

## REVIEW ARTICLE

# The Authenticity and Nature of the *Analects* of Confucius\*

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The *Analects* are among the rare Chinese books that have been classified as *hors classe*, or *qishu* 奇書 (extraordinary books), together with some others like the *Zhuangzi* 莊子. There seems to be something like a literary “voice” of the Master *and of some of his disciples*, in this book, a rare and elusive stylistic quality that in this case awakes and inspires a philosophical *wenxin* 文心 (literary heart) in readers past and present. One is left with a lasting curiosity concerning the social, intellectual, and dramatic contexts of these “compiled confabulations.”<sup>1</sup> Clues are intriguingly few. Uncertainties prevail. We have here a subtly exciting book that deserves a literate, subtly exciting translation.

The beautifully produced volume here under review<sup>2</sup> was published as the twenty-eighth volume in a series of bilingual translations from classical Chinese published in recent times by Les Belles Lettres in Paris. Jean Lévi, the translator,

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\* A Review of Jean Lévi, *Les deux arbres de la voie*. Vol. 2, *Les Entretiens de Confucius* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2018). I owe a great debt of gratitude to Jens Østergaard Petersen for his generous professional advice on this review.

<sup>1</sup> One type of authenticity question is whether we have here what Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin called literary *orkestrivka* (orchestration, character choreography) or indeed traces of diverse personal character. See Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel,” in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, edited by Michael Holquist and translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 372. This book contains four essays that originally appeared in *Voprosy literaturny i estetiki* (Moscow, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> Les Belles Lettres have produced bilingual Chinese-French annotated editions of twenty-five classical works in a series edited by Anne Cheng, Marc Kalinowski, and now also by Stéfane Feuillas. All these, like the carefully annotated French translations of classical works in the prestigious *Éditions de la Pléiade* (which we owe to the initiative of the inimitable Étienne),

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has earlier published translations of the *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 (1999), *Sunzi* 孫子 (2002), *Shangjunshu* 商君書 (2005), *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (2006), *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子 (2008), *Laozi* 老子 (2009), *Yantielun* 鹽鐵論 (2010), and *Wenzi* 文子 (2012).

For the *Analects*, there is a general Introduction, a very brief and utterly unambitious traditional chronological summary of some more or less datable events in the life of Confucius according to some late sources. Next there is the annotated translation of the *Analects*, conveniently facing the Chinese text. All this is followed by an Appendix entitled “L’authenticité des *Entretiens* de Confucius” (The authenticity of the *Analects* of Confucius; pp. 144–219).

For Jean Lévi, the all-important feature of Confucius is his role as an educator with empathy for the individual features of his disciples. This is the subject of an important longish essay that must serve as a crucial supplement to the present edition.<sup>3</sup>

## I. Translation

Lévi’s translation does not aim to be literal. It is thus disappointing to those who seek a crib of the text which makes it explicit how each word of the text is to be taken. This translation represents a literary take rather than an annotated philological study. Jean Lévi aspires to present in witty, literate French the essence of what is being said in the *Analects*. The result is a lively and defiantly subjective literary appropriation of the book by a connoisseur of classical Chinese culture. There is nothing banal about the *Analects*. And Jean Lévi’s book offers an escape from translation banality. The

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(Note 2—Continued)

are almost universally disregarded in mainstream anglophone sinology. (For example, on the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, John S. Major et al. seem unaware of the very often superior translation by Charles Le Blanc and Rémi Mathie.) I mention in passing that also L. S. Perelomov’s 590-page chaotic but entertaining study of the *Analects* in Russian (*Konfutsii: Lun’ Iui* [Confucius: “The *Analects*”], Moscow: Vostochnaya literatura, 1998) seems never mentioned or even dismissed as irrelevant in the literature on Confucius, nor is there ever any discussion of the important section “Принципы перевода” (Principles of translation), in V. M. Alekseev, “A New Method and Style for Translations from the Ancient Chinese Classics” (in Russian), in idem, *Китайская литература* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), pp. 417–98, which contains a translation of the first two books of the *Analects* and of Zhu Xi’s 朱熹 commentaries, with no less than 322 philological footnotes by Alekseev. On Alekseev (1881–1951), see Christoph Harbsmeier, “Vasilii Mikhailovich Alekseev and Russian Sinology,” *T’oung Pao* 97, fasc. 4/5 (2011), pp. 344–70.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Lévi, *Le petit monde du Tchouang-tseu* (Paris: Philippe Picquier, 2010), pp. 35–98: *Confucius ou la pédagogie*. See perhaps also *Confucius* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2002), one of the nine novels published by Jean Lévi so far.

book is often thoughtful, always provocative, at too many times plain careless, but entertaining and exciting throughout. Below, I shall compare this new translation with some modern authoritative “reference translations” that I have most often been told to rely on over the years.

The first principle of Jean Lévi’s translation is brisk leanness of style emulating the conciseness of the classical Chinese.

1. 子曰：「以約失之者，鮮矣！」(4.23)

Lévi: “Rares sont ceux qui pêchent par retenue.”

Slingerland: “Very few go astray who comport themselves with restraint.”

Brevity is of the essence everywhere, for Ezra Pound as for Jean Lévi. Throughout, Lévi tries hard to follow George Orwell’s advice: “If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.”<sup>4</sup> And I do believe Lévi would manage to transpose this into a more pleasing French equivalent of “If you can cut a word, do!” Even Homer nods. Jean Lévi nods rarely on racy brevity.

At crucial elementary points Jean Lévi tries to make subtle but actually substantial progress. For *zi yue* 子曰 (the Master said), he has everywhere the more adequate *le Maître a dit* (the Master has said), just as V. M. Alekseev has the perfective *сказал* and certainly not *говорил*. Both writers try to capture in their languages *en passant* an important feature of what is going on in *Lunyu*.<sup>5</sup> Ever since I have seen this translation, I cannot remember how we would ever all have acquiesced in “the Master said” without considering “the Master has said” as a seriously interesting alternative. The present perfect tense suggests that what Confucius said is, after all, still in effect; *le Maître a dit* would speak from the perspective of disciples aspiring to regulate themselves on what they took to be the Master’s voice. One may want to disagree. But Jean Lévi has an important point for discussion.

It is constructive to compare Lévi’s idiomatic psychologizing French with the sinological English:

<sup>4</sup> See George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language” (first published 1946), in *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, vol. 4 (London: Secker and Warburg, 1968), p. 139.

<sup>5</sup> Alekseev, *Китайская литература*, p. 430, also argues for translating *zi yue* 子曰 as “Он сказал” (He said) as correct for the time of the composition of the text as opposed to the later Confucianist traditions. His thoughtful translation is everywhere alive to *Lunyu as literature* with what Dostoevsky would have called *sobstvennye slova* (phrases all of its own). (See the opening paragraphs of Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*.)

2. 子曰：「仁遠乎哉？我欲仁，斯仁至矣。」(7.31)

Lévi: “Le bien, est-il loin de nous? Il suffit d’y aspirer pour qu’il soit là.”

Slingerland: “Is Goodness really so far away? If I simply desire Goodness, I will find that it is already here.”

Ames and Rosemont: “How could authoritative conduct (*ren* 仁) be at all remote? No sooner do I seek it than it has arrived.”

D. C. Lau: “Is benevolence really far away? No sooner do I desire it than it is here.”

Pierre Ryckmans: “La vertu suprême est-elle vraiment inaccessible? Je désire la vertu suprême—et la vertu suprême est là.”

Yang Bojun 楊伯峻：「仁德難道離我們很遠嗎？我要它，它就來了。」

Yang Fengbin 楊逢彬：「仁德離我們很遠嗎？我要仁德，它就來了。」

None of the other translators have noticed the rudeness and impertinence of the idea of Confucius claiming for *himself* (as opposed to others) such instantaneous access to *ren* 仁. Lévi hits the mark with his “It suffices to aspire to Goodness for it to be there.” *Wo* 我 is not a first-person pronoun here. It works like French *on*, German *man*, English *one*, or the impersonal English *you*, here as so often elsewhere. “We” will not do, for Confucius is not saying that “we Confucians” have this privilege any more than “we Chinese” or any other we-group opposed to any “others.” His reference is general and abstract. Ancient Chinese commentators were already aware of this feature of *wo* 我 and took care to gloss it as *ji* 己.<sup>6</sup>

3. 子曰：「予欲無言。」(17.19)

Lévi: “J’aimerais ne plus parler.”

D. C. Lau: “I am thinking of giving up speech.”

Ames and Rosemont: “I think I will leave off speaking.”

Slingerland sees the problem and simply rewrites the text: “The Master sighed, ‘Would that I did not have to speak!’”

The Master is using *yu* 欲 in an interesting subjunctive sense which Lévi’s translation captures gracefully.

At points, Lévi is scandalously careless, as when he emphatically mistakes Zilu’s name for Zigong’s:

<sup>6</sup> See Christoph Harbsmeier, “Xunzi and the Problem of Impersonal First Person Pronouns,” *Early China* 22 (1997), pp. 181–220; He Moye 何莫邪 (Christoph Harbsmeier), “Zhao Qi he Hanyu kouyu de lishi” 趙岐和漢語口語的歷史, in *Hanyu shumianyu de lishi yu xianzhuang* 漢語書面語的歷史與現狀, ed. Feng Shengli 馮勝利 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2013), pp. 117–25.

4. 子曰：「由！知德者鮮矣。」(15.4)

Lévi: “Mon petit Zigong, rares sont ceux qui savent ce qu’est la vertu.”

Slingerland: “Zilu! Rare are those able to understand Virtue.”

Even here, when we find him at his worst, Lévi is trying to bring out the force of addressing someone *not* by his name, but by the personal name in his translation.

Even when Jean Lévi makes his egregious mistakes, there is much to learn from him.

The names You 由 and Zilu 子路 refer to one and the same person. But the styles of reference are as different in classical Chinese as they are in Russian novels. With his mistranslation “Mon petit Zigong” Lévi does bring out a crucial nuance. The *Analects* are literature. These overtones in appellations matter a great deal. Just as for the narrator Dostoevsky in *Crime and Punishment*, it matters that Raskolnikov is Raskolnikov, for his mother and sister is normally Rodya, and under special circumstances even Rodka, but for the stranger in his room, and lover of his sister Dunya, Raskolnikov clearly has to be Rodion Romanovich and nothing else. These overtones (*obertony* in the language of Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin) matter a great deal to the translator of *Crime and Punishment*. They ought to matter to any competent translator of the *Analects*, if by any chance he is aiming to translate and recreate the *Analects* in English, and *as literature*.

Lévi is clearly erratic in the implementation of his valuable insights:

5. 子曰：「片言可以折獄者，其由也與？」子路無宿諾。(12.12)

Lévi: “Zilu, n’est-il pas l’unique personne que je connaisse qui puisse trancher un procès en n’ayant entendu qu’un seul son de cloche.” Zilu ne remettait jamais, fût-ce d’un seul jour, l’exécution d’une promesse.

Slingerland: “Able to decide a criminal case after only hearing one side—does this not describe Zilu?” Zilu never put off fulfillment of a promise until the next day.

Simon Leys (pseudonym of Pierre Ryckmans): “To pass judgment on the mere basis of half the evidence: only Zilu can do that.” Zilu never slept over a promise.

“Only hearing one side” in a criminal case is certainly not something Confucius would have commended Zilu for. *Piyanan* 片言 is “a snippet of words,” and Zilu is commended for having a “sixth sense,” recognizing guilt intuitively at once, on the basis of tone and manner of speech, and acting immediately upon his insight. It is this swiftness of decisive action that unites this passage.

6. 子曰：「人而不仁，如禮何？人而不仁，如樂何？」(3.3)

Lévi: “À quoi sert le Rite sans la bonté? À quoi sert la Musique sans la bonté?”

D. C. Lau: “What can a man do with the rites who is not benevolent? What can a man do with music who is not benevolent?”

The French brings out the essence of this idiomatically, whereas the English remains opaque: one asks oneself what it would mean to “do something” with rites and music.

7. 曾子曰：「慎終追遠，民德歸厚矣。」(1.9)

Lévi: “La vertu du peuple s’accroît en proportion des soins mis à servir les défunts.”

D. C. Lau: “Conduct the funeral of your parents with meticulous care and let not sacrifices to your remote ancestors be forgotten, and the virtue of the common people will incline towards fullness.”

One can see where “incline towards fullness” comes from, and one is used to this kind of language in sinological English, but it makes no proper sense. The French captures the essence. D. C. Lau’s translation brings up all the elements in the original, but does not see those who mourn and those whose virtue grows as the same, creating a sense of mystery (rulers mourn, their people become virtuous?). Lévi overcomes all this with ease.

The difference is consistent:

8. 子曰：「不患人之不己知，患不知人也。」(1.16)

Lévi: “On doit moins se tourmenter d’être incompris des hommes que de ne pas les comprendre.”

D. C. Lau: “It is not the failure of others to appreciate your abilities that should trouble you, but rather your failure to appreciate theirs.”

The English sets up an alternative whereas the brisk French gets the essential point which is understanding “not so much” *instead of* “not the failure.” This general semantic problem is recurrent.

9. 子曰：「溫故而知新，可以為師矣。」(2.11)

Lévi: “Seul peut enseigner celui qui, à rassasser l’ancien, découvre du nouveau.”

D. C. Lau: “A man is worthy of being a teacher who gets to know what is new by keeping fresh in his mind what he is already familiar with.”

The plain French has the correct “discovers something new” for “gets to know what is new.” Again, the racy French *rassasser* captures the relevant nuance, and again the French greatly improves on the lame “what he is already familiar with” for *gu* 故. The English loses all the excitement of the Chinese predicament as inheriting and building on tradition.

10. 子曰：「〈關雎〉，樂而不淫，哀而不傷。」(3.20)

Lévi: “Ah! «L’Apel des pétrels»! Plaisir sans licence, tristesse sans affliction.”

D. C. Lau: “In the *Kuan chü* there is joy but not to the extent of wantonness, and sorrow but not to the extent of self-injury.”

The wordiness of the English gets in the way of the communicative force of the whole. The meaning of *shang* 傷 derives from the basic meaning of “to injure,” but in a context like this it plainly means nothing of the kind. We have here a typical case of a derived abstract meaning for which the French *affliction* is better than the English “affliction” would have been. *Tristesse* hits the subtle mark here, where the basic meaning *ai* 哀 is indeed irrelevant.

11. 子曰：「苟志於仁矣，無惡也。」(4.4)

Lévi: “Qui aspire de toutes ses forces au bien sera sans défaut.”

D. C. Lau: “If a man were to set his heart on benevolence, he would be free from evil.”

*Gou* 苟, “if really” (standard old gloss *cheng* 誠), does *not* make counterfactual sentences. The French captures the intensitive force of the particle without having to be painfully or prosaically literal. Moreover, Lévi frees us from the implications of “evil” with his “defaut,” as does, by the way, Yang Bojun with his *huaichu* 壞處.

12. 子曰：「朝聞道，夕死可矣！」(4.8)

Lévi: “Qui le matin a connu la Voie, peut mourir heureux le soir même.”

Ames and Rosemont: “If at dawn you learn of and tread the way (*dao* 道), you can face death at dusk.”

“Learn of and tread” is less than felicitous, and the ability to face death precisely at dusk is not at all the issue in this passage. “That very evening” is clearly what is called for here. The French sorts it all out memorably. From the French one can easily imagine how hundreds of phrases from the *Analects* have become proverbial in Chinese, here as so often.

