"RU-MO" AND "KONG-MO" IN LATE IMPERIAL CONFUCIAN CONTROVERSY

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Introduction

The compound phrases "Ru-Mo" 儒墨 and "Kong-Mo" 孔墨 that appear in pre-Han and Han dynasty Chinese texts are often rendered as "Confucianism and Mohism" and "Kongzi and Mozi," respectively.[1] The coinage of the phrases is believed to reflect the historical fact that Confucianism and Mohism were the two most popular schools of thought in the pre-imperial era prior to the rise of the Qin 秦 dynasty in 221 BCE. This is suggested by the "Xian xue" 顯學 (Prominent Teaching) chapter of the *Han Feizi* 韓非子 (Master Han Fei), a collection of writings attributed to Han Fei 韓非 (ca. 280–233 BCE), which states that "Ru-Mo" were prominent at the time. Not only pre-Qin texts but several Han 漢 (206 BCE–220 CE) texts also contain discourses that use the phrase "Ru-Mo" or mention Kongzi 孔子 and Mozi 墨子 in conjunction. This phenomenon attracted the attention of scholars of Mohism in the modern era, who believed that early "Ru-Mo" discourses attest to the equal popularity of Confucianism and Mohism in the pre-Qin or the classical period, period. Some even cast doubt on the dominant theory that Mohism had waned during the Han dynasty, arguing that the frequent occurrence of "Ru-Mo" in Han texts suggests otherwise.[2]

Though the relevance of early "Ru-Mo" discourses to the history of Mohism has been examined in scholarship, their relevance to the history of Confucianism and classicism has not. This paper attempts to fill that gap, by demonstrating the relevance of early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses to Confucian studies, especially the late Qing Confucian debates about the correct transmission of the classics. Specifically, it illustrates that the frequent occurrence of "Ru-Mo" (and reference to Mozi alongside Kongzi) in early

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1   This is clear from scholars' translations of early *ru-mo* discourses. See, for example, Graham 2003: 178; Liu et al. 2010: 99.

2   Others argue instead that the occurrence of the compound "Ru-Mo" in Han texts does not indicate the continued prominence of Mohism but merely a continued lexical habit. For related discussions, see Lee 2014, which examines the historical significance of the coinage and usage of "Ru-Mo" in early China.

texts was employed by late Qing Confucian scholars to defend certain views regarding the New Text/Old Text controversy (*jinguwen zhi zheng* 今古文之爭).

The paper has four sections. Section 1 outlines the evolution of the Confucian attitude toward the phrase "Ru-Mo" and the pairing of Kongzi and Mozi. Section 2 introduces the New Text versus Old Text controversy in the late Qing as the backdrop against which Confucian scholars, such as Yu Yue 俞樾 (1821–1907), Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927), and Sun Yirang 孫詒讓 (1848–1908), turned their gaze toward early "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" narratives.[3] Section 3 explains how Kang Youwei used the book *Mozi* 墨子 (Master Mo) and early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses as arguments to support his New Text theory. Section 4 illustrates how Sun Yirang employed the same set of texts and discourses to instead defend Old Text scholarship against Kang Youwei's theory.

1   Confucians' Attitude Toward the "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" Coupling

Scholarly attention has been paid to early discourses that employ the compound "Ru-Mo" or that put Kongzi and Mozi on equal footing. However, these discourses have rarely treated as an independent research topic. Most academic discussions about the coupling of "Ru" and "Mo" focus on the history of Mohism, and are to a large extent restricted to the question of whether Mohism was still present or somewhat influential in early imperial China.[4] These discussions often begin by referring to Han Fei's claim of the prominence of "Ru-Mo" or by pointing out that "Ru" and "Mo" (or Kongzi and Mozi) were often juxtaposed by early authors.[5] Studies often invoke the "Ru-Mo" pairing in order to highlight the peculiarity of the sudden decline of Mohism during the Han dynasty, or else to look for other clues about its status during that period.[6]

This close association between the "Ru-Mo" (Kongzi and Mozi) coupling and the decline of Mohism in the Han seems to have first appeared in scholarship during the Qing dynasty (1644–1912). Prior to the Qing, scholars were less interested in "Ru-Mo" or

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3   The paper will focus almost exclusively on Kang Youwei and Sun Yirang, not because other Confucian scholars of the time paid no attention to early "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" couplings or regarded them as irrelevant, but because it is often difficult to determine whether a scholar belongs to either the New Text or Old Text camp. Kang and Sun are, however, unambiguous cases. For more details on this debate, see Wong 2011.

4   See, for example, R. Li 2006; Nylan 2009; Xue 2006: 215–216; Yang 1992: 308–310; Y. Zhang 2001: 301–306; Zheng 2006: 176–216.

5   For example, Luo 1990: 148; Yang 1992: 1.

6   For example, R. Li 2006; Nylan 2009; Xue 2006: 215–216; Yang 1992: 308–310; Y. Zhang 2001: 301–306; Zheng 2006: 176–216.

"Kong-Mo" couplings, being instead rather more concerned with the pairing of Yang Zhu 楊朱 and Mozi and the attendant "Yang-Mo" 楊墨 discourses. Relatively little attention was paid to the combination of Kongzi and Mozi. This does not in itself confirm that scholars were more interested in the relationship between the philosophies of Yang Zhu and Mozi than between those of Kongzi and Mozi. Rather, as Carine Defoort points out, the phrase "Yang-Mo," coined by Mengzi 孟子 (371–289 BCE), had become by then a useful rhetorical trope employed since the days of the Han, and Confucian scholars in the imperial period to defend Confucianism against heresies or ideological rivals, rather than as a specific reference to the historical figures or their thought.[7] These scholars found the coupling of Yang Zhu and Mozi rhetorically useful since by employing it they could appropriate the sentiment and authority of the *Mengzi* to express their commitment to Kongzi's doctrines. The "Ru-Mo" compound, or the grouping of Kongzi and Mozi, was, by contrast, not perceived as relevant or rhetorically useful, and was thus largely ignored.

Despite this general negligence, there were some scholars prior the Qing that did express an interest in the "Ru-Mo" discourses. The best-known example is Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), who lived during the Tang dynasty (618–907) and wrote an essay entitled "Du Mozi" 讀墨子 (On Reading Mozi).[8] "Du Mozi" acknowledges the contribution of Mozi's doctrines as complementary to Kongzi's. It states that whereas Confucians criticize Mozi's teachings of "conforming upward," "universal care," "elevating the worthy," and "clarifying ghosts," the teachings in fact resemble Kongzi's own ideals. Moreover, Confucianism and Mohism share many viewpoints: Both admire the ancient sage rulers Yao 堯 and Shun 舜, condemn the ancient tyrants Jie 桀 and Zhou 紂, and promote the political ideal of bringing order to the world through moral cultivation. Han Yu therefore suggests that Confucianism and Mohism should appreciate each other and that the philosophies of Kongzi and Mozi can complete each other – and they are only comprehensive when taken together. According to Han Yu, this is why Kongzi and Mozi could be put on equal footing. It is clear that Han Yu does not use the pairing of Kongzi and Mozi as a rhetorical device: He is explicitly discussing Kongzi and Mozi and their thought. More importantly, even though a Confucian scholar he does not treat "Kong-Mo" as a perverse pairing. He argues instead that this is a reasonable pairing since Kongzi and Mozi have many ideas in common. For example, Han Yu considers Kongzi's values of benevolence and comprehensive care as essentially the same as Mozi's norm of inclusive care. Thus he finds the quarrels between Confucianism and Mohism unnecessary, and considers them the result of later misinterpretations of the thought of Kongzi and Mozi.

