

Chapter 2*

The *Lunyu* as an Accretion Text

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In their impressive reinterpretation of the structure and history of the *Lunyu*, *The Original Analects*, E. Bruce and A. Taeko Brooks explain that their model of the *Lunyu*'s composition is based on an "accretion theory" of the text. They discuss briefly the history of such theories in connection with the *Lunyu*, and apply in great detail their version of the theory.¹ However, the Brookses do not define the term "accretion" or describe the range of textual phenomena and analytic tactics that an accretion theory may entail. This is not a defect in the Brookses book; their project does not depend on this type of definition. But the term can carry a range of meanings and there are many ways that accretion theory may be applied.

I am a proponent of applying accretion theory to the *Lunyu*, and although I do not accept the Brookses' specific portrait of the way the *Lunyu* came to be a book, I think that any viable model of the etiology of the text must accommodate an accretion approach. My task here is to show the usefulness of an accretion approach, and I will pursue it in four stages. I will begin by attempting to clarify the concept of accretion and its usefulness in interpreting texts characterized by editorial disorder. A second section will discuss different ways in which the concept has been applied to the *Lunyu* by reviewing a number of past approaches, including the Brookses'. I will then analyze a particular feature of the *Lunyu* to argue that it must, indeed, be an accretion text. Finally, I will suggest how the historical conditions of the Qin-Han transition may have generated the accretion processes that yielded the *Lunyu* as a unified, canonical text.

The Concept of an Accretion Text

The phrase "accretion text" is ambiguous and can be used to denote a range of textual phenomena. Any text that has taken its current form through an additive process over time could be characterized as the product of accretion, even

*Published in Michael Hunter & Martin Kern, eds., *Confucius and the Analects Revisited: New Perspectives on Composition, Dating and Authorship* (© Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2018)

¹ Brooks and Brooks 1998, particularly Appendix 1, "The Accretion Theory of the *Analects*," 201-248.

a single-author work that exists in multiple published or manuscript versions. However, in practice, the term is used to describe texts that are both the products of multiple authors and of multi-stage redaction processes. Thus, for example, a curated anthology of small texts, such as the Han Dynasty *Shuiyuan* 說苑 of Liu Xiang 劉向, would not usually be considered an accretion text; although its many component passages were authored by different people at different times, as a discrete text the *Shuiyuan* is the product of a single redaction process, guided by a single editorial agent.²

On one level, most traditional theories of the *Lunyu* have implicitly been accretion theories of a sort, because the approximately five hundred discrete passages of the *Lunyu* have historically been understood to have been the product of multiple authors—the original disciples and their followers—whose “records” of Confucius’s words and deeds, some recorded during the Master’s life or soon thereafter, were drawn together in a single book over some period of time, extending at least past the death of the disciple Zeng Shen 曾參, depicted in 8/3-4 and datable to c. 436 BCE, over forty years after Confucius’s death.³ However, “accretion” is generally used to denote more extensive disjuncture in the process of text creation. The term is used metaphorically, suggesting processes of natural growth, biological or geological, where gradual change occurs through undesigned but rationally intelligible processes.

We can convey the force of this metaphor through a general definition: An accretion text is one that has been created through a series of dispersed processes of authorship and redaction resulting in a fragmentation of editorial agency, signaled by apparent disorder in the design of the text. This definition contrasts observed textual disorder with expectations that authors and editors design texts with intelligible organizing principles. Because the concatenation of multiple editorial agencies over time is an undesigned process, the multiplicity of intentions reflected in the ultimate form of an accretion text is heterogeneous enough that there is an appearance of disorder—a lack of structural or stylistic coherence, inconsistency of diction or of facts and assertions, repetition of passages, and so forth, all of which we would expect to have been resolved were a single, guiding editorial agency at work.

² Variores in such texts may indicate some type of multiple redaction process, but unless discrepancies are major in scale they would not affect this profile.

³ Recognition of the dating significance of Zeng Shen’s profile is not recorded before the Tang writer Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819; quoted in Zhang 1954: 451-452), but it is hard to imagine that its general implications were unrecognized earlier. This traditional notion continues to have strong adherents, particularly in China. For example, in the introduction to his edition of the *Lunyu*, Yang Bojun adopts precisely such a view (1984: 29-30).

Moreover, to extend the geological metaphor, in an accretion model the lack of homogeneity or editorial coherence may be ascribed to a process of hardening, or resistance to alteration, that accrues to layers of text laid down earlier; the addition of subsequent material tends to leave earlier layers relatively untouched.⁴ In general, this tendency of redactors to avoid reordering and rationalizing existing text is explained by ascribing to early stages of the text some quality of authority, or what I will call here “canonicity,” which discourages later redactors from making radical alterations, constraining them instead to a limited range of strategies that include preposing or appending new text to old, interpolating new text without altering older text, or making minor adjustments in the wording of old text to make it say something new.⁵ The reluctance to revise and reorder existing text, even while adding new material, is the factor that creates apparent disorder.

In the case of the *Lunyu*, an accretion theory serves as an alternative to two accounts of the text’s etiology. The first of these is traditional: that the text was the product of a single editorial community of disciples, stretching over no more than two or three generations and largely complete within the lifespans of the first. The second of these accounts emerged only in the twentieth century, and pictures the *Lunyu* as entirely the product of a brief redaction period just at or after the close of the Warring States period. Accretion requires both deep fragmentation in editorial agency and the time necessary to provide canonicity to early layers of text, which neither of these two profiles can provide.