13. 子曰：「放於利而行，多怨。」(4.12)

Lévi: “La recherche de l’intérêt personel attise le ressentiment.”

Ames and Rosemont: “To act with an eye to personal profit will incur a lot of resentment.”

The French is brief and lively whereas the English makes one reflect on such trivial questions as whether “acting” would not perhaps have been better here instead of “to



act.” The colloquial “a lot of” translates an adverbial *duo* 多 (in many cases) which is elegantly packed into the concise French *attise*.

As I move through the translations of the shortest apothegms in the *Lunyu* I can find, I now turn to the authoritative translation that has been most recommended to me: Slingerland’s *Confucius Analects*.

14. 子遊曰：「事君數，斯辱矣；朋友數，斯疏矣。」(4.26)

Lévi: “La fréquentation trop assidue des princes est cause de disgrâce; celle des amis, d’éloignement.”

Slingerland: “Being overbearing in service to a lord will lead to disgrace, while in relating to friends and companions it will lead to estrangement.”

The French is plain, sentential, and concise where the English is less than memorable.

15. 子謂公冶長，「可妻也。雖在縲紲之中，非其罪也。」以其子妻之。(5.1)

Lévi: “Voici un garçon qui ferait un bon mari; certes, il est allé en prison, mais il était innocent.” Il lui accorda la main de sa fille.

Slingerland: “He is marriageable. Although he was once imprisoned as a criminal, he was in fact innocent of any crime.” The Master gave him his daughter in marriage.

The French is lively and elegant, and it explains the underlying context of age very well, where the English is awkward, wordy, and prosaic. The word “marriageable” is exactly the wrong thoughtless word to use for a prospective son-in-law.

16. 子曰：「伯夷叔齊，不念舊惡，怨是用希。」(5.23)

Lévi: “Oublieux de l’opprobre subi, Boyi et Shuqi avaient peu de motifs de ressentiment.”

Slingerland: “Bo Yi and Shu Qi did not harbor grudges. For this reason, they aroused little resentment.”

The French is transparent on the background of Boyi and Shuqi and sorts out whose resentment is at issue. One notes in passing that this is also how Yang Bojun translates it (and it would be instructive to explore the influence of Yang Bojun on selected English translations and indeed on later translations into modern Chinese).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For a greatly improved version of Yang Bojun, *Lunyu yizhu* 論語譯注 (Beijing: Guji chubanshe, 1958), see now Yang Fengbin, *Lunyu xinzhu xinyi* 論語新注新譯, ed. Chen Yunhao 陳雲豪 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2016). Yang Fengbin’s new work is based on well-documented and detailed grammatical analysis. It would merit an in-depth critical review in its own right.



17. 子曰：「雍也可使南面。」(6.1)

Lévi: “Yong, je le verrais bien à un poste de commandement.”

Slingerland: “Zhonggong can be given a position facing south.”

Note the familiarity of address in the personal name “Yong,” preserved in the French. It works a little like “our friend Yong.” The “facing south” in the English would need a footnote.

18. 子曰：「人之生也直，罔之生也幸而免。」(6.17)

Lévi: “L’homme vit par droiture; sans elle il ne vit que par chance.”

Slingerland: “A person survives by being upright. If you try leading a crooked life, only blind luck will allow you to get by.”

Crisp brevity is of the essence in this passage, but its energy is lost in the English. Lévi sees *wang* 罔 as a negation, just as Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) does, and hears a pause after *wang zhi* 罔之, which Liu Baonan 劉寶楠 (1791–1855) agrees is possible. Slingerland follows the standard reading, along with Yang Bojun, but loses Confucius by treating morality as an instrument.

19. 子曰：「知之者不如好之者，好之者不如樂之者。」(6.18)

Lévi: “La connaître ne vaut pas la chérir ni la chérir y trouver son bonheur.”

Slingerland: “One who knows it is not the equal of one who loves it, and one who loves it is not the equal of one who takes joy in it.”

The lively *variatio* in Lévi’s text and the thought-provoking feminine article *la* contrast with the pedestrian English that does not invite or inspire much reflection.

20. 子之燕居，申申如也，夭夭如也。(7.4)

Lévi: “En privé le Maître était détendu et bon enfant.”

Slingerland: “In his leisure moments, the Master was composed and yet fully at ease.”

“In private” in the French takes into account that this saying is not just about moments, leisure, or otherwise. This is clearly about how the Master behaved when he was not teaching disciples or counselling rulers.

21. 子曰：「甚矣吾衰也！久矣吾不復夢見周公！」(7.5)

Lévi: “Affreux! Je décline! Voilà bien longtemps que le duc de Zhou n’apparaît dans mes rêves.”

Slingerland: “How seriously I have declined! It has been so long since I last dreamt of meeting the Duke of Zhou.”

The stiffness of the English becomes painful when held up against the lively French. One can easily imagine how *shen* 甚 was looked up in the dictionary, how one of the meanings listed up there was selected, and how this was made to serve as a translation. The English makes no attempt to create a plausible context for this passage.

22. 子曰：「學如不及，猶恐失之。」(8.17)

Lévi: “L’étude repose sur la crainte de ne pas être à la hauteur et la hantise d’oublier.”

Slingerland: “Learn as if you will never catch up, and as if you feared losing what you have already attained.”

The French focus on a fear of not being “up to it” captures the essential point of this saying. “Catching up” (with whom?) is not the issue.

23. 子罕言利，與命，與仁。(9.1)

Lévi: “Le Maître associait rarement dans ses propos le profit avec le destin ou avec la bonté.”

Slingerland: “The Master openly [Slingerland reads *han* 罕 as *xuan* 軒, one of the basic senses of which is “open, wide”] expressed his views on profit, the Heavenly Mandate, and Goodness.”

The text is problematic, but at least the French makes an honest original effort.

24. 子絕四：毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我。(9.4)

Lévi: “Le Maître avait banni quatre epression de son vocabulaire: ‘je suppose’, ‘nécessairement’, ‘je m’y tiens’, et ‘moi, je’.”

Slingerland: “The Master was entirely free of four faults: arbitrariness, inflexibility, rigidity, and selfishness.”

The French brings out the drama of this piece of opaque and tight literate Chinese prose, offering, as it does, a plausible interpretation which differs from the standard Yang Bojun interpretation that is here rendered in English.

25. 子曰：「鳳鳥不至，河不出圖，吾已矣夫！」(9.9)

Lévi: “Les jeux sont faits! Le phénix n’est pas descendu, le fleuve Jaune n’a pas présenté la Charte.”

Slingerland “The phoenix has not appeared, the [Yellow] River has not produced its chart—it is all over for me, is it not?”

The French is idiomatic where the English is pedestrian prose (is it not?).

26. 子在川上，曰：「逝者如斯夫！不舍晝夜。」(9.17)

Lévi: Contemplant une fleuve depuis la rive, le Maître dit: “Tout passe comme cette eau; rien ne s’arrête ni jour ni nuit.”

Slingerland: “Look at how it flows on like this, never stopping day or night!”

Even Ryckmans gets nothing out of this: “Oh! aller ainsi de l’avant, sans trêve, jour et nuit.”

Lévi indulges in a touch of Heraclitus here. Misleading as it is, it is also thought-provoking: What exactly *was* Confucius getting at here?

27. 子曰：「語之而不惰者，其回也與！」(9.20)

Lévi: “Qi d’autre que Yan Hui buvait mes paroles sans se lasser?”

Slingerland: “One with whom I could discourse without his growing weary—was this not Yan Hui?”

The English does not capture the semantics of *duo* 惰 (be remiss in the practice of it).

28. 子曰：「三軍可奪帥也，匹夫不可奪志也。」(9.26)

Lévi: “Il est plus aisé de s’emparer du commandant d’une armée que de la résolution d’un pauvre hère.”

Singerland: “The three armies can have their general taken from them by force, but even a commoner cannot be deprived of his will in this fashion.”

The “three armies” mean nothing to the Western reader. “Commoner” is lame, and one notices what one is missing out when one compares the lively “pauvre hère.”

29. 入太廟，每事問。(10.14)

Lévi: “Chaque fois qu’il pénétrait dans le grand temple ancestral, il se montrait curieux de tout.”

Slingerland: “Upon entering the Grand Ancestral Temple, he asked questions about everything.”

The triviality of the English is patent: how irritating to imagine all these questions. The French gets to the nerve of things: Confucius is curious about things. Nothing irritating about that.

30. 子曰：「回也非助我者也，於吾言無所不說。」(11.4)

Lévi: “Yan Hui ne me stimulait guère: il buvait toutes mes paroles.”

Slingerland: “Yan Hui is of no help to me—he is pleased with everything that I say.”

The French delicately specifies the kind of help involved, and the French reproduces the lively syntax of the second part. There is nothing wrong with the English, except that it has nothing memorable. Here is how Lévi would write in English: “Yan Hui is no help! Whatever I say, he eats it raw!”

31. 顏淵死。子曰：「噫！天喪予！天喪予！」(11.9)

Lévi: “Le Ciel me tue! Le Ciel me tue!”

Slingerland: “Oh! Heaven has bereft me! Heaven has bereft me!”

Ryckmans: “Hélas! Le Ciel m’anéantit. Le Ciel m’anéantit!”

The English misses the urgent drama and gives an awkward historical description instead. It makes one wonder what exactly it is that Heaven has “bereft” Confucius of.

32. 曾子曰：「君子以文會友，以友輔仁。」(12.24)

Lévi: “La culture attire les amis, les amis concourent à la bonté.”

Slingerland: “The gentleman acquires friends by means of cultural refinement, and then relies upon his friends for support in becoming Good.”

The pedestrian English makes the gentleman look acquisitive, who then gains support. The dense French is memorable, and the “gentleman” is gently taken to be *understood*.

33. 子曰：「以不教民戰，是謂棄之。」(13.30)

Lévi: “Ne pas former un peuple au combat, c’est l’abandonner.”

Slingerland: “Leading people who have not been instructed into battle—this is called, ‘throwing them away.’”

The English gets the subject of *jiao* 教 (exercise, train). One does wonder what by whom would be called “throwing the people away.”

34. 子曰：「其言之不怍，則為之也難。」(14.20)

Lévi: “Les promesses indues sont difficilement tenues.”

Slingerland: “If you are shameless in what you propose, you may then find it difficult to put your words into practice.”

The French is brisk and clear, and settles confidently for a current meaning of *yan* 言, where the English is painfully prosaic with its completely unmotivated “may.”

35. 子路問事君。子曰：「勿欺也，而犯之。」(14.22)

Lévi: “Plutôt le heurter que l’abuser.”

Slingerland: “Do not deceive him. Oppose him openly.”

The English might seem perfectly correct, until one reflects on what it says. The French is sound advice, adding the essential *plutôt* (rather) which is clearly understood in the Chinese.

36. 子曰：「君子恥其言而過其行。」(14.27)

Lévi: “L’homme noble vit dans la crainte que ses actes ne soient pas à la hauteur des ses discours.”

Slingerland: “The gentleman is ashamed to have his words exceed his actions.”

One has to guess how words are supposed to exceed actions in the English. *Chi* 恥 is indeed not “be ashamed” of not living up to one’s words/promises, but the special kind of fear of coming to fail to live up to them.

37. 子曰：「不患人之不己知，患其不能也。」(14.30; a similar saying is also found in 1.16)

Lévi: “Plutôt que de se lamenter de ne pas être reconnu, il faut déplorer de ne pas posséder les capacités pour l’être.”

“Do not worry that you are not recognized by others; worry rather that you yourself lack ability.”

Here again, I feel the English fails to get the crucial nuance of the *plutôt*, which seems to involve something of a “not so much” that is absent in the English translation. But here as everywhere else I may be wrong: my comments here are only offered for critical consideration.

38. 子曰：「上好禮，則民易使也。」(14.41)

Lévi: “Que le prince prise les rites et le peuple sera facile à gouverner.”

Slingerland: “If those above love ritual, then the common people will be easy to manage.”

The English fails to record what is being recommended here.

39. 子曰：「眾惡之，必察焉；眾好之，必察焉。」(15.28)

Lévi: “Une exécution unanime demande à être vérifiée, une adulation unanime aussi.”

Slingerland: “When the multitude hates a person, you must examine them and judge for yourself. The same holds true for someone whom the multitude love.”

The English is desperately prosaic (and why should the multitude be examined anyway—that surely is not the point at issue) where the French is quick, literate, and fluent.

40. 子曰：「當仁不讓於師。」(15.36)

Lévi: “Le bien doit avoir le pas même sur le maître.”

Slingerland: “When it comes to being Good, defer to no one, not even your teacher.”

Here the English does get the meaning but takes far too much time over it.

41. 子曰：「道不同，不相為謀。」(15.40)

Lévi: “On ne fait pas des projets en commun quand les principes divergent.”

Slingerland: “Do not take counsel with those who follow a different Way.”

The English reads an injunction into this, and it refers to the inscrutable Way, where the French captures the path from the generalizing description to the injunction on the one hand and, at the same time, brings out the precise force of *dao* 道 in contexts like these: “*principes*” is plain French talk where “Way” passes the hermeneutic buck to the unsuspecting, innocent English reader.

42. 子夏曰：「小人之過也必文。」(19.8)

Lévi: “Il est dans la nature de l’homme de peu d’enrober ses fautes.”

Slingerland: “When a petty person commits a transgression, he is sure to gloss it over.”

“Committing a transgression” is a fine example of the kind of sinological *mot-à-mot* which even Nabokov eschews in spite of the deep truth in this apothegm that I have heard attributed to him: “If it doesn’t sound like a translation it is treason.” There is something treasonous, indeed, in the very Frenchness and brisk, racy literacy of all of Jean Lévi’s translations I have discussed here. Lévi does not confront us with the challenge of the deep otherness of Chinese thought. This is what Alekseev attempts more of.

When the Chinese is memorable (and in fact even when the Chinese isn’t!), Lévi looks for a memorable translation:

43. 子曰：「巧言令色，鮮矣仁！」(1.3)

Lévi: “Phrases bien tournées et airs charmeurs riment rarement avec bon coeur.”

D. C. Lau: “It is rare, indeed, for a man with cunning words and an ingratiating countenance to be benevolent.”

Alekseev, *Китайская литература* (Chinese literature), p. 433: “ловкая речь, умелая мина - редко в них истинно-человеческое.” Let me try to translate: “Cunning speech and crafty face—rarely is there the truly human(e) in these.” One takes in “*bon coeur*” as fair enough. But the “truly human(e)” is left in the translation as a foreign element, a conceptual challenge, unresolved.

Essentially, the above short examples must speak for themselves. My non-native speaker comments on English and French style must be taken with a very substantial pinch of salt.

