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On Gu Jiegang's "Qingdai Zhushu Kao" and the Construction of the Qing Dynasty Academic System: Post-Print Edition

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Abstract

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Full Text

Preamble

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**On Gu Jiegang's Construction of the Qing Dynasty Academic System
in *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty***

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* is a bibliographic work on Qing dynasty scholarship compiled by Gu Jiegang. The scholarly approaches, ideas, and methods reflected in this book remain worthy of reference and absorption to this day. **[Method/Process]** By analyzing the compilation, style, and innovations of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, and combining it with Gu Jiegang's early writings on bibliography and Qing scholarship, this study explores his early scholarly concepts and reveals the path, content, and influence of his construction of the Qing dynasty academic system. **[Result/Conclusion]** Through the compilation of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, Gu Jiegang deepened his absorption of Qing scholars' research achievements, which laid an important foundation for his formation of the "from classics to history" research path and his pioneering contributions to ancient history studies.

Keywords: Gu Jiegang; *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*; views on Qing scholarship; bibliography; academic system

Classification Number: G257

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Gu Jiegang (1893–1980), born in Suzhou, Jiangsu, was a renowned modern Chinese scholar. His theory of "the ancient Chinese history created layer by layer" sparked a "trend of doubting antiquity" in academia, generating intense debates that became a significant phenomenon in 20th-century Chinese intellectual history. While scholarly attention to Gu Jiegang has been considerable, examination of his early academic thought remains relatively weak. Recent research has primarily explored the formation of his academic ideas through his early learning experiences and social interactions. For instance, Hu Zhentao investigated how Gu's early training in traditional and new learning influenced the formation of his "Doubting Antiquity" theory [1]42, while Dong Enqiang analyzed Gu's important ideas on academic equality, seeking truth, and patriotism during this period through his "Inaugural Preface for the 1926 Weekly Journal of the Institute of Sinology at Peking University" [2]134. However, few studies have examined his early academic works as an entry point.

The formation of Gu Jiegang's academic thought and methods was a continuous developmental process. In *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, Gu attempted to construct his ideal academic system by sorting through Qing scholarship, and this work had an indelible impact on unblocking his research path and shaping his later academic thought. The book achieved remarkable accomplishments in bibliography, with many viewpoints and ideas playing an irreplaceable role in traditional scholarly inquiry. This study takes *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* as its starting point, combined with relevant

documents from Gu's early diaries and notes, to examine his research path, methods, and viewpoints, thereby presenting the trajectory of his intellectual evolution.

2. The Compilation Process and Academic Innovation of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*

2.1 Compilation Process

Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty is a bibliographic monograph that Gu Jiegang wrote in his early years to study Qing scholarship. In 1915, Gu withdrew from Peking University due to illness and returned to Suzhou to recuperate. The following year, he planned to compile the biographies, writings, and editions of 1,000 Qing scholars, along with relevant prefaces, postscripts, and textual research. Due to objective limitations, he actually completed bibliographic collation for 543 Qing scholars, with 19 listed only by title. This was an enormous task, as Gu once remarked: "Because there are so many Qing dynasty writings, even with one or two people devoting all their efforts to collecting materials, it would be difficult to complete without accumulating ten years of work" [3]2034. In reality, he only spent half a year on it, and the work was interrupted when he returned to Peking University in autumn 1916.

Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty marked the starting point of Gu Jiegang's envisioned "Writings Research" system. He once stated: "When I previously engaged in bibliography, I was very dissatisfied with the classification methods of earlier catalogs... My intention was to first divide by era, then by category, because the classification of books follows the trends of each period. In other words, I wanted to use the classification of academic history to determine the classification of books" [4]28. Because it remained unfinished, the work could not be published. Two volumes of the collated content were later published in the *Library Weekly* of Sun Yat-sen University when Gu was employed there. The first volume, supplemented and arranged by Ma Taixuan, was published according to the chronological order of the authors' birth years, cataloging 60 individuals; the second volume, arranged by Chen Chen, did not follow chronological order and cataloged 40 individuals. The majority of the content, however, remained in manuscript form and was not circulated in academic circles until 2011, when Zhonghua Book Company published *The Complete Works of Gu Jiegang*, which finally included a facsimile of this unfinished draft.

