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Anonymous voices and authorship politics in printed genealogies in Eastern Guizhou

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This paper analyzes two versions of a printed genealogy collated by the Hmub and Kam in Eastern Guizhou, who gave authority to claims of consanguine bonds. It focuses on how the main text of the genealogy and other intertextual practices can either attribute authority to the genealogies or undermine it. On the one hand, elite accounts of ancestors in the genealogies invent a strong ideology of consanguinity that directly contributes to the text's authority. At the same time, however, the use of Chinese characters to represent the Hmub phonetic system coexists with the Hmub system of patronymy within the assemblage of the individual descendant names. In other words, Chinese characters represent nonpersonal phonetic symbols of the Hmub language. This in turn means that anonymous voices can emerge in other texts. The result is a shift in the nature of authorship from an overtly collective authority to a covertly diffused anonymity.

Keywords: authorship; intertextuality; materiality; orality and literacy; imagined community; Eastern Guizhou; Southwest China

An encounter in Eastern Guizhou

In 2003, I did fieldwork in a Fangzhai Hmub[1] village near Shidong, a township on the Qingshuijang River in Eastern Guizhou that has been considered a major port since the Qing dynasty. This area is called the Shidong Entrance (*Shidong Kou* 施洞口) and has been known for its floods (*xun* 汛) dating to the Qing dynasty. A ferry (*du* 渡) was established in the fourth year of the Guangxu period (1878). The Qingshuijang River is the main waterway for the area, and the road from Zhenyuan to Taigong is its main trade artery. A regular market developed here beginning in the third year of the Qianlong period (1738), attracting merchants from foreign provinces. During the revolt by the Miao people during the Xianfeng and Tongzhi periods, Xu Jiagan was the secretary of the Xiang army and entered the provinces of Xiang and Qian, with the army stationing in Shidong. In *Miaojiang wenjianlu* (*What I have Seen and Heard in Frontier Miao*), which was completed in the fourth year of the Guangxu period, Xu describes the Miao market as already prosperous, 'situated 60 lis (about a half kilometer) south from the Zhenyuan government, and in the territory of Taigong County. There are mountains in the back and the Qingshuijang River flows in the front. It is a fertile land, and the whole district extends for several kilometers. Bageng Village stands in the west, and villages assemble in the east. In the front lie the places of Shawan, Yanjiaowan, Batuan, and Pingdiying; in the

back flows the Jiugu River. It has been a big market in the Miao frontier, and many different kinds of people live there.'[2]

In the summer of 2003 it had 193 households, making it a large village in the area. Except for a few families surnamed Zhang and Wu who emigrated to the village of Fangzhai in the 1960s, the majority of residents have the surname Liu. For the most part, village residents converse in an eastern Hmub dialect. During my fieldwork I found a wooden box containing a genealogy written in Chinese that had been printed in 1985. I was immediately struck by its detailed content and advanced features, which included prefaces, ancestral biographies, and a genealogical tree.[3] Nearly 2 years after this encounter, I went back to Guizhou again for further research. When I went to do fieldwork in Tianzhu, the senior headman of the Kam[4] village kindly let me read closely the previous version of the 1985 edition of the Genealogy of Liu, which is dated Guangxu 34 (1908) of the Qing dynasty.

Even more interesting was the fact that the genealogy was compiled, edited, and circulated by and among heterogeneous Liu descent groups – Hmub in Taijiang and Kam in Tianzhu. Not only are the two counties separated by a full day's travel by bus[5] but also have significant differences in terms of language, ethnicity, and cultural practices.

To understand these phenomena, one must look back at history. There are differences in the historical contexts of the genealogy compiled in the late Qing period and that of the 1980s in which the latest version of the genealogy was compiled. The Chinese state's imperial expansion to the southwest in the Ming – and particularly the Qing – period placed Eastern Guizhou under state administration. After 1949, the state established the minority administrative institution and state projects of ethnic classification, as well as the official Miao (Hmub) and Dong (Kam) writing systems. The native textual strategies and the state's influences on the cultural practices of genealogy production in the imperial state system are different from those in the modern Chinese state. Both the Hmub and the Kam were put under the same umbrella category of 'Miao' in the imperial scheme of classifying non-Han natives, whereas they belong to two different ethnic minorities under the contemporary official ethnic classification system established after 1949.