In the authoritative English versions quoted above I find everywhere some singular literary listlessness of what is going on in the *Analects*. And by contrast, quixotic as he is all over the place, Jean Lévi’s translation strikes me as aesthetically alive throughout. He offers us literate French prose, rather than any French variety of the peculiar genre “sinological *translationese*.” Jean Lévi is mindful of George Orwell’s intuition that bad ideas are the bedfellows of bad prose. That having been said, there is tremendous merit to the literal *mot-à-mot*. Couvreur’s kitchen Latin paraphrases are invaluable treasures for the study of the *Analects*. But his fluent French translations are not then awkward French versions of his splendidly useful kitchen Latin.<sup>8</sup>

I remember David Hawkes telling us, one late afternoon, after class, with his impish smile, that he thought translation in the end was really quite straightforward. A translation of any felicitous passage or text, he said, could only be successful to the extent it was itself felicitous in its own right, and in its own way—i.e., to the extent it can be accused of misappropriating the original text. When Gladys Yang politely protested to him that Yang Xianyi’s 楊憲益 and her translation of *The Story of the Stone* was no more than a “mere helpful crib” he swore to me he had felt humbled. Indeed, what had he done to this great Chinese novel! He had appropriated it and transposed it as best he could into his own literary, very *English* literary, anglophone mode, complete with London cockney accents for the servants and all the rest of it. I have always found this profoundly moving. But I mention it here because Jean Lévi, for his part, certainly has appropriated the *Analects*, and he has produced an erratically beautiful quixotic piece of very *French* literary prose that is quite as much Jean Lévi as it is *The Analects*. I suppose, his translation has to be read together with his novel entitled *Confucius*. And one all too easily forgives him for his inaccuracies and

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<sup>8</sup> I borrow the disrespectful phrase “kitchen Latin” from Alekseev whose Russian was surely inspired by the German *Küchenlatein* of my youth.



insouciances, simply because one happens to be reading a very entertaining French book of translation. A book one may indeed be tempted to offer to one's mother-in-law as an excuse for being so interested in ancient Chinese intellectual history. The thing is brisk and intensely readable as well as helpful, without being loquacious in its annotation. Lévi should perhaps have translated with the quaint archaizing elegance and exactitude of an Eduard Chavannes.<sup>9</sup> But Jean Lévi is not a Chavannes, and the *Analects* are much more robust and lyrically exciting than the *Shiji* 史記. It seems to me that the *Analects* do call for a lively translator like Jean Lévi to be brought to life for the modern reader—or indeed for a less quixotically pugnacious and more mildly literate translator like Burton Watson. In Burton Watson's *The Analects of Confucius*, I find none at all of that of that peculiar sinological listlessness that I have sadly diagnosed above. He does not write English like an anglophone Eduard Chavannes redivivus, but he writes with an elegant light touch all of his own and with a modest and lively classical grace that is deeply loyal to the overtones and undercurrents in the *Analects*, without any of the intellectual and stylistic poetic belligerence that gives a special kind of life to Jean Lévi's text.<sup>10</sup>

For the philologists and the specialists, Jean Lévi's book is nowhere more directly acrimonious, adversarial, and polemical than in its 66-page Appendix on authenticity. Here, Jean Lévi takes on extensive current scholarship by Michael Hunter and many others who would suggest that the book we know as the *Analects* was a Han-dynasty didactic compilation of the first century B.C. Jean Lévi begs to disagree. His Appendix argues aggressively that all the “negationist” arguments are fundamentally flawed and must be rejected: “I undertake to demonstrate, against recent tendencies in American sinology, that the *Analects* of Confucius are not be belated elaboration, fruit of a selection of bits and pieces picked up in the literature extant at the times of Emperor Wu of Han (r. 141–87)” (p. 147, my translation). Jean Lévi means to demonstrate that the *Analects* are much more than a Confucian *petit livre rouge avant la lettre* of Emperor Wu of Han's 漢武帝 time.

There is no point in rehearsing and evaluating here all the detailed points raised in this Appendix. We must wait patiently for the Michael Hunter's detailed response to Lévi's challenge.

<sup>9</sup> One notes with pleasure how Jacques Pimpaneau's *Vies de chinois illustres* (Paris: Librairie You Feng, 2009) tries to improve on the Grand Master Chavannes in a fluent modern spirit. Pimpaneau's many works on Chinese literary culture have this in common that they are immensely readable and accessible. They are not sinological marginalia, excrescences on the body literary. They tend to integrate Chinese literature into the global French landscape.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Nylan's critical summary of what she considers the most important *Lunyu* translations does not mention Burton Watson's version. See *The Analects: The Simon Leys Translation, Interpretations*, ed. Michael Nylan (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014), pp. lxi–lxii.

Meanwhile, it may be helpful to step back and look at matters from a broader perspective.

## II. The Compositional Nature of the *Analects*

And before entering questions of dating, one must consider the question of *repetition* in the *Analects*. Apart from more indirect echoes, we have at least eleven manifest repetitions in the *Lunyu*. The crucial point is that all of these repetitions are between different chapters, presumably by different authors. I assume a single author would not list the same quotation twice. And there is indeed no repetition within any single chapter. Liu Baonan has already assumed that different disciples wrote separate chapters of the *Analects*: “In the times of Confucius, the various disciples composed records of sayings and actions. They each produced their own chapters, and these chapters are not by one single hand” 當孔子時，諸弟子撰記言行，各自成篇，不出一人之手。<sup>11</sup> Disregarding here the question of dating and authorship by disciples, the decisive insight is that *Lunyu* is a collection of separate individual chapters by different authors. Such is the demonstrable nature of the *Analects* of Confucius.

Four passages from *Lunyu* 1 recur elsewhere in the very short book:

1. 〈學而〉：子曰：「巧言令色，鮮矣仁！」(1.3)  
〈陽貨〉：子曰：「巧言令色，鮮矣仁！」(17.17)
2. 〈學而〉：子曰：「君子不重則不威，學則不固。主忠信，無友不如己者，過則勿憚改。」(1.8)  
〈子罕〉：子曰：「主忠信，毋友不如己者，過則勿憚改。」(9.25)
3. 〈學而〉：子曰：「父在，觀其志；父沒，觀其行；三年無改於父之道，可謂孝矣。」(1.11)  
〈里仁〉：子曰：「三年無改於父之道，可謂孝矣。」(4.20)
4. 〈學而〉：子曰：「不患人之不己知，患不知人也。」(1.16)  
〈憲問〉：子曰：「不患人之不己知，患其不能也。」(14.30)

Again, there are two passages in *Lunyu* 6 and two different passages in *Lunyu* 9 that are repeated elsewhere in no less than four different other chapters of *Lunyu*:

5. 〈雍也〉：哀公問：「弟子孰為好學？」孔子對曰：「有顏回者好學，不遷怒，不貳過。不幸短命死矣！今也則亡，未聞好學者也。」(6.3)  
〈先進〉：季康子問：「弟子孰為好學？」孔子對曰：「有顏回者好學，不幸短命死矣！今也則亡。」(11.7)

<sup>11</sup> Liu Baonan, *Lunyu zhengyi* 論語正義 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), p. 1.

6. 〈雍也〉子曰：「君子博學於文，約之以禮，亦可以弗畔矣夫！」(6.27)  
〈顏淵〉：子曰：「博學於文，約之以禮，亦可以弗畔矣夫！」(12.15)
7. 〈子罕〉：子曰：「吾未見好德如好色者也。」(9.18)  
〈衛靈公〉：子曰：「已矣乎！吾未見好德如好色者也。」(15.13)
8. 〈子罕〉：子曰：「知者不惑，仁者不憂，勇者不懼。」(9.29)  
〈憲問〉：子曰：「君子道者三，我無能焉：仁者不憂，知者不惑，勇者不懼。」子貢曰：「夫子自道也。」(14.28)

None of these repetitions can have been overlooked by the compilers of *Lunyu* who would have known their book by heart. The repetitions, none of which occur within one and the same chapter, prove that the compilers were faced with pre-existing chapters, the textual composition of which they respected faithfully insofar as they resisted any temptation there might have been to cut out obvious explicit repetitions in such a short work. This shows that *Lunyu* is a compilation of independently assembled chapters by sources posing as independent witnesses. We are made to imagine that we have independent witnesses reporting the same sayings by the Master, just as in the case of Martin Luther's *Tischreden*<sup>12</sup> we have independent witnesses reporting the same remarks of the great reformer. The important difference is that in the case of Martin Luther we know so much more about the identity of the witnesses and about their independent records.

In one case it is as if the one chapter quotes the other, adding a Zengzi 曾子 comment:

9. 〈泰伯〉：子曰：「不在其位，不謀其政。」(8.14)  
〈憲問〉：子曰：「不在其位，不謀其政。」曾子曰：「君子思不出其位。」(14.26)

In another case, on the contrary, we might seem to have a highly interesting dramatic elaboration by the Master himself summarized more briefly by a different witness:

10. 〈八佾〉：子入大廟，每事問。或曰：「孰謂鄒人之子知禮乎？入大廟，每事問。」子聞之曰：「是禮也。」(3.15)  
〈鄉黨〉：入太廟，每事問。(10.21)

<sup>12</sup> D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. *Tischreden* (Weimar: Herrman Böhlau Nachfolger, 1912–1921), vol. 6, Index of Words and Concepts, pp. 513–705. For the comparable case of Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, see Chen Rongjie 陳榮捷 (Wing-tsit Chan), *Zhuzi menren* 朱子門人 (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 2007).

Finally, we have an account of the Master marrying off his daughter and an alternative shorter account where the Master is identified as “Confucius” against current practice in *Lunyu*:

11. 〈公冶長〉：子謂南容，「邦有道，不廢；邦無道，免於刑戮。」以其兄之子妻之。(5.2)

〈先進〉：南容三復白圭，孔子以其兄之子妻之。(11.6)

One suspects that in the first case the reporter witness poses as an insider, and in the second he poses as an outsider.

I find that none of the above repetitions can be plausibly or realistically explained in terms of Western Han compilers mechanically copying the same sayings several times into one and the same very short little book promoting Confucianism. I conclude that whoever compiled and edited the *Lunyu* must have confidently expected their readership to have recognized the independent origin of the different chapters of the *Lunyu*. I tend to think that the editors of the *Lunyu* would hardly have been able to imagine—even in their wildest dreams—that anyone could be mindless enough to think that the frequent repetitions in *Lunyu* could be taken to be due to editorial negligence rather than editorial, devoted faithfulness to the repetitive content of their separate *Lunyu*-chapter sources—of whatever date.

### III. The Dating of the *Analects*

First of all, at least four distinct issues must be held apart from each other:

1. What is the likely date of the *material* in the *Lunyu*?
2. What is the likely date of the *compilation of this material* into one book?
3. What is the likely date from which the *Lunyu* was given the title 論語?<sup>13</sup>
4. What is the date from which the *Lunyu* was quoted by its title in the extant literature?

<sup>13</sup> The abbreviation *Lun* 論 for *Lunyu* 論語 is attested in *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 8 (29 “Ren yi fa” 仁義法): *Qie Lun yi jian zhi* 且《論》已見之 (It is already found in *Lunyu*) (*Chunqiu fanlu jiaoshi* 春秋繁露校釋, ed. Yu Shoukui 于首奎, Zhou Guitian 周桂鈿, and Zhong Zhaopeng 鍾肇鵬 [Ji’nan: Shandong youyi chubanshe, 1994], p. 457, see footnote 21 on p. 460 for a detailed discussion) and again in *Chunqiu fanlu* 8 (30 “Bi ren qie zhi” 必仁且知): *Lun zhi suowei* “bu zhi ren” ye zhe 《論》之所謂「不知人」也者 (This is what *Lunyu* calls “not understanding men”) (ibid., p. 463, with footnote 15 on p. 465). For a careful consideration of the interpretation of the book title *Lunyu* 論語 as “compiled (not selected) talk,” see Huang Jingui 黃金貴 and Huang Hongchu 黃鴻初, *Gudai wenhua changshi* 古代文化常識 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2017), p. 480, and for the ways of referring to *Lunyu*, see Jiang Shaoyu 蔣紹愚, *Lunyu yandu* 論語研讀 (Shanghai: Zhong-Xi shuju, 2018), Chap. 1.

Cui Shu 崔述 (1740–1816) paid critical attention to the non-synchronic composite nature of the *Lunyu* anthology as containing earlier and clearly later parts.<sup>14</sup> H. G. Creel noted in 1949<sup>15</sup> that it might be tempting to suspect that perhaps the compilation of the *Analects* did not take place as early as we often suppose, and that perhaps, rather, the *Analects* turn out to be a compilation of Western Han times when the title of the books is first mentioned in the literature.<sup>16</sup>

The traditional reasons for resisting this temptation seemed obvious to everyone.

Ancient books may exist for a long time without being widely quoted or indeed ever mentioned by name before Han times. The *Mozi* 墨子 is just one egregious example. No one dates the *Mozi* to the first mention of the book title *Mozi* 墨子. The *Yili* 儀禮, the first mention of which is in *Lunheng* 論衡, is another relevant case that deserves investigation. Even more interesting is the untitled book *Zhanguo zonghengjia shu* 戰國縱橫家書, dated to around 226 B.C. by Tang Lan 唐蘭.<sup>17</sup> This book of twenty-eight short chapters was circulating anonymously and contains six fairly extensive episodes, versions of which recur both in *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 and in *Shiji*, and it becomes clear that neither of these transmitted works have simply used *Zhanguo zonghengjia shu* as a basis for their text. But on at least one occasion, *Shiji* and *Zhanguo ce* definitely seem to have worked from one and the same source. And on other occasions it is equally clear that *Shiji* and *Zhanguo ce* have worked from different sources. The deep and systematic grammatical changes that have occurred between the composition of *Zhanguo ce* and the composition of *Shiji* are manifest and have been studied in considerable detail.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Michael Quirin explains how Cui Shu makes his arguments as a loyal Confucian, convinced of the importance of the *Analects*. See Quirin, “Scholarship, Value, Method, and Hermeneutics in *Kaozheng*: Some Reflections on Cui Shu (1740–1816) and the Confucian Classics,” *History and Theory* 35, no. 4 (December 1996), pp. 34–53.

<sup>15</sup> H. G. Creel, “The Authenticity of the *Analects*,” in idem, *Confucius and the Chinese Way* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), pp. 291–95. First published in 1949 under the title *Confucius: The Man and the Myth* (New York: J. Day).

<sup>16</sup> Contrast the number of references and quotations from the *Shangshu* 尚書 conveniently laid out and discussed in Chen Mengjia 陳夢家, *Shangshu tonglun* 尚書通論, 2nd ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), pp. 11–35. Very clearly, *Lunyu* had nothing like the status of the *Shangshu* in Warring States literature.

<sup>17</sup> See Tang Lan 唐蘭, “Sima Qian suo meiyou jianguo de zhengui shiliao: Changsha Mawangdui boshu *Zhanguo zonghengjia shu*” 司馬遷所沒有見過的珍貴史料——長沙馬王堆帛書《戰國縱橫家書》, in *Zhanguo zonghengjia shu* 戰國縱橫家書, ed. Mawangdui Hanmu boshu zhengli xiaozu 馬王堆漢墓帛書整理小組 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1976), p. 126.

<sup>18</sup> See Tang Qin 湯勤, “*Shiji* yu *Zhanguo ce* yuyan bijiao yanjiu” 《史記》與《戰國策》語言比較研究 (Ph.D. diss., Huazhong University of Science and Technology, 2006); Chen Niangao 陳年高, (Continued on next page)

Books may also be anonymous (and have their anonymous influence) without ever being quoted by name. Excavated literature supplies plenty of examples where modern editors have had to make up titles for important texts. The Mesopotamian influences on the Old Testament offer rich examples.<sup>19</sup>

As for *Lunyu*, none of the many persons or things mentioned therein suggest any Western Han influence on the text.

Most important of all: the language of *Lunyu* has a fair number of unique linguistic features that would seem to be inconsistent with a Western Han date of compilation from Late Archaic Chinese and early Western Han sources like those we have in *Kongzi jiyu* 孔子集語.

The title *Lunyu* 論語 comes three times in such works as *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳, the author of which clearly had access to some kind of a copy of a *Lunyu*, including at least two separate chapters of the book (*Lunyu* 10 and 13) some years before Emperor Wu of Han's reign.