In Western text-critical traditions, the classic model of an accretion text is the Bible. Late nineteenth-century scholars of Biblical hermeneutics, drawing on a century of precursors, outlined the “Documentary Hypothesis,” which posited that the Pentateuch was not a single-author text but a network of interwoven passages from a variety of sources, thus explaining a variety of inconsistencies and redundancies that had long puzzled close readers of the Hebrew Bible. Subsequent studies have performed similar analyses on the Biblical chronicles and prophetic books, and New Testament scholars have pursued

⁴ Edward Slingerland (2000: 138-139), critiquing the Brookses specific accretion proposal, challenges the appropriateness of the geological metaphor, which I am extending. I hope the more flexible applications of the metaphor here will avoid the objections he raises.

⁵ My use of the terms “canon” and “canonicity” in this essay treat this imperative to preserve the words and form of a text, even if altering it by additions, as an index of a text’s authority. Of course, such a functional concept of canonicity involves matters of degree in the assessment of texts as authoritative—full canonicity would exclude alterations altogether. This usage is obviously different from, though related to, essential qualities ascribed to a text or its putative author, or criteria associated with church or government sanction of texts.

these strategies as well, particularly with regard to the synoptic Gospels. It is these practical studies that underlie the general notion of an accretion text, and from which I have derived the general definition above.⁶

The Brookses wrote with an awareness of this tradition of Biblical scholarship, which supplies scholars with many text-critical tools that we apply to the *Lunyu* today. However, in describing their accretion theory of the *Lunyu*, they based their model on an older, primarily East Asian scholarly lineage. If we examine the development of this lineage, extending it through the Brookses' own work, we will see how the *Lunyu* fits the profile of an accretion text, and the variety of ways in which its etiology has been understood.

Theories of the *Lunyu* as an Accretion Text

The list of earlier scholars the Brookses cite as advocates of the accretion approach is a short one, though it begins early, with the Song commentator Hu Yin 胡寅 (1098-1156). Hu was the first to note significant stylistic differences between *Lunyu* books 1-10 and 11-20, which he labeled the *Shanglun* 上論 and *Xialun* 下論 (*Upper* and *Lower Lunyu*), implying that the *Lunyu* might, in some sense, be a composite of multiple source texts.⁷ After Hu Yin, the Brookses list only Itō Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627-1705) in Japan, Cui Shu 崔述 (1740-1816) in China, and Arthur Waley (1889-1966) in the West. Itō drew from Hu Yin's division of the *Lunyu* the conclusion that books 1-10 represented an original (*sei* 正) and complete text, with book 10's unusual form, recording Confucius's habitual actions rather than his speech, signaling the coda of the work. Books 11-20 constituted a supplement (*zoku* 續), assembled at a later time.⁸

Cui Shu's somewhat later but independent analysis was far more detailed, part of a systematic skepticism that Cui applied broadly in his text-critical work. Whereas Hu and Itō had focused on distinguishing between two moieties of the *Lunyu*, Cui focused at the level of the text's twenty books. He claimed that features of the last five books marked them as later additions to an original and complete text of fifteen books.⁹ Like many who pursue

⁶ On the development of the Documentary Hypothesis and extensions to later Biblical books, see Nicholson 1998: 3-11 and Campbell and O'Brien 2000: 11-12. For New Testament text criticism, Sanders and Davies 1989 is a comprehensive methodological guide.

⁷ Brooks and Brooks 1999: 201.

⁸ Itō's comments appear in the preface to his *Rongo kogi* 論語古義.

⁹ Zhang (1954: 453-459) records relevant comments extracted from several of Cui's works. Cui had an optimistic view of the very early date of the books he regarded as original to the text, assuming that they were accurate life records of Confucius and his

accretion analysis, Cui was concerned with the issue of authenticity (*zhenwei* 真偽).¹⁰ He wished to delineate an original core text that could be viewed as a faithful report of Confucius's words and deeds, disentangling it from elements he felt were inferior or in conflict with his own view of Confucius.¹¹ By contrast, in remarks that Arthur Waley included in the introduction to his 1938 translation of the *Lunyu*, Waley made clear that he was skeptical that any part of the text should be understood as a true report of Confucius's own words. Waley did, however, follow Cui Shu in proposing an original core of the *Lunyu* text: he specified books 3-9, although he did not explain his reasoning, other than to point out that some other books, including those excluded by Cui, showed differences in style and substance.¹²

Japanese Sinology and the Accretion Theory

Waley's speculations mark the end of the Brookses' lineage of previous accretion hypotheses for the *Lunyu*. However, over the decades following Waley's comments, three Japanese scholars—Takeuchi Yoshio 武内義雄 (1886-1966), Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 (1873-1961), and Kimura Eiichi 木村英一 (1906-1981)—wrote pioneering monographic studies on the sources and composition of the *Lunyu*, using distinct methodologies and reaching different conclusions, which led to far more robust models of the *Lunyu* as an accretion text than anything Itō, Cui, or Waley envisioned.¹³ While their work is too

disciples. Thus, Cui regarded book 19, which records sayings of the disciples after Confucius's death, as "late" but not inauthentic: it is late only with regard to books 1-15, which record the statements of the living Confucius. By contrast, books 16-18 and 20 are, for Cui, both late and of unreliable provenance (454).

¹⁰ Issues of authenticity and accretion are often confused. While accretion analysis may identify certain sections or passages as late additions to a text, late addition does not mean late provenance: source texts added late may themselves have originated early. The absolute dating of text elements is a related but distinct issue.

¹¹ Cui is the earliest scholar I am aware of to identify an individual *Lunyu* passage as a late interpolation within an early book. He regarded the report of *Lunyu* 7/23, which states that Confucius met with the immoral consort of the ruler in the state of Wei, as inconsistent with Confucius's character (Zhang 1954: 454).

¹² Waley 1938: 21-26. Waley's analysis was perfunctory—he referred to it as a "guess"—but was influential because his translation was, for many years, treated as a standard English version.