Zongpu (宗譜 genealogy)[6] is a long-established and widely used style of writing in Asia, especially among countries that in the past used Chinese characters for written communication. Characteristics and limitations of this type of writing determine the exceptionally strong normative power of its system.[7] The compilation of genealogies among non-Han aristocratic families in the south of China relates to the history of the native chieftaincy (*tusi*) system. Compiling a genealogy and presenting it to the imperial court became a requirement for succession to chiefly office during the Ming dynasty. Genealogies were 'naturally' written in Chinese (they had to be), and they needed to show that the candidate for succession stood in an orthodox line of descent within the chiefly lineage. Pressure to conform to Chinese orthodox family law became intense at this time. Apart from chiefly lineages, many other aristocratic clans found it expedient to compile Chinese-style family registers and claim Chinese ancestry. This process was widespread in Guizhou as well as in other southern provinces. Many of the Hmub and Kam in Guizhou also claimed that their Han ancestors came from Jiangxi.[8]

In light of this background, genealogies were not a 'knowledge index' of 'the nature or properties of those societies' (certainly not the societies as a whole), nor, following Pieke,[9] were they necessarily a representation of 'a specific mentality that marks a strong association with the modern Chinese state.' For chiefly families, they had nothing to do with mentality; they were a bureaucratic requirement. For others, they served as a form of protection.

Based on the review of the literature noted above and the debate among scholars, I want to understand how local peripheral societies interact with the strong normative power of written genealogies. I will employ a discursive approach to analyze the meaning of genealogy in peripheral regions of the Chinese state.

Specifically, I will first highlight how local elites from the Hmub and Kam speech communities of Eastern Guizhou work together to claim their textual authority through acts of writing and editing.[10] Second, I will examine the authorship of the two versions of Liu genealogy in terms of relations between texts and social contexts. Working from the premise that social power or relations can be invented through genealogical compilation, I will focus on aspects of genealogical recording and intertextual relations. Specifically, I will examine the processes involved in inventing interethnic differences and consanguine or genealogical relations, such as those asserted by the Hmub and the Kam in Eastern Guizhou.

Having studied the upland Fangf Bil Hmub village in Taijang since 1997, I was aware of the conventional structure of Hmub social networks and the means through which they are maintained. The village is composed of over 330 households and has a population of almost 1,500 persons. It is divided into 11 hamlets (*vangf*), whose respective names refer to nearby geographic features. The 11 hamlets of Fangf Bil Hmub are organized into 5 patrilineal marriage groups. Marriage within a marriage group is forbidden. The proportion of intermarriages between these marriage groups within the village far exceeds the proportion of marriages outside the village. Based on the family genealogies of some hamlets, it is furthermore clear that women marry in both directions. The affinal classifications of this village seem to constitute something approaching a binary structure. Therefore, it is clear that the social network of the Hmub society in early times was more or less limited. My concern in the present paper is in determining how this cooperation came about. What was the process? How did the directions on the recording standards factor in; was it a joint agreement between the parties involved? Moreover, from the individual Hmub and Kam speakers' points of view, what was the relation between the genealogy compilation and their ethnic identities?

Genealogy as act

Ever since the Communist takeover of China in 1949, classic texts and written genealogies have been viewed as symbols of a repressive age in which the circulation of printed works was restricted to elites at all levels of society. A large number of genealogies were burned during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) – acts made irrelevant by that country's rapid cultural transformation and economic development beginning in the 1980s. With the cultural and religious revival – by way of traditional family and community rituals, as well as religious activities, gradually appearing again – local practices of writing Chinese-language genealogies have been restored by the Hmub and Kam elites in an effort to assert past kinship relationships with the so-called *Hanzu laodage* (Han Chinese Elder Brother – majority Han Chinese). In Fangzhai, a village in Taijang County, and in Lantian, a village in Tianzhu County, local elites (now in their 60s and 70s) claim to have inherited the Chinese surname Liu from a locally recognized Hanren/Hanzu (Han Chinese people or ethnic group) ancestor from many generations ago. This belief is reflected in their written genealogies. These elites also argue that their shared Hanren/Hanzu ancestry is evidence of past histories of interethnic brotherhood.

Literacy is repeatedly asserted as one of the criteria that determines who is selected to join in the genealogical practice. Another important criterion is seniority. Born between

1920 and 1940, these local elites are the recipients of both traditional and modern Chinese educations. Liu Yongheng (1924–), a Hmub speaker and Fangzhai resident, is a prime example of someone who was raised in an era dominated by Confucian ideology and who survived the ensuing decades by adapting to the official ideologies of various state regimes. The educational process experienced by Liu Yongheng is typical of these local senior elites. Some even obtained higher education. Liu Yaobi (1940–), after graduating from high school in 1963, entered Guiyang First Public Institute, the training institution for cadre members of the government. Besides reading the traditional Chinese canons and studying math, language, geography, and so on, writing in Chinese characters was also asserted as part of their educational experience. Among these local elites, others have more extensive experience writing in Chinese characters. Liu Kaixuan (1926–), a Kam elite from Tianzhu, has spent every day for over a year single-handedly drafting another version of the Liu family genealogy in Chinese characters. I witnessed the magnitude of his written work at his house during my fieldwork. Liu Kaixuan's laborious effort at writing up this genealogy offers a look into the extremely complicated interaction between Han and non-Han Chinese ethnic groups.

