevant sections of Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006); cf. David S. Nivison, *The Riddle of the Bamboo Annals* (Taipei: Airiti, 2009).

7. For Schaberg's detailed treatment of the *Zuozhuan* anecdotes and chains of anecdotes, see his *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001).

8. See Schaberg, *A Patterned Past*; Yuri Pines, *Foundations of Confucian Thought: Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period, 722–453 B.C.E.* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002); and Wai-yee Li, *The Readability of the Past in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

9. A very convenient tool of tracing these large segments is the topical arrangement of the *Zuozhuan*, undertaken by Gao Shiqi 高士奇 (1645–1704) in *Zuozhuan jishi benmo* 左傳紀事本末 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979).

10. The appeal of the *Zuozhuan* anecdotes is visible in Burton Watson's focus on these in his *The Tso chuan: Selections from China's Oldest Narrative History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). Watson's translation serves, due to its high readability, as the basic introduction to the *Zuozhuan* for undergraduate students throughout the Anglophone world. I expect that the new translation of the *Zuozhuan* by Stephen Durrant, Wai-yee Li, and David Schaberg (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016) will profoundly change the situation in the field.

11. *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注; ed. Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, rev. ed. 1990, hereafter *Zuo*), Zhao 12.3: 1332; Zhao 20.3: 1409.

12. Li, *The Readability.*

13. *Zuo*, Zhao 26.9: 1475–79.

14. *Guoyu* is a heterogeneous compilation of anecdotes, some of which may derive from the same sources that served the compiler of the *Zuozhuan*. There are several indications that *Guoyu* in general was composed later than the *Zuozhuan*, and underwent heavier editorial intervention. See Yuri Pines, "Speeches and the Question of Authenticity in Ancient Chinese Historical Records," in *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism and Ideology: Chinese Historiography and Historical Culture from a New Comparative Perspective*, ed. Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, Achim Mittag, and Jörn Rüsen (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 207–13.

15. The *ganzhi* cycle will be explained below.

16. *Zuo*, Zhao 26.5 and 26.7: 1473–74.

17. Schaberg, "Chinese History and Philosophy," 396.

18. Schaberg, "Chinese History and Philosophy," 398 for both citations.

19. The dating of the *Zuozhuan* composition is very much disputed, particularly because of a lengthy time that may have passed between its initial compilation and the text's fixation in a form close to the current version. In Pines, *Foundations*, I discuss various approaches toward the text's dating and the problem of manifold interpolations into the text during the lengthy period of its transmission.

20. Much of the discussion in this section is based on Yuri Pines, "Zhou History and Historiography: Introducing the Bamboo *Xinian*," *T'oung Pao* 100, no. 4–5 (2014): 287–324, esp. 290–98.

21. Li Xueqin 李學勤, ed., *Qinghua daxue cang Zhanguo zhujian* 清華大學藏戰國竹簡 Vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi, 2011), hereafter *Qinghua 2*. For an introduction to the *Xinian*, see Li Xueqin 李學勤, "Qinghua jian *Xinian* ji youguan gushi wenti" 清華簡《繫年》及有關古史問題, *Wenwu* 文物 no. 3 (2011): 70–74.

22. For an introduction to Guodian discovery, see e.g., Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams, eds., *The Guodian Laozi: Proceedings of the International Conference, Dartmouth College May 1998* (Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of Asian Studies, University of California, 2000). For the Shanghai Museum collection see note 2 above.

23. The three groups mentioned in this paragraph are those that use Zhou chronology, Jin chronology, and Chu chronology. As is clear from this paragraph, an additional subgroup uses a mixture of Jin and Chu chronology.

24. In Chu manuscripts *ji* appears as "with" only in six cases while *yu* in 99 cases (or 127 cases if Zeng 曾 manuscripts are added); in Qin manuscripts, by contrast, *yu* is used only four times, while *ji* appears 313 times; see Zhang Yujin 張玉金, *Chutu Zhanguo wenxian xuci yanjiu* 出土戰國文獻虛詞研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 2011), 251–81. For a recent study of the *ji* particle in the *Chunqiu* and its commentaries, and the commentators' difficulty to understand *ji* in its meaning as "with," "and," see Newell Ann Van Auken, "*Spring and Autumn* Use of *Jí* 及and Its Interpretation in the *Gōngyáng* and *Gǔliáng* Commentaries," in *Studies in Chinese and Sino-Tibetan Linguistics: Dialect, Phonology, Transcription and Text*, eds. Richard VanNess Simmons and Newell Ann Van Auken (Taipei: Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica, 2014), 429–56. For a detailed discussion of *ji* and *yu* in the *Xinian*, see Chen Minzhen 陳民鎮, "Qinghua jian *Xinian* xuci chutan" 清華簡《繫年》虛詞初探, *Chutu wenxian yuyan yanjiu* 出土文獻語言研究 2 (2015), 50–51.