¹³ My thanks to Cameron Moore for his 2011 conference presentation, which provided broader and more fully contextualized portraits of the three monographic Japanese works discussed here. It is unclear why the Brookses do not list the contributions of these scholars in their account of the development of the accretion approach;

detailed to explore adequately here, I want to focus on those aspects that bear directly on the issue of how we may conceive of the *Lunyu* as an accretion text.

In his 1939 monograph, *Rongo no kenkyū* 論語之研究, Takeuchi Yoshio extended the approaches of Itō Jinsai and Cui Shu to full text-critical scale. Relying heavily on records of variant *Lunyu* editions preserved in early sources, particularly in Wang Chong's 王充 (27-100) *Lunheng* 論衡 (*Balanced Discussions*), Takeuchi built a model of the *Lunyu* as a composite text, comprised of an early core of two editions—a “Qi-Lu” 齊魯 text in two *juan* 卷 (comprising books 1 and 10), and a “Hejian” 河間 text in seven *juan* (books 2-8), associated with the school of Zeng Shen—as well as an alternative group of seven books (11-15, 19-20) derived from a Qi tradition with ties to the disciple Zigong 子貢, and four additional books incorporated individually (Books 9, 16-18). For Takeuchi, the Hejian books were the earliest, linked directly to Confucius's original disciples; the remainder likely post-dated the *Mengzi* 孟子.¹⁴ While Takeuchi's specific model can be criticized on a number of grounds, his general approach marks a major methodological shift. Unlike Cui Shu and Waley, Takeuchi was not merely looking for an original core text: he sought to identify the *Lunyu*'s component source texts. While he treated one of the three main sources, the Hejian text, as the “original” *Lunyu*, he saw the Qi-Lu text and the group of books he assigned to the Qi tradition as being developed independently before being compounded with the Hejian text to create the received *Lunyu*. He saw the remaining chapters as appended or interpolated, most of them after the tripartite *Lunyu* had been compounded.¹⁵

Although Takeuchi pursued detailed interpretations of individual passages, like Cui Shu his text-critical work on the *Lunyu* was focused on book-level divisions, and his central motivating project was to disentangle early, more “authentic” reports of Confucius's words and deeds from ones that were more suspect because of their late date. This latter project became the target of Takeuchi's academic counterpart, Tsuda Sōkichi.

occasional citation of all three in the course of their discussion indicates awareness of these authors' contributions.

¹⁴ Takeuchi 1939: 106. Among accretion theorists, Takeuchi is perhaps most reliant on the external evidence of early reports of variant *Lunyu*. His use of the *Lunheng*'s somewhat garbled account of the *Lunyu*'s text history, which Takeuchi amended in critical respects (most significantly by emending on slender grounds Wang Chong's count of nine *juan* in the Hejian edition to a count of seven), facilitates a model of source texts that Takeuchi may have conceived initially on the basis of internal evidence.

¹⁵ According to Takeuchi (1939: 95-101), book 9 was probably an addendum to the Hejian text, implying that its addition may have preceded the editing of the compound *Lunyu* text, while books 16-18 were added last.

Tsuda was not an advocate of the accretion approach: though he granted that the *Lunyu* was in some sense a composite, he challenged the accretion approach and in doing so contributed to its further development. Writing with an awareness of the comprehensive techniques of biblical higher criticism, as well as the critical methods that had been applied to the analysis of the Buddhist canon, Tsuda believed that the goals and methods of previous *Lunyu* analysts were fundamentally misconceived, and that more sophisticated analysis would undermine models of long-gestating source texts, such as Takeuchi's.¹⁶ In his *Rongo to Kōshi no shisō* 論語と孔子の思想, published in 1946, Tsuda repeatedly used external evidence to question whether key passages in the *Lunyu* were associated with Confucius even as late as the Han era. For example, he argued that virtually every book in the *Lunyu* was pervaded by passages that reflected the intellectual environment of the late Warring States era, involving ideas drawn from Daoism, mantic traditions, and forms of canon exegesis that were unknown during Confucius's time.¹⁷ He identified many *Lunyu* sayings ascribed to Confucius that appear unattributed in late Warring States texts, including Confucian texts such as the *Xunzi*, suggesting that the *Lunyu* appropriated these passages to attribute them to Confucius, treating later texts as sources, rather than the other way round.¹⁸ Going further, Tsuda found *Lunyu* material quoted by Confucians without expected attribution to Confucius even in the late Western Han.¹⁹

Using criteria such as these, Tsuda was able to point to so many *Lunyu* passages that seemed anachronistic or to have been independent of the text at a late date as to undermine the notion that any sustained portion of the text could have been established before the last years of the Warring States era or that there was any way to date the *Lunyu* other than to assess passages on an

¹⁶ Tsuda 1946: 514-515.

¹⁷ Tsuda 1946: 157-218.

¹⁸ Tsuda 1946: 158-160. It is an anomalous feature of the *Xunzi* that, although Confucius is cited as authority for many passages in the text, every apparent quotation of the *Lunyu* is unattributed to Confucius (altogether six instances, each from a different *Lunyu* book; see Eno 1990: 239n2). Tsuda (1946: 6-22) related this to broad patterns of variation in attribution and wording of maxims across the pre-Qin and early Han corpuses.