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7   Defoort 2015.

8   For a useful overview see Zheng 2002: 1–10. For an English translation of Han's essay see Johnston 2009: lxxvii–lxxviii.

Han Yu's opinion that Kongzi's and Mozi's teachings are mutually complementary was both unique and daring in the imperial period, particularly after the rise of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. With the rise of Neo-Confucianism came the raised status of Mengzi. Mengzi's harsh criticism of Yang Zhu and Mozi as antithetical and pernicious to Kongzi's teachings was widely accepted by Song and Ming scholars. These scholars utilized "Yang-Mo" discourses to express their commitment to propagating Kongzi's teachings against the popular "heresies" of their time; namely, Buddhism and Daoism. Under the dominance of the Mencian "Yang-Mo" construction, early narratives about "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" were seldom mentioned or discussed. Though Han Yu was respected as a pioneer of Neo-Confucianism, some Confucian scholars felt uneasy with his essay. Their concern was not with the intellectual history of Kongzi's or Mozi's time but with Han Yu's repudiation of Mengzi's criticism of Mozi. In order to argue that Han Yu was wrong in pairing Mozi with Kongzi, they tried to reinforce Mengzi's view that Mozi was perverse. This opinion was popular during the Song (960–1279) and well into the Ming (1368–1644).[9]

This situation changed significantly after the late Ming owing to the publication and wide circulation of the book *Mozi*.[10] As more scholars gained access to the *Mozi*, they began to reflect upon the Mencian criticism and adjust their views about Mohism. A few Ming dynasty scholars became sympathetic to Mohism and Han Yu's judgment of the resemblance between Kongzi's and Mozi's doctrines. In 1553, for example, Lu Wen 陸穩 (fl. ca. 1550s) wrote the following preface to Tang Yaochen's 唐堯臣 (fl. ca. 1530s–1560s) edition of *Mozi*:

> When I read Jia [Yi]'s "Guo Qin lun" [On the Faults of Qin] seeing the names of Kong and Mo are referred to in conjunction, I felt doubtful about it. Because I thought Mozi was not of the kind of the sage. It is just Jia's fault. Until I saw Han Changli's [Han Yu] essay of "Reading Mo[zi]," which states that his [Mozi's] way and the sage's [Kongzi's] need each other in practices, I felt doubtful about it too. Changli adhered to Mr. Meng's learning, and Mr. Meng rejected Mo severely, but Changli praised and approved of [Mozi] like this. Why are his words so inconsistent? Or is it that Mo's way is approvable, and does not contradict with the sage's? I did not dare to consider Mo right, nor did I dare to consider Changli wrong. Pitifully, I did not get to see Mr. Mo's book to solve the suspicion in my mind, so I could only keep an opinion of accepting both. In the previous year, when I was staying in the capital, I luckily found a court version [of the Mozi] in a friend's place. Having read it, I realized that Mo's way indeed differs from self-serving persons. And his words, no less than Kongzi's, could inspire and stimulate people in the

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9   Wu 2012.
10   For more details, see Durrant 1977.

world, making them revere and believe in him. His being referred to in conjunction with Kong is indeed appropriate.[11]

Lu Wen mentions not only Han Yu's writing, but also an essay by the Han dynasty scholar Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–168 BCE). In contrast to earlier scholars, Lu Wen considers it appropriate to couple Mozi with Kongzi, although he does show some hesitation. Echoing Han Yu's opinion, he, after reading *Mozi*, thinks that Mozi's theory is by no means immoral and is as appealing as Kongzi's theory.

Concomitant with the increasingly wide circulation of Mohist texts was the emergence of objective and historical assessments of early authors who grouped together Kongzi and Mozi. For example, one late Ming scholar, Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551–1602), reckoned that there is more to the "Kong-Mo" coupling than whether Han Yu is "wrong" in putting Kongzi and Mozi on an equal footing. As Hu Yinglin correctly points out, from a historical point of view, Han Yu is neither the first nor the only scholar in history to have done this. Therefore, rather than considering how wrong Han Yu is, a better question to address is why many early authors paired Mozi with Kongzi. Hu Yinglin suggests that by using provocative words and working ascetically in an attempt to compete with Confucianism, Mozi became widely known and it is for that reason that his name was often combined with Kongzi's during the late Zhou period.[12] While Hu Yinglin provides a rather objective historical remark on early couplings of Kongzi and Mozi, he does not go so far as to acknowledge that Mozi's thought is as convincing as Kongzi's. In this regard, he does not agree with Han Yu's assessment that Mohism can complete Confucianism.

In spite of Lu Wen's and Hu Yinglin's divergent evaluations of Mozi, both exhibit a tendency to think beyond intellectual partisanship. They both think that it is a fact that the early Chinese had their reasons for putting Mozi and Kongzi on an equal footing. Lu Wen conjectures that Mozi and Kongzi were coupled because both had many followers in their day. Hu Yinglin, although disapproving of Mozi's theory, concedes that Mozi was equally famous and influential during the late Zhou period. Such a historically orientated perspective opened the door for scholars in the Qing to explore the significance of the early pairing of Kongzi and Mozi beyond the philosophical disputes between Confucianism and Mohism. This further exploration eventually arrived at a negative assessment of Mengzi's combining of Yang Zhu and Mozi. A notable example is Wang Zhong 汪中 (1745–1794). He reassessed the "Yang-Mo," "Kong-Mo," and "Ru-Mo" couplings, not to judge which better suited the Confucian ideological standard, but to understand which combination best cohered with history as it was lived.

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11   G. Li 2004: 163. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Chinese sources are my own.
12   Y. Hu 1958: 351.

> Speaking from the present-day perspective, Kongzi's current esteem is unprecedented in history. Speaking from the perspective of those days, Kongzi was a counsellor in Lu and Mozi was a counsellor in Song. They were equal in rank and close in age. [...] Among the nine streams of thought, only Ru was qualified to compete with it [Mo], as for other masters, they were no match for it. Reading throughout the texts from the Zhou and Han, we see more than one hundred fragments putting together Kong and Mo, and Ru and Mo. The text of Yang Zhu only values unrestrained and relaxed life; and [Yang Zhu's teaching] was not adhered at the time. Coupling [Yang] with Mo is certainly a misplacing.[13]

Wang Zhong argues that the coupling of Mozi and Kongzi is much more reasonable than Mengzi's grouping of Mozi and Yang Zhu, because Mozi's and Kongzi's teachings were equally popular, while Yang Zhu's teaching enjoyed little attention at the time. Additionally, Mozi and Kongzi were equal in terms of their political status and similar in age. Therefore, according to Wang Zhong, it is appropriate to couple Mozi with Kongzi, whereas the coupling of Mozi and Yang Zhu (an allusion to Mengzi's statement) fails to reflect historical reality and therefore unreasonable.

From Lu Wen and Hu Yinglin in the Ming to Wang Zhong in the early Qing, there was an increasing tendency to view the early usage of "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" as reflecting the late Zhou intellectual climate, rather than as revealing the early authors' intellectual partisanship or ideological propensity. Wang Zhong's opinion may have nevertheless been seen as deviant by some of his contemporaries.[14] However, his approach – viewing the grouping of Kongzi and Mozi as an indication of the prominence of Mozi and Mohism in early China – influenced subsequent Qing Confucian scholars, for whom the questions of whether this grouping was antithetical to Mengzi's standpoint and whether Han Yu is a "sober" Confucian in appreciating Mozi's teachings become moot. They were more interested in the potential relevance of early "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" discourses to contemporary Confucian debates.