Michael Hunter's *Confucius Beyond the Analects*<sup>20</sup> sets out to demonstrate that *Lunyu* was compiled around the time the title *Lunyu* was first mentioned in reliable sources from Western Han times. And since he takes some "Taoist" Confucius-anecdotes of the *Shiji* to be the source for a certain number of entries in *Lunyu* 18, presumably the real date from which the compilation of the text as we now have it must be, according to Hunter, later than *Shiji*.<sup>21</sup>

(Note 18—Continued)

"*Shiji* yuliao jiazhi yanjiu" 《史記》語料價值研究 (Ph.D. diss., Nanjing University, 2010); Jiang Wengui 江文貴, "Sima Qian dui *Zhanguo*ce shiliao de qushe yuanze" 司馬遷對《戰國策》史料的取捨原則, *Anqing shifan xueyuan xuebao* (*shehui kexue ban*) 安慶師範學院學報 (社會科學版), 2000, no. 3, pp. 52–55; as well as Wei Zhaohui 魏兆惠, "Zhou Qin liang-Han liandongshi de fazhan bianhua" 周秦兩漢連動式的發展變化 (Ph.D. diss., Huazhong University of Science and Technology, 2005). For the complex relations between these texts, see the magisterial Zhao Shengqun 趙生群, "Lun *Shiji* yu *Zhanguo*ce de guanxi" 論《史記》與《戰國策》的關係, *Nanjing shida xuebao* (*shehui kexue ban*) 南京師大學報 (社會科學版), 1990, no. 1, pp. 42–48; and Wang Weihui 汪維輝, "'Chu Zhe shui Zhao taihou' san ben yiwen zhi bijiao" 〈觸讐說趙太后〉三本異文之比較, *Huazhong guoxue* 華中國學, 2016 *chun zhi juan* (*zong di liu juan*) 2016 春之卷 (總第 6 卷), pp. 82–90.

<sup>19</sup> See Jean Bottéro, *Naissance de Dieu. La Bible et l'historien* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).

<sup>20</sup> Michael Hunter, *Confucius Beyond the Analects* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

<sup>21</sup> Michael Nylan seems to largely concur with Hunter and summarizes usefully: "When all is said and done, we can be fairly certain only of the text we think we are discussing in 175–183 C.E. (very late Eastern Han), when a version of the *Analects* was carved in stone at the capital. . . . Brief mention should be made, perhaps, of several other scholarly readings of the *Analects* that have proven less influential for a range of reasons. The 'Bruce and Taeko Brooks' hypothesis' appears in the Brooks' *Original Analects*: that disciples who actually studied with

(Continued on next page)



In his new translation of the *Analects* here under review, Jean Lévi takes issue with Hunter's account of the history of the *Analects* in a 66-page Appendix which is a central part of his book and which, Lévi announces, will be followed by a more exhaustive documentation to appear under the title *Du négationnisme dans la sinologie américaine et de la réalité des Entretiens de Confucius*.

#### IV. The Place of the *Analects* in the Development of the Chinese Language between Warring States and Western Han<sup>22</sup>

Jean Lévi and Michael Hunter concentrate so much on the intertextual relations of the *Analects*<sup>23</sup> that neither of them ever stop to consider in any detail the question whether

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(Note 21—*Continued*)

Confucius compiled Books 4–8, the oldest stratum of the text, while the rest of the *Analects* consists of successive later strata that the Brooks insist they can date with astonishing accuracy. Unfortunately, the Brooks advance such a dizzying array of corollaries while laying out their elaborate dating scheme—meanwhile ignoring the very good evidence for oral teaching—that initially enthusiastic *Analects* experts have largely given up trying to follow their conjectures. More troubling still, Roy Andrew Miller, a distinguished linguist, argued in his M.A. thesis that the grammar of the entire *Analects* is consistent throughout, which suggests a single editing of disparate materials, written and oral, in all likelihood in Western Han, and possibly even as late as 26–6 B.C.E.” (Nylan, “Editor’s Introduction,” in *The Analects: The Simon Leys Translation, Interpretations*, pp. lx–lxi).

<sup>22</sup> Miller comments: “Linguistic evidence may well be able to decide problems in the history of Chinese thought which have been debated for many years, decide them, that is, as well as they are ever to be decided.” See Roy Andrew Miller, “Studies in the Lu Dialect” (Master’s thesis, Columbia University, 1950), p. 36.

<sup>23</sup> For this subject we have He Zhihua 何志華 (Ho Che Wah) and Chen Xionggen 陳雄根 (Chan Hung Kan), *Xian-Qin liang-Han dianji yin Zhouyi ziliao huibian* 先秦兩漢典籍引《周易》資料彙編, *Xian-Qin liang-Han dianji yin Lunyu ziliao huibian* 先秦兩漢典籍引《論語》資料彙編, and *Xian-Qin liang-Han dianji yin Mengzi ziliao huibian* 先秦兩漢典籍引《孟子》資料彙編 (Hong Kong: Zhongwen daxue chubanshe, 2007), which aim to lay out the intertextual web of allusions of three seminal ancient texts. See Michael Hunter, “Did Mencius Know the *Analects*?” *T’oung Pao* 100, fasc. 1/3 (2014), p. 48, n. 58. I consider the series edited by He Zhihua and Zhu Guofan 朱國藩 (Chu Kwok Fan), of which the above-mentioned titles are a part, to be a major contribution to the study of Warring States literature. See also the titles for *Shangshu*, *Shijing*, and *Liji* in the same series. These are essential tools for the study of intertextuality in early Chinese literature.



*Lunyu* language use belongs to early Warring States times or to mid–Western Han times.<sup>24</sup>

Anyone knows that classical Chinese, like any other language, or like that of, say, Chaucer (d. 1400), would be changing over time. Thus, the English language was not what it used to be when we move to the time of Shakespeare (d. 1616). The rate of change is not the same for all languages, for the whole of a given language, or indeed for all stages of the same language. The language of the *Shuoyuan* 說苑 differs systematically in many well-defined ways from that of the *Analects*.<sup>25</sup> Compilation from older texts in Han times typically involves more or less non-deliberate, uncontrolled, and involuntary intrusion of Han colloquialisms. This, it will be observed, applies to a greater extent to the *Shuoyuan* than to the *Xinxu* 新序. Any careful reader would spot thousands of passages in the *Shijia* 世家 (Hereditary houses) section of *Shiji* which “literally” reproduce *Zuozhuan* 左傳 material, but, in doing so, inadvertently introduce elements of Western Han–dynasty colloquial Chinese.<sup>26</sup> And a careful study of the official redaction of the *Zhanguo* 國策 shows surprisingly little inadvertent Han-dynasty Chinese linguistic interference.

Before one can meaningfully enter any philologically reliable discussion of the *relation* of one text A to other texts, one has to ascertain how exactly the language and style of A relates to that of these other texts. The dating of texts very obviously has to be done against the background of a careful study of historical linguistics of our texts. Gone are the times of Henri Maspero and Bernhard Karlgren, it seems, when this would have gone without saying.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> My notes here attempt to supplement Wolfgang Behr’s “Linguistic Approaches to the Dating of the *Lunyu*: Methodological Notes and Future Prospects,” paper presented at “The *Analects*: A Western Han Text?” conference, Princeton University, 4–5 November 2011.

<sup>25</sup> See Wang Weihui, “*Shuoyuan* yu Xi-Han kouyu” 《說苑》與西漢口語, in idem, *Zhuming zhongnian yuyanxuejia zixuanji: Wang Weihui juan* 著名中年語言學家自選集·汪維輝卷 (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 2011), pp. 203–44.

<sup>26</sup> For a magisterial classified selection of well-explained examples from which I have drawn extensively for this paper, see He Leshi 何樂士, *Shiji yufa tedian yanjiu* 史記語法特點研究 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> Liu Fenglu’s 劉逢祿 (1776–1829) magnificent polemical “demonstration” that the *Zuozhuan* was a Han dynasty forgery in his notorious *Zuoshi chunqiu kaozheng* 左氏春秋考證 and that quotations from the *Zuozhuan* in early texts were the reverse: the *Zuozhuan* citing early “quotations” was decisively and importantly refuted on the basis of linguistic arguments on which Maspero and Karlgren were in agreement. But more recently, Xu Renfu 徐仁甫 (1901–1988) argued in unreliable, but meticulous detail for Liu Xin’s 劉歆 authorship of the *Zuozhuan* in his *Zuozhuan shuzheng* 左傳疏證 (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1981). In so doing Xu Renfu has produced an utterly wrong-headed but actually in many ways a quite

(Continued on next page)

Here, then, are some of the characteristic linguistic features of *Lunyu* that are unattested in any work of late Han date and the presence of which must be accounted for:

### 1. Passive Constructions

The history of the passive constructions in classical Chinese has been studied in detail by a magisterial series of papers by Tang Yuming 唐鈺明. Passives like “為 N 所 V,” “為 N 之所 V,” “被 V 於 N” (be VERBed by N), or “為 V,” “被 V,” “遇 V” (be VERBed) are not found in *Lunyu*. They all became common in Western Han Chinese.<sup>28</sup> The well-documented history of passive constructions shows *Lunyu* to belong to a much earlier stage of the development of the language than *Zhanguo* or *Shiji*. This much is clear, albeit disregarded in the current *Lunyu* debate here under discussion.

The question now remains, whether *Lunyu* could be a deliberate Western Han attempt to create what would look like an “early Warring States text” with respect to the passive constructions as first sorted out for us by linguists like Tang Yuming in the 1980s. How likely is it that any Western Han compilers know enough of what Tang Yuming reveals concerning the development of the passive to fit their text into the required historical pattern?

Tang Yuming’s statistics from his papers on the passive demonstrate clear developments in which *Lunyu* has its well-documented chronological place:

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(Note 27—*Continued*)

helpful annotated anthology of pre-Han and early Han parallel passages to the *Zuo* and *Zhuan*, just as Michael Hunter provides an interesting discussion of some selected parallels, allusions, and quotations from the *Analects*.

<sup>28</sup> See Tang Yuming, “Gu Hanyu beidongshi bianhuan juli” 古漢語被動式變換舉例, *Gu Han-yu yanjiu* 古漢語研究, 1988, no. 1, pp. 66–69, 44; and the comprehensive Tang Yuming, *Zhuming zhongnian yuyanxuejia zixuanji: Tang Yuming juan* 著名中年語言學家自選集·唐鈺明卷 (Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002), pp. 251–304. For a recent independent critical discussion, see also Jianhong Zeng and Christoph Anderl, “The Formation of the Copula Function of WEI 為 and the Nature of the ‘WEI 為 V’ Construction,” *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* (in press).

頻率 時期		形式	於	為	見	為 X 於 X	見 X 於 X	為 X 見 X	為 X 所 X	被
兩周	金文		13							
	尚書 詩經 周易		18							
	小計		31							
春秋 戰國 之交	左傳		19	18 (15+3)	1					
	國語		10	16 (10+6)	3					
	論語		2	1 (0+1)	1					
	墨子		23	10 (3+7)	3	1				
	小計		54	45 (28+17)	8	1				

Source: *Zhuming zhongnian yuyanxuejia zixuanji: Tang Yuming juan*, p. 265.

頻率 時期		形式	於	為	見	為 X 於 X	見 X 於 X	為 X 見 X	為 X 所 X	被
戰國 後期	出土文 物資料		20	6 (1+5)	1					
	孟子		13		3					
	荀子		36	5 (0+5)	19		1			
	莊子		19	8 (1+7)	1		3	1	1	
	韓非子		33	20 (5+15)	13	1	2		1	3
	戰國策		48	21 (1+20)	4	1	5		2	2
	小計		169	60 (8+52)	41	2	11	1	4	5
總計			263	105	49	3	11	1	4	5

Source: *Zhuming zhongnian yuyanxuejia zixuanji: Tang Yuming juan*, p. 266.

西漢被動式頻率表

頻率 典籍 \ 句式	於	為	見	見 X 於 X	為 X 於 X	為 X 所 X	為 X 之所 X	為所 X	被	被 X 於 X
新語	4					2				
春秋繁露	6	3 (1+2)	1			2				
賈誼集	3	7 (1+6)	2	1			2		2(2+0)	
淮南子	18	9 (1+8)		1		2			1(1+0)	
史記	38	46 (12+34)	33	13	3	70		3	2(2+0)	1
新序	8	3 (0+3)	13	2		4				
說苑	11	12 (2+10)	23	6		3		1	1(1+0)	
鹽鐵論	18	4 (1+3)	7	4		3			1(1+0)	
小計	106	84 (18+66)	79	27	3	86	2	4	7(7+0)	1

說明：本表總計 399 例。「為」、「被」括號內數字，前為甲式、後為乙式，下同。

Source: *Zhuming zhongnian yuyanxuejia zixuanji: Tang Yuming juan*, p. 279.

百分比 句式 \ 時期	先秦	西漢	東漢	六朝
於	58%	27%	11%	1.1%
為	24%	21%	7%	3%
見	11%	20%	19%	20%
為 X 所 X	0.9%	21%	52%	53%
被	1.1%	1.2%	5%	15%

Source: *Zhuming zhongnian yuyanxuejia zixuanji: Tang Yuming juan*, p. 277.

## 2. Complex Modality Marking

The proliferation of cumulative marking of modality in *Lunyu*, has long been found striking and is not at all paralleled anywhere in the 200-page *Kongzi jiyu*.

乎哉 (*Lunyu* 6, *Kongzi jiyu* 6)  
 矣夫 (*Lunyu* 7, *Kongzi jiyu* 4)  
 矣乎 (*Lunyu* 7, *Kongzi jiyu* 2)  
 矣哉 (*Lunyu* 4, *Kongzi jiyu* 8), *Mencius* 孟子 0  
 已乎 (*Lunyu* 4, *Kongzi jiyu* 3)  
 已矣 (*Lunyu* 5, *Kongzi jiyu* 5)  
 也夫 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 6)  
 也哉 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 2)  
 也已 (*Lunyu* 6, *Kongzi jiyu* 2), *Mencius* 0  
 也與 (*Lunyu* 12, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 耳乎 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 云爾 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)

The trisyllabic are special cases. *Eryi* 而已 is in fact a verb phrase, its degree of grammaticalization in dispute. This verb phrase being followed by a modal particle poses no special problem and is a current matter of style:

也已矣 (*Lunyu* 8, *Kongzi jiyu* 0), *Mencius* 1  
 而已乎 (*Lunyu* 2, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 云乎哉 (*Lunyu* 2, *Kongzi jiyu* 0), *Mencius* 0  
 而已矣 (*Lunyu* 13, *Kongzi jiyu* 12), *Mencius* 48

This leaves us with one remarkable trisyllabic case only of *Lunyu* 17.15, *yeyuzai* 也與哉, from which the Dingzhou 定州 manuscript omits both *ye* 也 and *zai* 哉. The Zhengping 正平 edition omits *yeyu* 也與, and the Tianwen 天文 edition omits *ye* 也. Surprisingly, the usually meticulous Takezoe Kōkō's 竹添光鴻 (1842–1917) *Rongo kaisen* 論語會箋 does not comment on the textual difficulty.<sup>29</sup>

也與哉 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0), *Mencius* 0

What is so striking here is that this grammatical peculiarity is not an isolated symptom but a cognitive syndrome at the same time, a feature of the Master's often tentative and lively intellectual style. Zhuangzi could easily have used this feature pervasively

<sup>29</sup> Takezoe Kōkō 竹添光鴻, *Rongo kaisen* 論語會箋 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2012), p. 1109.

in his parodies.<sup>30</sup> It is possible that later epigones would have imitated this particular stylistic feature. But there is no evidence for this.