2.2 Academic Innovation

2.2.1 Content This book not only cites extensively, gathering lost and rare documents from all over, but also comprehensively absorbs the latest scholarly achievements of its time, demonstrating the author's profound evidential scholarship. For example, in his textual research on Dai Zhen's writings, Gu Jiegang, building upon the list in *The Posthumous Works of Mr. Dai*, further absorbed Liang Qichao's *A Bibliographic Study of Dai Dongyuan's Compiled and Col-*

lated Works, enumerating nearly 50 types of his writings and collated books. He also clearly organized relevant biographies, accounts of conduct, and brief life stories about Dai Zhen, including Hong Bang's *Account of Mr. Dai's Conduct*, Duan Yucai's *Chronological Biography of Mr. Dai Dongyuan*, Qian Daxin's *Biography of Dai Dongyuan*, Yu Tingcan's *Brief Account of Dai Dongyuan*, Ling Tingkan's *Brief Account of Mr. Dongyuan's Conduct and Title*, as well as Kong Guangsen's *Preface to Dai's Posthumous Works*, Jiang Fan's *Records of Han Learning Masters in the Qing Dynasty*, and Li Yuandu's *Brief Biographies of Qing Dynasty Worthies*. He also incorporated the latest research works from the Republican period, such as Liang Qichao's *Dai Dongyuan*, Hu Shi's *The Philosophy of Dai Dongyuan*, and the *Special Issue on Dai Dongyuan* from Peking University Library. The comprehensiveness of his collection makes this work an important reference for Dai Zhen studies. Similar examples abound throughout Gu's book.

2.2.2 Cataloging Method Gu Jiegang made bold innovations based on previous cataloging methods. *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* broke the traditional four-part classification model of bibliography, adopting a form that takes individuals as the warp and writings as the weft. It first lists biographical information, then scholars' works, while categorizing writings into different types such as original compositions, compilations, collations, and block-printed editions, arranged sequentially according to the four-part classification. Under each work, various editions are listed in detail, and relevant discussions about the person's academic interests, characteristics, and evaluations from other works are excerpted and appended.

2.2.3 Academic Purpose Gu Jiegang attempted to use bibliographic methods to understand the full scope of Qing scholars' writings, demonstrating that the true function of bibliography is to provide access for reading and scholarship. In terms of academic purpose, the work further presents how Qing scholarship inherited Ming learning, pursued Han learning, clarified teacher-student relationships, distilled the essence of evidential scholarship, and initiated new learning, thereby evaluating the position of Qing scholarship and attempting to construct its academic system, clarifying the succession and evolution of academic development and presenting its trajectory.

2.2.4 Scholarly Thought The book emphasizes vertical comparison of documents across time and horizontal comparison among contemporary scholars. The textual research mainly consists of two parts: (1) Investigation and organization of scholars' biographies. This work primarily uses the *List of Names of Qing Dynasty Writers* in *Bibliographic Guide* and the "Eminent Confucians" section of Li Yuandu's *Brief Biographies of Qing Dynasty Worthies* as its basic framework, with additions and deletions made in a certain order. It also references important biographical reference works by Japanese scholar Imagawa Hisashi, *Chronological Tables of Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing Confucian Scholars*, Zhang

Weixiang's *Compiled Collection of Chronological Biographies*, Li Heng's *Classified Collection of Qing Dynasty Worthies*, and Wu Xiu's *Brief Biographies of Qing Dynasty Celebrities in Letters*, striving for consistency in compilation style and accuracy in chronology. In terms of the breadth of its historical synthesis, Gu's work is not inferior to Jiang Fan's *Records of Han Learning Masters in the Qing Dynasty*.