¹⁹ For example, Tsuda adduced a memorial submitted in 74 BCE by the Confucian minister Wang Ji 王吉, which invoked without attribution phrasing found in *Lunyu* 17/19, despite the fact that elsewhere Wang is conscientious in citing Confucius by name (Tsuda 1946: 284, citing *Hanshu* 10.3061). (We now know that 17/19 was included in the Dingzhou version of the *Lunyu*, datable prior to 55 BCE, considerably lowering the odds of Tsuda's conjecture in this case, and increasing the likelihood that the same *Hanshu* text could be evidence that familiar *Lunyu* passages might routinely be cited without attribution, at least during the Han.)

individual basis.²⁰ Although Tsuda did not specifically frame his study as a response to Takeuchi, his conclusions undermined Takeuchi's premise that the twenty-book structure of the *Lunyu* could provide a basis for reconstructing its etiology, and that the clues to the *Lunyu*'s textual history reported in Han sources could provide a blueprint.²¹ Tsuda believed the great majority of the *Lunyu*'s books, sixteen of twenty, were the products of a single milieu and that their order in the text was not significant.²² Most important for us, in Tsuda's view, whether those sixteen books were assembled by a single editor or by several—either of which he deemed possible—the intellectual and formal similarities so outweigh differences that there was no need to suppose that composition extended over any long period of time.²³

Tsuda's critique motivated Kimura Eiichi to develop a more refined model of the accretion approach in his 1971 monograph, *Kōshi to Rongo* 孔子と論語. Kimura articulates with great clarity the basic argument for applying an accretion approach to the *Lunyu*:

Now, suppose the *Lunyu* had been compiled by one person or at one time: what results would we expect? Surely we would expect to find some significant kind of pervasive editorial plan. For example, we might find that passages were sorted by topic or theme. Or perhaps entries would be arranged in chronological order, or grouped together on the basis of similar keywords. Even if we found the arrangement to be totally random, revealing that there had been no consideration of order whatever, that too would reflect an editorial principle. However, while we see in portions of the received *Lunyu* text examples of many such types of meaningful passage ordering, we see no overall editorial principle at work.

今かりに論語が或る一人による或一時の編纂に成ったとすれば、という結果になるであろうか。思うにそこには、必ずや何等かの意味で、全書を一貫する何等かの編纂意圖が見られる筈である。例えば事項とか論題別とかに篇目章次が定められているとか、年代順に排列が考慮されているとか相似た文辭を集めて前後の聯關がつけられているとか、或は全く雜纂の體によって、如何なる排列順序も考慮しないという態度を示してるとかは、いずれも全書を一貫した編纂方針の表現である。ところが今の論語には、部分的に種

²⁰ Tsuda 1946: 500.

²¹ Tsuda 1946: 238-239.

²² Tsuda 1946: 278. The exceptions are books 16, 18, 19, and 20, which he acknowledged as distinct in origin; he also believed that books 5 and 6 were compiled together.

²³ Tsuda 1946: 272-274.

々の意味での章次の聯關が見られながら、全體を一貫した編纂方針が見當らず。²⁴

In other words, the problem the *Lunyu* presents is one of editorial disorder. Kimura's claim was not that the text had no order at all—as he notes, that too would serve as a consistent expression of editorial intent. The problem is that, while there are portions of the text that have no perceivable order, many portions, of variable size, are ordered quite clearly, though the ordering principles of these sections are varied. The greater part of Kimura's extended analysis is, in the end, a discovery of the many kinds of order in the text. The order that he elucidates, however, is fragmented; different sections of the text exhibit different ordering principles in a way that cannot be cogently interpreted as the work of a single editorial authority.

Perhaps Kimura's most distinctive contribution to the theory of the *Lunyu* as an accretion text was his close analysis of microstructures within the *Lunyu* that he called “passage clusters” (*shōgun* 章群). Clusters of passages, some brief, others extended, do seem linked by topic or theme, by keywords, by passage structure, and so forth, even in the less coherent books. Kimura articulated five general editorial strategies governing these clusters, and his specific analyses illustrate great variety in the way these strategies are deployed.²⁵ It is through these pockets of coherence that the component elements of the *Lunyu* as an edited collection, operating on a level beyond the individual passage, can be identified, and these are the basis for critical analysis of the *Lunyu* as a text and for explorations of its history. Kimura devotes most of his analytic energy to these clusters, which, on occasion, bridge book divisions.²⁶

In this way, Kimura's analysis mediates between Takeuchi and Tsuda, focusing neither on the level of the book nor on the level of the individual passage, but on the level of passage clusters, searching for and interpreting “joins” between clusters, which can provide clues for both demarcating source texts and identifying which Confucian factions may have been responsible for both the sources and their redaction into a larger framework. On this basis, Kimura

²⁴ Kimura 1971: 171-172.

²⁵ The five editorial strategies include: stringing together passages alike in content; sequencing strings with different content through connecting passages sharing features of both strings; establishing an initial string on one theme and adding strings that are variations of it; placing resonant passages as framing markers around a string to bring out an implicit theme; appending a string through late redaction to inflect the meaning of prior text (Kimura 1971: 219-228).

²⁶ For example, Kimura (1971: 269-270, 480) sees the final passages of book 2, which concern issues of ritual (*li* 禮), as a bridge to book 3, which is devoted almost entirely to ritual concerns.

develops a complex model of the etiology of the books, assigning relative dates and places of origin in terms of disciple generations and faction location.²⁷ Despite differences in key assumptions, specific interpretations, and ultimate conclusions, Kimura's methodology appears to be the closest antecedent of the Brookses.

