

Sima Qian as a Reader of Master Kong's Utterances

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Based on selected passages in the *Shiji* 史記 (*Records of the Scribe*)¹ this paper attempts to shed light on Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (c. 145–c. 85 BCE) readings of the utterances of Confucius in the wider context of the reception history of the *Lunyu* 論語 (*Analects*). It understands the records and interpretations transmitted in the *Shiji* as a widely overlooked early hermeneutical attempt to contextualise and clarify the meaning of statements made by Master Kong.

The earliest description of a textual body titled *Lu Lunyu* 魯論語 as a compilation of the utterances of Kong Qiu 孔丘 (trad. 551–479), latinized as Confucius, by his disciples seems to date back to Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BCE) who is quoted by He Yan 何晏 (190–249) at the very beginning of his preface (*xu* 序; dated 242) to the *Lunyu jijie* 論語集解.² In his bibliographical chapter of the *Han shu* 漢書, Ban Gu 班固 (32–92) essentially follows a view attributed to Liu Xiang in referring to the title *Lunyu* 論語; however, he drops the regional specification reportedly made by Liu Xiang.³ Ban Gu's narrative also reports on the existence of three traditions of the *Lunyu*, the *Lu Lun* 魯論 (20 *pian*) and the *Qi Lun* 齊論 (22 *pian*), both in new script (*jinwen* 今文), and the *Gu Lun* 古論 (21 *pian*), a version written in ancient script (*guwen* 古文) and allegedly recovered from a wall in the former residence of Confucius during the reign of emperor Jing 景 (r. 157–141 BCE) of the Han.⁴

1 Technical note: Segmentation of the main text (*jingwen* 經文) of the *Lunyu* follows the Harvard-Yenching Index Series. Unless indicated otherwise references to *Shiji* and *Han shu* are to the Zhonghua editions. For Tang manuscript fragments I rely heavily on the International Dunhuang Project website of the British Library (London) which provides excellent digital reproductions of manuscript fragments and links to the holdings in other libraries such as the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris), thereby offering convenient access to the manuscripts brought back to Europe by Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) and Marc Aurel Stein (1862–1943). Shortly prior to the conference in Prague, Esther Klein presented a paper entitled “Sima Qian's Kongzi and the Western Han *Lunyu*” at the conference “The *Analects*: A Western Han text?” held at Princeton in November 2011. I would like to thank Esther Klein for providing me with a draft of her paper in October 2012.

2 See *Lunyu jijie*, *xu*, 1a. The *locus classicus* on the *Lunyu* as a compilation by the master's followers is, of course, found in *Han shu* 30.1717. For a concise summary of the early history of the *Lunyu* see Cheng 1993. For the *Lunyu* as a text that took shape and was compiled into the received version during the Eastern Han period see Makeham 1996, Csikszentmihalyi 2002, Zhu Weizheng 2002, Csikszentmihalyi 2004, 28–32, and Makeham 2007, 103. For more recent contributions to this topic see Kern, Hunter and Weingarten 2015 (forthcoming).

3 See *Han shu* 30.1717.

4 See *Han shu* 36.1970 and *Han shu* 30.1706. In their attempts to reconstruct antiquity Qing scholars also attempted to re-establish the texts of these early versions from fragments and other secondary material.

He Yan states that Kong Anguo 孔安國 (d. c. 100 BCE) and Ma Rong 馬融 (79–166) both compiled explanatory glosses on the *Gu Lun*, and that Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) based himself primarily on the *Lu Lun*, collated it against the *Qi Lun* and *Gu Lun* versions, and provided it with explanatory glosses.⁵

A first attempt to establish a standardised text of the *Lunyu* seems to date back to around 48 BCE when Zhang Yu 張禹 (d. 5 BCE), an imperial tutor to the crown prince, established the version later known as the *Zhang Hou Lun* 張侯論, a collation primarily based on the *Lu Lun* with references to the *Qi Lun*, and added a *zhangju* 章句 (chapter and verse) commentary.⁶ Bao Xian 包咸 (fl. 10) and other subsequent imperial tutors based themselves on the textual synthesis established by Zhang Yu which was originally compiled as teaching material for the later emperor Cheng 成 (r. 33–7 BCE).⁷ Although He Yan does not mention it as such, Zhang's collated version was certainly also consulted by Zheng Xuan; it served as main base text for the *jinwen* stela version of 175, and soon established itself as the most prestigious version among Han scholars. Further to Zheng Xuan's efforts, the *Lunyu jijie* compiled under the main editorship of He Yan is often described as another essential attempt to establish a representative main text (*jingwen* 經文) of the *Lunyu*.⁸ From the *Lunyu jijie* onwards the main text of the *Lunyu* remains relatively stable. Nevertheless, the bamboo strip manuscript fragments unearthed in 1973 in Dingzhou 定州, the bamboo strip fragments from the former Lelang (Korean: Nangnang) 樂浪 commandery and excavated in 1990, manuscript fragments discovered in Dunhuang and other areas (mainly dating back to the Tang) as well as the stela versions (from Han to Song) attest to the coexistence of divergent textual traditions and to a variety of lines of transmissions of the *Lunyu* up to the early Song period.⁹ Some of these textual divergences

For such a reconstruction attempt see Ma Guohan's collection of fragments Yuhan shanfang jiyishu, vol. 3, 1618–1637 (*Gu Lun*) and 1638–1642 (*Qi Lun*).

5 See *Lunyu jijie*, xu, 1a. For collation work on the manuscript fragments of Zheng Xuan's commentary see Wang Su's *Tang xieben Lunyu Zheng shi zhu ji qi yanjiu* and Chen Jinmu's *Tang xieben Lunyu Zheng shi zhu yanjiu*. For more general remarks on the Zheng Xuan commentary see Makeham 1997.

6 On Zhang Yu see *Han shu* 81.3347–3350.

7 On Bao Xian see *Han shu* 79B.2570; some of his glosses are found in the *Lunyu jijie*. A reconstruction of the *Bao shi zhangju* 包氏章句 from quotes is included in Yuhan shanfang jiyishu, vol. 3, 1682–1697; two additional fragments are found in Wang Renjun's Yuhan shanfang jiyishu xubian, 67. Other commentators include a certain "Mister Zhou", or Zhou shi 周氏, of whom we have no further information. Some of his glosses are transmitted in the *Lunyu jijie*, and fragments of his commentary can be found in Yuhan shanfang jiyishu, vol. 3, 1697ff. On the *Lunyu* as educational material for princes see also the remarks in Csikszentmihalyi 2002.

8 For collation work on manuscript fragments of the *Lunyu jijie* from Dunhuang see Li Fang's *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*. For a summary on relevant issues regarding this commentary see Makeham 1999.

9 The Dingzhou fragments cover less than half the text of the received *Lunyu*. Unfortunately reproductions of its actual bamboo slips remain unpublished and the text is only available in transcription (*shiwén* 釋文) with some rudimentary collation notes; see *Dingzhou Hanmu zhujian Lunyu*. On the so-called Pyongyang bamboo strip fragments (39 intact slips and 70 fragmentary pieces) which carry parts of only two chapters of the received *Lunyu*, see Lee Song-si, Yoon Yong-gu and Kim Kyong-ho 2009, and some of the articles in Kim Kyong-ho and Lee Young-ho 2012. I am indebted to Dr. Jo Jungeun 趙貞恩 of Seoul University for taking me through the Korean material. See also Jeon Deog-jae 2012, and Lee

have an impact on available and possible interpretations of particular passages and are thus crucial for the study of the effective history of the *Lunyu*.