- (2) Investigation and organization of writing editions. In enumerating scholars' works, Gu Jiegang strove to present a panoramic view and verify origins. In cataloging editions, he extensively cited various Qing catalogs and local gazetteers, including many rare documents, greatly enriching the documentary sources for Qing academic history research. In evaluating authors and works, he quoted other works for summary and analysis, distilling ideas and methods to highlight academic value. Whether investigating scholars' biographies or their writings, Gu Jiegang paid great attention to comparative study of materials, eliminating the dross and selecting the essential. Thus, *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* is both a 梳理 of academic history and reveals organic connections between many academic viewpoints. For example, in the entry on Gu Yanwu, the work lists 58 related writings, each annotated with various editions and textual research. For *Record of Daily Knowledge*, it not only details the original block-printed edition, reprints, and the two-volume excerpt from the Xuehaitang edition, but also catalogs different editions of Huang Rucheng's *Collected Commentaries on the Record of Daily Knowledge*, including the original block-printed edition, Guangzhou reprint, Hubei bureau edition, and Chaozong Shushi movable type edition. In academic evaluation, Gu cites Li Yuandu's view that "its thirty volumes of *Record of Daily Knowledge* represent the author's lifelong masterwork, containing all the essential words of classics and history" [3]1970. Through this, the importance of *Record of Daily Knowledge* in Qing academic history is highlighted, and Gu Jiegang's admiration for Gu Yanwu and reverence for *Record of Daily Knowledge* become clear at a glance. Similarly, Gu's cataloging of *Chronological Biography of Mr. Gu Linting* lists various compiled editions, including those by Gu Yansheng, Wu Yingkui, Che Shouqian, Wang Tiren, Hu Qian, Xu Song, Zhou Zhongfu, and Zhang Mu. He examines the relationships between these editions, noting that "Wu Yingkui's edition was based on Gu Yansheng's, Che Shouqian's was based on Wu's. Xu Song's edition has not been seen in various versions; it was completed but not printed. Zhang Mu's edition synthesizes Che and Xu's versions with corrections. Hu Qian's and Zhou Zhongfu's editions are presumably already lost" [3]1969. He then provides detailed cataloging of the edition information for Zhang's and Wu's versions. Through such comparative research, information about scholars, writings, and editions is organically connected, appearing clear at a glance yet intricately interwoven.

Gu Jiegang's academic innovation may have been a preliminary attempt at reflecting on Chinese traditional scholarship, closely related to his being deeply

immersed in an era when new intellectual trends challenged China's old academic traditions. Of course, because the work was completed in haste, some later scholars offered supplementary suggestions. For instance, Hu Shi suggested that Yao Jiheng should have been included, considering him a bold scholar who dared to write *General Discussions on the Nine Classics*, and asked Gu Jiegang to help search for materials on Yao Jiheng and editions of *General Discussions on the Nine Classics*. Indeed, some entries in the book are indeed too brief in content and do not cover the academic evaluations and edition information stipulated in the style guide, but this cannot obscure the academic contributions of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, nor prevent us from examining its important influence on Gu Jiegang's scholarship.

3. Gu Jiegang's Academic Views in *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*

3.1 Emphasizing Qing Scholarship

Since the late Qing period, with the decline of imperial power and the introduction of Western disciplinary systems and knowledge organization, the Daoist and scholarly traditions were deeply impacted and faced disintegration. How to understand and evaluate the scholarship of the nearly three hundred years of the Qing dynasty became an urgent issue facing the academic community. During this period, Gu Jiegang broke through the constraints of nationalism and school affiliations, strongly emphasizing Qing scholarship. He believed that to study ancient history and classical studies, one needed to absorb and draw on Qing scholars' research achievements: "If you want to study other kinds of scholarship, you may not need to glance at Qing dynasty writings at all, but only in studying ancient history, ancient texts, and ancient philology have Qing scholars already done two hundred years of work, already exhausted the efforts of thousands of people—this is precisely a great treasure trove. If we hope to obtain this treasure, then knowing Qing scholars' writings and their publication places is the first step" [3]2034.