Genealogical compilation

The following editorial note from the genealogy in question sheds light on how my informants viewed their task. It was written by a Kam elite, Nanchong Guangkuei.

> The continual revision of the genealogy is a great task of reorganizing lineal relations among descent groups. We had a fortunate start and successfully proceeded in extending our meetings for revising the genealogy, the first held at Lantian on 29 June 1985. After this meeting, we sent people to different counties to establish contact by going door to door, collecting information and arranging financing [perhaps including asking for donations]. The filial offspring of the male ancestor Xionggong who live throughout the area gave us warm and sincere support by offering information and money. Within two months, information and money for revising the genealogy was pouring in. On September 11 of the lunar calendar the cultural men [that is, men who were literate] from our clan started to compile the data as a first draft. After forty days they started to draft a manuscript ….[11]

Besides the expressed need to carefully guard the genealogy to preserve the goodwill of the ancestors, another focus here is the relationship between the act of recording and the factual value of the written word. The autobiographical accounts of these Hmub and Kam elites further support how their education both qualified them for the task and contributed to a fluidity of ethnic identity that broke down and rebuilt boundaries during the process of documentation.

Distant ancestors were recorded based on scattered pedigrees. Similar to the cultural person mentioned in the editorial note, literate elites have been key to genealogical editing. Upon his retirement in 1981, Liu Yongheng, one of the editors of the 1985 Liu genealogy, spent 2 months collecting information household-by-household on distant ancestors. He told me that editors were selected 'according to our social rank among the villagers …. The key elements were our knowledge, cultural background, and available time.'

Liu Guangde passed away several years before I went to Guizhou in 2003–2004 for this study. All my interviewees expressed to me their deep respect and strong admiration for an editor named Liu Guangde, a former vice head of rural Jianhe County. He was consistently described as the best educated elite and was perceived as having a large

amount of local knowledge and of playing an important role in arranging the project. In fact, all genealogy content had to be revised by him before being accepted for publication. His Chinese-language editing status might be explained by his education and cultural background, as he communicated exclusively in Mandarin. But he did not understand the Hmub language at all.

Evident from the above editorial note, literacy is a required ability for genealogical production. The portrait of Liu Guangde also exemplified the importance of literacy among local elites. However, here the crucial figure in editing the genealogical record of the Hmub and Kam ethnic groups neither spoke nor understood the Hmub and Kam languages. This means that being well educated is defined as someone who speaks and writes Chinese written characters. How then could a person like Liu Guangde decide ethnicity in recording material about Hmub or Kam ancestors?

Another factor in the compilation of genealogical records is the importance of money, which has played a role in determining who are and are not included in the process. The money that served as funding for genealogy-repair was collected according to the number of persons in the genealogy. For each individual recorded within it, a family must pay 5 yuan. A couple of families in Huangpao didn't give money; therefore, the editors didn't want them as part of the project and excluded them. If they wanted to be included after the fact, it would then require the agreement of all of the individual families. In other words, those chosen to organize the project had been given the authority to exclude from the genealogy those members who did not contribute money. Descent group membership was in this way determined by money and editorial decisions, not exclusively by patrilineal relations.

Genealogical circulation

According to the informants, compilation rules and circulation determine the power of genealogies. For members of descent groups with the surname Liu, the yearly custom of 'basking' (displaying) their genealogy (shaipu 曬譜) ensured circulation. The old genealogy was kept in Fangzhai and was placed on display on 6 June of the lunar calendar each year. Every member in the Liu family would come to view it. They would pool their money and have a shared feast that day. Both men and women were allowed to participate. This activity was held up until 50 years ago, but it was stopped around Liberation. Now, the genealogy can only be displayed during the Qingming Festival. One copy is permanently held in Fangzhai, and the other is rotated among neighboring villages.

Unlike in Fangzhai, the yearly genealogy basking ritual is still performed and well attended in Tianzhu County. Liu Guangsong recalled that during one recent basking event, the senior village head was invited to explain the roots and origins of the Liu family according to the compiled genealogy – an example of the combined power of literacy and seniority.