The bamboo strips from Dingzhou are the earliest surviving textual evidence of utterances of Confucius. They date back to about one generation after Sima Qian and provide us with a textual witness that comes fairly close to the lifetime of the court scribe who made ample reference to records of the utterances of Confucius.¹⁰ One of the terms used by Sima Qian to name this textual body is *Kong shi shu* 孔氏書.¹¹ Another expression used in the *Shiji* and suspected to refer to a defined written corpus recording utterances of Confucius is *Kong shi guwen* 孔氏古文.¹² Some take this taxing expression as synonymous with the title *Lunyu*, Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927) understands it as a reference to written records transmitted by Confucius and written in old script, and others read it as a more general term covering the entire body of old text material allegedly recovered from the former residence of Confucius.¹³ In the entire *Shiji* there is only one single occurrence of the expression *lun yu* / *Lunyu* 論語 which appears towards the very end of Sima Qian's collective biography of the disciples of Confucius. Most readers tend to perceive it as a book title:

則論言弟子籍，出孔氏古文近是。余以弟子名姓文字悉取論語弟子問并次為篇。The *Ti-tzu-chi* 弟子籍 (Register of Disciples) came from the ancient writings of Confucius' household; it is close to the truth. I took the names of the disciples, then gathered all the records concerning them from among the questions posed by the disciples in the *Analects* and arranged the information in one chapter.¹⁴

Sima Qian's narrative on the disciples of Confucius as well as his sketch of the life of Master Kong are the two chapters of the *Shiji* that exhibit by far the largest number of references to the utterances of Confucius. Textual parallels, quotes from and references to this source confirm that Sima Qian had indeed access to a body of utterances of Confucius that was most likely in some written form.¹⁵ His quotes from this body, which was at least in part close to that which became known under the title *Lunyu*, are mainly attributed to Confucius via formulae such as *Kongzi yue* 孔子曰, *Zhongni yue* 仲尼曰 and the like,

Song-si, Yoon Yong-gu and Kim Kyong-ho 2011. For a summary on the Dingzhou and the Pyongyang fragments see also van Els 2015 (forthcoming).

10 The Dingzhou mss fragments date from around 55 BCE; the Pyongyang mss fragments date from 45 BCE.

11 See *Shiji* 47.1947.

12 See *Shiji* 67.2226.

13 For the reading of this term as a reference to the *Lunyu* see for example Wang Liqi, *Shiji zhuyi*, vol. 3, 1678. For Wang Guowei's interpretation see Wang Shumin, *Shiji jiaozheng*, vol. 7, 2163. For an example of the third reading see *Shiji* 67.2226 where *lunyu/Lunyu* is marked as a book title by the editors of the Zhonghua edition.

14 *Shiji* 67.2226. Translation from Nienhauser 1994, 84. Cf. Csikszentmihalyi 2004, 29.

15 With regard to the quantity of records about his statements and events in the life of Confucius, Wang Chong 王充 (27 – c. 100) in *Lunheng* 論衡 speaks of “some dozens to a hundred *pian*” (數十百篇); see *Lunheng zhushi*, 1598. For some of the titles that Wang Chong may have had in mind here, such as *Sanchao ji* 三朝記, *Zhongni xianju* 仲尼閑居, *Kongzi Yan ju* 孔子燕居 etc., see Sun Shiyang 1933.

including even *shengren yue* 聖人曰.¹⁶ This mode of referencing source material stands in a widely attested tradition. The *Mengzi* 孟子 for instance where none of the quotes from or parallels with utterances of Confucius is referred to by the title *Lunyu* also makes frequent use of such formulae.¹⁷ Other sources that are closer to the time of Sima Qian and still attest to this practice include texts such as the *Xin Yu* 新語, attributed to Lu Jia 陸賈 (240–170 BCE), a text which Sima Qian definitely had seen, and the *Xin shu* 新書 which is traditionally attributed to Jia Yi 賈誼 (201–169 BCE).¹⁸

In addition to utterances transmitted in the *Lunyu*, chapter 47 of the *Shiji*, the “Hereditary House of Confucius”, draws largely on information from sources such as the *Liji* 禮記, *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 and *Guoyu* 國語.¹⁹ Similarly chapter 67, the memoir on his disciples, builds on a number of other sources including the *Zhongni dizi mulu* 仲尼弟子目錄.²⁰ The perhaps most prominent source, however, is material later compiled into the *Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語, much of which is also attested in parallels transmitted in other pre-Han and Han compilations.²¹ With Sima Qian’s sources in mind, one may suggest the following reading of the passage above which would leave us with no direct reference to the title *Lunyu* in the *Shiji*:

則論言弟子籍，出孔氏古文近是。余以弟子名姓文字悉取論語弟子問并次為篇。

Then, the discussions [*lun* 論] and words [*yan* 言] in the *Register of Disciples* come from the ancient writings of Confucius’ household and are close to the truth. I took the names of the disciples, gathered all the records concerning them from among

16 For the use of those formulae due to the lack of the existence of a book titled *Lunyu* see also Takeuchi Yoshio 1939. For the use of the formula *Shengren yue* see *Shiji* 79.422. Whether the term *shengren* in *Shiji* 79.2422 refers to a particular sage or an anonymous sage remains unclear.

17 It is worth noting here that only eight of the twenty-nine references to utterances of Confucius in the *Mencius* are actually attested in the received version of the *Lunyu* which may be taken as an indication of a corpus of utterances of Confucius that was, at the time, much larger than the received versions of the *Lunyu* would suggest. On the *Lunyu* parallels in the *Mencius* see Honda Shigeyuki 本田成之 1927, 173, and Honda Shigeyuki 1935, 131.

18 For Sima Qian’s access to the *Xin Yu* see *Shiji* 97.2705. In this context some also make reference to the *Han Shi wai zhuan* 韓詩外傳 (attributed to Han Ying 韓嬰, c. 200–130 BCE) which, in view of some of the issues involved in this case, shall be disregarded here temporarily; see the remarks in Makeham 1996, 12. On Sima Qian seeing the *Xin Yu* see *Shiji* 97.2705.

19 Much has been written about Sima Qian’s sources. A *locus classicus* is still Chavannes 1895, “Introduction”. Cf. also Karlgren 1970, esp. 297 and He Zhihua 2010, 2. For the wider context see Jin Dejian 1963.

20 The *Zhongni dizi mulu* (1 scroll) is attributed to Zheng Xuan; as it is no longer listed in the bibliography of the *Song shi*, it was presumably lost in the mid-fourteenth century around 1343–1345. A reconstructed version is found in Yuhán shānfāng jìyìshù, vol. 3, 1739f. For this material being referred to in the *Suoyin* commentary on the *Shiji*, see Cheng Jinzao 1998, 138f.

21 Even if one were to trust Wang Su’s 王肅 (195–256) account on how this compilation became more widely available, it remains questionable whether the *Kongzi jiayu*, which allegedly derives from family lore of the Kong clan, was available to Sima Qian in any form or shape that resembles the received version. However, with regard to textual parallels between the *Shiji* and the compilation now known as *Kongzi jiayu*, the traditional commentaries on the *Shiji* as well as the notes by Takikawa Kametarō, first published in 1934, provide ample pointers. Cf. Cheng Jinzao 1998, 131–138.

the questions posed in discussions [*lun* 論] with and speeches [*yu* 語] to disciples, and arranged the information in one chapter.²²

This prompts the questions as to when the term *Lunyu* was established as the title of a book, an issue that is disputed since the Han. Some relate it to the first generation of disciples of Confucius, some to Kong Anguo or one of his pupils, a certain Fu Qing 扶卿 from the state of Lu.²³ Some believe it to be established during the Han, probably not before the reign of emperor Wen 文 (r. 180–157 BCE), most likely under emperors Wen or Jing (r. 157–141 BCE).²⁴ Wang Chong describes the title *Lunyu* as being established as late as during the reign of emperor Wu 武 (r. 141–87 BCE) which, by and large, coincides with the lifetime of Sima Qian.²⁵ Some see the versions taught in Qi and Lu as emerging during the Han, and regard these versions as *jinwen* transcriptions that essentially derive from the *Gu Lun*.²⁶ As for the title of the textual body being received as *Lunyu*, one may argue that the term *Lunyu* came into existence as a book title around the time when Sima Qian was born.²⁷ Sima Qian's own view on this issue is not documented. But with the Dingzhou and the Pyongyang corpora being copied on to bamboo strips after Sima Qian's lifetime and apparently not carrying the title *Lunyu*, a reading of *lun yu* in the *Shiji* as “discussions [*lun*] and speeches [*yu*]” would seem an available and indeed attractive reading option.²⁸

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As even the most fundamental information on the body of records on the utterances of Confucius available to Sima Qian is uncertain, and since the oral transmission of relevant records and their interpretation up to the court scribe's lifetime seems irretrievably lost, a

22 *Shiji* 67.2226. The parallel 論言弟子籍 and 論語弟子問 suggests that Sima Qian may have been talking about two titles, a *Diziji* (Register of Disciples) and a *Diziwen* (Questions of Disciples), both of which reportedly transmitted material regarding the discussions between the Master and his disciples. Alternatively, we may read this passage as indicated in the translation above. In any case, the parallel structure of *lun yan* 論言 (discussions and words) and *lun yu* 論語 (discussions and speeches) can be taken as an argument against reading *lun yu* as a reference to the book title *Lunyu* in this passage.