For Gu Jiegang, evidential scholarship (朴学) represented the essence of Qing scholarship. He believed that "the Qing dynasty reached its peak with evidential scholarship, and evidential scholarship is science" [5]96. From Huang Zongxi's *Treatise on the Calendar of Eclipses* to Jiang Sheng's *Discourse on Fixed Stars*, and then to Dai Zhen's *Continuation of the Outline of Astronomy*, all took "seeking truth" as their purpose. Although evidential scholarship encompassed multiple research fields, its essence lay in pursuing truth from facts. Therefore, Gu Jiegang argued that "evidential scholarship is what truth-from-facts learning returns to. In its small form, it is textual exegesis; in its large form, it is mathematics and the study of phenomena. The key is to be accurate and free from error, without empty speculation or unfounded statements—this is what makes it valuable" [5]96. This work thus promoted the formation of Gu's scholarly thought with "seeking truth" as its criterion and profoundly influenced

the formation of his later “Doubting Antiquity” theories. Gu once stated: “I love the precision of their research methods, their diligence in seeking evidence, and their truth-seeking spirit without practical application” [4]29.

On the other hand, Gu Jiegang believed that Qing scholarship was extensive but lacked systematic organization. During his early years at Peking University, he reflected on China’s traditional academic system. In the 1916 preface to *Xuelan*, he criticized Chinese scholarship for lacking scientific systems: “The learning of former scholars was always called classics, history, and belles-lettres. This so-called system is actually the system of classics, not a scientific system. Any scholarship marked by state and family can only be called academic history, not learning itself... The obscurity of learning and the disorder of classics are all caused by family learning. Now that we have scientific methods, future scholarship should directly draw materials from things themselves—how can family learning still be an obstacle?” [4]31-32. After being influenced by modern Western scientific thought and deeply reflecting on Chinese traditional scholarship, Gu recognized that academic research required scientific induction, systematic classification, and theoretical guidance, believing that “understanding that a science must have a system and theory to be comprehensive” [6]38. Only by systematically organizing and arranging Qing scholarship could one better clarify its threads and relationships, providing more effective paths for academic research. The creation of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* represented an important step in Gu Jiegang’s systematic scholarship.

3.2 Guided by the Concept of Academic History

Using scientific methods to sort through Qing scholars’ writings and present the evolution of Qing scholarship, thereby constructing a Chinese academic “system,” became an important component of Gu Jiegang’s academic thought during this period. He proposed that to better absorb and draw on Qing scholarship, one needed to address such academic historical propositions as: (1) What constitutes learning? (2) Why should there be learning? (3) How did today’s learning come to be? (4) What should today’s learning be like? [4]25. Gu’s concept of academic history is reflected throughout *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*. For example, in the entry on Li Shanlan, the collected evaluations include: “This gentleman is a great master of Chinese mathematics who assisted the London Missionary Society missionary Alexander Wylie in translating numerous mathematical works (Rong Hong’s *Records of the Eastward Spread of Western Learning*); although Li Shanlan’s various works are original, they all take Dong Ming as their teacher (Zeng Jihong’s *Preface to the Explanation of Mathematics*)” [3]2136. From this, the inheritance relationship of science within traditional academic development and its absorption and integration of modern Western science are clearly presented.