Such grammatical feature defines the grammatical and stylistic identity of *Lunyu*. As do indeed the details below.

### 3. Descriptive Suffixation

The preponderance of archaic-poetic “descriptive” suffixation (nineteen examples in *Lunyu*), often even in the expository prose of *Lunyu*, is an idiosyncratic feature of *Lunyu* prose style scantily attested.<sup>31</sup>

已而 (*Lunyu* 2, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 殆而 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 反而 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 純如 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 勃如 (*Lunyu* 3, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 怠如 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)<sup>32</sup>

Suffixation after reduplication is a special feature of the prose style of *Lunyu*:

申申如 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 行行如 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 侃侃如 (*Lunyu* 2, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 怡怡如 (*Lunyu* 2, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 空空如 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 夭夭如 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 洋洋乎 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)  
 郁郁乎 (*Lunyu* 1, *Kongzi jiyu* 0)

Such suffixation is so obvious and manifest as a surface feature that one could easily imagine someone faking it. I find it difficult to imagine that Western Han compilers would choose their pieces to create this as an illusion of archaic and poetic diction in

<sup>30</sup> See Du Yujian 杜玉儉, “*Zhuangzi dui Lunyu de huayong he gaizao*” 《莊子》對《論語》的化用和改造, *Kongzi yanjiu* 孔子研究, 2012, no. 6, pp. 121–26.

<sup>31</sup> See Mieczysław Jerzy Künstler, *Les formations adverbiales à quasi-suffixe en chinois archaïque et dans la langue de l'époque Han* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1967), p. 112, which provides the diachronic and stylistic context. See also He Yongqing 何永清, *Lunyu yufa tonglun* 論語語法通論 (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan), pp. 232–45, for (often unreliable but sometimes helpful) systematic documentation.

<sup>32</sup> Künstler, p. 112, finds no cases of X 如 or X 而 in his Western Han sources.

late accounts of Confucius. But in this instance one could imagine that Han compilers might be tempted to choose archaizing or early pieces, thus trying to give their Han compilation an ancient stylistic patina.

Here is the summary which places the language of *Lunyu* (MCA=Middle Archaic Chinese, BCA=Late Archaic Chinese, HA=Western Han Chinese) in its proper linguistic context:

Phase	Second élément		如		若		然		而		爾		耳		乎		焉		言	
	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D
HCA	18 (34)		10 (18)		9 (9)		1 (1)										1 (1)		8 (20)	
MCA	8 (13)	13 (19)			4 (6)	2 (2)				4 (4)					1 (1)	6 (8)				
BCA	1 (1)	1 (1)	4 (7)		116 (158)	35 (41)			3 (3)	2 (2)	1 (1)				26 (36)	29 (34)	7 (7)	10 (10)		
HA					15 (15)	70 (76)			5 (5)											
HP		1 (1)			40 (55)	130 (149)			2 (2)				2 (2)	2 (2)		7 (9)				
Total	27 (48)	15 (21)	14 (25)		184 (243)	237 (268)		1 (1)	10 (10)	6 (6)	1 (1)	2 (2)	2 (2)	27 (37)	42 (51)	8 (8)	10 (10)	8 (20)		

Source: Mieczysław Jerzy Künstler, *Les formations adverbiales à quasi-suffixe en chinois archaïque et dans la langue de l'époque Han*, p. 112.

#### 4. The Semantics of *wen* 問

As is well known, in *Lunyu* the very common formula “*wen* 問 X” always refers to a question about the subject X and never a question to an addressee X, as in *She gong wen Kongzi yu Zilu* 葉公問孔子於子路 (7.19). In the *Analects*, *wen Kongzi* 問孔子 (asked about Confucius) is unambiguous. So when in the “Renjian” 人間 chapter of the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 we read: *Ren huo wen Kongzi yue Yan Hui heru ren ye* 人或問孔子曰顏回何如人也, we can tell immediately that this saying is not part of the textual tradition to which *Lunyu* belongs.

Compare the following questions to Zigong, all quoted in Michael Hunter’s *Confucius Beyond the Analects*, pp. 96–162:



《論語》：「大宰問於子貢曰…… (9.6)  
《白虎通·聖人》：「《論語》曰：『太宰問子貢曰……

We can see that *Baihutong* translates *Lunyu* into Han Chinese.

《論語》：「子禽問於子貢曰…… (1.10)  
《史記·仲尼弟子列傳》：「陳子禽問子貢曰……  
《論衡·知實》：「陳子禽問子貢曰……

Here again, *Shiji* and *Lunheng* translate the language of *Lunyu* into Han Chinese.

The phrase *Zigong wen Kongzi yue* 子貢問孔子曰 appears in *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 4.3, which shows that *Lüshi chunqiu* has already translated the language of *Lunyu* into late Warring States Chinese.<sup>33</sup>

Now a “hidden” or subliminal idiomatic feature of this sort, overlooked even by seasoned scholars like Lévi and Hunter, is not likely to be artificially created or focused on for collecting purposes by Han Confucianists. It is even less likely that a wide variety of sources our supposed compilers of *Lunyu* must have used would concur in creating such a stable idiomatic feature for the Master’s language. Here, as in all the cases below, it would seem truly far-fetched to imagine the compilers of the *Lunyu* homogenizing the language of their disparate sources so as to produce the appearance of an idiomatically stable language use for the benefit of the Master’s image.

## 5. The Contrast Between *yu* 于 and *yu* 於

As Jens Petersen has been able to show, the distinction between the general-use preposition *yu* 於 vis-à-vis the solemn, dignified, and archaic *yu* 于 is strikingly dominant in *Lunyu*, and it is not neutralized as it came to be in many later Warring States and Han-dynasty sources.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Lunyu* is replete with phrases like 子禽問於子貢曰 (1.10), 大宰問於子貢曰 (9.6), and 衛公孫朝問於子貢曰 (19.22), but there is not a single example like 趙簡子問子貢曰 (*Shuoyuan* 說苑 11). See Zhao Shanyi 趙善詒, *Shuoyuan shuzheng* 說苑疏證 (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1985), p. 318.

<sup>34</sup> On *yu* 於 and *yu* 于 in *Lunyu*, see Jens Østergaard Petersen, “The Distribution of ‘於’ and ‘于’ in *Zuozhuan* 左傳, a Stylistic Approach,” available on Academia at [https://www.academia.edu/32406050/The\\_Distribution\\_of\\_%E4%BA%8E\\_and\\_%E6%96%BC\\_in\\_Zuozhuan\\_%E5%B7%A6%E5%82%B3\\_a\\_Stylistic\\_Approach\\_2001\\_Draft\\_](https://www.academia.edu/32406050/The_Distribution_of_%E4%BA%8E_and_%E6%96%BC_in_Zuozhuan_%E5%B7%A6%E5%82%B3_a_Stylistic_Approach_2001_Draft_), pp. 11–15. The general predictability of these prepositions in *Lunyu* is in clear contrast to standard Han-dynasty practice, and it is as if only readers of Petersen’s work could have faked this consistency of usage in the *Lunyu*. As far as I know, the distinction Petersen demonstrates remains unknown in the extensive Chinese scholarship on the subject. Zhu Qixiang 朱歧祥, “You ‘yu,’ ‘yu’  
(Continued on next page)

In late Western Han times, the semantic nuance that distinguishes *yu* 於 from the more formal and archaic word *yu* 于 was unknown and could not have been deliberately maintained by late Western Han compilers.

## 6. *Si* 斯 and *ci* 此

As Bernhard Karlgren and many others have noticed, the *Lunyu* never uses the current pronoun *ci* 此, always preferring the archaic *si* 斯 (also as an equivalent of *ze* 則 [then]) which became largely obsolescent by late Western Han times.

The attribution to Confucius of such an idiosyncratic dialect feature that makes him quite unique in the history of Chinese literature is not to the Master's credit. It is not plausible that late Western Han compilers would rewrite their sources to create an odd idiolect. On the contrary, it is quite likely that this preference of *si* 斯 was taken to be an authentic feature of Confucius's idiolect.

## 7. The Connective *ze* 則

In *Lunyu* the sentence connective *ze* 則 comes over a hundred times and is used only in generalizing contexts “then (as a general rule),” as in *yu su ze bu da* 欲速則不達 (when one wants to be quick then one will not reach one's aim) in *Hanshu* 漢書 75, and never in specific contexts “then on such a concrete occasion,” as in *fei bi si ze chen bi si yi* 非彼死則臣必死矣 (if they do not die, then your servant will surely die) in *Lüshi chunqiu* 16.4, or in narrative contexts “then at that point in time,” as in *zhi yu Qiyang ze Wenwang yi mo yi* 至於岐陽則文王已歿矣 (when [Boyi and Shuqi] reached Qiyang, King Wen had already died) in *Lüshi chunqiu* 12.4. Mencius sentences like *jin wang yu baixing tong le, ze wang yi* 今王與百姓同樂，則王矣 (now if your majesty shared your enjoyment with the people, you would be a true King) in 1B1, or *wang yu xing wangzheng, ze wu hui zhi yi* 王欲行王政，則勿毀之矣 (if Your Majesty wished to practise kingly government, do not pull it down) in 1B5, are not in the grammatical repertoire of *Lunyu*, whereas they are obviously current all over the literature that cites it.

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### (Note 34—Continued)

yongzi pinggu Qinghua jian (er) *Xinian*: Jian tan ‘mou zhi mou’ de yongfa” 由「于」、「於」用字評估清華簡(貳)《繫年》——兼談「某之某」的用法, in *Shi gu yi jin: Jiaguwen, jinwen, taowen, jianwen cunyi luncong* 釋古疑今——甲骨文、金文、陶文、簡文存疑論叢 (Taipei: Liren shuju, 2015), pp. 221–33, discusses the statistics of the use of 於 versus 于 in history and in Warring States texts, as well as in Li Xueqin 李學勤, ed., *Qinghua daxue cang Zhanguo zhujian (er)* 清華大學藏戰國竹簡(貳) (Shanghai: Zhong-Xi shuju, 2011), pp. 121–200, *Xinian* 繫年, in the context of questions regarding the authenticity of the Qinghua texts.

The subtle but important semantic peculiarities of *ze* 則 in *Lunyu* would not have been noticed in Western Han times. They cannot be the choice of Western Han compilers.

### 8. The Idiom *heru* 何如

*Heru* 何如 is well known to have been used repeatedly as an independent predicate in the *Analects* and never once the independent predicate *ruhe* 如何 that was current in this particular context in Western Han times.

One hesitates to credit the late Western Han compilers with a deliberate attempt to rewrite their sources so as to create this special feature of the compilation.

### 9. Disjunctive *ruo* 若

It has long been noticed that *ruo* 若 (or) is very rarely disjunctive in *Zuozhuan* and absent in *Lunyu*, but that in *Shiji*, *ruo* 若 can freely link prepositional phrases, verbal predicates, and even whole sentences, as in:

不乃天裂若地動。(《史記·天官書》)

There is neither disjunctive *ruo* 若 nor disjunctive *ru* 如 in the *Analects*. Thus, there is also nothing like:

予秦地如毋予，孰吉？(《史記·平原君虞卿列傳》)

Shall we give Qin territory or shall we not give it territory, which is the auspicious thing to do?

Nor are *qie* 且 or *jiang* 將 ever used as disjunctive particles in the *Analects*, as they are in *Shiji*:

子擊因問曰：「富貴者驕人乎？且貧賤者驕人乎？」(《魏世家》)

文曰：「人生受命於天乎？將受命於戶邪？」(《孟嘗君列傳》)

Also, the disjunctive paraphrase *fei* 非 . . . *ze* 則 (if not . . . then) is absent in the *Analects* but common in *Shiji*:

逆之者不死則亡。(《太史公自序》)

如非有司失其傳，則武王之志荒矣。(《樂書》)

Disjunctive thinking is quite generally not a salient feature of the thought of Confucius.

10. *Gua* 寡 and *shao* 少

As has often been observed, *Lunyu* only uses the archaic *gua* 寡 and never once uses the later current *shao* 少 which tended to replace *gua* in most contexts by Western Han times.<sup>35</sup>

If indeed the late Western Han compilers of the *Lunyu* anthology were not just collectors preoccupied with its content, but forgers of a fake, artificially archaic language, it is conceivable that they could fall for the idea of quite consistently giving a patina of arcane ancient diction to their sage. If *Lunyu* is not a document linguistically somehow *sui generis*, why is there no *ci* 此 anywhere in *Lunyu*, whereas there is *ci* all over the place in *Mencius* and in each and every one of the sources from which *Lunyu* is supposed to be compiled?

11. Concessive *sui* 雖

The basic meaning of *sui* 雖 “1. even if; 2. maybe . . . but” seems never emphatically factive in early times, and the word tends not to be straightforwardly translatable into “even though; although.”<sup>36</sup> Even in the idiomatic *Lunyu*, *Hui sui bu min, qing shi si yu yi* 回雖不敏，請事斯語矣，James Legge’s expansive reading “Though I am deficient in intelligence and vigour, I will make it my business to practise this lesson”<sup>37</sup> would come closer to the Chinese if it had opened with the less committed “I may be deficient . . . .” In any case, pre-verbal *sui* 雖 (even if) is very predominantly hypothetical in *Lunyu* and comes to be predominantly factive and standardly translatable as “even though” in *Shiji* times.<sup>38</sup> It is important to keep in mind that in the *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 the particle is very predominantly factive (fifty-six factive as against six hypothetical cases).<sup>39</sup> It is important to realize that the historical developments that one is observing here in late Warring States and Western Han times are

<sup>35</sup> On *gua* 寡 and *shao* 少, see Wang Weihui, “Cong Hanyushi kan ‘duo’ ‘shao’ zhijie xiushi mingci wenti” 從漢語史看「多」「少」直接修飾名詞問題, in idem, *Zhuming zhongnian yuyan-xuejia zixuanji: Wang Weihui juan*, p. 383. More generally, see his very important “*Shuoyuan yu Xi-Han kouyu*,” which provides meticulous comparisons with the language of the *Analects*.

<sup>36</sup> See the chapter on *sui* 雖 and *zong* 縱 in Christoph Harbsmeier, *Aspects of Classical Chinese Syntax* (London: Curzon Press, 1981).

<sup>37</sup> James Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1, *Confucian Analects* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1893; Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), p. 250.

<sup>38</sup> Although there are still neat hypothetical cases to be found, like 雖舜禹復生，弗能改已 (“Fan Ju Cai Ze liezhuan” 范雎蔡澤列傳).

<sup>39</sup> See Li Yan 李豔, “*Shiji* lianci xitong yanjiu” 《史記》連詞系統研究 (Ph.D. diss., Jilin University, 2012), p. 137.

part and parcel of a greater long-term development. There is nothing “circular” about basing arguments on them.

## 12. The Preposition *cong* 從

*Cong* 從 does not occur as a preposition in *Lunyu*, but does so 8 times in *Zuozhuan* (1.4 per cent), 36 times in *Zhanguo* (15 per cent), 220 times in *Shiji* (15 per cent), 101 times in *Lunheng* (36 per cent), and 36 times in *Shishuo xinyu* (34 per cent).<sup>40</sup>

## 13. Spatial *you* 由

Spatial *you* 由 (from) is absent in *Lunyu*, but comes 13 times in *Mencius*, 14 times in *Zhanguo*, 51 times in *Shiji*, and 110 times in *Lunheng*.<sup>41</sup>

## 14. “Spurious” *yu* 於

*Lunyu* has a striking series of “spurious” *yu* 於 before direct objects as in *tan yu caihuo* 貪於財貨. These “empty” uses of *yu* have come to feel “archaic” and are in any case uncommon in Western Han classical Chinese prose style.

