

DATING THE CHAPTERS IN *GUANZI* -----EVIDENCE FROM HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS PERSPECTIVE

by

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Abstract

The *Guani*, which bears the name of a famous seventh-century B.C. minister of state of Qi, Guan Zhong, is one of the largest Chinese politico-philosophical works, exceeding 135,000 characters in length. It is widely believed that the material in *Guani* was written by a number of anonymous writers over a long period of time, but as to when these different texts were written, opinions differed. Dating of *Guanzi* is still very much an outstanding issue today. Debates have been going on through the centuries and those historical techniques that have been successfully employed in clarifying the origins of some early Chinese texts have not succeeded in producing a consensus among modern scholars in this case. This study departs from past researches in that we hope to contribute to the discussion solely based on our understanding of the historical development of Chinese language. We have conducted a detailed description of the three different aspects of the language in *Guanzi*, mainly phonological, syntactic and lexical. The main focus of this thesis is not to present a comprehensive description of the language in this huge socio-political text, but to identify linguistic innovations that will help us resolve a long-standing dispute on the composition date of this text. This thesis consists of five chapters, inclusive of an introduction and a conclusion. In Chapter Two, we will discuss various phonological features in the *Guani* to establish the fact that the composition of the *Guanzi* should not predate the end of the Warring States period. Since not all sections in the *Guani* contain rhymed passages, we will therefore, through our discussion of the syntactic features in the *Guani* in Chapter Three, further enhance the conclusion that the *Guani* should not be composed earlier than the end of the Warring States period. Various syntactic innovations, which are attested only in Han texts and are found in the *Guanzi*, will also be discussed in the chapter. We have devoted most of the Chapter Four to disyllabic words in the *Guanzi* that first occur in Han texts. Finally, in my concluding chapter, I will summarize all my findings in table form before

putting together different linguistic evidence to propose a composition date, if possible, for each chapter in the *Guanzi*.