The custom of genealogy-basking provides opportunities to ritually and publicly circulate a genealogy in front of the descent group that is the focus of the work. Genealogical circulations can also give or confirm text-related authority – a phenomenon that was obvious in Shidong but not in Lantian. Having inherited the position from his great-grandfather, Liu Yongyue is now the keeper of the Liu family genealogy circulated in the Shidong area. The keeper of the genealogy is selected according to his rank in the family, educational background, and authority, for he is the person acting on behalf [responsible for the genealogy] of the entire family. Other family members are not allowed to look at the genealogy. In contrast to this authoritative tone and serious attitude toward

genealogical keeping and circulation, the Kam elites in Tianzhu take a flexible and relatively relaxed attitude toward genealogical circulation. These differences can be explained by variations in literacy level among ethnic groups in areas considered to be on the periphery of the Chinese state. A comparison of these two approaches to displaying a genealogy indicates that the number of printed copies released and circulated influences the value of the genealogy and degree of authority in its production.

Inventing consanguinity: exclusiveness and inclusiveness

In his work *Kinship*, Robert Parkin addresses the difficulties associated with the use of the term *descent*:

> As a professional academic notion, descent has certainly suffered a degree of reification in the past, to the extent that anthropologists have sometimes imagined it rather than identified it in the field. This does not render it useless, for there are still many societies which give it importance.[12]

My analysis of the Liu genealogies may be examined in terms of local conceptualization of the concept. Whereas biologists might consider ties of descent and consanguinity as ongoing and incapable of disruption, kinship researchers view societies and descent according to specific and narrow limitations. Regarding descent group membership, Parkin describes recruitment as a central principle, and accounts of textual power or authority are viewed as constituting a special social relationship: *consanguinity*, achieved by both exclusiveness and inclusiveness. The distinguishing characteristic of the written genealogy for the Liu descent group is exclusivity. Despite Pieke's demonstration that the new genealogical form in modern China provides flexible boundaries for determining unity and diversity within ethnic groups, [13] the feature of exclusiveness is still common to most genealogical practices. This feature is especially clear in terms of participants in genealogical compilation and circulation activities. As Liu Guangsong pointed out to me, 'Families with different surnames don't display their genealogies together. Families of different clans do, but only by invitation.' This explains the motivation behind the editorial note presented in the above 'Genealogy as Act' section.

  In contrast, *inclusiveness* in the form of genealogy coauthorship using the Chinese written language allows for the blurring of multiethnic identities and boundaries among local Hmub, Kam, and Hanren/Hanzu concepts. A clear example is the adoption of the brotherhood metaphor. The following are two examples of many statements regarding Liu ties across ethnic boundaries:

> If one of two brothers suffers from some hardness and runs away to the Hmub area, then he becomes a Hmub. It is just a difference of language, not of lineage. (Liu Yongyue, Taijang County)

> There are two villages in Lanchong that are inhabited by Liu people. They are from the Kam clan. The Kam language as well as Mandarin is spoken there. Mandarin was used during the process of reediting the genealogy. The genealogy belongs to all Liu people. It makes no difference whether some speak Han and some speak Kam. All the people are kin brothers. The ethnicity issue is not important to everyone. (Liu Yongheng, Taijang County)

I heard many assertions of flexible attitudes toward linguistic diversity, thus establishing a sense of multiple ethnic roots and blurred boundaries. Written records occasionally confirmed the glossing over of boundaries that I heard during conversations with

informants. In some cases the texts spoke of cultural hegemony on the part of Han Chinese, while in others they mention unified Hanren/Hanzu ancestral roots tied to the Liu surname. The attitudes of local elites such as Liu Taian reveal the emphasis on geographic location and generation over ethnicity:

> There are some people speaking Hmub, some speaking Kam, and some speaking Mandarin, but they all belong to the same genealogy, and *it doesn't matter*. The coincidence of ethnicity and language are not imposed. It depends on the area one lives in. He belongs to a specific ethnic group as long as he thinks he does. The rank by generation, instead of ethnicity, is important in the genealogy. The people who are of the same generation belong to the same rank, no matter where you live.

According to these statements, generation supersedes locality and locality supersedes ethnicity among those having the Liu surname. In other words, local elites recognize shared Hanren/Hanzu ancestry as evidence of a Hmub-Han and Kam-Han interethnic history as well as the importance of individual choice in ethnic identification. The result is multiple identities and blurred boundaries expressed through personal accounts and interpretations of a coauthored genealogy. Combined, the two versions of the Liu genealogy lend authority to claims of consanguine bonds between Hmub and Kam speech communities.