Western Han compilers would hardly have taken the trouble to artificially introduce these “spurious” uses of *yu* 於 into their sources, although they did sometimes mechanically copy them into their books.

## 15. Preposed Reflexive *bu ji* 不已

*Bu ji zhi* 不已知 (understand one) is used three times in *Lunyu*. The phrase *bu ji* 不已 with the preposed object pronoun is completely absent in *Zuozhuan*, *Mencius*, and *Shiji*, and distinctly quite rare elsewhere down to early Western Han literature.

Western Han compilers are not likely to have created this archaism for the benefit of their Master.

## 16. Resumptive *shi* 是

The very current resumptive subject *shi* 是 (this) in *Lunyu* (18 examples) is always impersonal “this matter/thing” in *Lunyu*, and this pronoun never once has personal

<sup>40</sup> See Shi Dongqing 史冬青, “Xian-Qin zhi Wei Jin shiqi fangsuo jieci de lishi kaocha” 先秦至魏晉時期方所介詞的歷時考察 (Ph.D. diss., Shandong University, 2008), p. 64, for more detail.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

reference. But *shi* is very commonly personal “this person” from Mencius onwards, and certainly in Western Han times. It is very implausible to attribute to Western Han compilers the kind of subtlety of grammatical analysis to be able to insure such a consistent feature in *Lunyu*.

The absence of certain phenomena in a short text like the *Lunyu*, in general, proves very little, to be sure! And yet, it may be worthwhile to reflect on some more pervasive features of *Shiji* time Chinese of which we find no trace in *Lunyu*:

#### 17. Resultative *ji* 及

There are no postposed resultative adverbial complements in *Lunyu*. These are very common in *Shiji* and elsewhere in later sources. In particular, the postverbal *ji* 及.

#### 18. Causal *ziyu* 自於

*Zi yu* 自於 (because of), current in Han times, is not in *Lunyu*.

#### 19. Unmarked Locatives with Pronominalized Objects

I have not found unmarked locatives after transitive verbs with pronominalized objects, such as *sha zhi langzhong fuli ce zhong* 殺之郎中府吏廁中 (*Shiji* 9), in *Lunyu*. They are common in Western Han Chinese.

#### 20. Unmarked Locatives with Non-pronominalized Object

I have not found unmarked locatives after transitive verbs with non-pronominalized objects, such as *Zhou qiu Xibo Youli* 紂囚西伯羨里 (*Shiji* 3), in *Lunyu*. They are common in Western Han Chinese.

#### 21. Unmarked Locatives

I have not found unmarked locatives after intransitive verbs, such as *si Chang'an ji zang Chang'an* 死長安即葬長安 (*Shiji* 106), in *Lunyu*. They are common in Western Han Chinese.

#### 22. Complex Adverbials

There seem to be no complex adverbial modifiers in *Lunyu*. These are very common in *Shiji* and elsewhere in later sources.

### 23. Complex Noun Modifiers

There seem to be no complex noun modifiers in *Lunyu*. These are very common in *Shiji* and elsewhere in later sources.

### 24. Complex Hypotheticals

*Lunyu* has a single instance of *shi* 使 (supposing). *Shiji* has few monosyllabic *shi* 使, no monosyllabic *ling* 令, and instead a wealth of bisyllabic compound counterfactual or hypothetical conditional particles as in the following examples:

如有 (〈孟嘗君列傳〉)、誠使 (〈秦始皇本紀〉)、誠令 (〈吳王濞列傳〉)、  
藉使 (〈秦始皇本紀〉)、借使 (〈秦始皇本紀〉)、向使 (〈秦始皇本紀〉)、  
若使 (〈楚世家〉)、假使 (〈范雎蔡澤列傳〉)、鄉使 (〈酈生陸賈列傳〉)、  
假令 (〈淮陰侯列傳〉)

Other complex conditionals current in *Shiji* and absent in *Lunyu* include *xiang ling* 向令, *chengling* 誠令, *di ling* 弟令, and *ru ling* 如令.

### 25. *You shi* 由是

*You shi* 由是 (therefore) is unattested in *Lunyu*, but common in *Shiji*. *You ci* 由此 comes 70 times in *Shiji*, *yi ci* 以此 comes 19 times, and the corresponding *you si* 由斯 as well as *yi si* 以斯 are not found at all in *Lunyu*.

### 26. *Qiefu* 且夫

*Qiefu* 且夫 (moreover as for) belongs to a scholastic style and to scholastic genres that had not emerged in *Lunyu* times, but this important phrase was exceedingly common in *Shiji* (47 examples). Similarly, the somewhat rarer but equally scholastic *ruofu* 若夫 (now as for) and *zhiru* 至如 (when it comes to such as) are never found in *Lunyu*.

### 27. Self-reference by Personal Name

Confucius refers to himself informally as Qiu 丘 fourteen times in *Lunyu*. This is an idiosyncratic feature of Confucius that would be easily inserted in the Kongzi folklore by Confucianists eager to add signs of authenticity to their creations. Note that in the much larger *Mencius*, the man refers only twice to himself as Ke 軻. We seem to have, here, a stylized peculiarity of speech in all sources attribute to Confucius. But in our context, features of this sort do not really go to prove anything because



they can easily be taken as stylized mannerisms used by the compilers to increase the credibility and authenticity of their products.

28. The core phrase *renyi* 仁義 (morality—not, I believe, humaneness and righteousness) is absent in the *Lunyu* but present twenty-nine times in *Mencius*, and is not only ubiquitous but historically and ideologically crucial in the rest of Han and pre-Han Confucian literature.

Yao Zhenwu's 姚振武 *Shanggu Hanyu yufashi* 上古漢語語法史 divides *shanggu Hanyu* 上古漢語 (Old Chinese) conventionally into three phases: (1) Shang / Yin; (2) Western Zhou; and (3) Eastern Zhou down to *Shiji*. I believe I have shown that for our present purposes we need a much more fine-grained division of Yao Zhenwu's Eastern Zhou period into, among others, early Warring States Chinese, late Warring States Chinese, and Western Han Chinese.

This selective survey has disregarded many more such structural features of language use that mark out the *Analects* as strikingly divergent from current *Shiji* language usage. But I hope I have demonstrated that the dating of the *Analects* can—and therefore must!—rely on well-understood and well-described linguistic changes that occurred between Warring States and *Shiji* times. If we are to assume that the material in the *Analects* anthology were collected from various sources in Western Han times, one would have expected that at least some of the features that can be determined to be Western Han innovations would have crept into the *Analects* text, as they certainly have into the *Shuoyuan* and even the *Xinxu*.

The question remains whether this systematic avoidance of any trace of late Warring States and Western Han innovation can be plausibly attributed to a deliberate and systematic archaizing strategy of Western Han compilers of the *Lunyu* to eliminate such traces from the late material they are argued to have used.

To summarize: the absence of any linguistic phenomenon in a book as short as the *Analects* by itself proves precious little, except that it demonstrates clearly that *Lunyu* is not given away as a Han dynasty work by the language alone.

The pervasive absence of any trace of a very wide range of Western Han innovations is highly suggestive in that it is very hard to imagine anyone in Han times systematically and completely avoiding these.<sup>42</sup>

The clear idiosyncratic features of the *Lunyu* language shared by no other Warring States text demonstrate that *Lunyu* cannot be a compilation from any wide variety of Han and pre-Han primary sources, none of which shares the linguistic

<sup>42</sup> For a summary of Han-dynasty innovations and Eastern Han new developments, see the meticulously documented Wei Zhaohui, *Liang-Han yufa bijiao yanjiu* 兩漢語法比較研究 (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 2011), especially p. 233.

idiosyncrasies of *Lunyu*. The reason is that such a multiplicity of distinct subtle semantic and syntactic features, none of which were ever mentioned or commented upon in Western Han times, could in no way have resulted from a syncretistic compilation from linguistically varying texts.

Of course, every single one of the twenty-eight linguistic observations above still needs and invites further critical study and indeed detailed verification. However, as far as I can see, the linguistic arguments by themselves make a strong case against a mid-Western Han dating for *Lunyu*. And they can be supplemented by stylistic features of the text: the common exclamatory and purely expressive rather than discursive character of *Lunyu*, which has not, so far, received detailed attention in the spirit of Bakhtin's theory of speech genres. But even if one disagrees with the linguistic considerations I have presented here, one thing is certain: the current practice by leading US scholars of early Chinese texts to discuss the dating of these texts without meticulous attention to the language in which they are written is nothing less than methodologically absurd.<sup>43</sup>

## V. The Literary Form and the Philosophical Contents of the *Analects*

Let us suppose, then, for the sake of the argument, that the *Analects* are a Western Han didactic compilation (including even some anecdotes like *Lunyu* 18.3–7 influenced by *Shiji*) that promote the wisdom of Confucius and of his senior disciples like Zengzi and Zilu. Obviously, even in English alone there is extensive discussion of every single entry of the *Analects*.<sup>44</sup> Inevitably, in every single instance my reading of the text is doomed to remain controversial.

<sup>43</sup> Gone are the times of Abel-Rémusat, Stanislas Julien, Georg von der Gabelentz, Bernhard Karlgren, Henri Maspero, George A. Kennedy, and Peter Boodberg, or indeed any of their disciples, when historical linguistics belonged to the indispensable core of sinological competence.

<sup>44</sup> See Joel Sahleen, "An Annotated Bibliography of Works on Confucius and the *Analects*," in Bryan W. Van Norden, ed., *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 303–20; and Michael Hunter, *Confucius Beyond the Analects*, pp. 321–38. Compare the French pendant Charles Delaunay, *Lire le Lunyu 論語—Une bibliographie analytique et critique. An Analytical and Critical Bibliography (updated regularly)* 論語考證書目, available on Academia at [https://www.academia.edu/37097269/Lire\\_le\\_Lunyu\\_%E8%AB%96%E8%AA%9E\\_Une\\_bibliographie\\_analytique\\_et\\_critique.\\_An\\_analytical\\_and\\_critical\\_bibliography\\_updated\\_regularly\\_.\\_%E8%AB%96%E8%AA%9E%E8%80%83%E8%AD%89%E6%9B%B8%E7%9B%AE.\\_20?auto=download](https://www.academia.edu/37097269/Lire_le_Lunyu_%E8%AB%96%E8%AA%9E_Une_bibliographie_analytique_et_critique._An_analytical_and_critical_bibliography_updated_regularly_._%E8%AB%96%E8%AA%9E%E8%80%83%E8%AD%89%E6%9B%B8%E7%9B%AE._20?auto=download). This includes an instructive list of French translations of pre-Buddhist texts (pp. 56–68).

The matter is different when it comes to the prevalence of rhymed Kongzi dialogues in Han times which has no obvious clear parallels in *Lunyu*. In *Lunyu*, the use of rhyme in dialogues seems very different from that illustrated in Weingarten's careful survey of the phenomenon.<sup>45</sup>

To begin with, from the vast folklore of Kongzi sayings available in Han times,<sup>46</sup> consider this selection:

1. 子曰：柴也愚，參也魯，師也辟，由也嘑。(11.18)

The Master said: "That man Chai is besotted. That man Shen is obtuse. That man Shi is far out. And that man You is thick as a plank."

Jean Lévi translates: "Zigao était un abruti, maître Zeng une buse, Zizhang un esprit étroit, et Zilu une brute."

It is for a good reason that this particular emotional outburst<sup>47</sup> goes unmentioned in the *Shuoyuan*, which actually is a Han-dynasty compilation promoting Confucian morality. It is also significant that this outburst does recur in *Shiji*, which is not a compilation that systematically promotes Confucianism: 師也辟，參也魯，柴也

<sup>45</sup> For rhyming in *Lunyu*, see the exceedingly sparse Jiang Yougao 江有誥, *Yinxue shishu* 音學十書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993; with a very helpful introduction by Zhou Zumo 周祖謨), p. 127. When using Jiang Yougao on *zhuzi* 諸子 (various masters) rhyming, it is always important to consult Long Yuchun 龍宇純, "Xian-Qin sanwen zhong de yunwen" 先秦散文中的韻文, *Chongji xuebao* 崇基學報 2, no. 2 (May 1963), pp. 137–68; 3, no. 1 (November 1963), pp. 55–87, for essential corrections and additions. But there is nothing more here on *Lunyu*. For rhymed dialogues elsewhere in particular, see Oliver Weingarten, "The Singing Sage: Rhymes in Confucius Dialogues," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 79, no. 3 (October 2016), pp. 582–607; idem, "Textual Representations of a Sage: Studies of Pre-Qin and Western Han Sources on Confucius (551–479 BCE)" (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 2010), pp. 203–21. For the *Huainanzi* we have Liu Dianjue 劉殿爵 (D. C. Lau), *Huainanzi yundu ji jiaokan* 淮南子韻讀及校勘 (Hong Kong: Zhongwen daxue chubanshe, 2013). See also He Kegen 何科根, *Lüshi chunqiu yunyu yanjiu* 《呂氏春秋》韻語研究 (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1996).

<sup>46</sup> For detail see Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 et al., comps., *Kongzi jiyu jiaobu* 孔子集語校補, ed. Guo Yi 郭沂 (Ji'nan: Qi-Lu shushe, 1998) and Pei Chuanyong 裴傳永, *Lunyu waibian: Kongzi yiyu huishi* 論語外編——孔子佚語彙釋 (Ji'nan: Ji'nan chubanshe, 1995).

<sup>47</sup> There is another, less crude and rude but no less emotional, assessment of his disciples along similar lines in *Lunyu* 5.22: 子在陳，曰：「歸與！歸與！吾黨之小子狂簡，斐然成章，不知所以裁之。」 The repeated emotional ejaculation, "I'm gong home! I'm going home!," leaves no doubt that we have here not an exemplary Master dispensing wisdom, but a despondent teacher despairing over the craziness and simple-mindedness/naïveté of his disciples.

愚，由也嘑，回也屢空。賜不受命而貨殖焉。<sup>48</sup> The addition of the wealthy Zigong's insubordinacy in *Shiji* has the true ring of the *ipsissima vox* of the master historians, and it fits extremely well into the general pattern of *Shiji* prosopography. Any Han compilers would be aware that neither Sima Qian 司馬遷 nor the originator of the *Shiji* project, his father Sima Tan 司馬談, were open ardent supporters or promoters of Confucianism.

To summarize: Confucius insults his senior disciple Zilu as well as his leading disciple Master Zeng.<sup>49</sup> Confucius acts out like an unhinged Donald Trump *avant la lettre!*<sup>50</sup> A Chinese intellectual historian would have had to conclude: *fei li ye* 非禮也. In my view, no Han-dynasty compiler of a didactic work—none in his right mind, that is—would choose to include such a profanity, such an inculcating piece of evidence against the good manners and the balance of mind of the Master,<sup>51</sup> whereas I suppose the despondent *Lunyu* 5.22 could have been marginally acceptable as a melodramatic demonstration of the Master's challenging pedagogical task.