2   The New Text/Old Text Controversy and the Evolved Interest in "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo"

The ideological neutralization of the early combination of Kongzi and Mozi far from rendered it irrelevant to Confucian studies. On the contrary, the issue became methodologically crucial during late Qing Confucian debates, particularly to the New Text versus Old Text controversy.

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13   Sun, *Mozi jiangu*, 670.
14   Weng 2002: 493.

As discussed in the previous section, by the late Qing discussions on "Ru-Mo"/"Kong-Mo" were mostly concerned with the debate over whether it is appropriate to couple Mozi with Kongzi, a debate initiated by Han Yu and then fueled by Neo-Confucian antagonism toward Mozi's thought. With the gradual decline of Neo-Confucianism, Han Yu's view becomes less provocative. There emerged a tendency to accept as a simple fact that early Chinese authors often compared and equated Kongzi with Mozi (or Confucianism and Mohism). It was thus considered more worthwhile to address the question of what this fact might suggest than the question of how deviant it is to put the two on an equal footing. This new question may on the face of it appear to be much more ideologically neutral, but the answers late Qing scholars gave were frequently not: rather, they were designed to defend certain approaches to studying the Confucian classics and interpreting Confucianism. Two remarkable examples are Kang Youwei and Sun Yirang. The former was the representative scholar of New Text scholarship, the latter of Old Text scholarship.

Kang Youwei was perhaps the first scholar to write a lengthy essay specifically on early "Ru-Mo" discourses.[15] More importantly, this essay is a chapter of the *Kongzi gaizhi kao* 孔子改制考 (An Examination of Kongzi's Institutional Reform), a book Kang Youwei composed to defend his New Text theory. Interestingly, Sun Yirang (Kang Youwei's major rival in the controversy) uses "Kong-Mo" to defend Old Text theory and counter Kang's position. To explain why the leading scholars from both the New Text and Old Text camps find early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses relevant, it will be useful to outline the context and characteristics of the controversy.

The typical presentation of the New Test/Old Text controversy begins with its re-emergence in the late Qing period, described so since the seed of this controversy is claimed to have been sown during the Han dynasty. According to the widespread portrayal of Han classicism, New Text scholarship (New Text versions of the classics and their exegeses) was predominant in the Former Han (202 BCE–9 CE) and Old Text scholarship eventually triumphed during or after the Later Han (25–220 CE).[16] This does not mean that the labels "New" and "Old" in their strict sense, if there is any, had already gained currency in the Former Han.[17] By the end of the Former Han, neither the various versions of the *Five*

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15   As explained in footnote 3, the focus here is on Kang Youwei and Sun Yirang, and the New Text/Old Text controversy of the late Qing in which they played a prominent part. However, the "Ru-Mo" coupling had an impact on other thinkers in both the late Qing and republican (1912–1949) periods. For related discussions, see Zheng 2002, 2006.

16   On the Han dynasty New Text vs. Old Text controversy see Makeham 1994: 113–125; Pi 1981: 69–100; Qian 2001a, 2001b.

17   On the meaning of "New" and "Old" see Nylan 1994.

Classics 五經 (*wu jing*) nor their scholars and exegeses were deemed to belong to the New Text camp. The term "New" in contradistinction to "Old" appeared primarily because of Liu Xin's 劉歆 (ca. 50 BCE–23 CE) attempted to establish Old Text versions in the imperial academy.[18] Liu Xin and his followers promoted the Old Text versions as reliable and complete versions of the *Five Classics*, and disparaged the New Text versions as damaged leftovers from the biblioclasm of the Qin dynasty (221–207 BC).[19] According to the New Text scholars of the time, however, the Old Text versions were questionable because their lineages of transmission were neither traceable nor verifiable.[20]

The New Text and the Old Text traditions seem to differ in many regards.[21] A major difference lies in the use of "old" characters (or loan characters reflecting "old" pronunciations) in Old Text versions.[22] The two traditions also make different assumptions regarding the authorship and nature of the *Five Classics*: while New Text proponents believe that the classics embody Kongzi's ideas, their Old Text counterparts believe that Kongzi is a transmitter of the classics, which are historical records of the Zhou political system laid out by Zhou Gong 周公 (the Duke of Zhou). These differences lead to different interpretative approaches. New Text classicists are inclined to decode the subtle messages conveyed by Kongzi via the classics (such as the hidden message in the narratives about miraculous events).[23] Old Text scholars, on the other hand, devote more energy to examining such details as ancient rites, administrative practices, and linguistic issues, studies that are often categorized under the label of "lesser learning" (*xiaoxue* 小學) or "evidential study" (*kaoju* 考據). The dispute between the two camps was obscured by the fusion of the two traditions in the Later Han period and the subsequent demise of New Text scholarship.[24] The dispute remained in relative obscurity until New Text classicism re-emerged in the Qing period, when Han Learning (Hanxue 漢學), a scholarship that is

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18   On this point see Pi 1981: 88; Qian 2001b: 232.

19   According to these Old Text classicists, the Old Texts survived intact from the Qin emperor's biblioclasm because the texts were secretly hidden and preserved by local hands.

20   See Ng and Wang 2005: 250ff.; Nylan 1994.

21   On the differences between the two traditions see Liao 1935 [1886]; Pi 1981: 87–100; Zhou 1996: 1–14.

22   Nylan 1994 provides a detailed discussion and related references on this topic.

23   Because of this tendency, the New Text tradition is more often associated with early apocryphal scriptures. On the relation of apocryphal scriptures to the New and Old traditions see Van Ess 1999; Zhou 1996: 40–63.

24   Some scholars do not consider Zheng Xuan to be an Old Text classicist in the strict sense. They argue that Zheng Xuan's role in the demise of the New Text tradition obscures or confuses the boundaries between Old and New Text scholarship. See Pi 1981: 141–169; Zhou 1996: 15–17.

reminiscent of Old Text scholarship in its *xiaoxue* or *kaoju* approach to the classics, be-
came popular.[25] Han Learning is believed to have resulted from late Ming and early Qing
scholars' dislike for Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. Appalled by what they saw as Neo-
Confucians' voided philosophizing about the moral import of the classics (the *Four Books*
in particular) without solid philological evidence, Han Learning scholars advocated a
return to the original texts of the *Five Classics* with the *kaoju* approach (including epigra-
phy, phonology, archaeology, forgery detection, etc.)[26] and promoted Later Han exegeses
as paradigms.[27] The transition to Han Learning was thus marked by a shift in emphasis
from philosophical interpretation to the philological, historical, and linguistic analysis of
the classics.[28] Since its approach is characterized by close analysis of textual evidence, Han
Learning gradually became synonymous with the term "*kaoju*" 考據 (evidential studies).[29]

It is against this backdrop that the New Text versus Old Text controversy re-
emerged in the late Qing.[30] As Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929) pointed out, the rev-
erence of Han Learning scholars for Later Han studies mirrors a tendency to hold more
remote antiquity in higher regard and question less remote antiquity.[31] This tendency

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25   On this point see Fogel and Zarrow 1997: 64; Ng and Wang 2005: 251; Zarrow 2006: 26.

26   On the shift from the *Four Books* to the *Five Classics* see Elman 2011.

27   Zheng Xuan is widely seen as a representative of Han Learning. For example, Zhu Ciqi 朱次
     琦 said that: "the scholarship of Han was gathered together by Zheng Kangcheng; the schol-
     arship of Song was gathered together by Zhu Xi." See Jian 1978: 48.