23 The attribution of the *Lunyu* to the first generation of disciples of Confucius, namely Zhonggong 仲弓, Ziyou 子游 and Zixia 子夏, goes back to Zheng Xuan who is frequently quoted on this matter; see for example the *Zheng Xuan Lunyu xu yiwen* 鄭玄論語序逸文 which is attached to *Lunyu zhengyi*, 431ff, esp. 431. See also the discussion in *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 1133. Fu Qing is also known as Fu Xian 扶先 which is taken as an alternate name by some, others read it in the sense of “Mr Fu”.

24 See the discussion in Zhao Zhenxin 1961; see also Zhao Zhenxin 1936.

25 See *Lunheng zhushi*, 1598. For more references on this see the notes in *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 1131–1134, in *Sishu kaoyi, zongkao* 9.2b [39], and in the commentary on He Yan's preface to the *Lunyu* in *Lunyu zhengyi*, 419–430.

26 On the relation between these three traditions see Takeuchi Yoshio 1939, 69.

27 See also Makeham 1996, 1. In case the title *Lunyu* was already established as the title of the material recording utterances of Confucius at the time of Sima Qian, an inquiry into the reasons why Sima Qian may have decided to not use this title in the *Shiji* becomes indispensable.

28 As is the case for the Dingzhou material, there is no indication of the title *Lunyu* being used for the text fragments found at the former Lelang commandery. Note also that whereas the Dingzhou fragments show a textual sequence similar to that of the received *Lunyu*, the fragments from the two chapters on the Korean strips exhibit a rather different textual arrangement.

close reading of the received *Lunyu* and its textual parallels in the *Shiji* may provide us with some preliminary glimpses regarding the inter-textual relation of these two sources.²⁹ In this paper I shall thus venture to briefly explore examples of textual and interpretative divergences in the light of other textual witnesses that seem relevant for this inquiry.³⁰

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Orthography and lexicon: To start with, I shall briefly discuss instances of textual divergences that are of a primarily orthographic nature.

Lunyu 3.8: In a quote from *Shijing* the passage *mei mu pan xi* appears in received versions of the *Lunyu* as 美目盼兮, a writing confirmed in the quote from the *Shijing* 詩經 by Xu Shen 許慎 (c. 55 – c. 149) in his *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 and also by Lu Deming 陸德明 (556–627) in the *Jingdian shiwen* 經典釋文.³¹ The *Shijing* redaction in the *Thirteen Classics* transcribes the word 盼 as 眈 which, according to the old gloss, stands for “the black and white [of the eye] being well defined”.³² The verse *mei mu pan xi* 美目盼兮 is thus read as “beautiful eyes, black and white well defined”. However, with regard to the parallel in the *Shiji* the textual tradition is split: some have 美目盼兮, others write 美目眈兮.³³ Regardless of this orthographic divergence the commentaries in the *Shiji* redactions share a reference to the gloss by Ma Rong which aims at an interpretation distinctly different from that in the *Shijing* corpus and leads to a reading such as “the beautiful eyes flashing”.³⁴ Though some described 眈 as a non-standard variant of 盼 and others treated the two graphs as representing two distinct terms denoting different meanings, the main point in question here is that the gloss attached to the *Shijing* corpus is at variance with the commentarial tradition of the *Lunyu*. The readings in the *Shiji* context favour Ma Rong’s gloss which is also transmitted in the *Lunyu jijie* and has been an integral part of the *Lunyu* reception ever since.³⁵ In the context of the *Lunyu*, the quote from the *Shijing* is thus reinterpreted and takes on a new meaning.

Lunyu 5.1: In the passage *leixie zhi zhong* (in bonds) the expression *leixie* (rope [used to bind a criminal or prisoner]), which appears as *leixie* 縲紲 in *Shiji* and as 累紲 in Sima Qian’s biography in the *Han shu*, is transcribed as 縲紲 in the received versions of the

29 The important function of the oral transmission of the utterances of Confucius and their interpretations has already been emphasised by Huang Kan 皇侃 (488–545) in his preface to his subcommentary on the *Lunyu jijie*; see *Lunyu yishu*, xu, 3b. There are however some doubts regarding the authenticity of this preface; for a recent discussion see Benjamin A. Elman 2009.

30 For the purpose of this article I shall primarily focus on passages from the first ten books (*pian*) of the *Lunyu*.

31 See *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 4A.3a [130] and *Jingdian shiwen* 24.3a [1354]: 美目盼兮. For further references on the graphic variations see Ruan Yuan’s collation notes to the received *Shijing* text in *Mao Shi zhengyi* 3B.24a [133].

32 *Mao Shi zhengyi* 3B.17a [130] has 美目眈兮. The gloss reads 眈白黑分.

33 *Shiji* 67.2202 and *Shiki Kaichū kōshō* 67.28 [8884] have 眈. The Duanjuben redaction *Shiji* 67.12a [870] and a number of others have 盼.

34 Translation from Nienhauser 1994, 74. Ma Rong’s gloss reads 眈 as 動目貌.

35 See *Lunyu jijie* 2.2a.

Lunyu.³⁶ *Shiji* seems internally (fairly) consistent and has *leixie zhi zhong* 繚繼之中 in its quote from the utterances of Confucius.³⁷ This orthography is also transmitted in the *Lunyu yishu* as well as a number of manuscripts up to the stela of 1131 and 1143.³⁸ It appears the graph 繼 can be regarded as a more recent variant that became widely used in this expression during the Tang when 繼 was to be avoided for taboo reasons.³⁹

Lunyu 5.6: The orthography of *diao* as 彫 in the name of the pupil Qidiao Kai 漆彫開 as encountered in *Shiji* represents an older layer than the orthography transmitted in the perhaps most dominant later tradition of the *Lunyu* where we read 漆雕開.⁴⁰ The wording found in *Shiji* is also transmitted in *Lunyu jijie*, *Lunyu yishu* and *Lunyu zhushu*, in Tang manuscripts as well as in the Tang (837) and Song stela.⁴¹ Lu Deming gives 凋 as a graphic variant; Ruan Yuan takes 彫 as the “proper graph” (*zheng zi* 正字).⁴² Whatever the orthographic variant in the textual transmission, the interpretation here and in *Lunyu* 5.10, where the same orthographic instability can be observed, remains stable.⁴³

Lunyu 7.31: The name of Wuma Qi, one of the disciples of Confucius, appears as 巫馬期 in current versions of the *Lunyu* and the *Han shu*.⁴⁴ *Shiji* has it as 巫馬旗, a written form also found in *Lü shi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋.⁴⁵ It has been argued that *qi* stands as a loan graph for 旗, a usage that does, however, only come into practice at a later stage. And as Zhai Hao 翟灝 (1736–1788) pointed out there are good reasons for considering 旗 the more appropriate graph in view of traditional naming practices and the customarily intertwined relation between alternate names.⁴⁶ As 期 does not seem to be attested as a phonetic loan for 旗 in

36 See *Shiji* 62.2135, *Shiji* 83.2468, *Han shu* 62.2733, *Lunyu zhushu* 5.1a [41].

37 See *Shiji* 67.2208.

38 For further information regarding the graphic representation of the word *leixie* in various textual transmissions of the *Lunyu* and beyond see Ruan Yuan's collation notes in *Lunyu zhushu* 5.1a [47].