25. For the usage of *yu* 于/於 particles in *Zuozhuan* and comparison to other pre-imperial texts, see He Leshi 何樂士, *Zuozhuan xuci yanjiu* 左傳虛詞研究 (Beijing: Shangwu chubanshe, rev. ed. 2004), 81–122; cf. Zhao Daming 趙大明, *Zuozhuan jieci yanjiu* 《左傳》介詞研究 (Beijing: Shoudu shifan daxue chubanshe, 2007), 34–158; Pines, *Foundations*, 217–20; for their usage in paleographic materials from the Warring States period, see Zhang Yujin, *Chutu Zhanguo wenxian*, 61–106. For the observation that Warring States Period copyists were careful in reproducing distinct *yu* particles even when their grammatical usage was identical, see Olivier Venture (Feng Yicheng 風儀誠), "Zhanguo liang Han 'yu,' 'yu' er zi de

yongfa yu gushu de chuanxie xiguan" 戰國兩漢 '于', '於' 二字的用法與古書的傳寫習慣, *Jianbo* 2 (2007): 81–95.

26. For yet another example of these differences (possible substitution of *nai* 乃 particle in the meaning of "then," "thereupon" with *sui* 隨), see Pines, "Zhou History and Historiography," 295.

27. One notable piece of previously unknown and highly reliable information provided by the *Xinian* concerns the origins of the Qin ruling lineage (see detailed discussion in Pines, "Zhou History and Historiography," 299–303). Another potential indication of the reliability of the *Xinian* is its reference (section 18, slip 100) to Tuo (㸰=佗) (r. until 504 BCE), the ruler of a tiny polity of Xu 許. In the *Chunqiu* and the *Zuozhuan* this ruler is identified as Si 斯. However, a Xu Zi Tuo-*zhǎn* 許子佗盞 vessel unearthed in 2003 at Nanyang, Henan, in the vicinity of Tuo's new capital, Rongcheng 榮成, identifies this ruler by the same name (㸰=佗) as recorded in the *Xinian*. Since the identification of the Xu ruler's name as Tuo was tentative and was not widely known in the scholarly community, it is almost unbelievable that a forger would use this graph instead of the name Si recorded in the canonical work. See detailed discussion in Huang Jinqian 黃錦前, " 'Xu Zi Tuo' yu 'Xu Gong Tuo'—jian tan Qinghua jian *Xinian* de kekaoxing" 許子佗與許公佗: 兼談清華簡《繫年》的可靠性, http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=1756 (accessed: July 29, 2016).

28. See Yuri Pines, "Reassessing Textual Sources for Pre-Imperial Qin History," in *Sinologi Mira k iubileiu Stanislava Kuczery: Sobranie Trudov*, eds. Sergej Dmitriev and Maxim Korolkov (Moscow: Institut Vostokovedeniia RAN, 2013), 236–63.

29. The *Xinian* routinely reports about every slain Chu king that he had simply "passed away"; only in section 18 (slip 99) King Ling's death is referred to as having "encountered misfortune" 見禍 (*Qinghua 2*: 180).

30. See Chen Wei 陳偉, "Qinghua daxue cang zhushu *Xinian* de wenxianxue kaocha" 清華大學藏竹書《繫年》的文獻學考察, *Shilin* 史林 1 (2013): 44–45.