28   As to the sociopolitical dimensions of the rise of Han learning see Elman 2020.

29   On this point see Makeham 2003: 278.

30   Qing dynasty Han Learning echoed the Old Text tradition in terms of methodology – for
     example, it held Later Han Old Text studies in high regard and embraced the *kaoju* approach
     to the *Five Classics*.

31   Yan Ruoqu's 閻若璩 (1636–1704) *Shangshu guwen shuzheng* 尚書古文疏證 (Exegetical
     and Evidential Study on the Old Text of the Book of Document) is regarded as a typical ex-
     ample. Yan Ruoqu's work has been deemed a model of Han Learning because it undermines
     Song Learning by collecting substantial evidence against the authenticity of the received
     Guwen Shangshu 古文尚書 (now known as the "Spurious Old Text of Book of Documents"
     偽古文尚書). It argues that the received Old Text *Shangshu* is not the Old Text *Shangshu*
     reportedly discovered in the Han period but a forgery made by the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–
     420 CE) scholar Mei Ze 梅賾 (fl. fourth century CE). The significance of Yan Ruoqu's work
     is that it proved Song Learning to be groundless. If the received Old *Shangshu* is spurious,
     Song Learning is questionable, since it elevated a quote from the "Da Yu mo" 大禹謨 (Coun-
     sels of Yu the Great), a chapter of the *Spurious Shangshu*, as the essence of the Confucian or-
     thodoxy transmitted by sages through the centuries. Once the "Da Yu mo" had been proven
     false, the core doctrine of Song Learning could no longer be attributed to the ancient sages.
     While Yan Ruoqu's *Shangshu guwen shuzheng* assumed that there was indeed an authentic

makes it inevitable that Qing classicists would eventually realize that the tradition adhered to by the majority of Han Learning scholars was not "ancient" enough, as "Han Learning" seems to have been largely confined to the Later Han exegeses of Old Texts such as the *Maoshi* 毛詩 (Mao Odes) and the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Zhou Rites).[32] If respect for antiquity is paramount, New Text scholarship, allegedly dominant in the Former Han period, could claim superiority over the Old Text tradition, which is said to have been dominant in the Later Han period. Accordingly, some Qing classicists turned their gaze to New Text exegeses and began to question Old Text ones.[33] The scattered attempts to challenge Old Text exegeses culminated in an extensive reflection on the Han dynasty New Text versus Old Text controversy[34] and finally led to a general suspicion of the authority of Old Text exegeses and the authenticity of the Old Text classics in general. It is in this climate that Kang Youwei published his controversial works attacking the Old Text tradition and promoting his New Text theory of Confucianism.

Kang Youwei's New Text theory is discussed in great detail in the *Xinxue weijing kao* 新學偽經考 (An Examination of the Forged Classics of Xin Dynasty Learning) and defended in the *Kongzi gaizhi kao*.[35] The *Xinxue weijing kao* marks the revival of the New Text/Old Text controversy. Its major thesis is that all the Old Texts were forged by Liu Xin to provide theoretical support for the legitimacy and political system of Wang Mang's 王莽 (45 BCE–23 CE) Xin dynasty (9–23 CE), an ephemeral regime between the Former and Later Han.[36] This thesis entails that the so-called Han Learning predominant in the Qing period is not "Han" Learning but "Xin" Learning (Xin Dynasty Learning); that

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Old Text discovered by *Shangshu* in the Han period, it encouraged suspicion over the authenticity of Old Text versions and therefore served as a catalyst for bringing about the re-emergence of New Text classicism. For an overview of Yan Ruoqu's *Shangshu* study see Qian 1997 [1937]: 243–250; Q. Liu 1989: 344–352. For a detailed discussion on the spurious Old Text *Shangshu* see Chen 1985: 114–135; Q. Liu 1989: 156–194.

32   See Liang 2000: 70–77. A similar point is made in Zhou 1996: 333.

33   An example is Wei 2004: 1–5.

34   Wong 2011 provides an insightful discussion on these attempts.

35   While the *Xinxue weijing kao* is his representative work, some of Kang Youwei's theses are more concisely and explicitly summarized in other writings. For this reason, I sometimes quote them instead of the *Xinxue weijing kao*.

36   Kang Youwei repeats this thesis in several of his works, e.g., Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 1: 349, 368. It should, however, be noted that in his earlier works he still believes in the authenticity of old scripts and Old Texts, e.g., ibid., 35–39. Some argue that Kang changed his views after reading Liao Ping's work and that he plagiarized Liao Ping's ideas; see Qian 1997 [1937]: 713–723. Qian Mu not only accuses Kang Youwei of plagiarism but also argues against his theory; see Qian 2001a.

is, a scholarship built on Liu Xin's forgeries. According to Kang Youwei, "Whatever was called and deemed as 'Han Learning' by later generations are all Jia's, Ma's, Xu's and Zheng's learning; they are 'Xin Learning' instead of 'Han Learning'." [37] Contrary to their admiration for the Later Han classicists, Kang disparages the Han Learning scholars as being foolishly deceived by texts fabricated by Liu Xin: consciously or not, they have become accomplices of Liu Xin's large-scale forgery project by helping spread the spurious texts, mixing the different versions of the classics, and jeopardizing the transmission of the true sage's teaching.[38] Kang Youwei thus laments that the paramount principles conveyed by Kongzi's subtle statements (*wei yan da yi* 微言大義) in the authentic classics have been extinguished by Liu Xin's forgeries and succeeding imprudent classicists. For him, the true essence of the sage's teachings is not lodged in the Old Texts but in the New Texts and this sage, according to Kang Youwei, is Kongzi rather than Zhou Gong. In brief, according to Kang Youwei's theory, Kongzi is the chief *composer* (not just a compiler, redactor, or transmitter) of the authentic classics.[39] Kang Youwei further develops his theory of Kongzi as the author of the *Five Classics* in the *Kongzi gaizhi kao*,[40] which argues that Kongzi was a reformist and composed the classics to lay out his political ideal and advocate it in the name of antiquity – it is this book that contains a lengthy essay on early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses.

Kang Youwei's portrayal of a reformist Kongzi conveys a profound political message. While the *Xinxue weijing kao* and *Kongzi gaizhi kao* are presented as studies on Confucian classics, their implications go beyond classicism. As the leader of the Wuxu Reform (*wuxu bianfa* 戊戌變法), Kang Youwei attempts to rely on "a reformist Kongzi" to legitimize his reformation campaign.[41] According to his New Text theory, the classics are not historical records of the Zhou dynasty ritual and institutional systems; rather, they reflect Kongzi's political ideals and reformation plans. That the New Text tradition was closely associated with pro-reformation standpoints placed its scholarly rivals – Old Text scholars – in an embarrassing position. If the Old Text scholars wanted to defend themselves against the harsh criticisms of Kang Youwei and other New Text scholars, they would

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37 Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 1: 356.

38 Ibid., 349.

39 It should be noted, however, that Kang Youwei's views about how and which of the classics are composed, amended, or abridged by Kongzi vary at different points in time.

40 For an opinion on when this book was first published see the editor's note to *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 3.

41 As Zarrow indicates, "[t]he substantive issue at stake was the image of Confucius." See Zarrow 2006: 26. On Kang Youwei's resort to the New Text tradition to justify his reformation proposal see Fairbank and Liu 1980: 283–291; Levenson 1964: 79–85; Zhu 1995: 235–250.

have to point out the mistakes and flaws in New Text theory. By doing so, however, they might jeopardize the reformation campaign, since New Text theory was being utilized as the justification for political reformation. Yet staying silent in the face of such criticisms might mean jeopardizing their own professional careers. As a result, Old Text scholars tended to tread carefully in expressing their opinions and responding to the New Text criticisms. What is particularly noteworthy is how Old Text scholars found Mohism or early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses useful in formulating *indirect* responses to New Text theory. In the following sections, I illustrate how the New Text and Old Text leading scholars, Kang Youwei and Sun Yirang, deployed the *Mozi* and the early relationship between Mohism and Confucianism to support their theses.