39 See *Jingdian shiwen* 24.5a [1357], the collation notes in *Lunyu zhushu* 5.1a [47] and the notes in *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*, 169.

40 See *Shiji* 67.2213. *Sishu jizhu* 四書集註, 80, has 雕. *Lunyu zhushu* 5.3a [42] has 彫. Note that for taboo reasons some Han sources substitute *qi* 啟 which was the personal name of Liu Qi 劉啟 (188–141), emperor Jing 景, by the synonym *kai* 開. Zhang Wenhui (1977, 506) indicates a fairly consistent orthography within the text transmission of the *Shiji* and lists only one redaction that shows the graphic variant 雕 in the name Qidiao Kai.

41 See the *Lunyu jijie* mss fragment P 3643, *Lunyu yishu* 3.4a. The Turfan 363 mss fragment also has 漆彫□.

42 See *Jingdian shiwen* 24.5a [1357], Ruan's notes in *Lunyu zhushu* 5.2a [47] and *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*, 175.

43 The orthographic issues regarding 彫 and 雕 also relate to the phrase 朽木不可彫/雕也 in *Lunyu* 5.10, the quote of which is printed as 朽木不可雕也 in *Shiji* 67.2195, *Shiji* (Duanjuben), 67.6b [867] and *Shiki Kaichū kōshō* 67.16 [881]. However, *Jingdian shiwen* 24.5b [1358] glosses 彫, not 雕.

44 See *Lunyu jijie* 4.5b, *Lunyu zhushu* 7.9b [64] and 7.10a [64]. Ruan Yuan (*Lunyu zhushu* 7.6b [68], “Jiaokan ji”) and Li Fang (1998, 271) attest to a stable transmission of the *Lunyu* in this case. *Han shu* 20.926, *Han shu buzhu* 20.73a [351] as well as *Qian Han shu*, 330, have 巫馬期.

45 See *Shiji* 67.2218 and *Lü shi Chunqiu* 18.21a [132]. Note that the orthography of this name in the latter is not internally coherent for *Lü shi Chunqiu*, 21.4a–4b [155] has 巫馬期.

46 See *Sishu kaoyi, tiaokao* 9.12a [217]. With Ziqi 子旗 as his courtesy name (*zi* 字) in *Shiji* 67.2218, Wuma Qi's given name (*ming* 名) is transmitted as Shi 施, the meaning of which is explained by Xu Shen in

pre-Han literature, one may argue Sima Qian adhered to a textual tradition that was later superseded.

Whereas some orthographic differences have no or little impact on exegetical matters, the way in which orthographic divergences are perceived and conceptualised does, in some cases, lead to divergent readings. One such case is found in a parallel with *Lunyu* 7.17. The phrase *jia wo shu nian* appears as 假我數年 in *Shiji* as well as in a quote attributed to Confucius in *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義 (c. 195).⁴⁷ However, the lines of textual transmissions of the *Lunyu* attest rather consistently to an alternate wording of this phrase as 加我數年.⁴⁸ Given that *jia* 加 (to add) and *jia* 假 (if) may function as phonetic loans and can thus be used indiscriminately, some interpret 加 in the sense of 假, the former being also suspected of deriving from a slip of brush due to phonetic similarity.⁴⁹ But where the exegete decides to take them as two distinct terms, divergent interpretative trajectories become available for further exploration. Readings such as “If I had few more years (假我數年)” stand against “Give me few more years” (加我數年).⁵⁰ Depending also on how the remaining part of *Lunyu* 7.17 is interpreted, the different perceptions of the studies conducted by Confucius that feature in the exegetical traditions of the *Lunyu* are informed by and emerge from the way in which this textual discrepancy is negotiated.

In a number of parallels we observe lexical alterations. One such case is found in the phrase that appears as *Zizhang wen gan lu* 子張問干祿 (Zizhang inquired about [how to] pursue a salaried position) in *Shiji* and as *Zizhang xue gan lu* 子張學干祿 (Zizhang studied [how to] pursue a salaried position) in *Lunyu* 2.18.⁵¹ In this case the textual transmission of the *Lunyu* is rather uniform.⁵² Liu Baonan 劉寶楠 (1791–1855) suspects the divergence to be caused by the *Gu Lun* showing the verb *wen* 問 whereas the *Lu Lun* exhibited *xue* 學 instead, a hypothesis that derives from assumptions regarding Sima Qian’s affinity with the *guwen* tradition.⁵³ With the actual textual evidence long lost verification or falsification based on undisputable textual witnesses was already impossible for Liu Baonan.⁵⁴ In case

reference to *qi* 旗; see *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 7A.19a [311]; in his commentary Duan Yucai makes explicit reference to the names of Wuma Ziqi. Zhang Wenhui (1977, 507) records two redactions of the *Shiji* in which his courtesy name Ziqi appears as 子祺, an orthographic variant of 子旗 most likely to be caused by a slip of the brush.

47 See *Shiji* 47.1937. *Fengsu tongyi* 7.11b [55] has 孔子曰: 假我數年乎.

48 See for example P 2510 and Stein mss 800, *Lunyu jijie* 4.3b, *Lunyu yishu* 4.10a, *Lunyu zhushu* 7.6a [62]. Cf. also the references in *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*, 251, on manuscripts and other textual witnesses that carry the wording 加我數年.

49 See for example *Sishu jizhu*, 99. Zhu Xi glosses: 加作假 [...] 蓋加假聲相近而誤讀.

50 Depending on how *jia* 假 is perceived, the two readings can, of course, have quite some overlap. The juxtaposition above follows the dominant explanatory trajectories attested in the commentarial literature on this passage.

51 See *Shiji* 67.2204 and *Lunyu zhushu* 2.6a [18].

52 *Lunyu zhushu* 2.4a [22] suggests stable transmission.

53 *Lunyu zhengyi*, 34.

54 It remains somewhat unclear when exactly the *Gu Lun* ceased to exist. According to Wang Chong it was transcribed into clerical script during the reign of emperor Xuan 宣 (r.74–48); see *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 1133. Takeuchi Yoshi understands the *Qi Lun* and *Lu Lun* as copies of the *Gu Lun* in clerical script; see

his informed guess was indeed correct, one might argue that Sima Qian followed the *guwen* tradition where subsequent collators and exegetes considered the *jinwen* text a better reading. Rather than relying on conjecture, readers more doubtful about *guwen/jinwen* issues may well prefer to open up alternate routes of inquiry in dealing with the divergent wordings in this phrase.

At first glance textual amendments caused by taboo conventions seem straightforward. Nevertheless we observe considerable internal inconsistencies in the *Shiji* as well as inconsistencies on the intertextual level where even graphs such as 邦, which presumably would be altered and substituted by the synonym *guo* 國 in Han sources, are not avoided or altered on some occasions.⁵⁵ One such case occurs in the phrase *zai bang wu yuan* 在邦無怨 (In the state there is no resentment), parallels of which appear in identical wording in *Shiji* and *Lunyu*.⁵⁶ It has previously been suggested that the failure to comply with taboo rules in this passage derives from Sima Qian following the *Lu Lun*, which reportedly showed this reading, a postulation that can only be described as disputable on a number of different levels.⁵⁷ *Lunyu* 12.2 is not transmitted in the Dingzhou corpus, the Pyongyang slips write 在邦無怨.⁵⁸ Other available source texts derive from copies which may already have been (and often are) cleansed of textual amendments caused by Han taboo conventions.⁵⁹ As can be seen from the wording of the phrase *bang you dao* 邦有道 (“[When] the state has the Way”) in *Lunyu* 5.2 as attested in fragmentary copies of Zheng Xuan's version and of the *Lunyu jijie*, these late medieval manuscript copies of this passage bear no traces of Han taboo conventions.⁶⁰ Further to this, it seems worth noting that whereas the *Lunyu* transmission is stable in this case as far as extant witnesses are concerned, parallels with the phrase *bang you dao* appear in the *Shiji* as *guo you dao* 國有道 (“[When] the state has the Way”).⁶¹ The question as to why Sima Qian presumably changed the wording on some occasions (parallels with *Lunyu* 5.2) but did not implement taboo roles on another (parallel with *Lunyu* 12.2) thus remains open to discussion. It seems preferable to develop inquiries into this issue from the angle of the editorial history of the *Shiji* rather than via unverifiable conjectures regarding Sima Qian's source material.