31. A major exception to this view is Yoshimoto Michimasa's 吉本道雅, "Seika kan keinen ko" 清華簡繫年考, *Kyōtō daigaku bungakubu kenkyū kiyō* 京都大學文學部研究紀要 52 (2013): 1–94. Yoshimoto dates the *Xinian* to the latter half of the fourth century BCE, because he presupposes that this text is based on the *Zuozhuan*, and because his earlier research postulated the mid-fourth-century dating of the latter. Recently Guo Yongbing 郭永秉 put forward additional evidence in favor of the Xinian's dating to the early decades of the fourth century BCE on the basis of the shape of some of its characters in the context of the evolution of the so-called Chu script. See Guo's "Qinghua jian *Xinian* chaoxie shidai zhi guce: jian cong wenzi xingti jiaodu kan Zhanguo Chu wenzi quyuxing tezheng xingcheng de fuza guocheng" 清華簡《繫年》抄寫時代之估測: 兼從文字形體角度看戰國楚文字區域性特徵形成的複雜過程, *Wen shi* 文史 3 (2016): 5–42. I am not in a position to judge the validity of Guo's analysis.

32. This dating makes the *Xinian* roughly contemporary with another Chu quasi-historical text from the Qinghua collection, *Chuju* 楚居, for which see a brief introduction by Asano Yūichi 淺野裕一, "Qinghua jian *Chuju* chutan" 清華簡《楚居》初探, *Qinghua jian yanjiu* 清華簡研究 1 (2012): 242–47.

33. For a good, albeit incomplete summary of 2011–2012 studies, see Chen Minzhen 陳民鎮, "Qinghua jian *Xinjian* zhounian zongshu" 清華簡《繫年》週年綜述, http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn/SrcShow.asp?Src_ID=1977 (accessed: July 29, 2016). In 2015, no fewer than ten monographs on the *Xinian* (of very uneven quality) were published by the Zhongxi shudian publishing house, Shanghai.

34. Li Xueqin, "Qinghua jian *Xinian*," 70.

35. The "topical arrangement" style started under the Song dynasty (960–1279) when Yuan Shu 袁樞 (1130–1205) prepared a topically arranged version of *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒; this style became very popular in under the Ming and Qing dynasties. For a very good analysis of the *jishi benmo* style of the *Xinian*, see Xu Zhaochang 許兆昌 and Qi Dandan 齊丹丹, "Shilun Qinghua jian *Xinian* de bianzuan tedian" 試論清華簡《繫年》的編纂特點, *Gudai wenming* 古代文明 6, no. 2 (2012): 60–66; for a similar assessment, see Liao Mingchun 廖名春, "Qinghua jian *Xinian* guankui" 清華簡《繫年》管窺, *Shenzhen daxue xuebao (renwen shehuikexue ban)* 深圳大學學報 (人文社會科學版) no. 3 (2012): 51. Other scholars propose alternative identification of the *Xinian's* genre: Chen Minzhen 陳民鎮 ("*Xinian* 'gu zhi' shuo—Qinghua jian *Xinian* xingzhi ji zhuanzuo beijing chuyi" 《繫年》"故志"說——清華簡《繫年》性質及撰作背景芻議, *Handan xueyuan xuebao* 邯鄲學院學報 no. 2 [2012]: 49–57, 100) affiliates it with the so-called *zhi* 志 histories; Chen Wei 陳偉 speculates that it may be related to the now lost *Duoshiwei* 鐸氏微 (Subtleties of Mr. Duo), a circa 340 BCE text by Duo Jiao 鐸椒 ("Qinghua daxue," 48). Li Xueqin defends his argument in favor of the *Xinian*'s similarity with the *Zhushu jinian* in his "You Qinghua jian *Xinian* lun *Jinian* de tili" 由清華簡《繫年》論《紀年》的體例, *Shenzhen daxue xuebao (renwen shehuikexue ban)* 深圳大學學報 (人文社會科學版) no. 2 (2012): 42–44. For a recent study which largely shares my views of the *Xinian*, see note 97 below.

36. For a preliminary analysis of these "scribal records," see Pines, *Foundations*, 14–26.

37. "To wife" 妻 is glossed by Hu Sanxing 胡三省 (1230–1302) as "to commit adultery with a married woman" (私他人婦女), and this gloss fits perfectly here. See Cheng Wei 程薇, "Qinghua jian *Xinian* yu Xi Gui shiji" 清華簡《繫年》與息媯事跡, *Wenshi zhishi* 文史知識 4 (2012): 45–48 on p. 47; cf. Chen Wei 陳偉, "Du Qinghua jian *Xinian* zhaji" 讀清華簡《繫年》札記, *Jianghan kaogu* 江漢考古 3 (2012), 117–21 on p. 18. See also *Qinghua er*, 276–77.

38. I read *shun* 順 in 弗順 as a transitive verb; this usage ("to consider somebody incompliant," or, more precisely, "to bear a grudge against somebody") is peculiar to the *Xinian* (see also section 15 and note 48 below).