But there is worse to come. When shown insufficient ritualized reverence, the Confucius is said to have resorted to verbal abuse first, and then stooping to nothing less than physical violence:

2. 原壤夷俟。子曰：「幼而不孫弟，長而無述焉，老而不死，是為賊！」以杖叩其脛。(14.43)

Yuan Rang was squatting on his heels, and so awaited the approach of the Master, who said to him, “In youth not humble as befits a junior; in manhood, doing nothing worthy of being handed down; and living on to old age—this is to be a pest.” With this he hit him on the shank with his staff.

<sup>48</sup> *Shiji* 67. Note that the *Shiji* faithfully reproduces the subliterate profanity *yan* 嘑, which the *Analects* also reserve for the most recalcitrant of the disciples. Note also that this “expletive” profanity appears to be unattested in pre-Qin and Han literature.

<sup>49</sup> See Jia Qingchao 賈慶超, *Zengzi jiaoshi* 曾子校釋 (Ji'nan: Shandong daxue chubanshe, 1993), pp. 1–158, for a rich account of his importance in the history of Confucianism.

<sup>50</sup> The *Analects* do *not* at this point look very much like an anticipation of Mao Zedong's *Mao zhuxi yulu* 毛主席語錄 along the lines of *Kong fuzi yulu* 孔夫子語錄.

<sup>51</sup> Kai Vogelsang, “Beyond Confucius: A Socio-historical Reading of the *Lunyu*,” *Oriens Extremus* 49 (2010), pp. 40ff., takes a purely sociological angle on what I take to be an irate emotional outburst. He regards the passage as an objectively justified complaint against his disciples concerning their provincialist social backgrounds. There may be something in this. But such social animosities within the elite of early Confucianism would not in any case have recommended themselves to the attention of the compilers of a didactic anthology to the higher honour of Confucianism.

Knocking the shank can be painful. But—to be fair—we do not know how hard he knocked that shank. The Master’s unceremonious insult, followed by a physical attack on an old friend, may be a solid sign of extreme regard for ritual propriety in its own way. However, the Master’s unceremoniousness surely is no less outrageous than that of his old friend. Physical assault of this kind is far from being to the Master’s credit. On the other hand, this little vignette adds immensely to the human interest of the *Analects* as a source for psychological biography. Moreover, as linguists, at last we know the deep cultural origins of the popular insult *lao bu si* 老不死 (old codger)!

From a dogmatic point of view, Yuan Rang, the Master’s old friend, constituted an obvious threat to the congregation of docile devoted disciples. When not having one of his fits of anger, Confucius gives unstinting support to his friend against the boisterous Zilu. He does this outside the *Lunyu*, in the *Liji* 禮記 :

3. 孔子之故人曰原壤，其母死，夫子助之沐椁。原壤登木曰：「久矣予之不託於音也。」歌曰：「狸首之斑然，執女手之卷然。」夫子為弗聞也者而過之，從者曰：「子未可以已乎？」夫子曰：「丘聞之：親者毋失其為親也，故者毋失其為故也。」（《禮記·檀弓》）

There was an old acquaintance of Confucius, called Yuan Rang. When his mother died, the Master assisted him in preparing the shell for the coffin. Yuan (then) got up on the wood and said, “It is long since I sang to anything”; and (with this he struck the wood), singing: “It is marked like a wild cat’s head; It is (smooth) as a young lady’s hand which you hold.” The Master, however, made as if he did not hear, and passed by him. The disciples who were with him said, “Can you not have done with him?” “I have heard,” was the reply, “that relations should not forget their relationship, nor old acquaintances their friendship.”

Confucius emerges from this *Liji* anecdote in much better shape than from the passage in *Lunyu* 14. Why would Han-dynasty dogmatists opt to include a disreputable and deplorable anecdote showing Confucius flying into a vulgar verbal and throwing a physical tantrum and omit this more “appropriate” account?

*Kongzi jiyu* is full of material available in Western Han times that would have served Han-dynasty didactic and ideological purposes. Why choose disreputable conflictual outbursts like this one, devoid of higher intellectual significance, when there was so much wonderfully politically edifying Kongzi material to choose from?

Moreover, why include a passage where someone is quite openly rude to the Master:

4. 微生畝謂孔子曰：「丘何為是栖栖者與？無乃為佞乎？」孔子曰：「非敢為佞也，疾固也。」（14.32）

“Dear friend! What is all this hectic frenzy for? Isn’t it precisely an exercise of that (awful) glib oratory *ning* (which you reject)?” Confucius said: “I would by no means venture to engage in glib oratory: It’s that I hate to be indocile/pigheaded.”

Weisheng Mu clearly talks down to Kongzi here,<sup>52</sup> addressing the Master very impolitely by his personal name and with an insulting literate quib. Confucius defends himself very well with an ingenious response, alluding to the all-important *xue ze bu gu* 學則不固 (if one studies one will not be indocile/pigheaded; *Lunyu* 1.8). His itinerant oratory is explained as a necessary evil, not an end in itself.

This rude address to Confucius would, in any case, clearly not have recommended itself to Western Han compilers/editors of the *Analects*.

Han-dynasty compilers would have wanted to establish Confucius as a moral authority. Here is a quotation from the Master that is unlikely to have been a favourite for Han-dynasty didacticism, which set out to cultivate exactly the attitude that Yan Yuan 顏淵 is here criticized for:

5. 子曰：「回也非助我者也，於吾言無所不說。」(11.4)

The Master said, “Hui gives me no assistance. There is nothing that I say in which he does not delight.”

Again, in *Lunyu* 14.38 the senior disciple Zilu gets a taste of public reaction to the ways of Confucius that is natural enough to note in Warring States times when the Master was widely ridiculed:

6. 子路宿於石門。晨門曰：「奚自？」子路曰：「自孔氏。」曰：「是知其不可而為之者與？」(14.38)

Lévi: “Ah, fit l’homme, n’est-ce pas celui qui s’obstine dans une tache qu’il sait impossible?”

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<sup>52</sup> For the powerful social impact of using the personal name as a term of address, compare this humorous tale: 周訢謂王曰：「宋人有學者，三年反而名其母。其母曰：『子學三年，反而名我者，何也？』其子曰：『吾所賢者，無過堯、舜，堯舜名。吾所大者，無大天地，天地名。今母賢不過堯、舜，母大不過天地，是以名母也。』」Chou Hsi said to him: “Once there was a student from Sung who, after three years of study, returned home and began calling his mother by her first name. She asked him why he was addressing her thus after three years of study. “The men I most admire are Yao and Shun and I call them by their names,” said the boy. “The greatest things I know of are Heaven and Earth and I call *them* by their names. You, mother, cannot be more admirable than Yao and Shun nor greater than Heaven and Earth so I called *you* by your name.” J. I. Crump, Jr., trans., *Chan-kuo Ts’u*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1979), *Wei ce san* 魏策三, no. 359, p. 431.



But is this the spirit that would be cultivated in pro-Confucian didactic handbooks of the first century B.C.? It seems to me that we have here pretty exactly the kind of social realism of the common reception Confucius was exposed to that was being bureaucratically exorcized in the first century B.C.

The question now is this: dare we really attribute to Han time compilers the kind of mindlessness that is needed in order to overlook the profound wisdom of the gatekeeper at Shimen and his stridently dismissive, concise criticism of Confucius?

7. 子擊磬於衛。有荷蕢而過孔氏之門者，曰：「有心哉！擊磬乎！」既而曰：「鄙哉！硜硜乎！莫己知也，斯己而已矣。『深則厲，淺則揭。』」子曰：「果哉！末之難矣。」 (14.39)

The Master was playing, one day, on a musical stone in Wei, when a man, carrying a straw basket, passed door of the house where Confucius was, and said, “His heart is full who so beats the musical stone.” A little while after, he added, “How contemptible is the one-ideaed obstinacy those sounds display! When one is taken no notice of, he has simply at once to give over his wish for public employment. ‘Deep water must be crossed with the clothes on; shallow water may be crossed with the clothes held up.’” The Master said, “How determined is he in his purpose! But this is not difficult!”

In the best tradition of Zhuangzi, the working man of the people here is fully attuned to the quaint charm of the music of Confucius’s thought. But this man of the people understands Confucius only too well, when he thinks about it all. His quotation from the *Odes* is punishingly pertinent and to the point.

And as if this weren’t enough, much to his credit, Confucius acknowledges defeat.

This is Chinese literature at its best. Add to these are the well-rehearsed routine “Taoist” diatribes against Confucius in *Lunyu* 18.3–7.

Supposing that the compilers only had nineteen modern-size pages to fill for a didactic anthology as part of an ideological drive of the empire in Western Han times, one wonders why the detractors of Confucius were given such ample space to denigrate the Sage. Sima Qian, “fond of the extraordinary/deviant” (*haoqi* 好奇) as he notoriously was, would of course be delighted to liven up and to dramatize his biographic account of the Master.

Hunter writes: “In light of these connections and the distinctiveness of the 18/3–7 cluster within the *Lunyu* as a whole, it is possible to read these entries as a distinct layer added under the influence of the ‘Kongzi shijia’ biography.”<sup>53</sup> We have just seen that there is much more material other than the “18/3–7 cluster” in *Lunyu*.

<sup>53</sup> Hunter, *Confucius Beyond the Analects*, p. 290.



The castrated and disgraced son of the great Sima Tan was not known as an ardent supporter of the new Han-dynasty imperial State Confucianism. One wonders why later first century compilers of a didactic *Lunyu* anthology to the higher glory of Confucius would have chosen to cast highly amusing and sustained literary aspersions on the Sage on the basis of the great hidden *Shiji*.

Dozens of *Lunyu* entries could easily be adduced as unlikely choices for first century B.C. compilers among Kongzi sayings. Lin Yutang's 林語堂 *Lun Kongzi de youmo* 論孔子的幽默 and also Harbsmeier's "*Confucius Ridens: Humor in the Analects*" can be used as annotated anthologies of passages in *Lunyu* that are "inappropriate" for didactic purposes and quite alien to the spirit of first century B.C. bureaucratic promotion of Confucius as a model of serious self-assured sagehood.

And, for that matter, neither would it be to the taste of Han didacticism, as I see it, when Yan Yuan makes quiet fun of the limitless devotion to his Master, which he owes and shows everywhere:

8. 子畏於匡，顏淵後。子曰：「吾以女為死矣。」曰：「子在，回何敢死？」(11.23)

The Master was put in fear in Kuang and Yan Yuan fell behind. The Master, on his rejoining him, said, "I thought you had died." Hui replied, "While you were alive, how should I presume to die?"

One could, of course, declare that the Han didacticists, like the commentators and later philologists, rightly found no joke and no self-irony here. Let us leave all this aside for the time being.

I find much, much less of the humorous light touch that enlivens the *Lunyu* in so many places throughout much of the book. However, before one can draw any definite conclusions from this contrast, one has to remember that what we have in the *Kongzi jiyu* and its singularly useful *jiaobu* 校補 (collation and annotation) is not all the Kongzi lore there was available in first century B.C. Han times. All we can say is that the humorous light touch in *Lunyu* contrasts strikingly with both the straight Kongzi sayings on the one hand and with the nature of the humour in what *Kongzi jiyu jiaobu* 孔子集語校補 classifies as the *yuyan* 寓言 (made-up fables) about Confucius.

## VI. Authenticity versus Epigonism

Anacreon (c. 582–c. 485 B.C.)<sup>54</sup> was almost a contemporary of Confucius. His authentic poetry was meticulously and faithfully collected and edited by Alexandrian

<sup>54</sup> The most readable study of Anacreon I have seen is Gérard Lambin, *Anacréon. Fragments et imitations* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2002). On the Anacreontea specifically, there  
(Continued on next page)

philologists some time around 300 B.C., and Anacreon was regarded as one of the nine “classic” poets. By no means all of Anacreon’s “authentic” pieces anthologized by the Alexandrian philologists were to his credit as a popular minstrel. By no means all of them were of a kind with the inebriate erotic banquet song hits that had made his name a household word. But that apparently wonderful edition collected dust in the great *Mouseion*<sup>55</sup> in Alexandria. What flourished under the Roman Empire and under his name was not Anacreon’s complex poetry with its diverse quirks, religious tangents and political escapades, and especially with his disarming self-sarcasm and his biting self-irony. What flourished in the Roman Empire was a streamlined predictable author of repetitive and immensely popular drinking songs and love songs in common use on festive occasions of all kinds. What flourished were not the highly complex delicately psychologizing poems by Anacreon; what flourished came to be known as the “Anacreontea,” the result of simplifying and popularizing “*mimesis*.” The authors were often anonymous epigones, not great poets. The inimitable Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff put the matter well: “*wem diese matte Limonade nicht unausstehlich ist, der soll nicht nach dem hellenischen Weine greifen*” (Whosoever does not find this flat lemonade of the Anacreontea intolerable should never go for the true Hellenic wine).<sup>56</sup>

In this day and age, one would never dare to chime in with this: “Whosoever does not find this flat lemonade of *Kongzi yue* 孔子曰 sayings intolerable should not be allowed to touch the *Lunyu*.” Heaven forbids! But what if much of the *Lunyu* wine appears to be of a quite distinct vintage from the lemonade that pervades and suffuses *Kongzi jiyu*? What if Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎 had something of a genuine point when he called *Lunyu* the finest book in the world, and not *Kongzi waibian* 孔子外編? What if the subtle Master with his *weiyen* 微言 (subtle words) was of a different order of rhetorical depth and pedagogical mindfulness when compared to his admirers

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(Note 54—*Continued*)

is the excellent Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *The Poetics of Imitation: Anacreon and the Anacreontic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Sappho and Simonides. Untersuchungen über griechische Lyriker* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1913), pp. 102–37, has inspired my work on this section.

<sup>55</sup> The Greek word for a library was indeed *mouseion* (museum).

<sup>56</sup> The text continues in the true spirit of critical comparative philology: “Aber auch das kann nur Graekomanie behaupten, daß der echte Anakreon ein wahrhaft großer Dichter gewesen wäre. Troubadours und Minnesänger nehmen es mit der griechischen Gesellschaftslyrik wahrhaftig auf, mit Alkman und Alkaios und Anakreon, und eine so unmittelbare Gewalt der Lebensfreude und Lebenskraft wie der Archipoeta wird nur Archilochos besessen haben.” (Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Die griechische Literatur des Altertums* [Berlin: Teubner, 1905], p. 44)

and epigones, the later “Confucianists”? The point would need to be demonstrated. And I believe a crucial part of this psychological subtlety and self-humour is demonstrated in considerable detail in Lin Yutang’s *Lun Kongzi de youmo* as well as in my “*Confucius Ridens*.” However, much more *sensitive* work of literary criticism on related subjects in *Lunyu* needs be done. Like Anacreon, but in his own politicized way, Confucius was trivialized into predictable Kitsch by his political advocates and admirers. Failing to see this is like failing to distinguish 7 Up lemonade from *vin blanc de Bourgogne*. *Ceterum censeo: de gustibus est disputandum!* With Laurence Sterne “I leave to the few who feel to analyse.”<sup>57</sup> But to me it does appear that the prevalence of subjective “voice” in *Lunyu*, as well as the absence of “voice” in so much of *Kongzi jiyu*, is not merely a matter of my subjective taste, and is not, in fact, a matter of philological taste.