3   "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo"
as Evidence for Kang Youwei's New Text Theory

While Kang Youwei's theory mainly concerns the nature of the classics and the historical Kongzi, his arguments, as I have argued and illustrated elsewhere, rely heavily on the *Mozi* and early couplings of "Ru" and "Mo" (or "Kongzi" and "Mozi").[42] Mohism plays a crucial role in Kang Youwei's arguments because the *Mozi* contains many quotes from the *Shangshu* 尚書 (Book of Documents) and Mozi is often juxtaposed with Kongzi.

   Kang Youwei considers the *Shangshu* quotes as important evidence since they do not correspond to any received versions of the *Shangshu* but do cohere with Mozi's thought. This, Kang argues, suggests that the *Shangshu* recorded in the *Mozi* is a version composed to promote Mozi's thought; that is, Mozi may have been the author of the *Mozi Shangshu*. Moreover, the differences between the *Mozi Shangshu* and other versions are often about Mozi's political visions, so it is possible that Mozi composed his own version of the *Shangshu* to reform the present in the name of antiquity.

   The question then arises as to why Kang Youwei is eager to "prove" that Mozi is a reformist who composed independent versions of classics in order to defend his political reformation by appealing to the authority of ancient sages. The answer lies in Kang Youwei's argument strategy. The *Kongzi gaizhi kao* states that the key to reconstructing the picture of historical Kongzi lies in the early masters:

> Due to the suspension of the New Text scholarship and the popularity of the Old Text scholarship, people have been bewitched and thus incredulous at the theory that Kongzi intended an institutional reform. Now, let us put Kongzi aside and turn to examine the masters. Is there any master who did not intend to reform the existing institution? […] I shall unveil the masters' theories regarding institutional reform. Having seen clearly that

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42   Lee 2020.

the masters' [intention of] reforming institutions, [how could we imagine that] a great sage like Kongzi with reform proposals would bear to watch the chaotic era, and not try to amend and upgrade [the institutions], to rectify [the chaotic situation] and restore the order?[43]

To argue that Kongzi endeavored to reform his contemporary political system in the name of antiquity, Kang thus turns to Mozi because he believes that the early masters' frequent combining of the names of "Ru" and "Mo" reflected their recognition of the obvious commonalities between Kongzi and Mozi and between Confucianism and Mohism.

> Before the birth of Kongzi, the institutions, standards, policies, and doctrines/religions were all unfixed. At that time, every master had the mind to reform the institutions. [...] They all attempted to establish their own religions/doctrines, and constantly highlighted their authority by adducing antiquity. Kongzi, accordingly, in his eagerness attempted to change the institutions. For this reason, the masters' accounts all refer to and put "Ru" and "Mo" on a par. The one who competed with Kongzi with a different religion/doctrine was Mozi. Among the religions/doctrines of the masters, Lao's and Mo's were the most senior. [...] Among Kongzi's most formidable rivals, no one could compete with Mozi. As to Laozi, he was no match [for Kongzi and Mozi].[44]

For this reason, Kang Youwei's *Kongzi gaizhi kao* repeatedly quotes early discourses about "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" (it often invokes the two expressions interchangeably) as evidence that Kongzi was a religious leader, institutional reformer, and a composer of the classics, who attempted to promote his ideal in the name of antiquity.

Interestingly, despite Kang Youwei's intention to celebrate Kongzi, he frequently quotes Han Fei's criticism of Kongzi as the most compelling evidence:

> The eminent learning of our generation is *ru-mo*. The ultimate model of *ru* is Kong Qiu. The ultimate model of *mo* is Mo Di. [...] Kongzi and Mozi both advocate the way of Yao and Shun, but what they approved and disapprove of are different and they all claim themselves to be true [adherents of the way of] Yao and Shun. Since Yao and Shun could not return to life, who is to decide whether those *ru-mo* are faithful [to the way of Yao and Shun]? [...] Without verifying something yet taking it as certain is foolish; taking something that cannot be certain as a basis is fraudulent. Thus, those who openly take as a basis [the ways of] previous kings and are certain of [the way of] Yao and Shun are either foolish or fraudulent.[45]

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43   Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 3: 21.
44   Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 2: 110.
45   Cited in X. Wang 2003: 456–457.

While these statements are severe criticisms of Confucianism and Mohism, Kang Youwei repeatedly cites them to argue that Kongzi is similar to Mozi in that he promotes his values using the names of ancient sage rulers. For example:

> "Kongzi and Mozi both advocated the way of Yao and Shun, but what they approved and disapproved were different and they all claimed themselves of being true [adherents of the way of] Yao and Shun. Since Yao and Shun could not return to life, who is to decide whether those *ru-mo* are faithful [to the way of Yao and Shun]?" [...] [From the *Han Feizi* we] can see that the trend of adducing the antiquity of former kings was still observable in Han Fei's time.[46]

> Han Fei said: "Since Yao and Shun cannot return to life, who is to decide whether those *ru-mo* are faithful [to the way of Yao and Shun]?" It is clear that the descriptions about previous rulers' practices and deeds were attributed by Kongzi to former kings with the intention to enunciate the meanings of his institutional adaptations and inventions.[47]

In addition to quoting the "Ru-Mo" discourse in the *Han Feizi* to argue that both Kongzi and Mozi composed their own versions of the classics to present their reform proposals in the name of antiquity, Kang Youwei also traces the emergence and decline of the juxtaposition of Ru and Mo to portray the rise and fall of the New and Old Text traditions. He deploys "Ru-Mo" as evidence that pre-Qin Confucians competed with Mohism over reformist visions in the name of antiquity. He therefore reckons that when imperial authors are bewitched by the fake Confucianism, namely the Old Text scholarship, they no longer remember that fact. This is supported by the fact that Later Han scholars, except Wang Chong 王充 (27–97 BC), seldom speak of "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo."[48] According to Kang Youwei, Later Han authors generally forget that Kongzi, like Mozi, was a political reformer and an author of the classics. Later Han texts therefore contain fewer statements mentioning Kongzi and "Mozi" in conjunction. Under Kang Youwei's interpretation, early usages of "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" are infused new significance. While he comes closer to Song Learning scholars in contesting that Confucianism is superior to Mohism, he differs them in considering it reasonable for early authors to use the compound "Ru-Mo" or to compare Mozi with Kongzi. It is clear that unlike previous Confucian scholars, Kang Youwei lacks interest in the question of whether the pairing of "Ru" with "Mo" (or Kongzi with Mozi) is antithetical to Confucianism, nor is he against such a pairing. On the contrary, he sees unique values in this early lexical habit: by drawing on early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses, Kang argues that Kongzi and Mozi must have

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46 Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 2: 142.
47 Ibid., 147.
48 Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 3: 85, 196, 221.

manufactured the political practices in antiquity to support their political prescriptions; otherwise Kongzi and Mozi would not have had divergent depictions of the same ancient sage rulers or been put on an equal footing by early authors.

4   Sun Yirang's Affiliation in the Controversy and His Discussions on Mozi and "Ru-Mo"

Kang Youwei relied heavily on the *Mozi* and early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses in constructing his arguments. But Sun Yirang also utilized them in defending Old Text scholarship against New Text theory.