Takeuchi Yoshio 1939, 69, and Makeham 1996, 20.

55 For a discussion of issues regarding the observation of taboo rules in the *Shiji* see Pan Mingji 2009.

56 See *Shiji* 67.2190 and *Lunyu zhushu* 12.1b [106].

57 For further details and source references see Pan Mingji 2009, 41f.

58 In the Pyongyang fragments the first two phrases of the Master's response transmitted as *Lunyu* 12.2 appear on slip 7, the second part of his answer is copied on to slip 23; see Lee Song-si, Yoon Yong-gu and Kim Kyong-ho 2009, 144, 148, 187 and 190f.

59 *Lunyu zhushu* 12.1a [111] contains no reference to alternate wordings in the redactions consulted by Ruan Yuan and thereby suggest a stable transmission.

60 For *Lunyu* 5.2 see *Lunyu zhushu* 5.1b [41]. The lack of references to textual variants in Ruan Yuan's collation notes attests to a uniform transmission; see *Lunyu zhushu* 5.1a [47]. For mss evidence see the copy of Zheng Xuan's version from Turfan (Stein mss 363) and the *Lunyu jijie* mss fragment copy P 3643. *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*, 170, lists only one variant in Stein mss 7002 which is however of purely orthographic nature.

61 See the occurrences in *Shiji* 62.2134, 67.2207, 67.2209 and 79.2422.

Some lexical amendments in the *Shiji* are caused by translation of archaisms, a mode of explaining archaisms through modern or more accessible diction. The gloss to a quote from the *Shujing* 書經 in the main text of the *Mengzi* (3B.9) is perhaps one of the most famous examples of a Zhanguo-text responding to the needs of his audience by translating an archaic expression into a more widely understood term.⁶² With some of the expressions used in old texts becoming increasingly obscure and difficult to understand during the Han, the frequency with which archaisms were re-phrased in the *Shiji* attests to this technique being used by Sima Qian on a regular basis.⁶³

With regard to grammatical function words the extant textual witnesses testify to considerable instabilities in the transmission of the *Lunyu* up to the beginning of the Song. Some of these textual variations attested in manuscript copies relate to scribal practices and manuscript culture. Others, like the discrepancies regarding function words between the *Lunyu jijie* and Huang Kan's 皇侃 (488–545) *Lunyu yishu* 論語義疏, reflect textual divergences in different lines of transmission of the main text of the *Lunyu*. With the appropriate caveats in mind, it is in this context that parallels between the *Shiji* and the *Lunyu* provide indications of the linguistic shift between the Zhou and Han periods and its impact on the transmission of the *Lunyu*.

In phrases like *Zhou jian er dai* 周監二代 (“[The] Zhou looked back to the two dynasties [i.e. Xia and Shang]”) we observe parallels in which the *Shiji* omits prepositions such as *yu* 於.⁶⁴ *Lunyu* 3.14 has the wording as 周監於二代 which is already attested in the Dingzhou corpus and shows a stable transmission.⁶⁵

Another notoriously unstable part of the textual transmission are sentence finals. The current text of the *Lunyu* for instance shows the final *ye* in the sentence *bu ke de er wen ye* 不可得而聞也 (“can not be obtained and heard”) in *Lunyu* 5.13.⁶⁶ One of the Tang manuscript copies of the Zheng Xuan version contracts the phrase *ke de er wen ye* 可得而聞也 (“can be obtained and heard”) to *ke de er wen* 可得聞 (“can be heard”) and drops all final particles at the end of *Lunyu* 5.13 where it has: 不可得而文 (聞).⁶⁷ At the end of this passage a number of *Lunyu* redactions have an additional *yi* 已 and write 不可得而聞也已.⁶⁸ The *Lunyu yishu* and others extend the final phrase to 不可得而聞也已矣 which Ruan Yuan deems to be the most appropriate wording.⁶⁹ The parallel in the *Shiji* reads:

62 See *Mengzi zhushu* 6B.3b [117]: 書曰：洛水警余。洛水者，洪水。

63 For examples in the wider context see Karlgren 1970.

64 *Shiji* 47.1936.

65 See *Lunyu zhushu* 3.8a [28] and *Dingzhou Hanmu zhujian Lunyu*, 17. This wording is also attested in mss fragments, cf. for example Stein mss 363 and P 2677. With regard to this phrase in *Lunyu* 3.14 Ruan Yuan records no textual variations; see *Lunyu zhushu* 4.3b-4a [33–34]. Although the mss copies show minor orthographic divergences, the use of the preposition is however attested consistently; see *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*, 112.

66 *Lunyu zhushu* 5.6a [46] has 子貢曰：夫子之文章，可得而聞也；夫子之言性與天道，不可得而聞也。

67 See Stein mss 363: 不可聞. The standard text of this phrase as 可得而聞也 is stable, see for instance the mss fragment of the *Lunyu jijie* (P 3664), *Lunyu yishu* 3.10b and *Lunyu zhushu* 5.6a [46]. Contractions such as the one exhibited in Stein mss 363 are a frequently encountered phenomenon in manuscript culture and do not seem to represent an alternate text tradition.

68 For the wording as 不可得而聞也已 see for instance P 3643. For summaries and further references on the

夫子言天道與性命，弗可得聞也已。

[One] can not contrive to hear the Master speaking about the Way of Heaven and [human] nature and fate.⁷⁰

With respect to the finals, Sima Qian's wording is identical to that attested in early copies of the *Lunyu jijie*. In his *Jijie* commentary to the *Shiji* Pei Yin 裴駟 (5th cent.) defines the reading of this passage, especially the terms *xing* 性 and *tiandao* 天道, by reference to the *Lunyu jijie* and does therefore provide no clarification on the term *ming* 命 in this context.⁷¹ The expression *xing yu tiandao* 性與天道 is frequently encountered as an emblematic formula in characterisations of the teachings of Confucius which appears in re-arranged and expanded mode in the *Shiji* as *tiandao yu xingming* 天道與性命.⁷² It remains uncertain whether the inverted order and inclusion of *ming* (fate) among the subjects elaborated on by Confucius reflects Sima Qian's assessment of his teachings, whether this passage allows the reader to speculate about Sima Qian's philosophical background or persuasions, or whether the wording transmitted in the *Shiji* derives from textual divergences in his source material.⁷³

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Utilisation of received material: Be it for aesthetic reasons, in order to strengthen the persuasive force of their claim, or indeed with an eye to both these effects, in the advancement of their own arguments traditional authors customarily apply transmitted material in a creative way. By generating resonances to statements attributed to Confucius, Sima Qian routinely employs this technique. An example at hand would be his account of a speech attributed to Li Ke 李克 (c. 455–395 BCE). This speech may be perceived as echoing a statement attributed to Confucius and transmitted in *Lunyu* 2.10, which itself is reminiscent of wording found in the *Yi Zhou shu*, parts of which date back to the “late 4th or early 3rd century B.C.”⁷⁴

textual discrepancies here see the collation notes in *Lunyu zhushu* 5.5a [49], *Dunhuang Lunyu jijie jiaozheng*, 187, and *Tang xieben Lunyu Zheng shi zhu ji qi yanjiu*, 50.

69 See *Lunyu yishu* 3.10b. The Genji redaction (1864) is a reproduction of Nemoto Sonshi's 根本遜志 (1699–1764) collation work based on the so-called Ashikaga manuscript which dates from between 1521 and 1554. The *Lunyu jijie yishu* as reproduced in the *Zhibuzuzhai congshu* 知不足齋叢書, which was widely used by Qing scholars, shows the same wording; see *Lunyu jijie yishu*, vol. 3, 48. For Ruan Yuan's view see *Lunyu zhushu* 5.5a [49].