39. *Qinghua 2*: 147; slip numbers appear in Chinese in bold square brackets. In working on the *Xinian* text I have utilized, aside from *Qinghua 2* volume, also annotations by Xiaohu 小狐, "Du *Xinian* yizha" 讀《繫年》臆札, published on Fudan University site, http://www.gwz.fudan.edu.cn/SrcShow.asp?Src_ID=1766 (accessed: July 29, 2016); notes by Ziju 子居 published on the Qinghua University site, http://www.confucius2000.com/admin/lanmu2/jianbo.htm (accessed: July 29, 2016); and the partial annotation by The Huadong Normal University Small Group of Reading Warring States Period Bamboo Documents 華東師範大學中文系戰國簡讀書小組 published on the Wuhan University site, http://www.bsm.org.cn/show_article.php?id=1609 (accessed: July 29, 2016). When revising this article, I have consulted also the *magnum opus* by Su Jianzhou 蘇建洲, Wu Wenwen 吳雯雯, and Lai Yixuan 賴怡璇, *Qinghua er 'Xinian' jijie* 清華二《繫年》集解 (Taibei: Wanjuan lou, 2013; hereafter *Qinghua er*). For additional sources, see notes below.

40. *Zuo*, Zhuang 10.3: 184. The *Chunqiu* record (*Zuo*, Zhuang 10.5: 181) is the first appearance of Chu (which is then named Jing 荊) in the *Chunqiu*.

41. *Zuo*, Zhuang 14.3: 198–99.

42. The precise location of Fangcheng is disputed: it is likely that initially the term referred to the mountain ranges going from Funiu Mountains 伏牛山 eastward, which served as a natural boundary of the state of Chu; by the fifth century BCE a long protective wall was built in the area, and Fangcheng became identified with it. See Wu Wenwen's discussion in *Qinghua er*, 298–302.

43. For the *Lüshi chunqiu* version see Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷, *Lüshi chunqiu jiaoshi* 呂氏春秋校釋 (Shanghai: Xuelin, 1990), "Chang gong" 長攻 14.5: 991–92; for the *Lienüzhuan* version, see *Gu Lienüzhuan* 古列女傳, composed by Liu Xiang 劉向, "Zhen shun zhuan" 貞順傳, e-*Siku quanshu* edition, 4: 6–7.

44. From the *Zuozhuan* and *Guoyu* it is clear that Zhengshu was not a prince; here the *Xinian* is obviously mistaken. Shao Kong is known in other texts as Xia Ji 夏姬; Shao may be the lineage name of her husband, Yushu 御叔, Kong is her private name (*Qinghua 2*: 171n.2). According to the *Zuozhuan*, she was Zhengshu's mother and not wife.

45. *Lianyin* 連尹 is an official title in Chu hierarchy. The precise function of the *lianyin* is unknown, and the title is therefore left untranslated.

46. "Captured at Heyong" apparently refers to capturing Xiang's body after his death in action during the Bi 邲 battle between Chu and Jin in 597 (see *Zuo*, Xuan 12.2: 743); for Heyong's proximity to Bi, see Wu Wenwen's gloss in *Qinghua er*, 555–56.

47. In the *Zuozhuan*, the sequence of events differ: Heiyao was murdered by Marshal Zifan and his accomplices at the same time that Qu Wu's family was massacred; already before that Qu Wu had smuggled Xia Ji (viz. Shao Kong) out of Chu.

48. See note 38 above for *shun* 順 in the context of 弗順 as a transitive verb: "to consider somebody incompliant," i.e., to bear a grudge against him.

49. For reading the graph here as *jie* 捷 (to capture), see Chen Jian's 陳劍 explanations, as cited in *Qinghua er*, 554–55.

50. *Qinghua 2*: 170.

51. *Zuo*, Zhao 28.2: 1492.

52. For the invasion of Wu in 537 BCE and the capture of Prince Jueyou, see *Zuo*, Zhao 5.8: 1270–72; from the *Zuozhuan* it is clear that Wu did not submit to Chu in the aftermath of this invasion.