The Brookses' Accretion Theory

To date, by far the most detailed attempt to chart the accretion process for the *Lunyu* is represented by the work of the Brookses. The goal of their analysis is a complete map of the development of the *Lunyu*, passage by passage, discovering within each book individual principles of order and dating each book and the timing of each later interpolation into an existing book within a narrow range.²⁸ Their project is a form of "redaction criticism": rather than focusing on the question of source texts, the Brookses address the question of the date and perspective of successive generations of redactors, explaining their contributions to the text in terms of the unique contexts of eras in which they lived.²⁹

To accomplish this goal, the Brookses adopt bold hypotheses: they posit that the earliest portions of the text were compiled under the guidance of Confucius's original disciples in the state of Lu: first under the leadership of Zigong, followed by, tentatively, one or two other original disciples, then shifting to Zeng Shen, who became the acknowledged master of a single branch of Lu Ruism that composed, preserved, and enlarged the *Lunyu*. Curatorial control of the text is pictured as under the sole control of the group's designated leader. The Brookses argue that this leadership role remained with Zeng Shen's lineal heirs for one further generation and then passed to Confucius's grand-

²⁷ For Kimura (1971: 473-475), books 1, 8, and 4, emerging in that order, are the earliest, derived from Zeng Shen's school in Lu, which also produced books 14 and 17 somewhat later. Other Ru communities in Lu produced books 2-3, 5-7, 9-10 relatively early, and books 11, 13, and 15 later. Communities in Qi produced the late books 16 and 18-20, with book 11 a hybrid, begun in Lu and completed in Qi.

²⁸ Kimura's analysis of "passage clusters" is paralleled in the Brookses' work by their analysis of each book into thematic subsections, treating as late interpolations passages that break continuity within subsection confines. Like Kimura, the Brookses are exceptionally conscientious readers of the *Lunyu*, and their structural analyses of its books are full of critical insights.

²⁹ Traditional redaction criticism refers to these issues of editorial context by the German phrase *Sitz im Leben*, or "life setting." The Brookses support their critical conclusions through extensive engagement with Warring States history and texts.

son, Zisi 子思, whose heirs controlled it thereafter.³⁰ These hypotheses permit the Brookses to reconstruct the text's history with remarkable specificity, deploying a range of text-critical methods well established in biblical studies. However, the validity of the Brookses' key assumptions of authorial lineage and the insularity of the growing *Lunyu* text is lightly argued and supported by neither internal nor external evidence, other than the Brookses' interpretations of internal evidence dictated by their governing theory itself.

For the Brookses, the authoritative character of the *Lunyu* is established from the outset. They imagine book 4 as the product of a specific context, Confucius's death, which they picture as the occasion for the creation of a "memorial" text, composed by the disciples, most likely under the direction of Zigong. This textual genesis ties book 4 to immediate, living memories of the Master, selected by the original inner circle at a sanctified point of heightened care. After this authoritative genesis, succeeding books derive their authority from the lineally sanctioned editorial chain of school leaders in control of the text.³¹ The text is pictured as growing in a linear fashion, with school leaders adding a book about every ten years over the course of nearly two centuries, until, with the absorption of the state of Lu by the state of Chu 楚 in 249 BCE, the school leader, Zishen 子慎, flees west, sealing the text away in the wall of his home, ending its life as a growing repository.³²

It should be clear from this description that, although the Brookses label their model an accretion theory of the *Lunyu*, it is a most unusual type of accretion, fundamentally different from the models developed in biblical studies. Although editorial agency is fragmented, it is also unified by an order of licensed authority, passed, for the most part, from father to son. There is also

³⁰ The *Kong congzi* 孔叢子 and the "Kongzi shijia" 孔子世家 (Hereditary House of Kongzi) chapter of the *Shiji* 史記 provide lists of the Kong family heirs, including their names and life spans, which permits the Brookses to correlate individual leaders with what they interpret to be an appropriate *Sitz im Leben* for *Lunyu* books and interpolations. Every dated passage is assigned to a unique, identified redactor. However, apart from name and life span (and in two cases an added phrase on an office held), existing sources provide no documented personal characteristics for the figures after Zisi, and it is the Brookses' model, rather than external sources, that supplies specific qualities to these featureless lists of heirs.

³¹ Perhaps weakened to some degree when the school lineage leadership did not follow kinship lineage. The Brookses' model allows no interpolations to disturb the earliest books until school leadership passes from Zeng family members to Kong family members. Thereafter, interpolation became an ongoing editorial strategy.

³² Brooks and Brooks 1998: 196. The Brookses see Zishen's hypothesized act as the origin of the "Gulun" 古論 (*Ancient Lunyu*) text, ancestral to today's received *Lunyu*, which was reported to have been accidentally recovered from a wall of the Kong family compound in 157 BCE.

no compounding of distinct urtexts: accretion is entirely a matter of text expansion according to set rules for appending or preposing books and interpolating passages. The Brookses do not engage in source criticism because, for them, there is only one source text.

The peculiarity of the Brookses' approach to the accretion model lies in a particular feature of their philological project. Whereas the general text-critical function of an accretion theory is to explain textual disorder, the Brookses' basic goal is to date the component books and passages of the *Lunyu*. These are distinct issues, and so long as a passage can be fitted into their dating scheme, the Brookses do not treat it as a sign of editorial disorder. For example, verbatim passage repetition is one type of editorial disorder that an accretion theory can help explain, since compounding source texts may include duplications that a conservative editor will leave intact, respecting the authority of each text. When the Brookses encounter verbatim duplication in the *Lunyu*, no disorder is recognized. For example, in the case of identical passages such as 1/13 and 17/17, the author of 17/17, identified as the son of the author of 1/13, is simply seen as repeating the passage because its expression was germane to him in the same way it was to his father.³³

For all its technical virtuosity, the Brookses' project has the significant problem that there exists no evidence in support of the a priori assumptions on which its success depends. There is no record to indicate that the anchor date for book 4 is accurate, that redaction authority was limited to a single editorial line, that Confucius's lineage played a continuing doctrinal leadership role, or that the text was kept under confidential control for nearly two centuries. While these issues are problematic for the Brookses' particular version of the accretion approach, they do not bear on the validity of the approach in general. I want now to draw on some elements of the accretion theories reviewed here to comment on features of the *Lunyu* that I think make the accretion approach persuasive, and then to outline one model of the general historical processes that would have yielded the text we have today.