70 *Shiji* 47.1941. Note also the omission of *er* 而 and substitution of the negation *bu* 不 by *fu* 弗 in the *Shiji* parallel. On a summary of the complexities regarding the negations *bu* and *fu* see the remarks in Pulleyblank 1995, 103f.

71 See *Shiji* 47.1941.

72 For instance see Liu Gongmian's postface (*houxu*) to the *Lunyu zhengyi*, 434: 非祇謂言性與天道也志。 “[Confucius] did not just talk about [human] nature and the Way of Heaven.”

73 The wording of *Lunyu* 5.13 is not transmitted in the corpora excavated in Dingzhou and Pyongyang.

74 Compare *Lunyu* 2.10 (視其所以，觀其所由，察其所安；人焉廋哉？人焉廋哉？), *Yi Zhou shu* 7.3a (考其所為，觀其所由) and *Shiji* 44.1840 (君不察故也。居其所所親，富視其所與，達視其所舉，窮視其所不為，貧視其所不取，五者足以定之矣，何待克哉！). On the *Yi Zhou shu* see Shaughnessy 1993, esp. 230, quote.

Lunyu 2.19: As Sima Zhen 司馬貞 (c. 656–720) pointed out in his commentary to the *Shiji*, the narrative of a record of a conversation between Ji Kangzi and Confucius in the *Shiji* on governance (*zheng* 政) appears to be a condensed version of the response Confucius reportedly offered when the Duke of Lu enquired about the ways to make his people obedient (*min fu* 民服).⁷⁵ *Lunyu* 2.19 reads:

哀公問曰：何為則民服。孔子對曰：舉直錯諸枉，則民服；舉枉錯諸直，則民不服。 Duke Ai asked saying: “What action is to be taken to make the people obedient?” Master Kong replied saying: “If one promotes the straight and places them above the crooked, then the people will be obedient. If one promotes the crooked and places them above the straight, then the people will not be obedient.”⁷⁶

The altered message in the *Shiji* is linked with a discussion between Confucius and his disciple Zixia recorded in *Lunyu* 12.22. The *Shiji* reads:

魯哀公問政，對曰：政在選臣。季康子問政，曰：舉直錯諸枉，則枉者直。 [When] Duke Ai of Lu asked about governance, [Master Kong] answered: “Governance lies in selecting [one’s] subordinates.”⁷⁷ [When] Ji Kangzi asked about governance, [Master Kong] said: “If one promotes the straight and places them above the crooked, then the crooked become straight.”⁷⁸

What seems noteworthy here is that in Sima Qian’s version we observe not only a compressed answer but also a change of interlocutor and an alteration of message. In addition, the *Shiji* account comes close to what is recorded in *Lunyu* 12.22 but with a contracted version of the answer being presented by Sima Qian prior to the question.⁷⁹ The utterances transmitted in the *Lunyu* clearly indicate that responses given by Confucius are highly context-sensitive and therefore depend on his perception of specific characteristics of his interlocutors. The twist to the transmitted material observed in the application of the utterance transmitted in *Lunyu* 2.19, together with the accounts in *Lunyu* 12.22, suggests that Sima Qian put into operation a similar *ad hominem* approach so as to appropriate the material to his ends.

On a number of occasions Sima Qian makes use of the wording attributed to Confucius (and transmitted in the *Lunyu*) to verbalise his evaluation of historical persons.⁸⁰ The *Shiji* for instance reports that Confucius ridiculed the Ji’s sacrifice to Mount Tai, a reference to a statement transmitted as *Lunyu* 3.6 that is also taken over in the *Han shu* 漢書 where Yan

75 See his *Suoyin* commentary in *Shiji* 47.1935.

76 *Lunyu zhushu* 2.6b [18].

77 This is the essence of a statement recorded in *Lunyu* 12.22 and attributed to Zixia: 子夏曰：富哉言乎！舜有天下，選於眾，舉皋陶，不仁者遠矣。湯有天下，選於眾，舉伊尹，不仁者遠矣。

78 *Shiji* 47.1935. The corresponding part in *Lunyu* 12.22 reads: 子曰：舉直錯諸枉，能使枉者直。何謂也？

79 Note Pei Yin’s (5th cent.) remark in his *Jijie* commentary in *Shiji* 47.1935. He takes the view that by condensing the words attributed to Confucius Sima Qian distorted the message and lost factual accuracy.

80 See for example *Shiji* 42.2779 as a reflection on a passage transmitted in *Lunyu* 1.10. On *Shiji* 86.2537 the *Suoyin* commentary to the *Shiji* refers to *Lunyu* 4.2 as a point of reference. *Shiji* 79.2422 exhibits a partial parallel with *Lunyu* 7.16 (不義而福且貴；於我如浮雲) which is prefaced by *Shengren yue* 聖人曰。 These examples are mentioned in He Zhihua 2010, 3ff.

Shigu 顏師古 (581–645) relates it to *Lunyu* 3.6 through a partial quote in his commentary.⁸¹ Sima Qian's characterization of Pengzu is highly reminiscent of a passage transmitted in *Lunyu* 5.25, and as Pei Yin pointed out in his *Jijie* commentary to the *Shiji*, Sima Qian's critical evaluation of Lü Buwei has a passage recorded in *Lunyu* 12.20 as its point of reference.⁸² Though without indication regarding the originator of these statements Sima Qian evokes and refers to statements on Guan Zhong attributed to Confucius by means of textual parallel with *Lunyu* 3.22.⁸³ Another such example is found in chapter 103 of the *Shiji* where his evaluation of the achievements and performance of Shi Fen 石奮 and others begins with a direct reference to a statement transmitted in *Lunyu* 4.24:

君子欲訥於言而敏於行。

The accomplished person wishes to be slow to speak but quick to act.⁸⁴

Rather than referring to a named body of transmitted written records, Sima Qian's reference to the originator of the statement simply reads: "Confucius [once] said" (仲尼有言曰).⁸⁵ From a rhetorical point of view it seems significant that a good deal of applications of utterances of Confucius appears in Sima Qian's appraisals, prefaced by the well-known formula *Taishi gong yue* 太史公曰 (The Grand Scribe says) that marks his conclusions on narratives of historical figures. This is for instance the case in the concluding statements on Wu Taibo, the beginning of which is a parallel with *Lunyu* 8.1, prefaced by *Kongzi yan* 孔子言.⁸⁶ In his concluding statement on Tian Shu 田叔 for instance Sima Qian echoes the phrase *bi wen qi zheng* 必聞其政 ([he] always hears about its [i.e. a state's] governance) transmitted in *Lunyu* 1.10 and prefaces it by the formula *Kongzi cheng yue* 孔子稱曰.⁸⁷

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Omission and addition of words and phrases in textual parallels is another widely observed practice in traditional literature. A considerable number of parallels with the *Lunyu* can be identified in the *Shiji* where the latter omits phrases and sentences. Examples include:

Lunyu 3.9: The phrase on the documentation regarding ancient ceremonies being unavailable or inadequate for constituting a suitable basis for discussion is dropped in *Shiji*. The *Lunyu* reads:

夏禮吾能言之，杞不足徵也；殷禮吾能言之，宋不足徵也；文獻不足故也；足，則吾能徵之矣。

81 See *Shiji* 28.1364 and *Han shu* 25.1199 incl. Yan Shigu's note; cf. He Zhihua 2010, 3f.

82 On Pengzu see *Shiji* 59:2098 and in *Shiji* 85.2514 Lü Buwei; cf. He Zhihua 2010, 3, 5.

83 See *Shiji* 62.2134; cf. He Zhihua 2010, 4.

84 *Lunyu zhushu* 4.5b [38].

85 *Shiji* 103.2773.

86 See *Shiji* 31.1475. The *Jijie* commentary to the *Shiji* makes explicit reference to Wang Su's explanation of this passage; see *Shiji* 31.1476; cf. He Zhihua 2010, 3.