3.3 Using Bibliography as a Research Method

Bibliography aims to “distinguish academic traditions and examine their origins,” serving the function of constructing academic research systems. Gu Jiegang believed that bibliography mainly serves to clarify academic systems. However, traditional bibliographic works, using the four-part classification of classics, history, masters, and collections as their foundation and taking documents as their cataloging objects, could not truly achieve the construction of academic systems. Gu criticized: “Bibliography is the study of classification. Chinese learning is complex and endless, like untangling chaotic silk: it is comprehensive but not concise, without system or guiding principles” [5]187. He further stated: “The classification of Chinese classics, history, masters, and collections, and bibliographic books that focus only on editions, really do not live up to the meaning of bibliography” [7]259. He proposed achieving the deeper functions of bibliography by solving problems at “two levels—internal and external,” namely “internally clarifying how scholarship should be, externally clarifying the principles of scholarship’s rise and decline” [5]89.

Based on this, in applying bibliography, Gu Jiegang insisted that “one should simultaneously study the general principles of science and specially work on classification from a logical perspective, creating an appropriate classification method for scholarship and books, so that academic books from ancient and modern times, East and West, can all be categorized without conflict or isolation, and then the classification of this historical section will certainly not contain major errors” [8]110. He attempted to innovate bibliographic cataloging methods to achieve the function of sorting through academic history and constructing the Qing academic system. This innovative bibliographic cataloging method required four elements: “first, tracing their school; second, describing their purpose; third, evaluating their strengths and weaknesses; and fourth, examining their editions” [9]37. *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* attempted to pioneer such a path through reforming cataloging methods.

Taking “tracing their school” as an example, Gu Jiegang absorbed the approach to “chronological biography” in Qing scholar Zheng Zhen’s *Records of Zheng’s Studies*, which divides content into four items: “chronology,” “current events,” “career,” and “writings.” He adapted and integrated these to construct a cataloging form that highlights school characteristics: “The first column is name, the second is biography title, the third is position within the school, the fourth is writings, and the fifth is reference bibliography. Four people per page; fifteen pages per volume, with ten pages of columns and five blank pages (reserved for recording systems), plus one page of maps. Several blank pages are added at the beginning of each volume to record the social and historical relationships of the school” [10]75. In *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, Gu Jiegang presented the evolutionary trajectory and inheritance relationships of academic development through the arrangement of scholars’ entries. The scholars listed at the beginning of the book—Gu Yanwu, Huang Zongxi, and Wang Fuzhi—highlight their revolution against Ming scholarship and their founding of Qing

learning. Subsequent entries include Dai Zhen, Duan Yucai, Kong Guangsen, Hui Dong, Yu Xiaoke, Jiang Sheng, Jiang Fan, and others, reflecting the academic theme centered on Han learning since the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods. The most representative schools and figures are the Wan school led by Dai Zhen and including his disciples Duan Yucai and Kong Guangsen, and the Wu school led by Hui Dong and including Yu Xiaoke, Jiang Sheng, and Jiang Fan, which stood as equals and each had their moment of prominence in the academic world of that time. *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* 集中编排了理学代表人物在较为靠后的第十五册中, 包括孙奇逢、魏象枢、汤斌、张履祥、陆陇其、李光地、颜元、李塨、唐甄等。通过这种方式进一步呈现清代理学发展的现状, 以及不同时期理学思想的发展变化, 也体现出理学在整个清代学术中次于汉学的地位。

3.4 Constructing the System of Qing Scholarship

The Qing academic system that Gu Jiegang primarily sought to construct in *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* is an academic historical genealogy centered on Qing scholars and their writings. Its specific content includes: the system of scholars, the system of writings and classics, and the system of academic evolution. It aims to break the genealogical system under school classification, highlight that textual documents are the core foundation for interpreting academic thought, and reveal the developmental 脉络 of academic logic.