53. In other texts, this king is known by just one posthumous name, King Ping 楚平王 (r. 528–516 BCE).

54. Wu Yun is the famous Wu Zixu 伍子胥 (d. 484 BCE), for the evolution of whose story see David Johnson, "Epic and History in Early China: The Matter of Wu Tzu-Hsü," *Journal of Asian Studies* 40, no. 2 (1981): 255–71. There is no evidence for Wu She's another son, Ji of Wu, in any other historical source.

55. The *Chunqiu* records Wu's defeat of Chu and its allies in 519 BCE at the location named Ji's Father (or Rooster's Father? 雞父).

56. These are dramatic events of 506 BCE, when the state of Chu was on the verge of extinction; see *Zuo*, Ding 4.3: 1542–49.

57. *Qinghua 2*: 170.

58. The *Xinian* often adds possessive particle *zhi* 之 between an individual's lineage name (surname) and his personal name. This feature figures prominently also in the Warring States Period Chu extract from the *Zuozhuan*, a part of the Zhejiang University collection.

59. For Shen Baoxu's heroic mission to Qin to request assistance against Wu, see *Zuo*, Ding 4.3: 1547–49; Ding 5.5: 1551. This mission is referred to (without mentioning Shen's name) in section 19 of the *Xinian*.

60. See Ziju, "Qinghua jian *Xinian* 12–15 zhang jiexi" 清華簡《繫年》12～15 章解析, http://www.confucius2000.com/admin/list.asp?id=5413 (accessed: July 29, 2016). "Rooster" may be just a river's name (Ji 雞).

61. *Zuo*, Zhao 23.7: 1440.

62. See Johnson, "Epic and History."

63. See Wei Cide 魏慈德, "Qinghua jian *Xinian* yu *Zuozhuan* de Chu shi yitong" 《清華簡・繫年》與《左傳》中的楚史異同, *Donghua Hanxue* 東華漢學 17 (2013): 25. If the manipulation was performed in the *Zuozhuan*, then making Xia Ji into a mother rather than wife of Xia Zhengshu could have been done to stress her role as an ultimate age-defying femme fatale. I am grateful to Wai-yee Li for this observation.

64. It may worth reminding at this point that seven *Xinian* sections do not overlap with the *Zuozhuan* at all, and that even overlapping sections may propose radically different interpretation of certain events; see more in Pines, "Zhou History and Historiography," 315–21.

65. Schaberg, "Chinese History and Philosophy," 395–96.

66. This period is covered neither in the *Zuozhuan* nor in *Guoyu* (both end their narrative with the year 453 BCE); while the *Shiji* account for ca. 450–380 BCE is sketchy and fairly inaccurate. Heretofore, the only significant additional source for the second half of the fifth century BCE history was the *Zhushu jinian*, fragments of which survived in manifold early citations; in addition a few pieces of information are found in the *Mozi* 墨子 and in several bronze inscriptions, such as the Piaoqiang-*zhong* [厂+鳳] 羌鐘.

67. The dates of the late fifth century BCE Chu kings are not entirely clear; according to the reconstruction proposed by Li Rui 李銳 ("You Qinghua jian *Xinian* tan Zhanguo chu Chu shi niandai de wenti" 由清華簡《繫年》談戰國初楚史年代的問題, *Shixueshi yanjiu* 史學史研究 no. 2 [2013], 100–104), King Sheng reigned between 404–401, and King Dao ascended the throne in the year 400. Yet since this reconstruction remains somewhat speculative, I do not adopt it here.

68. Yu Pass 榆關 is a strategic point halfway between the capital of Zheng and Daliang 大梁 (now Kaifeng), the would-be capital of the state of Wei 魏. The location of Wuyang is disputed, but it is likely to be located not far from Yu Pass and not far from the Song territory, perhaps in the borders of the current Henan and Shandong provinces.

69. Luoyin is located to the west of the Yellow River near its conflation with the Wei 渭 River; during the period under discussion it was the westernmost part of Jin territory.

70. According to the *Shiji* 40: 1720, King Sheng was assassinated. As is common in the *Xinian*, dramas from the domestic life of Chu are glossed over.

71. Lord of Yangcheng, just as lords of Luyang, Liang, and Pingye mentioned below were senior enfeoffed nobles of Chu, whose fiefs were located in the Huai 淮 River valley. See more about Chu enfeoffed lords in note 89 below.

72. *Shang guo* 上國, "upper parts of the country" (i.e., of Chu) refer to western areas of Chu which were upstream the rivers that flow through the country. See Du Yu's 杜預 (222–85) gloss on this term in the *Zuozhuan* (*Zuo*, Zhao 14.3: 1365).