## VII. Authorial Reflexivity

*Lunyu* is a book for the philosophical-cum-literary connoisseur, and Jean Lévi translates *Lunyu*, as literature, into exciting, dynamic literary French. His translation reads like a retelling of content rather than a literal crib. Lévi mirrors himself in Confucius. He “appropriates” Confucius. His translation often is more like Lévi than like Confucius. As a translator, he does not pretend that he can offer us anything superficially like the *ipsissima vox* of Confucius.<sup>58</sup> He frankly offers Jean Lévi’s Confucius. And, incidentally, when all is said and done, in fact, no one can offer more than his own subjective version. Jean Lévi clearly enjoys this subjectivity. He will have nothing of the *dictum*: “If it doesn’t sound like a translation it is treason.” His *credo* is: “If it isn’t exciting French, then it was a bad French translation. Assuming,

<sup>57</sup> Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, edited by Graham Petrie with an Introduction by A. Alvarez (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 43.

<sup>58</sup> There is indeed a clear attempt to depict and perhaps even exaggerate some idiosyncrasies of the Master’s idiolect in the *Lunyu*, a feature that facilitated imitation by epigones as well as parody by detractors. See already Donald Holzman many years ago: “They are thus a record of spoken words, whether in conversations or not, and certain peculiarities of style prove clearly that the object of the recorder or recorders of the words has been to preserve as much as the recalcitrant Chinese character was willing to preserve of the colloquial flavor of the original speech. The recorders have gone so far as to include the very hemming and hawing of actual conversation in their texts, with their *i*’s! 矣 and *i-i*’s! 已矣 and *hu-tsai*’s! 乎哉.” Donald Holzman, “The Conversational Tradition in Chinese Philosophy,” *Philosophy East and West* 6, no. 3 (October 1956), p. 225. It needs to be pointed out, however, that the *Lunyu* is not a collection of informal colloquial banter. In many places it is a rhetorically and artfully chiselled literary masterpiece.

of course, that the original was exciting and worth translating in the first place, which is not a foregone conclusion, whatever blue-eyed enthusiasts would have us believe.”

We do also have a *Lunyu* translation by one of the great masters of French prose in the twentieth century, Pierre Ryckmans.<sup>59</sup> One may usefully compare his with Jean Lévi's effort in the same direction. As Jacques Gernet has been at pains to point out in his hostile review of Ryckmans in *T'oung Pao*, such literary efforts are inevitably wide open to instructive detailed philological criticism. At the same time, such literary efforts make rewarding reading in their own right.

### VIII. The Character of Dialogues in the *Analects*

The global history of the literary genre of dialogue is of great interest.<sup>60</sup>

One salient feature of *Lunyu* is the presence of non-didactic “horizontal” dialogues between equals, and often without a clear winner. These cannot have been chosen for the celebration of the wisdom of Confucius, especially not when Confucius does not have the last word. Such dialogues are much closer to miniature personal portraiture of a remarkable personality, occasional warts and all. It was probably well known that in a weak moment Confucius associated with the notorious Nanzi 南子, and that even his disciples were dissatisfied with him on this point. And yet, the episode gets its proper attention in *Lunyu*. Confucius is contrite in *Lunyu* 6.28 and has not even a lame excuse.

When caught red-handed making a flippant remark that clearly went against the grain of his own teaching, I suppose he was known to have shrugged this off, and to have said *qianyan xi zhi yi* 前言戲之耳 (Oh just now I was just trying to be funny, that's all) (*Lunyu* 17.4). We have here a forgivable *faux pas* by the great Master, but what is the didactic purpose of selecting this embarrassing but true little episode in a nineteen-page didactic handbook for imperial use?

When the tempestuous indefatigable senior disciple, Zilu, repeatedly and often successfully calls the bluff on his Master (and friend) and easily keeps the upper hand in discussions, this is more an intimate touch of familiar realism regarding some disreputable episodes of the Master, and not a didactic celebration of his toleration of dissent.

Since such material is extremely sparse in *Kongzi jiyu*, one wonders why Handynasty Confucianist didacticists made sure to include all of it in their little nineteen-page political compilation in support of Confucius.

<sup>59</sup> See also *The Analects: The Simon Leys Translation, Interpretations*.

<sup>60</sup> For a magisterial cultural history of the dialogue in Europe, see Rudolf Hirzel, *Der Dialog. Ein literaturhistorischer Versuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1885).

All this realistic but disreputable detail about Confucius strongly suggests that *Lunyu* is in fact a pre-Confucianist compilation made long before any adulatory orthodoxy concerning Confucius became de rigueur.

## IX. Quotation and Allusion

Questions regarding quotations from and allusions in relation to *Lunyu* are not in fact entirely irrelevant in spite of the commonly overlooked fact that *Lunyu* might very well have existed without ever having been quoted or referred to for hundreds of years. For if *Lunyu* can be demonstrated to quote, be influenced by, or allude to a Han text, then the compilation of *Lunyu* must indeed be dated to Han times.

Now on this very subtle literary matter of intertextual relations like quotation and allusion of all kinds, Bakhtin writes:

In each epoch certain speech genres [ritualized modes of linguistic interaction] set the tone for the development of literary language. And these speech genres are not only secondary (literary, commentarial, and scientific), but also primary (certain types of oral dialogue—of the salon, of one's own circle, and other types as well, such as familiar, family-everyday, sociopolitical, philosophical, and so on).

. . . But words can enter our speech from others' individual utterances, thereby retaining to a greater or lesser degree the tones and echoes of such individual utterances.

. . . Therefore, one can say that any word exists for the speaker in three aspects: as a neutral word of a language, belonging to nobody; as an *other's* word, which belongs to another person and is filled with echoes of the other's utterance; and finally, as *my* word, for, since I am dealing with it in a particular situation, with a particular speech plan, it is already imbued with my expression [экспрессией (!)].

. . . Our speech, that is, all our utterances (including creative works), is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of "our-own-ness," varying degrees of awareness [of these links] and detachment [from them]. These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework, and re-accentuate.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> M. M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, translated by Vern W. McGee and edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp. 65, 88, 89. Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) could have profited immensely from the subtle

(Continued on next page)

The cultures of quotation and the modalities of allusion vary greatly between different civilizations, different places, times, and different subcultures.<sup>62</sup> It is in the spirit of such comparative literary reflections that the Chinese case must be studied. Bakhtin's insight on the intertextuality even of individual vocabulary use is essential.

The existence of some version of *Lunyu* for the authors of the *Mencius*

There are nine passages where the *Mencius* quotes *Lunyu* nearly word for word.<sup>63</sup> One case, *Mengzi* 7B/37, "is especially striking in this regard. The episode opens with a question about a variant of *Lunyu* 5/22, and in response *Mengzi* quotes variants of *Lunyu* 13/21 and 17/13 before quoting a variant of *Lunyu* 17/18 in order to explain the 17/13 parallel. Its sustained engagement with multiple (variant) *Lunyu* Kongzi sayings in a manner reminiscent of a *Lunyu* commentary would seem to indicate that its author was indeed familiar with a text resembling our *Lunyu*."<sup>64</sup>

When the explicit evidence that *Mencius* quotes the book *Lunyu* gets incontrovertible, Hunter acknowledges the situation and goes straight for the direct attack against the credibility of the witness. He argues that the last book of the *Mencius* is a fake. However, one cannot overstate how truly exceptional *Mengzi* 7B/37 is both within the *Mengzi* and in the pre-Han corpus at large. There is simply no other Kongzi-related passage in any ostensibly pre-Han text that engages multiple Kongzi sayings with *Lunyu* parallels in series, *Mengzi* 7B/37.

(Note 61—Continued)

perspectives on intertextually opened up in "Speech Genres" by Bakhtin and later elaborated and systematized, for example, in Ruth Finnegan, *Why Do We Quote?: The Culture and History of Quotation* (Cambridge, UK: OpenBooks, 2011) and defined in impassioned detail to biblical studies in Christopher A. Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 11–35. Beetham concludes aptly, albeit inelegantly: "At this point we affirm that there is an element of intuition and judgment in the detection and verification of echo. Such is the nature of this type of investigation, that it is both art as well as science" (p. 35). Jean Lévi errs in the study the echoes of *Lunyu* on the side of the impassioned artist with his lively and unquestioned intuitions, while Hunter's "Did Mencius Know the *Analects*?" is basically still looking for digitisable algorithms for catching intertextual poetic butterflies.

<sup>62</sup> Finnegan's *Why Do We Quote?* is by far the best general philosophical-minded survey I have seen. For Old Chinese, Xu Renfu's *Gushu yinyu yanjiu* 古書引語研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2014) is indispensable as a survey of intertextuality from pre-Qin to Han times. Unfortunately, neither Lévi nor Hunter mentions this work which is of central importance to the study of intertextuality in pre-Buddhist China.

<sup>63</sup> Hunter, "Did Mencius Know the *Analects*?" p. 50, n. 62.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.



### The existence of a *Lunyu* for the authors of the *Xunzi*

In a single paragraph of *Xunzi* 27 alone, Jean Lévi diagnoses three adjacent echoes to three *non-adjacent* chapters of *Lunyu* 15.2, 14.12, and 9.28:

君子隘窮而不失 (echoes *Lunyu* 15.2: 子路愠見曰：「君子亦有窮乎？」子曰：「君子固窮，小人窮，斯濫矣。」)

臨患難而不忘細席之言 (echoes *Lunyu* 14.12: 久要不忘平生之言)

歲不寒，無以知松柏 (echoes *Lunyu* 9.28: 子曰：「歲寒，然後知松柏之後彫也。」)

*Lunyu* cannot reasonably be taken to allude in three separate places to a particular unremarkable passage in *Xunzi* which never mentions Confucius in the first place. If this is indeed a sustained echo, the direction of the allusion is unmistakable. In this instance it is indeed as if *Lunyu* 9, 14, and 15 were available to the authors of this part of the *Xunzi*.

Jean Lévi presents a detailed list of annotated allusions to the *Analects* where the *Lunyu* passages cannot possibly be taken to be inspired by the *Xunzi*. Every one of these deserves a critical discussion. *Sed non hic et non nunc!* (But not here and not now!)

### *Lunyu* in *Hanfeizi* 韓非子

葉公問政。子曰：近者說，遠者來。(13.16)

Hunter, *Confucius Beyond the Analects*: The Duke of She asked about governance. The Master said, “Those close by are pleased; those far away are attracted.” (p. 183)  
Lévi: Le gouverneur de She ayant demandé au Maître en quoi consistait le gouvernement s’attira cette réponse: “Apporter la joie à ses peuples et attirer ceux des pays lointains.”

In this particular context, the verbs *yue* 說 and *lai* 來 should probably be taken as causative so that Confucius can be taken to answer the question directly, but grammatically, Hunter’s reading is of course possible.

None of this is central to our concern. But Han Fei does translate this *Lunyu* passage into his own language exactly as one predicts him to, a version which in this case Hunter, *Confucius Beyond the Analects*, p. 183 does get right:

葉公子高問政於仲尼，仲尼曰：「政在悅近而來遠。」(《韓非子·難三》)

Zigao, the Duke of She, asked Zhongni about governance. Zhongni said, “Governance lies in pleasing the near and attracting the distant.”



This passage cannot be taken to be the source of the compilation of a Han-dynasty work that came to be known as *Lunyu* 論語. And the reason is threefold at least: (1) The Han Fei version has 悦, which disambiguates the older *Lunyu* standard form 說. Lu Deming 陸德明 glosses 說 as 悦. Han Fei anticipates this gloss. In the transmitted texts, the *Lunyu* way to write the word later written as 悦 is everywhere 說. When an edition has 悦 that is generally taken as a “modernization” of the transmitted text. The Dingzhou manuscript also has 說.<sup>65</sup> (2) The addition *zheng zai* 政在 is an expansion on the brevity that characterized early and mid-Warring States prose. What we have here sounds almost like a translation *ad usum Delphini*. (3) The commentarial expansion of She gong 葉公 to She gong Zigao 葉公子高 is of a kind profusely attested in the *Shiji* quotations from *Zuozhuan* as laid out conveniently in the work of He Leshi 何樂士 discussed below. Han-dynasty compilers are less likely to interfere with the text to try to simplify She gong Zigao to She gong than vice versa. In this particular context the current doctrine that a *lectio facilior* is more likely to be a “rewriting” than a corresponding *lectio difficilior* does apply to Chinese just as it does to Latin or Greek. Moreover, in early Warring States times the chances that the Zigao could be taken for granted was considerably greater than in mid-Western Han times.

#### Intertextual relations between *Lunyu* and *Huainanzi*

Chen Ying’s 陳穎 paper on modes of *Huainanzi* “quotation” from *Lunyu* lines up literal versus adapted direct quotations and a wealth of vocabulary loans and “grammatical echoes” from *Lunyu*. All of these need careful consideration. In addition, there is a most interesting proliferation of explicit ancient evidence on echoes from *Lunyu* in the form of ancient commentaries on the *Huainanzi*, which explicitly diagnose echoes from the *Lunyu*.<sup>66</sup> The old commentators may of course be suspected of being biased in favour of such echoes, but like specialized biblical scholars they resemble philological dogs, highly trained in sniffing out the subtle scents of intertextual relations.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> He Linyi 何琳儀, *Zhanguo guwen zidian: Zhanguo wenzi shengxi* 戰國古文字典——戰國文字聲系 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998) still had no entry for 悦.

<sup>66</sup> Chen Ying 陳穎, “*Huainanzi yin Lunyu kao*” 《淮南子》引《論語》考, *Huainan shifan xueyuan xuebao* 淮南師範學院學報, 2012, no. 6, pp. 56–59.

<sup>67</sup> The most intellectually exciting Western example of this I am familiar with is Rudolf Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*. Erklärt von D. Rudolf Bultmann, D. D. von Dt. Andrews (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1964). It takes very much more than digital algorithm searches and statistics for this sniffing out of subtle intertextual echoes of the intellectual kind.

## X. Concluding Remark

Supposing now that under Emperor Wu of Han someone was trying to compile a competitor for the “Daoist” *Huainanzi* but in a Confucianist spirit, we actually do have Han-dynasty books of this general sort to look at: the *Shuoyuan* with its systematic chapter arrangement gives one a pretty good idea what such a work might have looked like in Han dynasty imperial times when Confucianism was being institutionally promoted: 1. The Way of the Ruler; 2. The Art of the Minister; 3. Building up the Basics; 4. Establishing Moderation; 5. Honouring Virtue; 6. Paying Back Generosity; 7. Principles of Government; 8. Due Respect for the Worthy; 9. Correct Remonstrance; 10. Due Care; 11. Eloquence; 12. Delegation of Tasks; 13. Strategic Thinking; 14. Ultimate Public Spiritedness; 15. Directing the Military; 18. Sundry Apophthegms; 19. Diverse Propositions; 20. Discriminating between Things; 21. Cultivating Elegance; 22. Getting Back to the Substance.<sup>68</sup>

The *Analects* do not look like a didactic Confucianist book; considerable parts would seem to suggest that the *Analects* is a pre-Confucian book. But one thing is sure: early commentators have done their best to read the *Analects* as a source for Confucianism, and to defocus whatever it is in the *Analects*, be it self-humour, or be it the Master’s intellectual defeats and insouciances, that does not fit into this didactic mould, be it the Master being laughed at not by political leaders but by the common people! Jean Lévi’s translation of the *Analects* is provocative in the best sense of that word: it provokes critical discussions and deep reflections on the current state of the art in the study of ancient Chinese intellectual and literary history. After all, Confucius himself was something of a moral (not ethical!) *provocateur*. And that is why, try what may, he never got a proper job in his lifetime.

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<sup>68</sup> Zhao Shanyi’s *Shuoyuan shuzheng* together with a number of other *shuzheng* 疏證 (commentaries) on ancient texts illustrate the intertextual relations of the content of the book. But these commentaries only look for extensive parallels and they are not sniffing out those subtle decisive echoes that are our concern here.

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