Genealogy as text

The genealogy texts and information from interviews with their editors or keepers contain evidence of the influence of the creators, a center of authority reflected in the oral and written language of the genealogy. Further examination of relationships between different textual practices reveals another kind of authorship, thereby challenging the notion of a single type of power achieved through authorship. Local elites emphasized basking and holding genealogies, and the editor's note invoked the power of ancestors – two indications of multiple textual authorities and a complex relationship between text and ritual that indicates a distribution as opposed to centralization of influence.

Alessandro Duranti is one of several researchers of conversation emphasizing a need to distinguish between *speaker* and *hearer*, which also suggest a need for reassessing the ideas of *textual authority* and *authorship*.[14] In scenarios where multiple actual and latent authors use either language or purely symbolic acts of communication, the designation of authorship depends on community perceptions of authority.[15] However, in the same manner as speech act theory or the relationship between intention and language, textual authority lies within the confines of person-centric theory. In speech or language activities, authority may shift to what Du Bois refers to as a *nonpersonal* agent, meaning that authorship belongs not to a first or second person, but a third.[16] In this section, I will give three examples of the nonpersonal agent from the Liu genealogy in order to discuss anonymous voices and authorship politics in printed genealogies in Eastern Guizhou.

Example one: individual name

The anonymous voices emerge in the form of the patronymic practice of referring to parents via the names of their children. The first volume of the new version of the Liu genealogy presents the story of the Liu ancestry plus the prefaces and family injunctions for each subsequent volume. Volumes 1 through 4 contain records of the patrilineal

descendants of four male ancestors – Tengshangong (滕山公), Fengshangong (鳳山公), Meishangong (梅山公), and Zhengbogong (正伯公). In other words, the detailed records for each line of patrilineal offspring constitute the main content of this genealogy. Age at death and burial locations are recorded, and official occupations are occasionally given.

All of this information is written in Chinese characters, with the name of each male preceded by information as required by an elegant and complex traditional Hanren/Hanzu naming system: rank (generational name), official name (*hao* 號), and given name (*ming* 名). The following is an example from the record of descendants of Mei-Shan Gong:

> Wenlu's (文陸) eldest son Changhai (昌海), *hao* Baoliu (寶六), born in 1908, year of death unknown, buried in Baoyinmei. Married Zhang Shi, year of death and burial site unknown. Remarried Zhang Shi, born in 1930, bore two sons: Qiao (橋) and San (三). Changhai's eldest son Yongde (永德), *ming* Qiaobao (橋寶), born in 1954. Married Zhang Shi, people of Pangba. Bore two sons: Heping (和平) and Zhengqiao (正橋).
>
> Yongde's (永德) eldest son Yaohe (耀和), *ming* Heping (和平), born in 1980. Yongde's second son Yaozheng (耀政), *ming* Zhengqiao (正橋), born in 1982. Changhai's (昌海) second son Yongqing (永清), *ming* Sanbao (三寶), born in 1950, an elementary school teacher. Married Yao Shi, *ming* Moying, bore a son Linsan (林三).
>
> Yongqing's (永清) son Yaolin (耀林), *hao* Linsan (林三), born in 1982.

In this excerpt the individual names constitute a system that represents inheritance relationships between three generations of patrilineal descendants. Two naming systems are used, one written in Chinese and the other in Hmub. The most obvious feature of the Hanren/Hanzu system is the succession of name cliques – for instance, 'Wenlu (文陸) bore Changhai (昌海), Changhai bore Yongde (永德),' etc. The dual names mark the inheritance relationship between different generations: *wen* (文), *chang* (昌), *yong* (永), *yao* (耀), *zong* (宗). All of these are on the list of 60 generational names presented in the genealogy.

However, another regular pattern among names between generations emerges. Each name is followed by a second name, designated by *hao* or *ming*: Changhai (昌海), *hao* Baoliu (寶六); Yongde (永德), *ming* Qiaobao (橋寶), etc. These *hao*s and *ming*s formally resemble the double names used among the society of Han Chinese. Using as an example the relationships in 'Baoliu (寶六) bore Qiaobao (橋寶) and Sanbao (三寶), Qiaobao (橋寶) bore Heping (和平) and Zhengqiao (正橋); Sanbao (三寶) bore Linsan (林三),' note that the first character of the father's name moves to the second position for his descendants (the only exception being Qiao-Bao's eldest son, He-Ping). This movement is a clear example of the patronymic custom followed by the Hmub of Eastern Guizhou province – that is, the individual Hmub name is used with a single Chinese name (e.g., Liu [六], Bao [寶], Qiao [橋]). The complete name consists of a son's own name followed by his father's – a system that is still followed among Hmub Liu families in the Shidong area. Furthermore, complete Hmub names in upland Hmub villages of Taijang County include the grandfather's name.