The Significance of Order within Disorder in the *Lunyu*

Earlier, I quoted at length Kimura's insight into the central issue for the accretion approach: the editorial disorder of the *Lunyu*. Tsuda, arguing against an accretion approach, did not feel the force of this disorder, and the Brookses make it a subordinate issue where it conflicts with their premises. But I believe

³³ Brooks and Brooks 1998: 164. See also the Brookses' treatment of repetition in 6/27 and 12/15 (1998: 93).

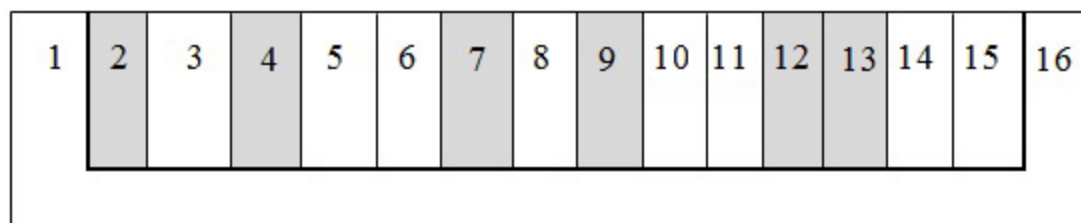


FIGURE 2.1: Diagram of *Lunyu* book 1. (Shaded passages quote disciples as authoritative voices.)

Note: The resonance of *Lunyu* 1/1 and 1/16 (noted early by Takeuchi [1939: 90]) depends on selecting one of two commentarial interpretations for 1/1; scholars have long been divided on which is to be preferred. It would be plausible to argue that the final editors of book 1 read 1/1 according to the sense implied by their placement of the resonant 1/16, but that an alternative that ignores this resonance exists precisely because it was transmitted prior to the incorporation of 1/1 in the *Lunyu*.

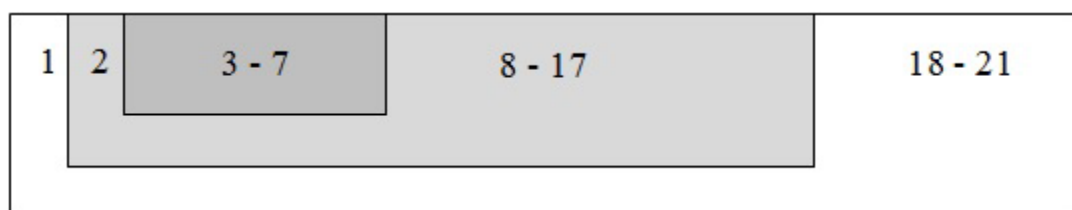


FIGURE 2.2: Diagram of *Lunyu* book 8. (Zeng Shen passages are more darkly shaded; quotes of Confucius are lightly shaded; comments on ancient sages are unshaded.)

Note: This analysis differs slightly from Kimura's (1971: 322-329); see Eno 2010.

Kimura is right: editorial inconsistency is a pervasive feature of the *Lunyu*, and it is not conceivable that a single editor or a closely coordinated editorial team would have constituted the text in this way.

Kimura's point about the *Lunyu*'s combination of orderliness on the micro level and lack of overall editorial coherence can be illustrated by considering the shifting forms of organization that characterize individual books of the text. For example, book 1, among the most clearly ordered books in the *Lunyu*, is organized as an anthology of school sayings, alternating teachings attributed to Confucius and those attributed to his disciples in sequences of one to two passages, all framed within the "bookends" of thematically resonant initial and final passages (see fig. 2.1).

Book 8, on the other hand, is not organized as an anthology, but is composed of three clearly separate component texts, bound together by a nested structure that places a block of the disciple Zeng Shen's teachings in old age within a selection of disparate teachings attributed to Confucius, all set again within a body of texts celebrating heroes of remote antiquity (see fig. 2.2).



FIGURE 2.3: Diagram of *Lunyu* book 19. (Passages quoting Zigong are shaded.)

Book 19, which is devoted entirely to the teachings and sayings of disciples after the death of Confucius, is organized as a compound text, combining a relatively orderly string of passages involving the junior disciples, in competition with one another and in conversation with their followers, with an appended section devoted to the senior disciple Zigong in conversation with various grandees of the Lu court, and in which independent origin is clearly signaled by consistent use of Confucius's style name, Zhong Ni 仲尼, unique within the *Lunyu* (see fig. 2.3).

Some books are models of thematic consistency. For example, almost all passages of book 3 are explicitly devoted to the theme of ritual and music, excepting only 3/5, a comment on the superiority of the Zhou states over nomadic and forest peoples, which appears to address the theme of ritual order implicitly, and 3/24, an isolated narrative concerning Confucius that does not invoke the theme, and is thus, perhaps, a late interpolation. Other books are so disordered as to defy mapping. For example, the Brookses analyses of books 14 and 15 identify over forty percent of the passages in each chapter as late interpolations in order to tease some type of editorial unity out of the remainder.³⁴

If we move from the level of the individual book to the text as a whole, most scholars (Tsuda seems to be the only exception) see the stylistic distinction that first prompted Hu Yin to divide the text into the moieties of the *Shanglun* and *Xialun*, and books 16, 18, and 20, at least, do seem to belong to separate intellectual discourses, as Cui Shu and all the Japanese scholars agree. But within these broad divisions, I believe one group of books is particularly suggestive of a core component text: books 3-5 and book 7. The reason this group of books is distinctive is because each book is internally homogenous in form and theme, and they are mutually complementary in content. The uniform content of book 3, on the theme of ritual and music, has been noted above. Book 4 is a collection of brief ethical maxims, with two of the twenty-six passages, 4/15

³⁴ For a very different analysis of the text's editorial diversity, see Brooks and Brooks 1998: 248.

and 4/26, often identified as interpolations.³⁵ Book 5 collects comments on individuals.³⁶ Book 7 collects comments on Confucius and descriptions of his manner.³⁷ The fact that book 6 intervenes in this sorted collection of books appears to be a simple case of interpolation: the first half of the book (6/1-16) is uniform and duplicates book 5 in theme, explaining its point of insertion, while the second half (6/17-30) is a short miscellany of maxims. Based on this reasoning, I will treat books 3-5 and 7 as originally conjoined.