Modern scholars might apply the label "Old Text" loosely to some Qing classicists before Sun Yirang,[49] but Sun was arguably one of the first-generation Old Text scholars proper. His teacher Yu Yue did not display an unambiguous and consistent attitude toward the New Text tradition, nor did he actively engage with the New Text versus Old Text controversy.[50] For this reason, Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 (1868–1936), another student of Yu Yue, said that he was unaware of the distinction between New and Old Texts while he was studying at Yu Yue's gate. He only became aware of this distinction when he was twenty-four years old.

> When I started to study the classics, I pursued only the comprehension of the interpretation [of the classics] and the understanding of the institutions and ceremonies [recorded in the classics]. Ever since I followed and served my teacher Yu, [my understanding] became more detailed, accurate, and solid. Yet I still could not see the broad picture. Only since the age of twenty-four have I started to distinguish between the Old and New scholars' explanations of the classics.[51]

Zhang Binglin turned twenty-four in 1891, the year Kang Youwei published the *Xinxue weijing kao*. By saying that he had only become aware of the controversy at this age, Zhang implicitly suggests that scholars, including himself, were not concerned with the boundary between New and Old Text traditions until Kang Youwei put forward his provocative

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49   Wong 2011 provides an informative study on the Old Text scholar identity of Zhang Binglin and Sun Yirang and indicates that the label "Old" is often loosely and somewhat carelessly applied to earlier Qing classicists.

50   Yu Yue, however, may have been aware of New Text scholars' criticisms of the Old Text tradition: Zhang indicates that Yu Yue had read Kang Youwei's *Xinxue weijing kao* and Qian indicates that Yu Yue had read Liao Ping's *Guxue kao* 古學考 (Examination of Old Scholarship). See, respectively, B. Zhang 1980: 5 and Qian 1997 [1937]: 715–716.

51   B. Zhang 1980: 5.

theory attacking the Old Text tradition. According to Zhang Binglin, thanks to New Text scholars' attacks, self-identified Old Text specialists thus emerged and attempted to defend their scholarship. The representative example he gives is that of Sun Yirang:

> In the early Qing, people who discussed the Classics and studied Han Learning did not have disputes over the New and Old Texts. Ever since New Text specialists had expelled the Old Texts with New Texts, there were accordingly Old Text specialists who counter-attacked the New Texts with Old Texts. That Sun Yirang composed the *Zhouli zhengyi*, elevating exclusively Old Texts and opposing to the New Texts, is an example of this.[52]

Sun Yirang was a first-generation Old Text scholar proper in that he explicitly committed himself to the Old Text tradition, was aware of the differences between the two traditions, and was well informed about Kang Youwei's theory. Zhang Binglin regards Sun Yirang as representative not only because Sun was a distinguished specialist of the Old Texts, but also because he was the perfect embodiment of all the Old Text tradition's "vices" from the Kang Youwei perspective. For example, Sun was renowned for his research on the *Zhouli*, an Old Text Kang considered a vicious forgery. He was also a specialist in paleography and epigraphy, two disciplines Kang regarded as vicious. Moreover, Sun venerated and studied Xu Shen's *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Explanation of Graphs and Analysis of Characters), which Kang thought unwisely incorporated fake ancient characters invented by Liu Xin to enhance the credibility of Old Text forgeries.[53]

Kang Youwei thought that one of the Old Text "crimes" was that it shrouded Kongzi's institutional prescriptions in a fake Zhou Gong system, as depicted in the *Zhouli*, and in dubious *xiaoxue* 小學 studies (such areas as paleography, epigraphy, and phonology).[54] Kang believed the *Zhouli* to be the most pernicious forgery, fabricated by Liu Xin to legitimize a pernicious political system.[55] He held that the popularity of *xiaoxue* was responsible for centuries-long political corruption and claimed that this discipline was encouraged by Liu Xin to beguile scholars into believing in the "old scripts" 古文 (Kang believed that the old scripts occurring in the Old Text versions were also manufactured by Liu Xin) and to draw their attention away from Kongzi's political visions to trivial but onerous script studies.[56] For Kang Youwei, therefore, the highly respected paleographer Xu Shen is one of the most unwise as he includes the fake ancient characters in

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52   B. Zhang 2004: 104.
53   See Kang, *Kang Youwei quanji*, vol. 1: 41, 329, 408–412.
54   Ibid., 407.
55   This thesis is prevalent in Kang Youwei's works, e.g., ibid., 93–95, 315.
56   Ibid., 73, 404.

the *Shuowen jiezi*.[57] Kang Youwei complains that, due to the predominance of the Old Text tradition and its auxiliary philological research, scholars have been diverted from Kongzi's ideals encoded into the authentic classics.[58] The transmission of Kongzi's teaching had thus been broken and China had to go through interminable political darkness.[59]

If one was to accept Kang Youwei's theory, one would consider Sun Yirang the most foolish scholar since he was both an Old Text and a *xiaoxue* scholar. As a specialist of the *Zhouli* and *Shuowen jiezi*, Sun believed that the *Zhouli* is a record of Zhou Gong's institution[60] and that the *Shuowen jiezi* can help decipher ancient scripts.

Unsurprisingly, then, Sun Yirang disagreed with Kang Youwei. But fell short of openly and directly confronting Kang Youwei. One reason is that, since he considered Kang's scholarship obviously shaky, there was no need to openly repudiate it.[61] Another, more decisive reason – and one touched upon earlier in this paper – is that, notwithstanding the scholarly disputes, Sun Yirang was a reformist and appreciated the efforts of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao to promote Confucianism and struggle for political reform.[62] In a letter to Wang Kangnian 汪康年 (1860–1911), Sun Yirang says that academic debates can be put one side since the enterprise of protecting Confucianism is more urgent.[63] Song Shu 宋恕 (1862–1910) explains why Sun is reluctant to attack Kang Youwei's New Text theory:

> Mr. [Sun] was a great master of Old Text classicism, who was especially specialized in the *Zhouli*. Someone from Lingbiao [Kang Youwei] vehemently attacked Xu [Xu Shen] and Zheng [Zheng Xuan], and criticized the *Zhouli* as a forgery made up by Liu Zijun [Liu Xin]. But Mr. [Sun] did not vent anger over and oppose [Kang Youwei's political posi-

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57   Ibid., 41, 411–412.

58   Ibid., 407.

59   Ibid., 315.

60   Sun Yirang's belief that the *Zhouli* is a record of the institution designed by Zhou Gong may reflect his political intent, like Kang Youwei's, of reforming the present in the name of antiquity; see Luo 2006: 272; Tang 1989: 238. Yet Liang Qichao criticizes Sun Yirang for overstating the value of *Zhouli*; see Liang 1983: 225.

61   See K. Wang 1986: 1474.

62   In 1895 Sun opened the Society of Reviving Ru (Xing Ru Hui 興儒會) in Ruian 瑞安, modelled on and supportive of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao's Society of Strengthening Learning (Qiang Xue Hui 強學會) in Shanghai 上海. He also drafted the "Xing Ru Hui lueli" 興儒會略例 (General Guidelines of Society of Reviving Ru) in response to the call of the "Shanghai Qiang Xue Hui zhangcheng" 上海強學書局章程 (Constitution of Society of Strengthening Learning). See Yanzhao Sun 2003: 262–269. For a brief description of the history see S. Zhang 2005: 363–368.