Note that in the genealogy the normative naming systems are still recorded. Names are written with Chinese characters, and the *ming* or *hao* name is added in a Hanren/Hanzu style of *shu ming* (書名), which the Hmub of Guizhou generally interpret to mean 'the name of the educated person'; this is used when children start attending school. According to this multilayered naming system, Chinese written characters are used to represent both the Hmub language and Hmub patronymy practices. This mix of Chinese written characters and Hmub language patterns transforms the property or voice of individual names

from the personal to the nonpersonal, or anonymous. In other words, the Chinese written characters represent nonpersonal phonetic symbols of the Hmub language – the 'third voice' embedded in written accounts of the Liu genealogy. I suggest that the Hmub and Kam minority writing systems invented in the 1950s played a role in the compilation of the native genealogy in the 1980s. Also, comparing to the use of Chinese characters to represent the Hmub phonetic system, logical alternatives to this writing system can be found in Zhuang's cosmological and ritual contexts, such as in *Hanvueng: The Goose King and Ancestral King*, which is an epic and one of the Zhuang traditional texts widely circulated from Guanhgxi in Southern China.[17]

Example two: basking the genealogy

My senior informants told me that in Taijang and Tianzhu, the family genealogy was only open to community inspection at a yearly event. I view this event as an extension of textual authority: since the Liu genealogy cannot be displayed in tandem with other genealogies, it serves as a confirmation of boundaries between families. The annual genealogy basking event also conveys the message that the document's power resides within the Liu family. Informants in both villages talked about the sharing of money for food and wine – a participatory event of celebration suggesting that genealogical content and textual authority are not viewed as the central reasons for the gathering. When examining the annual gathering from linguistic or ritualistic perspectives, it is difficult to determine whether the event celebrates the text, its authors, or event participants.

Although I have not come across the mentioning of basking genealogies in Guizhou chronicles published since the Qing dynasty, the terms *basking books* and *basking clothes* do appear in chronicles of Guiyang province and other sectors in Guizhou. Such occasions are meant to take place on the sixth day of the sixth lunar month.[18] For instance, in an edition of the *Puan Prefectural Gazetteer* (普安直隸廳志) the following tasks are associated with that date: 'planting reeds and beans, basking books and drying clothes, worshiping new shoots and grain gods, cutting wild grass, and stocking manure.'[19] According to some documents, only local gentry families practiced the custom of basking books. An edition of the *Anshun Prefectural Gazetteer* (安順府志) states that 'on the sixth day of the sixth moon, worship earth god, dry clothes, scholars bask books, farmers worship ancestors with wine and rice and plant paper money in the field to pray for an abundant harvest.'[20] In other words, the basking genealogy ceremony still practiced by Taijang Hmub and Tianzhu Kam members of the Liu family may represent interactions between text and culture within a complex peripheral society. Further investigation is needed to determine whether the chronicle records were incorrectly copied from other sources, but what they reference illustrates broader connections regarding the basking of genealogies. The first and second examples also share in common a detachment from human authorship.

Example three: receive genealogy

The following excerpt is from the older version of the Liu genealogy, compiled and printed during the Guangxu 34 period of the Qing dynasty.[21]

> We are the offspring of the Great Han Ancestor, Liu Bang (劉邦). From then on until the establishment of the ancestry by the six brothers of the Xionggong, all of our ancestors were well-known officials ….

Twenty volumes of the common genealogy were completed. Each volume was given a distinguished name …. Anyone who respected Xionggong as his ancestor is the kin of bone and flesh and should not be thought of as distant, as is the case between the Qin and Yue people.[22] So, *compiling a genealogy* is a way to bring distant people together, which is the way it should be. This is to serve as an introduction.

Praise: The genealogy has been completed, and the virtuous acts of the ancestors will be spread for hundreds of years. Their offspring will develop many branches, with descendants continuing to compile and amend our genealogy ….