Constructing the system of scholars and writings is the core content of Gu Jiegang's establishment of the Qing academic system. As he stated: "In my *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, I take individuals as the main focus, not the classification of books" [5]112. This approach highlights the use of documents and writings to explore scholars' thoughts, 跳出固有的谱系观念, 回归到将文本文献作为考察学者学术思想的基础地位作用。

Building the system of academic evolution and revealing the developmental 脉络 of academic logic is the internal structure of Gu Jiegang's *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*. Gu once stated: "I want to create *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* to: first, clarify its inheritance of Ming scholarship; second, clarify its inheritance of Han scholarship; third, clarify teacher-student origins; fourth, clarify the essence of evidential scholarship; fifth, clarify the initiation of new learning; and sixth, clarify what position Qing scholarship holds within and outside Chinese learning" [5]112.

In defining the time limits of the catalog, *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* begins with the late Ming and early Qing and extends to the late Qing and Republican period, involving key figures in the transformation of academic development and presenting the evolutionary trajectory of academic development. In the later period of Qing academic development, as times evolved, the accumulated drawbacks of Qing scholarship became increasingly serious, while the gradual introduction of Western scientific thought provided soil and impetus for new academic 转向. Gu Jiegang's *Research on the Writings of the Qing*

Dynasty presents the evolutionary relationship between Qing scholarship and new learning by highlighting figures such as Zhang Taiyan, Yan Fu, Liu Shipei, Kang Youwei, and Liang Qichao.

From the perspective of central content, Gu Jiegang proposed that Qing scholarship could be divided into four stages: the first stage is distinguishing the differences between Lu and Wang; the second stage is distinguishing the differences between Han and Song learning; the third stage is distinguishing the differences between New and Old Text classics; and the fourth stage is distinguishing the differences between classics and commentaries [11]117. These four stages constitute the transformation of the main topics of Qing academic discussion across the Shunzhi-Kangxi, Yongzheng-Qianlong-Jiaqing, Daoguang-Xianfeng-Tongzhi, and Guangxu periods, summarizing the evolutionary 脉络 of Qing academic development. This understanding is inseparable from his in-depth study of Qing scholarship in his early years.

4. The Influence of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* on Gu Jiegang's Scholarship

Through the compilation of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, Gu Jiegang conducted systematic investigations of Qing scholars' academic achievements, research methods, and writing conditions, further deepening his thinking and laying a solid foundation for his subsequent scholarly concepts and methods.

4.1 More Rational and Objective Understanding of the Evolution of Chinese Academic Thought

In 1919, Gu Jiegang wrote the essay "Observations on Recent Changes in Chinese Academic Thought," deeply reflecting on transformation issues in academic development and proposing his own understanding of the 脉络 and dynamics of academic transformation. He believed that the evolution of ancient and modern academic thought was a coherent activity, neither accepting the view of "replacing the old with the new" nor agreeing that it was solely stimulated by Western academic thought. Instead, he emphasized the internal dynamics of academic change, viewing it as an evolution "from old to new" that stemmed from "inheriting the past" in traditional scholarship. This understanding benefited from his previous in-depth knowledge of Qing scholarship.

The influence of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* on Gu Jiegang is reflected in his later statement in "How I Wrote *Debates on Ancient History*": "From this kind of collation (*Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*), I gained deep understanding of Qing scholarship... By this time, I clearly understood that learning must seek simplicity from complexity to find the true guiding principles; without many complex materials as a foundation, the simple principles established will ultimately be unreliable" [4]29. The process of writing this book enabled Gu Jiegang to find guiding principles within the complex materials of the Qing dynasty and trace the evolutionary 脉络 of Chinese

academic thought.

4.2 Deepening Understanding of Classical and Historical Studies, Laying the Foundation for the “From Classics to History” Research Path

Classical studies occupied the central position in traditional Chinese scholarship as the orthodox learning. Respecting and trusting the classics was the basic orientation of most scholars throughout history, bringing drawbacks that Gu Jiegang clearly recognized. He criticized: “Chinese learning has always taken rites, music, military affairs, and agriculture as substance, and texts as form; if facts conflict with ancient meanings, it is the facts that are wrong and should be corrected to conform to ancient meanings” [12]2. He broke through the boundaries between classics and history, emphasizing on the basis of accepting that “the Six Classics are all history” that “classics are materials for scholarship,” placing the ontological object of academic research first on documents and texts and breaking the sacred status of “classics.” Gu Jiegang proposed that “we should view learning as learning, not define learning by sages” [12]6, thereby pointing out that to seek truth in learning and explore its origins and causes, one must study history, examining both historical events and texts. This liberated historical studies from their subordinate position to classical studies and placed them in a prominent position, leading to the “from classics to history” research path.

