1. The Han-chi (漢紀), which comprises 30 chüan (卷), was written by Hsün Yüeh (荀悅) during the Eastern Han (東漢) dynasty (25-220 A.D.). Since the Jen-tsung (仁宗) reign period (1023-1063 A.D.) of the Northern Sung (北宋) dynasty (960-1127 A.D.), no good editions of this work are in extent. Later editions, such as the three block-printed editions of the Ming (明) dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.), the collated edition by the Chiang (蔣) family of Hsiang-p'ing (襄平) county, and the reprint of the Hsüeh-hai T'ang (學海堂) of Canton (廣東) during the Ch'ing (清) dynasty (1644-1911 A.D.), are far from perfect. In this paper, the author attempts to collate the text of the first chüan in detail, using the methodology of textual criticism as described in his supervisor, Professor Wang Shu-min's (王叔岷) A Study of Textual Criticism (校點學). This is a convenient unit for textual study as the whole of this chüan is concerned with events during the reign of Duke P'ei (沛公).

2. In this study, the master copy used for collation is the facsimile block-printed edition of the Chia-ching (嘉靖) reign period (1522-1566) in the Ming Dynasty, published by Huang Chi-shui (黃姬水), preserved in the Hsiao lu-tien.
Library of the Sun (孫) family, and now included in the Ssu-pu t'sung-k'an (四部叢刊). This text is further checked against the Hsüeh-hai T'ang edition of the Kuang-hsü (光緒) reign period (1875-1908) and Cheng Kuo-hsun's (鄭國勳) revised edition in the Lung-ch'i ching-she t'sung-shu (龍谿精舍叢書), of the Republican (民國) period (1912-1949). These are the only supplementary texts available to the author in Singapore.

3. Previous Studies on this text include Chiang Kuo-tso's (將國祚) Liang-Han-chi tzu-chü i-t'ung-kao (兩漢紀字句異同考), Ch'en P'ü's (陳璞) Liang-Han-chi chiao-chi (兩漢紀校記), Niu Yung-chien's (鈕永建) Ch'ien-Han-chi chiao-shih (前漢紀校釋). Though these works are brief the author has also consulted them for reference.

4. Generally speaking, Hsün Yüeh's Han-chi was an abridgement of the Han-shu (漢書). On the other hand, the historical events of the early Western Han (西漢) period (206 B.C. - 8 A.D.) recorded in the Han-shu were taken from the Shi-chi (史記), whereas the Tzu-chih t'ung-chien (貢治通鑑) took its record of the Former Han (前漢) dynasty from the Shih-chi, Han-shu and Han-chi. Thus, the most important sources related to this study are the Shi-chi, Han-shu and Tzu-chih t'ung-chien.
5. In general, when dealing with the historical events of the Western Han period, ancient annotations or encyclopaedias cited their sources from the Shih-chi, Han-shu, but not from the Han-chi. Therefore, in this study, the author's references are taken not only from the Han-chi, but also from the Shi-chi and the Han-shu. Although Chao Jui's (趙 霕) Ch'ang-tuan ching (長短經) of the T'ang (唐) dynasty (618-907 A.D.) is found among "miscellaneous books" in the Ssu-k'u (四庫), it quotes profusely from ancient texts. As it quotes either openly from the Shi-chi, Han-shu, or unobtrusively from the Han-chi, this paper has in many places, made the best use of it.

6. In the course of collating the Han-chi, the author has also consulted numerous secondary supporting sources which can be found in the bibliography appended to this thesis.