73. Guiling is located to the north of the Yellow River, in present day Changyuan 長垣 County, Henan. That the battle was waged there means that the Chu armies invaded deeply into the Jin territory.

74. For reading the surname of a Jin commander as Fu [貝+甫], see Su Jianzhou 蘇建洲, "*Qinghua daxue cang Zhanguo zhujian (er)-Xinian* kaoshi si ze"《清華大學藏戰國竹簡 (貳)·繫年》考釋四則, *Jianbo* 簡帛 7 (2012): 73–74.

75. Prince Ding, possibly King Sheng's son, fled Chu and contested the throne from King Dao.

76. *Qinghua 2*: 196.

77. It is not my intention here to discuss the appropriateness of European aristocratic nomenclature to the Zhou China; I apply European ranks just as a matter of heuristic convenience.

78. The annalistic source of this sentence is further buttressed by its usage of an older and more "respected" *yu* 于 particle, while elsewhere section 23 invariably uses 於. See more in You Rui 尤銳 (Yuri Pines), "Cong *Xinian* xuci de yongfa lun qi wenben de kekaoxing: jian chutan *Xinian* yuanshi ziliao de laiyuan" 從《繫年》虛詞的用法重審其文本的可靠性—兼初探《繫年》原始資料的來源, *Qinghua jian Xinian yu gushi xintan* 清華簡《繫年》與古史新談, ed. Li Shoukui 李守奎 (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2016), 224–27.

79. There is much uncertainty regarding precise dates of the rulers of Chu and Song at the turn of the fifth century (see Li Rui, "You Qinghua jian"), but it is sure that King Dao of Chu, whose posthumous name is mentioned in the last section of the *Xinian* died in 381 BCE, and this date should be later than the deaths of Duke Xiu of Song (r. ca. 403–385 BCE) and Lord Xu of Zheng (ca. 396 BCE). For the complexity of the usage of rulers' names in the annalistic sections of the *Xinian*, see You Rui (Yuri Pines), "Cong *Xinian* xuci," 227–28.

80. Mengzi mentions the *Sheng* of Jin and *Taowu* of Chu as identical with the Lu *Chunqiu*. See *Mengzi yizhu* 孟子譯注, ed. Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, [1960] 1988), "Li lou, xia" 8.21: 192. See also the Introduction to this volume.

81. Lang 郎 was identified by Dong Shan 董珊 as Liang 梁, a city in the Ru River valley, on Chu's northern frontier. See Ma Nan 馬楠, *Qinghua jian 'Xinian' jizheng* 清華簡《繫年》輯證 (Shanghai: Zhongxi shuju, 2015), 472n.4.

82. Ziyang 子陽 was the most powerful Zheng statesman of the time; his elimination by *taizai* Xin appears to be a critical step toward Zheng's weakening en route to its elimination at the hands of the state of Han in 375 BCE. For debates about Ziyang's death and its consequences, see *Qinghua er*, 903–07.

83. The location of both these fortresses is unclear; the identification proposed by the editors of *Qinghua 2* (p. 199, n. 19) does not make sense geographically, placing Lü in the westernmost part of Chu, while Changling in the Huai 淮 River valley. As Su Jianzhou correctly notices, it is highly unlikely that the Jin armies would penetrate so deeply into Chu's hinterland (*Qinghua er*, 908).

84. Lords of Pingye belonged to a collateral branch of the Chu royal lineage, enfeoffed at Pingye in southern Ru 汝 River valley. Su Jianzhou (*Qinghua er*, 908–09) identifies Lord Daowu as a son of another lord of Pingye, who was the occupant of Xincai Geling 新蔡葛陵 Tomb, excavated in 1994. For lords of Pingye, see more in Zheng Wei 鄭威, *Chuguo fengjun yanjiu* 楚國封君研究 (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe 2012), 115–18.

85. The state of Teng 滕 was conquered by Yue 越 ca. 420 BCE (see *Zhushu jinian* information from the gloss to *Shiji* 41: 1747); it is not clear whether by 398 BCE it had already regained its independence, or whether Lord Shejian was a Yue governor of Teng.

86. *Qinghua 2*: 196.

87. The precise reading of 厭年 is contested; it may refer to "the next year" or "after two years." See more in *Qinghua er*, 912–16.

