ON THE TRANSMISSION OF KUAN-TZÜ

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Students of Kuan-tzu, both in and outside China, have devoted more attention to the circumstances in which the text was first written than to the later stages of its transmission. In his monograph on the composition of Kuan-tzu, Lo Kên-tsê 羅根澤 deals in turn with the different p’ien of the text, trying to date each of them by internal evidence 1). In this way he seeks systematically to corroborate such doubts about authorship and homogeneity as had often been expressed before. He certainly makes out a strong case for studying the various parts of the present text individually, although the conclusions he reaches can only be provisional. The same method was followed by Haloun, who published critical studies of p’ien 59 (Ti tzü chih 弟子職) and 55 (Chiu shou 九守) 2). One cannot however be too careful in choosing criteria for dating the separate sections. Lo Kên-tsê does not take sufficient account of the possibility that many readings in the present text may be due to later corruption instead of being original features of the respective p’ien. For instance, one of his arguments for attributing p’ien 20 (Hsiao k’uang 小匡) to the early Han period is the reading in 8.5b 常 for 恙, which was the ming of Wên-ti (180-157) and therefore tabooed 3). However, the Chou li i su

1) Kuan-tzu t’an yüan 管子探源, Shanghai, 1931.
2) Asia Major IX (1933), 467-502, New Series II (1951), 85-120.
3) Kuan-tzu t’an yüan, p. 69. My references are to the edition of Kuan-tzu reproduced in the Ssu pu ts’ung k’an unless otherwise stated. For the editions of other Chinese works to which I refer in the footnotes see the list at the end of this article.
The history of the collection called Kuan-tzü as we have it now begins with the bibliographical activities of Liu Hsiang 劉向 (79-8 B.C.). It may be useful to give a short account of his work as far as the existing sources permit. It seems that the first organization for collecting and copying books had been set up by Wu-ti in or shortly after 124 B.C. The Ch’i lüeh 七略 of Liu Hsin 劉歆 (ob. A.D. 23) says: ‘Emperor Wu instructed the Chancellor Kung-sun Hung to provide ample facilities for pre-

1) Chou li chu su 10.28a.
2) Liu Shih-p’ei 劉師培, Kuan-tzü chiao pu 8b.
3) La Chine Antique, p. 585, note i.
4) BMFEA I (1929), 172-176.
6) See below, p. 367.