63   K. Wang 1986: 1470–1471.

tion], [on the contrary, he] expressed profound sympathy towards his [Kang Youwei] political theories concerning institutional reformation and constitutionalism.[64]

Sun Yirang was aware of Kang Youwei's insults to Old Text scholars, but that did not prevent him from endorsing Kang's reformation campaign.[65] He also praised Liang Qichao's political insights despite Liang's adherence to Kang Youwei's theory:

> About Zhuoru [Liang Qichao], I deeply admire the profoundness, precision, thoroughness, and clarity of his *Bianfa tongyi* [A general proposal for reform], and would not dare to belittle him because of his obstinate adherence to Kang's scholarship.[66]

Sun Yirang's reluctance to criticize Kang Youwei's New Text theory, however, did not mean that he would conceal his Old Text opinions or not attempt to defend them. To counter Kang Youwei and defends Old Text scholarship, Sun drew on the same resources – the *Mozi* and early "Ru-Mo" discourses.

As we saw in Section 3, because the *Mozi* is believed to have originated in the pre-Qin period, it was used as a litmus test in the New Text versus Old Text controversy. Kang Youwei, as we have seen, compared various versions of the classics to the *Mozi*, arguing that the New Texts are authentic Kongzi classics, comprising a separate group, different from the Mohist and the Old Text versions. Sun Yirang, too, adopted this mutual-authentication methodology in his *Zhouli* studies[67] and frequently used the *Zhouli* and Old Text exegeses to interpret the *Mozi*, and vice versa. For example, in the *Mozi jiangu* 墨子閒詁 (Clarifying Commentary on the Mozi[68]), Sun Yirang explains the expression "*yuan tu*" 圜土, occurring in the *Mozi* as well as the *Zhouli*,[69] with Zheng Xuan's commentary on the *Zhouli*: "To the 'Da situ' [Grand Minister of Education] of the *Zhouli*, Zheng's [Zheng Xuan] annotation says: '*yuan tu* means "prison"'."[70] By using the *Zhouli* and *Mozi* to interpret each other, Sun Yirang essentially argues that if the mutual explications can improve the understanding of the two texts and if scholars agree that the *Mozi* is

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64   Z. Hu 1993: 477.

65   In fact, like Kang Youwei, Sun Yirang was also a reformist appealing to antiquity. After Kang's failed Wuxu Reform, Sun Yirang composed the *Zhouli zhengyao* 周禮政要 (The Essentials of Politics Extracted from Zhouli), trying to use the *Zhouli* to offer a blueprint for reform. While Kang Youwei used the *Gongyang*, Sun Yirang used the *Zhouli* to elaborate his political prescriptions. While Kang asserted that the *Gongyang* embodies Kongzi's reform proposal, Sun claimed that the *Zhouli* is a record of the institutional system laid down by Zhou Gong.

66   Cited in K. Wang 1986: 1474.

67   See, for example, Sun, *Zhouli zhengyi*, vol. 1: 6.

68   For the translation of the title see Defoort 2014.

69   For example, Sun, *Zhouli zhengyi*, vol. 1: 889, 1023.

70   Sun, *Mozi jiangu*, 68.

from the pre-Qin period, it should be accepted that the *Zhouli* and Old Text annotations do not fabricate ancient history. In other words, Kang Youwei is wrong to claim that the ancient practices recorded in the *Zhouli* are fake.

In addition to using the Old Text classics and their commentaries, Sun Yirang also frequently uses the *Shuowen jiezi* to interpret the *Mozi*. He declares his reliance on the *Shuowen jiezi* in both the preface and the title of the *Mozi jiangu*. According to the preface, *Mozi jiangu* is named after Xu Shen's *Huainan honglie jiangu* 淮南鴻烈閒詁 (Clarifying Commentary to Great Brightness of Huainan). Sun Yirang selects this title to show his admiration for Xu Sheng's *Huainan honglie jiangu* and he draws on Xu's explanations of characters in interpreting the *Mozi*.

> *Jian* means to uncover the dubious and contradictory; *gu* means to determine the translation and explanations. I often follow Xu's [Xu Shen] scholarship concerning the meanings of characters, I therefore use [the title of *Huainan honglie jiangu*] as the title [of my book *Mozi jiangu*].

This passage could be seen as Sun Yirang's proclamation of his Old Text stance against Kang Youwei's New Text theory. Sun might not have foreseen the intensification of the New Text/Old Text controversy when he began working on the *Mozi jiangu* (composed during 1883–1893), but it is likely that he had this controversy in mind when he was writing the preface in 1893, two years after the publication of Kang Youwei's *Xinxue weijing kao*.

As Kang Youwei's argument relies heavily on the early juxtaposition of Kongzi and Mozi, Sun Yirang and his teacher Yu Yue also use it to convey their pro-Old Text tradition message. Yu Yue wrote a preface for Sun Yirang's *Mozi jiangu* in which he uses the early coupling of Kongzi and Mozi as evidence that Mohism was once popular in the classical period. Yet, rather than express an interest in the history of Mohism, Yu Yue stresses the occurrence of "ancient characters and ancient expressions" in the transmitted *Mozi*:

> Han Fei regarded Ru and Mo as the prominent learnings in the world; well into the Han, the world still referred to Kong and Mo in conjunction. [Was it because] apart from Kongzi, no one was as highly esteemed as this old man [Mozi]? [...] From the Tang onwards, no one knew the *Mozi* except Han Changli. Since [the *Mozi*] has been little transmitted and cited, the annotations and commentaries [to the *Mozi*] are concomitantly rare. [...] [As a result,] lost fragments and misplaced lines make [the received *Mozi*] difficult to collate and correct. The ancient characters and ancient expressions [in the received *Mozi*] make it even more difficult to apprehend.[71]

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71   Sun, *Mozi jiangu*, 1.

Clearly, Yu Yue is not concerned with whether Han Yu is "reprehensible" in considering Mozi comparable with Kongzi; nor does he intend to examine those early "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" discourses. Rather, he indicates the existence of those discourses primarily in order to highlight the sudden demise of Mohism, so as to call attention to the concomitant poor textual conditions of the *Mozi*. Because of the sudden decline of Mohism, the *Mozi* remained unread in the subsequent centuries. As a result, the version in the hands of Qing scholars was seriously corrupted and contained many "ancient characters and ancient expressions" (*gu zi gu yan* 古字古言). By emphasizing the difficulty of collating and interpreting the *Mozi*, Yu Yue reminds the reader of the philological contribution of Sun Yirang's *Mozi jiangu* to the *Mozi*. It is interesting that Yu Yue's preface echoes Bi Yuan's preface to the *Mozi*, which is included by Sun Yirang in the *Mozi jiangu*: "There are very few commentaries and discussion on the book of Mo, perhaps because of Mengzi's statements, [the book] consequently kept abundant ancient expressions and ancient characters."[72]

Bi Yuan, too, emphasizes that many "ancient expressions and ancient characters" are found in the transmitted *Mozi*. In a similar vein, he is not interested in the debate on whether Mengzi is right or biased in criticizing Mozi – he evokes Mengzi's criticism mainly to explain why the *Mozi* contained so many ancient words and to show the importance of *xiaoxue* scholarship to the task of restoring the *Mozi*. The same point is made by Sun Yirang:

> Since Mozi is incongruous with the methods of Ru, people like Meng [Mengzi], Xun [Xunzi], Dong Wuxin, and Kong Ziyu all expelled and criticized him. From the Han and Jin onwards, his [Mozi's] learning was almost extinguished, and only the book survived. Yet it has been rarely studied, and thus is difficult to collate due to the missing and erroneous fragments. And its ancient characters and ancient expressions consequently remained unchanged. Without being versed in the rules of picto-phonetic and phonetic-loan characters, one could not make it intelligible.[73]

Sun Yirang also stresses that the received *Mozi* contains many "ancient characters and ancient expressions" to suggest that paleography is very important for collating the *Mozi*. In other words, the Old Text scholarship severely criticized by Kang Youwei should be essential to understanding the *Mozi*, a text that is employed by Kang to support his own theory.