88. Han Qu is Marquis Lie of Han 韓烈侯 (r. 399–387 BCE), Wei Ji is Marquis Wu of Wei 魏武侯 (r. 395–370 BCE). It is not clear whether at the time of the incursion Marquis Wu had already ascended the throne or did he act on behalf of his ailing father, Marquis Wen of Wei 魏文侯 (r. 445–396 BCE). Notably, despite the official elevation of the marquises of Han and Wei to the status of regional lords (*zhuhou* 諸侯) in 403 BCE, the *Xinian* treats them here as military leaders of the unified state of Jin. This is not a consistent ideological stance, though: section 22 does recognize the "marquis" (*hou* 侯) title of Marquis Wen of Wei.

89. Possession of the *gui* 珪 tablet marked the highest degree of authority in Chu: the ducal position of an enfeoffed noble. See Chen Yingfei 陳穎飛, "Chu Daowang chuqi de da zhan yu Chu fengjun: Qinghua jian *Xinian* zhaji zhi yi" 楚悼王初期的大戰與楚封君: 清華簡《繫年》札記之一, *Wenshi zhishi* 文史知識 5 (2012): 106. For the exceptional power of the group of enfeoffed nobles in Chu, see Zheng Wei, *Chuguo fengjun yanjiu*. Zhao Si 昭誒 was another important noble; probably a descendant of King Zhao of Chu 楚昭王 (r. 516–489 BCE).

90. Originally, the text's editors identified Chen in this sentence as a reference to the state of Qi, which was already ruled (de facto if not de jure) by the Chen 陳 (Tian 田) lineage (*Qinghua 2*: 200n.28). Later, this understanding was challenged: it is likely that Chen here refers to a Chu dependency, a former state of Chen 陳 which was annexed by Chu in 534 BCE, regained independence in 529, and was annexed again in 478 BCE. Little is known of its management thereafter, but it is possible that the former Chen territory, which served as a springboard of dynastic coup in 529 BCE, played a similar role in attempts of the ousted Prince Ding to regain power in Chu. See also *Qinghua er*, 923–24.

91. This sentence shifts the narrative back to the moment before Chu's defeat at Wuyang.

92. *Qinghua 2*: 196.

93. The *ganzhi* 60-days cycle was unrelated to the month counting; and in any case in every month only a half of the *ganzhi* dates could occur. Without a month, the *ganzhi* date does not provide an adequate chronological information.

94. There are only very few instances of the *ganzhi* dating in the anecdotes from the Warring States and the Han period (a section of the *Guoyu* "Jin yu 4" is the major exception); and when the *ganzhi* do appear they may be a result of a careless incorporation of earlier annalistic materials. For instance, in one of the *Han Feizi* anecdotes, an otherwise meaningless *ganzhi* date appears due to its incorporation from the *Zuozhuan* (cf. *Han Feizi jijie* 韓非子集解, annotated by Wang Xianshen 王先慎 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998], "Nan 難 4" 39: 384 vs. *Zuo*, Huan 17.8: 150 and discussion in Pines, *Foundations*, 29–30).

95. As mentioned in note 67 above, the precise dating of the Chu kings' reign periods from the late fifth–early fourth centuries BCE is still much disputed; hence the dating of the events depicted in *Xinian* 23 remains approximate. It is possible, albeit not much probable, that the narrative "jumped" a few years without mentioning it; in this case, the last events, viz. the Wuyang campaign, should have taken place in 394 BCE and not in 396 BCE as in my estimate. See *Xinian er*, 917–21.

96. David Schaberg, "Functionary Speech: On the Work of *shi* 使 and *shi* 史," in *Facing the Monarch: Modes of Advice in the Early Chinese Court*, ed. Garret P.S. Olberding (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 40.

97. For a similar supposition, see also Huang Xinyong 黃梓勇, "Lun Qinghua jian *Xinian* de xingzhi" 論清華簡《繫年》的性質, *Qinghua jian yanjiu* 清華簡研究 2 (2015), 248–49.

98. I analyze some of these obvious distortions and the resultant loss of argumentative power of historical anecdotes in Pines, "Speeches." For the importance of the anecdotes in ideological debates of the Warring States Period see other chapters in this volume.

99. See Yuri Pines, "Political Mythology and Dynastic Legitimacy in the *Rong Cheng shi* manuscript," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and Asian Studies*, 73, no. 3 (2010): 503–29.