What the genealogy has recorded are the names or titles of our patrilineal ancestors and whereabouts of their tombs. *We hope each keeper will treasure and take good care of it.*

The concept of *intertextuality* – relations between texts – can be used to examine the dialogical relations within the paragraphs of the above excerpt and between this account and other excerpts from the same genealogy. At the beginning of the first paragraph of the latest excerpt, the story of the ancestors establishes the type of authorship as personal. However, the nonpersonal language used throughout these paragraphs ('the loss of the old genealogy' and 'the recompiling of the common genealogy') conveys a certain detachment from a person-centric authorship or viewpoint. The second and third paragraphs also contain examples of nonpersonal or anonymous concepts: praising the genealogy, naming the 22 volumes, and asking keepers to carefully protect the genealogical works. In other words, both intertextual relations and dual authorship exist within this single excerpt.

Concluding remarks

The practice of writing genealogies and the circumstances of their circulation is generally analyzed in terms of the literacy capabilities of local elites. Taking a theoretical approach based on recent discussions of intertextuality, or interdiscursivity, this paper first examines the nature of genealogical nonresponsibility – that is, anonymous voices in the genealogies are imparted differently than those in the main text; the accounts of ancestors or descent groups invent a strong ideology of consanguinity that directly contributes to the textual authority. But anonymous voices in the other texts carry a nonpersonal tone, a nonresponse to textual authority.[23] As Silverstein describes, text or discourse is a 'processual, real-time, and event-bound social action …. Communicational interdiscursivity is a relationship of event to event and is projected from the position of the personal – authorial and/or animating senders, responsible receivers, [and] non-responsible monitors.'[24] Du Bois also challenges the 'personalist ideology of language use' when discussing how Azande, an ethic group of Central Africa's Triangle, was reluctant 'to seek a personal or personified source for the meanings derived from divination.'[25] Analogous to discussing the problem of the nonpersonal and the lack of intention in spoken acts,[26] this paper uses native genealogies to explore the intent of emphasizing an imagined interethnic brotherhood or consanguine relationships among members of the Liu family via local notions of exclusiveness and relatedness invented through the concepts of intentionlessness, or no responsibility as expressed in the printed genealogies.

  Secondly, this paper describes how the Hmub and Kam elites have created genealogies using the written Chinese language, resulting in both the bridging of interethnic differences and the opening of a gap between these two ethnic groups and the Chinese state. It specifically examines the two versions of a printed Chinese language genealogy collated (jointly created) by the Hmub and Kam living in the eastern part of China's Guizhou province.[27] Combined, the two versions lend authority to claims of consanguine bonds

between the Hmub and Kam speech communities. However, despite the collaborating editors' invocation of the spirit of 'our' ancestors and their request that readers resist profaning the name of their ancestors, neither one claims responsibility for the content. This paper argues that the textual authority of genealogies is not always located within the confines of its narrowly defined authors. It instead focuses the attention on the broader social processes of authorship when describing how interethnic assertions of a shared consanguinity are present in genealogies written in Chinese, as well as when showing how these interethnic assertions alternately emphasize exclusiveness and relatedness. As a collective writing strategy, authorship in genealogies written in Chinese becomes diffuse and anonymous, while simultaneously asserting a sense of Hmub and Kam from the Chinese state.

Thirdly, drawing from the above examples, anonymous utterances in the other texts need to be considered carefully due to deictic phenomena invented by a pair of anonymous dispositions between the main text and other texts. The anonymous voices in the above three examples are verbalized differently than those in the main text: the accounts of ancestors or patrilineal descent groups invent a strong ideology of patrilineal consanguinity that directly contributes to the textual authority. This ideology is intentional and personalist. Yet, distinctive expressions in the other texts (as well as in the above three examples), carry a nonpersonal, anonymous tone, a nonresponse to authority. Moreover, the anonymous voices in the Liu genealogies possess distinctly different dispositions. The basking genealogy ritual and receiving genealogy text contribute to the authority of the genealogy. But the use of Chinese characters to represent the Hmub phonetic system coexists with the Hmub system of patronymy within the assemblage of the individual Liu descendant names – indications of compromised authority. The result is a shift in the nature of authorship from an overtly collective authority to a covertly diffused anonymity. In other words, the anonymous voices struggle with two dispositions deictically related to the genealogical texts.

The presence of a nonpersonal, anonymous voice in native genealogies is reflected in Du Bois' divination study.[28] Du Bois uses his observations of Azande divination ceremonies to explain the concept of the nonpersonal in language use. Here is the quote originally collected in Azande by Evans-Pritchard:

> Poison oracle, that woman, since I intend to marry her, she is my wife? Poison oracle, listen, kill the fowl. It is not so, mine is the weariness of piercing boils …. I must do without her and may not marry her, poison oracle, listen and spare the fowl.[29]

He reconsiders the personalist ideology of language use[30] by the reluctance of Azande to seek personal or personified sources for meanings derived from divination.