87 See *Shiji* 42.2779 and *Lunyu zhushu* 1.7b [7].

The Xia ceremonies, I can talk about although Qi is not worth taking as evidence. The Yin ceremonies, I can talk about although Song is not worth taking as evidence. This is because the writings and worthies are insufficient.⁸⁸ If they were sufficient, then I could take them as evidence.⁸⁹

The parallel in *Shiji* omits a crucial part of this passage which is however attested on the Dingzhou bamboo slips and in Tang manuscript fragments of Zheng Xuan's version and of the *Lunyu jijie*.⁹⁰

夏禮吾能言之，杞不足徵也。殷禮吾能言之，宋不足徵也。*足，則吾能徵之矣。
The Xia ceremonies, I can talk about although Qi is not worth taking as evidence.
The Yin ceremonies, I can talk about although Song is not worth taking as evidence.
If they were sufficient, then I could take them as evidence.⁹¹

The absence of the sentence *wenxian bu zu gu ye* 文獻不足故也 (“This is because the writings and worthies are insufficient”) in the *Shiji* is not inconspicuous. If Sima Qian's sources contained this phrase and he deliberately omitted it, this could, in view of his work as a historian, suggest that he did not exactly share the assessment of relevant source material put forward by Confucius. Alternatively, one may speculate as to whether the record of the utterances of the Master Kong from which Sima Qian worked actually included this phrase in its version of the statement that is transmitted as *Lunyu* 3.9. Given the compositional arrangement of *Lunyu* 3.9, the phrase *wenxian bu zu gu ye* 文獻不足故也 may well have been an early explanatory commentary that slipped into the main text during the early stages of the compilation of the transmitted versions of the *Lunyu*. If this phrase was indeed not yet part of the transmitted words of the Master in the version seen by Sima Qian, it must have been integrated into the main text at a stage prior to the version found at Dingzhou. If this is the case, the *Shiji* represents an early version of *Lunyu* 3.9, i.e. a version abolished by the later tradition in favour of a more elaborate wording that was perceived as transmitting the assumed meaning of the Master more lucidly.

Lunyu 5.3: In its parallel with *Lunyu* 5.3 the *Shiji* drops the “such as he” (*ruo ren* 若人), a wording otherwise attested consistently in the transmission of the *Lunyu* including

88 Following the gloss by Zheng Xuan the term *wenxian* 文獻 is to be taken as “writings and worthies”. Zheng Xuan's annotation (see P 3677 and P 2904) which is integrated in *Lunyu jijie*, *Lunyu yishu* and *Lunyu zhushu* reads: 獻猶賢也; see *Lunyu zhushu* 3.5b [27]. *Sishu jizhu*, 69, carries the explanation 獻賢也, thereby following Zheng's gloss but providing, of course, no source reference. An alternate reading of the term *wenxian* would be “written records”.

89 *Lunyu zhushu* 3.5b [27].

90 For the phrase 文獻不足故也 as attested in the early witnesses see *Dingzhou Hanmu zhujian Lunyu*, 16, Stein mss 363, P 3677 and P 2904.

91 *Shiji* 47.1936. Note that the *Jijie* commentary to the *Shiji* refers to Bao Xian's reading of this passage where *zheng* 徵 is explained as *cheng* 成 (complete, perfect), a gloss also transmitted in the *Lunyu jijie*: 成也。Following Bao Xian's explanation, the passage translated above as “The ruler of Qi is not worth taking as evidence” would read “Qi can not be considered as having reached accomplishment”.

fragments of Zheng Xuan's version from Turfan and the *Lunyu jijie* manuscript fragment from Dunhuang, as well as in a parallel in the *Kongzi jiyu*.⁹² The *Lunyu* reads:

子謂子賤，君子哉若人！魯無君子者，斯焉取斯？

The Master said of Zijian: An accomplished person indeed is such as he! If Lu had no accomplished person, then where did he get that from?⁹³

The parallel in the *Shiji* reads:

孔子謂子賤君子哉！魯無君子，斯焉取斯？

The Master said of Zijian: An accomplished person indeed! If Lu had no accomplished person, then where did he get that from?⁹⁴

Lunyu 7.8: In the *Lunyu* Confucius gives the following account on some of the conditions for receiving his tuition:

不憤不啟，不悱不發；舉一隅不以三隅反，則不復也。

[To those who] are not eager, [I] do not expound [anything]. [To those who] are not urgent, I do not reveal [anything]. If [I] raise one corner and [they] do not come back with three corners, then I do not repeat [myself].⁹⁵

Sima Qian drops the aspect of the learner bursting to speak (不悱不發). His version reads:

不憤不啟，舉一隅不以三隅反，則弗復也。

[To those who] are not eager, [I] do not expound [anything]. If [I] raise one corner and [they] do not come back with three corners, then I do not repeat [myself].⁹⁶

Examples of Sima Qian making additions to passages from the records of the Master's utterances include a parallel with *Lunyu* 7.19 which is interpolated with references to another speech, thereby bringing together accounts that are normally seen as unrelated. As far as the textual traditions of the *Lunyu* are concerned, the transmission of the relevant part of *Lunyu* 7.19 is stable except for the function words at the end of the sentence. The *Lunyu* reads:⁹⁷

其為人也，發憤忘食，樂以忘憂，不知老之將至云爾。

He is the type of man who gets so excited that he forgets to eat, so happy that he forgets [his] worries, and is not aware that old age will soon be at hand.⁹⁸

92 This passage is not transmitted in the Dingzhou corpus; for fragments see Stein mss 363 and P 3643. For the parallel see *Kongzi jiyu* 5.32 which also carries Wang Su's gloss on 若人.

93 *Lunyu zhushu* 5.1b [41].

94 *Shiji* 47.2207.

95 *Lunyu zhushu* 7.3a [61].

96 *Shiji* 47.1938.

97 With regard to the sentence finals some versions including the *Lunyu yishu* have *ye yun er* 也云爾 where the dominant textual traditions have *yun er* 云爾. P 2510 exhibits the short hand 云尔. The Dingzhou version omits 將 and shows the sentence finals as 云壘; see *Dingzhou Hanmu zhujian Lunyu*, 33.

98 *Lunyu zhushu* 7.6b [62].

The *Shiji* version merges passages transmitted in *Lunyu* 7.19 and *Lunyu* 7.2 (學而不厭，誨人不倦) with a slightly altered wording: *xue er* 學而 (“to learn / study and / but”) of the *Lunyu* text becomes *xue dao* 學道 (“to study the Way”) in the *Shiji*:⁹⁹

其為人也，學道不倦，誨人不厭，發憤忘食，樂以忘憂，不知老之將至云爾。

He is the type of man who studies the Way without becoming tired, teaches people without growing weary, gets so excited that he forgets to eat, so happy that he forgets [his] worries, and is not aware that old age will soon be at hand.¹⁰⁰

Lunyu 6.9: As Lu Deming and Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) pointed out, Zheng Xuan’s wording of the final phrase in the sentence *ru you fu wo zhe, ze wu bi zai Wen shang yi* 如有復我者，則吾必在汶上矣 (“[If] someone comes back for me, then I shall certainly be beyond the [river] Wen”) drops the words *ze wu* 則吾.¹⁰¹ Exactly the same omission is found in an otherwise perfect parallel with the received *Lunyu* in *Shiji*.¹⁰² One is therefore tempted to suggest the wordings transmitted in the Zheng commentary and in *Shiji* derive from the same source and preserve a reading that was deemed inferior by later collators of the *Lunyu* who judged the wording *ze wu bu zai Wen shang yi* the better option.¹⁰³

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Historicising and re-contextualising: The large majority of utterances recorded in the *Lunyu* are transmitted as isolated statements or short dialogues. It is often the case that hardly any information is provided in terms of his interlocutors or of the circumstances in which those words were situated. Since contextual matters and situatedness play a crucial function in the exegetical process commentators have engaged in the reconstruction of contextual aspects ever since. As his biography of Confucius may be read as a historicising narrative that binds transmitted statements and events to specific situations in the life story of their originator, and given that the earliest extant commentaries on the *Lunyu* date from periods well after his lifetime, Sima Qian’s contextualisation of otherwise isolated utterances are of great significance for the interpretative traditions of the *Lunyu*.