Sun Yirang also mentions early discourses about "Kong-Mo." As Kang Youwei attributes a lot of significance to these discourses, Sun deliberately downplays their relevance. He collects a couple of Mozi's anecdotes and introduces them by referring to the early juxtaposition of Kongzi and Mozi:

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72   Ibid., 661.
73   Ibid., 2.

> In the seven-state period [the Warring States], scholars coupled the names of Kong and Mo, but Kongzi's speech permeated the world while Mozi's fragments and anecdotes could be rarely seen except in the seventy-one texts [i.e., the *Mozi*].[74]

Sun's collection of the anecdotes does not include many early narratives about both Kongzi and Mozi. By presenting this collection, he merely wants to suggest that despite Mozi's fame in the Warring States, the information about Mozi is scarcely found in early texts. His disinterest in the actual content of early narratives about both Kongzi and Mozi accords with his disinterest in the content of early discourses about "Ru-Mo." After listing early descriptions about Mozi's thought, he comments:

> Qin and Han masters [texts] and historical texts contain many passages referring to *ru-mo*. These grandiose narratives and tangential remarks elucidate and clarify nothing.[75]

Like many Han Learning scholars, Sun Yirang considers the frequent usage of "Ru-Mo" in early texts as rhetorically useful in defending *xaioxue* scholarship. However, he claims that no special values can be found in the content of those "Ru-Mo" discourses. It is therefore interesting to note that while Kang Youwei finds abundant information regarding the nature of Mohism (leading to the nature of Confucianism) in early "Ru-Mo" discourses, Sun explicitly states that these discourses cannot improve one's understanding of Mozi's thought. The sharp contrast of Kang's and Sun's distinct views and attitudes toward early "Ru-Mo" discourses illustrates the division of opinions regarding the New Text/Old Text controversy.

5   Conclusion

The "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses in early texts have attracted modern Mozi scholars' attention, but they are generally neglected in the study of Confucianism and thus their relevance to late Qing Confucian controversies is often overlooked. By delving deeper into late imperial Confucians' discussions about early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses, this paper shows that the late Qing Confucians often used these discourses to express or defend their views regarding the nature of Confucianism and the methodology of studying the Confucian classics.

To contextualize the late Qing Confucian scholars' interest in early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses, this paper began by outlining the growing trend of viewing the grouping of Kongzi and Mozi (or the compound "Ru-Mo") in the late Ming and early

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74   Ibid., 723.
75   Ibid., 734.

Qing periods as an indication that Mohism enjoyed equal popularity with Confucianism in early China. On the surface level, this trend shows that Confucian scholars of the imperial era gradually came to accept that the "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" coupling reflected only a neutral historical fact. However, Qing dynasty Confucian scholars were nevertheless interested in commenting on the early coupling. Some of their analyses were intended to advance certain intellectual agendas, bringing up this "neutral fact" to make their own points concerning other issues. As the compounds "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" were no longer perceived as an "insult" to Confucianism, Confucian scholars began to use these early discourses to support their interpretations of Confucianism or the Confucian classics. Scholars whom we normally think of as belonging to the camp of Han Learning or Old Text scholarship often used early juxtapositions of "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" to emphasize the importance of *kaoju* or *xiaoxue* training. The representative figure of New Text scholarship, Kang Youwei, used them to defend his New Text theory, even writing an essay specifically on the early combination of "Ru" and "Mo."

Kang Youwei found early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses particularly valuable because they suggest that Kongzi and Mozi shared reformist enterprises. Akin to Mozi, Kongzi was a political reformer who composed the classics to promote his political ideals by ascribing them to ancient authorities. Moreover, Kang believed that the usage of "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" indicates that early authors knew that Kongzi was akin to Mozi in that he encoded his political ideals into the classics. Thus Kang Youwei thought that the decreased frequency of "Ru-Mo" in post-Han texts signaled the "corruption" of classicism; namely, the decline of the New Text tradition and the increasing influence of the Old Text tradition. This transition from New Text to Old Text scholarship was a corruption because, according to his theory, the Old Text classics are forgeries and the emphasis on *xiaoxue* scholarship draws away scholarly attention from Kongzi's political visions and on to trivial linguistic and archaeological details.

As a very prestigious Old Text scholar and highly respected *Mozi* scholar, Sun Yirang also used the *Mozi* and early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses but to defend Old Text scholarship against Kang's criticisms of "spurious" Old Texts, *xiaoxue* study, and Xu Shen's scholarship. Sun Yirang deployed Old Text classics and Xu Shen's paleographical study to decipher the difficult words and fragments in the *Mozi*. By doing so, he showed not only the value of *xiaoxue* scholarship but also the value and authenticity of the Old Text classics. Following previous Han Learning scholars (such as Bi Yuan and Yu Yue), Sun Yirang invoked the early usage of "Ru-Mo" to emphasize the sudden demise of Mohism. Due to this, he argued, the *Mozi* has been neglected and thus still contains many "ancient characters and expressions." With the help of the characters used in the Old Texts and Xu Shen's explanations of them, Sun demonstrated, one can decipher the old characters in the *Mozi*. This suggests that Liu Xin did not fabricate the old characters in the Old Texts, unless the *Mozi* was his creation. As Kang Youwei's arguments relied heav-

ily on the credibility of the *Mozi*, he could not afford to admit that the *Mozi* was also a forgery by Liu Xin.

From the analysis in this paper, we can see that Kang Youwei differs significantly from Han Learning or Old Text scholars in terms of how they perceived the evidential value of early "Ru-Mo" discourses. Kang Youwei invoked them to argue that Kongzi is akin to Mozi as an author of the classics and a political reformer. Since the early uses of "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" are essential to his argument, it is unsurprising that Kang Youwei had more to say on this topic. He examined the frequency of these pairings to speculate on the vicissitudes of New Text and Old Text scholarship, whereas Sun Yirang asserted that nothing could be learned from the early "Ru-Mo" discourses.

By contextualizing and analyzing late Qing Confucians' discussions on early "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" discourses, both the surface beliefs they express and the underlying intentions become clear: The late imperial Confucian interest in "Ru-Mo" and "Kong-Mo" was often accompanied by an attempt to advance certain approaches of classicism. This discovery has several implications. It suggests that the issue of "Ru-Mo" or "Kong-Mo" is not only relevant to the study of the history of Mohism but also to the history of Confucianism, and in particular to the New Text versus Old Text controversy. This leads to a clearer understanding of Kang Youwei's and Sun Yirang's arguments and argumentative tactics, which have long been neglected in the literature. Finally, by focusing on Kang's and Sun's "Ru-Mo" arguments, the previously invisible debate between the two major figures of the New Text camp and Old Text camp can be reconstructed. This reconstruction may yield further insights into questions concerning the relationship between Qing Confucian scholars' political orientation and their academic opinions on classicism and Mohism, such as how Tan Sitong's 譚嗣同 (1865–1898) New Text affiliation connects with his reformist standpoint and sympathy to Mohism, whether Liang Qichao's assessments of Mohism changed with his shift from being a reformist to a revolutionary, or whether Zhang Binglin formulated narratives on Mohism in accordance with his pro-revolution and Old Text positions. These are questions into which future research could continue to investigate.

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