If all linguistic actions are always meaningful, how can we explain the nonpersonal, or anonymous voices, in genealogical construction and texts? Are they products of the imaginations of the Eastern Guizhou Hmub or Kam communities, or their responses to state influences on rituals, mannerisms, and literacy? Once again looking at the use of Chinese written characters with Hmub language patterns in the genealogies, the detachment noted in the original Chinese lexicon and the transformation to Hmub phonetic symbols may be analyzed as processes of detached individuality for communities with collective consanguine values or purposes, especially in terms of Hmub patronymy in the oral narrations of their genealogies. Such characteristics are especially insightful upon discovering that the Hmub naming system is embedded in or

juxtaposed with Hanren/Hanzu generational names and the *ming-hao* double-naming system.

Finally, in light of the discussion on the importance of the Chinese surname as a means for non-Han native groups' Sinicization throughout the imperial history of China,[31] the practice of mimicry does not necessarily lead to assimilation and transformation of the natives into Han; it could be, rather, a significant native practice of appropriating otherness to assert the native self and identity.[32] In this paper, the use of Chinese language in the genealogy as well as the intertextuality as the mimetic process of the native and their assertion of self through alterity[33] suggests that the imagined consanguine community of peripheral Hmub and Kam have found ways to express its local identity, even under the influences of state language use in rituals, mannerisms, and literacy.

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Notes

1. Hmub society is cognate with Hmong, both acting as patrilineal descent groups, including cross cousin marriage and duolocal post-marital residence. Hmub and Hmong have been called Miao in Chinese since the Qing dynasty.
2. [Qing] Xu, *Miaojiang wenjianlu*, 75.
3. According to Taga, these regular items are very common among Chinese written genealogy by different surnames. Taga, *Zhongguo zongpu de yanjiu*, 1.

4. Kam and Hmub have been considered two distinct ethnic groups in East Guizhou since the 1950s. Dou, ji, gong and the household are main structures for the Kam society. Similar to the Hmub, Kam society acts as a patrilineal descent group, including cross cousin marriage and duolocal post-marital residence. Kam has been called Dong in Chinese since the Qing dynasty.
5. The earlier version of the genealogy mentioned that the Liu descent groups lived along the Qingshuijang River. They would commute by boat along the river during early times.
6. Other commonly used terms are *jiapu* 家譜 (family pedigree), *zupu* 族譜 (clan pedigree), and *pudie* 譜牒 (genealogical tree).
7. Taga, *Zhongguo zongpu de yanjiu*, 1.
8. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist*.
9. Pieke, "Genealogical Mentality Modern China," 120.
10. Related works are Blommaert, 'Grassroots Historiography and the Problem of Voice; Faure, "The Lineage as an Invention"; Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*; Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination*; Wilkerson, "Late Imperial Education and Control"; and Wilkerson, "A New Page".
11. *Liu shi zupu*, 115.
12. Parkin, *Kinship*, 26.
13. See note above 9.
14. Duranti, "Units of Participation," 280–330.
15. Ibid.
16. Du Bois, "Meaning without Intention."
17. Holm and Meng, *Hanvueng*.
18. Ding and Zhao, *Zhongguo difangzhi minsu ziliao huibian – Xinanjuan*.
19. Ibid., 473.
20. Ibid., 507.
21. *Liu shi zupu*, dated Guangxu 34 of Qing dynasty.
22. During the Qin empire, the two countries of Qin and Yue were far apart, with one in the northwest, the other in the southeast. The proverb, 'perceived as Qin Yue,' was used to describe a distant relation with no contact.
23. Du Bois, "Meaning without Intention"; Irvine, "Shadow Conversations"; and Keane, "The Spoken House"
24. Silverstein, "Axes of Evals."
25. See note above 16.
26. Du Bois, "Meaning without Intention," 57.
27. As topics for future research I will provide more detail on differences between the late Qing and the 1980s versions of the genealogy. Does the counting of descent in the two versions have the same geographical spread and cross-linguistic/ethnic dimension? Are the anonymous voices and authorship politics in the two versions similar? How do these issues correspond to the historical contexts of the compilation of these genealogies in the late Qing dynasty and the 1980s? These issues seem to be directly related to questions about the nonpersonal plus anonymous voices in these genealogical texts.
28. Du Bois, "Meaning without Intention," 57.
29. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande*, 298.
30. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*; and Searle, *Speech Acts*
31. Wang, "Lun panfu: Jindai Yan-Huang zisun guozu de gudai jichu."
32. Cheung, "Appropriating Otherness and the Contention."
33. Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity*.

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