A group of four books sorted into complementary themes, in the midst of sixteen other books that are, to greater or lesser degrees, heterogeneous, makes sense if those four books were at some point an independent collection. Thematic sorting is the sort of editorial principle that Kimura found lacking in the *Lunyu* as a whole; he sought it at the level of the passage cluster, but does not appear to have considered the possibility of a “book cluster.”³⁸ On the theory that book 6 was probably interpolated before this cluster was incorporated with other source texts for the *Lunyu*, I am going to refer to books 3-7 together as the “*Shanglun* Core Source.”³⁹

My minimal claim is that the redaction of the materials that composed the *Shanglun* Core Source was clearly performed at a different time and on different principles from other episodes of redaction that shaped the received *Lunyu*. When additional materials that shared themes with the chapters of the *Shanglun* Core Source were incorporated in the text, the Core Source books, apart from scattered interpolations, were not revised to accommodate them,

³⁵ See, e.g., Kimura 1971, 290-91; Brooks and Brooks 1998, 149. Additionally, passages 4/5 and 4/6 seem to have been expanded by preposing and appending elements to an original maxim.

³⁶ Passage 5/13 appears to be a late interpolation, and 5/26-28 are not as straightforwardly on topic as the main body of passages. Among the four books discussed here, book 5 is the least homogenous, and even so, 85 percent of its entries conform to the main theme of the book.

³⁷ Five of thirty-eight passages diverge from the theme: 7/6, 7/36, and 7/37 are brief maxims, and 7/26 and 7/29 are more complex diversions.

³⁸ Kimura’s final proposal for the accretion process assigns book 4 to a different Confucian faction from the others in this group, and book 7 to disciples one generation later than the rest. The Brookses treat books 4 and 5 as serially composed, with book 6 intervening before the addition of book 7, all over a period of about forty years, with the other member of this set, book 3, composed about a century later, after several chronologically intervening chapters (the late date for book 3 reflects their theory that the Confucian school focus shifted from *ren* 仁 to *li* 禮 when leadership in Lu moved from the Zeng lineage to the Kong lineage; see Brooks and Brooks 1998: 59). The notion of this four-book cluster is more closely compatible with Waley’s perception that books 3-9 form a core source and Takeuchi’s theory that books 2-8 represent a preserved Hejian edition.

³⁹ An argument can be made for viewing books 11-13 as a similar, sorted core source in the *Xialun* portion of the text, but I will not pursue that issue here.

and no further general sorting by theme occurred at the level of the full text.⁴⁰ This claim is inconsistent with the processes of redaction pictured by Tsuda, and it is strong evidence that the received text is the product of an accretion process. I believe that strong arguments, incorporating aspects of the proposals of Takeuchi, Kimura, and the Brookses, can be presented for a more extensive accretion model, but I will not pursue them here, since my argument requires only that an accretion process be established in principle.

There is a corollary to this claim that will form a bridge to the next step of this analysis. It is that, regardless of whether the date was early or late, we can say that at the time the *Shanglun* Core Source took its present form, the component sources for that redaction were *not* regarded as “canonically” sacrosanct, in the functional sense of the term “canon” used here.⁴¹ Respect for the canonical authority of a text is, in this analysis, signaled by an unwillingness to so radically alter the form of a text that the new redaction loses lineal continuity with its source. In such a canonical context, redaction and preservation are companion imperatives.

The Historical Context for the Compilation of the *Lunyu*

In this section I will consider how the accretion process may have occurred in the case of the *Lunyu*, covering a period that may have extended from the close of Confucius’s life until the date of the earliest recovered manuscript copy, placed in a grave closed in 55 BCE.⁴² I believe the basic conditions for the gestation of an accretion text such as the *Lunyu* would involve the following succession of five stages:

- 1) The generation of passages that will, intact or altered, find their way into the received text;
- 2) The collection of these passages in manuscripts that will become the source texts for the *Lunyu*;
- 3) The assembly of these collections as components of a larger text;

⁴⁰ Kimura (1971: 172-173) makes this point as well: single-theme chapters in the *Lunyu* highlight the disorder implied by the presence of similarly themed passages in other chapters that show no thematic unity. It is possible that some thematically consistent passages are late interpolations in chapters without thematic unity, but the fact that many thematically relevant passages were instead located elsewhere indicates that this was not a consistent redaction principle.

⁴¹ Although I am claiming the *Shanglun* Core Source predates the *Lunyu*’s final redaction, I am not claiming it was necessarily earlier than other components of the received text.

⁴² Hebei sheng wenwu yanjiusuo 1997: 1.

- 4) Concurrent or sequential iterative processes of canonization that would endow components and the growing composite text with such authority as to restrain any editorial initiative to reorder the text as a whole;
- 5) Continued conservative editorial alteration through strategies of appendage and interpolation on the levels of the book, the passage, or wording within passages, until canonization is formalized or reaches a point where reverence for the disseminated text makes it inalterable.

I will devote most attention here to the key third and fourth stages, which seem to me the most challenging to explain concretely. I will argue that the third stage was most likely a byproduct of larger scale bibliographic activities of Ru 儒 and others under the sponsorship of the Qin state and empire, and that the fourth stage was most likely the product of a period of Ru persecution during the early decades of the Han. First, however, I want to comment more briefly on what we know concerning the initial two stages.