The essence of this “from classics to history” approach is “using truth-seeking criteria to critique classical studies” [13]71. In Gu Jiegang’s early academic thought, he attached great importance to bibliography and elevated it from a new perspective, believing that scholarship required the concept of academic history. Based on this, he combined bibliography with academic history, attempting to construct an academic system through *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*. Although he failed to present a panoramic view of the entire development of Qing academic thought, the organization of Qing scholarship deepened his understanding of Qing scholars’ teacher-student relationships, academic propositions, and academic status.

4.3 Absorption of Qing Evidential Scholarship and Textual Criticism Methods and Achievements

Evidential scholarship and textual criticism are closely related. Qing scholars’ evidential work, whether on classical or historical documents, was based on textual criticism. The difference lies in Qing scholars’ different attitudes toward classics and history. In classical documents, Qing scholars’ basic work was to clarify later commentaries and subcommentaries, elucidate the original meaning of the classics from the perspective of exegesis, correct variant texts and divergent interpretations in the transmission process, and restore the original appearance of the classics. For historical documents, however, variant texts, divergent interpretations, and even the records in original historical texts were all subject to textual criticism. Although textual criticism of classical documents

had specialized discussions since Yao Jiheng in the early Qing, his criticism and textual criticism of classical originals did not cause much impact. Gu Jiegang's ancient history research treated classical documents (including original classics), historical documents, and collected folk legends and ballads as historical materials, primarily using methods of textual criticism and evidential scholarship. Because he dared to doubt, his research often broke new ground that predecessors had not explored. For example, in his essay "Examining the Transformation of Social Marriage Systems Through Marriage Forms Such as 'Successional Marriage' and 'Levirate'," Gu Jiegang keenly noticed relevant records of "successional marriage" in *Zuo's Commentary*. Whether in the original text, Kong Yingda's subcommentary, or later interpretations, significant loopholes existed. By examining oracle bone inscriptions, bronze inscriptions, and other transmitted documents, he corrected previous errors and opened new horizons for research on pre-Qin marriage systems. It can be said that Gu Jiegang's achievements in ancient history research are largely attributable to his implementation of textual criticism ideas and application of evidential scholarship methods.

In 1920, Gu Jiegang sent his manuscript of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* to Hu Shi for review. Hu Shi greatly praised the work, believing it had "grasped the central ideas of three hundred years of academic research" [14]152. Gu Jiegang's early brilliance in the academic forest and his extraordinary achievements in ancient history research, historical geography, folklore studies, and other fields were indeed inseparable from his understanding and inheritance of Qing scholarship.

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A Study About the Academic System of Qing Dynasty Constructed by Gu Jiegang in His Book *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*

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Abstract: [Purpose/significance] *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty* is a bibliographic monograph about the learning of Qing Dynasty. This book plays an important role in exploring Gu Jiegang's scholarly methods and thought when he was young. [Method/process] We can come to know his thoughts and scholarly methods on constructing the Qing Dynasty's academic system by analyzing the content characteristics and style of the book and the other works which were written in his young time. [Result/conclusion] Gu Jiegang deepened his understanding about the scholarly methods and purposes of the scholars in Qing Dynasty through the compilation of *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*, the book, which lays an important foundation for his "from philosophy to history" scholarly methods, makes pioneering contributions on the ancient history research.

Keywords: Gu Jiegang; *Research on the Writings of the Qing Dynasty*; Qing learning thoughts; bibliography; academic system

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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