In some cases the sequence of events recorded in the *Shiji* coincides with the textual sequence transmitted in the *Lunyu*. For instance in a case like the utterances transmitted as *Lunyu* 15.2 and 15.3 one may argue that Sima Qian’s historical narrative is developed from the textual arrangement found in the *Lunyu*.¹⁰⁴ Undoubtedly such a notion presumes that the records on the utterances of Confucius seen by Sima Qian exhibited the same or at least very similar structure as the text transmitted under the title *Lunyu*. In view of the

99 Although the phrase 誨人不倦 also appears in *Lunyu* 7.34, *Lunyu* 7.2 seems to be the main point of reference here.

100 *Shiji* 47.1928.

101 See the gloss in *Jingdian shiwen*, 24.6b [1360] and Ruan Yuan’s note in *Lunyu zhushu* 6.3a [57]. For the main text of the *Lunyu* see *Lunyu zhushu*, 6.4a [52]. On the Dingzhou version only a part carrying the wording 我必在汶上矣 survived; see *Dingzhou Hanmu zhujian Lunyu*, 27.

102 *Shiji* 67.2189: 如有復我者，必在汶上矣。

103 Unfortunately no further information is transmitted on the source from which this wording stems.

104 Compare *Lunyu* 15.2 and *Lunyu* 15.3 in *Lunyu zhushu* 15.1b-2a [137] with the account in *Shiji* 47.1930.

organization of the text in the fragments from Dingzhou this assumption seems reasonable. The bamboo slips provide fragmentary textual evidence that confirms that the sequence of utterances and overall textual organization of this textual witness from the Han corresponds to the internal organization of the received version of the *Lunyu*. As for the case of *Lunyu* 15.2 and *Lunyu* 15.3, the Dingzhou corpus supports an argument for Sima Qian arranging his narrative according to received records on the utterances of Confucius.¹⁰⁵

In other cases the actual message of a specific statement may be clouded by the lack of context. This certainly applies to the following passage which is transmitted as *Lunyu* 7.23 and for which the main text of the *Lunyu* provides the reader with no context:

天生德於予，桓魋其如予何！

Heaven has endowed me with virtue, so what will Huan Tui have to do with me?¹⁰⁶

According to Sima Qian's contextualization, this statement was made after Huan Tui, a military minister in the state of Song who allegedly disliked Confucius and his pupils travelling through his state, reportedly cut down a tree beneath which the Master and his disciples practiced ceremonies in an attempt to kill Confucius.¹⁰⁷ As for subsequent *Lunyu* exegetes, Bao Xian provides information on Huan Tui's position in Song and elaborates on the implications of Confucius' mission from heaven.¹⁰⁸ Zheng Xuan takes over parts of Bao Xian's gloss and explains this mission from heaven as "establishing order". In addition he provides more information on Huan Tui's identity and notes that he strongly disliked (*ji* 疾) Confucius and wanted to kill him.¹⁰⁹ Huang Kan describes Huan Tui as a malicious person who wanted to harm (*hai* 害) Confucius. He surmises this statement was made in order to put an end to Huan Tui's malevolent intentions and quotes Jiang Xi 江熙 (4th cent.) who perceives this as an allegory on how to deal with malicious mediocre persons (*xiaoren* 小人).¹¹⁰ As far as can be said from the available material, none of the major early commentators up to Xing Bing's 邢昺 (931–1010) concise *Lunyu*-reader of 999 mentions the tree that features so prominently in Sima Qian's account. With his reference to and quote from the *Shiji* in his subcommentary in the *Lunyu zhengyi* 論語正義, also known as *Lunyu zhushu jiejing* 論語注疏解經 or *Lunyu zhushu* 論語注疏, Xing Bing brings the context established by Sima Qian into mainstream *Lunyu* reception. As for subsequent dominant commentaries and interpretations, Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) disregards Sima Qian's version of events in his *Lunyu jizhu* 論語集註 (1177) whereas Liu Baonan and his son Liu Gongmian 劉恭冕 (1824–1883) integrate the *Shiji* narrative in their magisterial commentary

105 For the fragments of *Lunyu* 15.2 and *Lunyu* 15.3 see *Dingzhou Hanmu zhujian Lunyu*, 70.

106 *Lunyu zhushu* 7.7b [63].

107 See *Shiji* 47.1921. In the *Zhuangzi* the narrative regarding this attempt on his life is embedded in the formalized lore on mishaps in the life of Confucius. For further observations on the four references to this event in the *Zhuangzi* see Makeham 1998.

108 See *Lunyu jijie* 4.4a. Huan Tui is, of course, also mentioned in the *Mencius* where some information on this person can be obtained.

109 See P 2510. Cf. also *Tang xieben Lunyu Zheng shi zhu ji qi yanjiu*, 79.

110 See *Lunyu yishu*, 4.14a.

of 1866.¹¹¹ This is to say the earlier commentarial traditions of the *Lunyu* chose to disregard the context established in Sima Qian's narrative whereas more recent reading suggestions are, with one notable exception, shaped by the account of events provided in the *Shiji*.¹¹²

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According to the autobiographical part of his postface (*zixu* 自序) to the *Shiji*, Sima Qian reached considerable familiarity with *guwen* at the tender age of ten *sui*.¹¹³ Given that he studied Kong Anguo's *guwen* version of the *Shangshu* 尚書, the assumption that he also studied and followed Kong's tradition of the *Gu Lun* is widespread. As a result of this line of reasoning we frequently encounter the notion that textual divergences between the recent *Lunyu* and its parallels in the *Shiji* derive from textual idiosyncrasies at the very early stages of the transmission of the *Lunyu* or its predecessors.

Looking at the textual evidence, there clearly is support for the argument that Sima Qian followed variants, be that orthographic or compositional, which became obsolete in the later textual transmission of the *Lunyu*. It also seems evident that in his references to utterances attributed to Confucius Sima Qian applied a broad repertoire of techniques widely attested in traditional literature.¹¹⁴ Nonetheless hardly any of these techniques seems to support a solid case for perceiving the parallels in the *Shiji* as a reasonably reliable representation of or approximation to the text body that was constituted the *Gu Lun*, a material that ceased to exist long ago and could no longer be read against parallels provided by the court scribe even by those remarkable Qing scholars who showed such extraordinary dedication to the reconstruction of archaic matters and textual traditions. The examples presented here illustrate the complexities regarding Sima Qian's source material, the questionable classification of parallels in the *Shiji* along the doubtful lines of three traditions (reconstructed and) established during the Han, the liberties Sima Qian took and the creativity he applied in appropriating and weaving given material into his narrative.

More importantly, where the application of a received text to a specific context is considered to be the primary task of the exegete, the *Shiji* may be read as an early hermeneutical attempt to contextualise and clarify the transmitted utterances of Master Kong. As the relevant parts of the *Shiji* take on the function of a commentary, Sima Qian's work constitutes no less than the earliest extant text material that provides interpretation, contextualisation and application of a significant portion of the utterances attributed to Master Kong.

111 See *Sishu jizhu*, 100, and *Lunyu zhengyi*, 147. *Lunyu yizhu*, one of the most widely received modern annotated versions of the *Lunyu*, also provides the relevant quote from *Shiji*; see *Lunyu yizhu*, 72.

112 The reasons why the early commentarial traditions (especially up to He Yan) eclipse this narrative relate, in all probability, to hagiographic issues and, to some extent, also to the simple fact that copies of the *Shiji* were, for some centuries after Sima Qian's death, by no means easily accessible. On some of the relevant hagiographic aspects, especially the tradition established by the compiler(s) of the *Kongzi jiaoyu*, see Hans van Ess 2011. On the problems regarding access to copies of the *Shiji* see Lü Shihao 2009.

113 See *Shiji* 130.3293.

114 See also He Zhihua 2010, 1f.

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