The Emergence of Confucian Aphoristic Collections

I do not believe it is possible, on the basis of current evidence, to pinpoint the time at which Confucius lore began to be recorded in writing. The Brookses speculate that *Lunyu* passages were first composed at the time of Confucius's death. While this is certainly possible, no positive evidence exists to support it, and the speculation assumes a type of text-based culture that may not yet have existed.⁴³ Writing was long established in certain contexts, but the notion of Confucian disciples recording the Master's words—though pictured once in *Lunyu* 15/6—may be anachronistic, a better fit for the following century, when a variety of masters traditions competed for patrons and followers by circulating school texts. This does not mean that component passages of the *Lunyu* may not have begun with or before Confucius's death; however, the likelihood is that any such aphoristic teachings would have been memorized and orally transmitted individually, not as an ordered collection with fixed content and sequence.⁴⁴

⁴³ The Brookses (1998: 204) claim a resemblance between the language of book 4 and contemporary bronze inscriptions and bamboo chronicle entries, but I believe there is little in common with bronze-inscription rhetoric and we have recovered no pre-Warring States court chronicles to assess the form they took at the time.

⁴⁴ For reasons of space, I will not consider further here the role of oral transmission in the formation of the *Lunyu*. I believe it is likely that during the Warring States era there was a widespread shift in authority from the spoken to the written word, and that this must be

Recently recovered bamboo grave manuscripts, dating from about 300 BCE, do testify to a robust culture of sectarian and other private writing by that date, and they provide a terminus ad quem for the first Confucian aphoristic collections.⁴⁵ While no apparent source texts for the *Lunyu* have yet appeared among these Warring States era manuscripts, two of these documents consist, like the *Lunyu*, of strings of relatively brief aphorisms and discussions, quoting Confucius and his disciples. Contemporary editors have titled these documents **Junzi wei li* 君子為禮 (*The Noble Man's Practice of Ritual*) and **Dizi wen* 弟子問 (*The Disciples Ask*).⁴⁶ Although these specific texts differ in content from the *Lunyu* and are not direct source texts, each includes passages that show clear filiation to the received text, either as near duplication or recognizable variant, or in terms of characteristic form and rhetoric.⁴⁷

a central consideration in dating the *Lunyu*. In biblical contexts, issues of oral sources are usually pursued through analyses of formulaic language, or “form criticism,” and there are ways in which this can be applied to the *Lunyu*.

⁴⁵ I am considering here bamboo texts recovered from Baoshan 包山 and Guodian 郭店 in Hubei, as well as the Shanghai Museum and Qinghua University collections, presumably from the same era and region, but of undocumented provenance.

⁴⁶ Huang Ren'er 2011 and others argue that these two texts are, in fact, a single text that intermingled the strips published separately, and they substantially rearrange passages on that theory. My own analysis of the calligraphy of the strips, going beyond the comments provided by the original commentator, Zhang Guangyu 張光裕, confirms that there are clearly two different, but similar, calligraphic hands at work, and that the division proposed by Zhang and the Shanghai Museum staff does indeed, with one exception (**Dizi wen* Strip 3), track that distinction. Although this does not rule out the possibility of a single text with scribes alternating strips, no rearrangement I have seen is adequately compelling to reverse the presumption that these are distinct texts. The similarity in calligraphic styles between the two texts suggests that they were the product of a single workshop (based on the model of calligraphy traditions and scribal workshops in Bin 2014: 4-9), and it may be that they were sequential parts of a single text, prepared by scribal colleagues, or even two books of one larger compendium.

⁴⁷ The clearest specific overlaps are **Dizi wen*, Appended Strip, and *Lunyu* 1/3 and 17/17, and **Junzi wei li*, Strips 1-3, and *Lunyu* 12/1, the latter involving considerable variation from the received *Lunyu*. However, on the level of form and rhetoric, there are at least nine more passages that mark these texts as drawing from the same homiletic tradition as the *Lunyu* (see Yi [Eno] 2011: 536). In addition, the **Yucong* 語叢 3 text, a string of maxims recovered at Guodian, includes two unattributed *Lunyu* quotes—7/6 (likely a late interpolation in book 7, see note 37) and 9/4—and the **Zun deyi* 尊德義 text, a sustained exposition, appears to embed *Lunyu* 8/9. These Confucian texts are not explicitly Confucius aphorism collections, like the two Shanghai Museum examples; they remind us that some maxims in the received *Lunyu* circulated outside of Confucius-lore contexts.

The Likely Role of Qin Encyclopedism

With certainty established for the existence by about 300 BCE of passages that appear in the *Lunyu* and of *Lunyu*-like aphoristic texts concerning Confucius and his disciples, though not the existence of specific source texts for the *Lunyu*, we now turn to the question of how and when the third stage of the process outlined above took place: the assembly of source texts into the embryonic *Lunyu* (bearing in mind that a smaller scale redaction of sources for the independent *Shangshun* Core Source would have come earlier). As is well known, the sole text of possible pre-Han provenance that refers to the *Lunyu* by name is the “Fang ji” 坊記 (Embankment Record) chapter of the received *Liji* 禮記, and the date of that text is a factor in this issue. Traditionally viewed as a pre-Qin text, for most of the past century the dominant view has been that it dates from the early Han.⁴⁸ However, the “Fang ji” has also been seen as a member of a linked four-chapter corpus within the *Liji*, all texts associated with Confucius’s grandson, Zisi. Since a pre-Qin manuscript of the associated *Zi yi* 緇衣 (Jet-Black Robes) chapter emerged in both the Guodian find and the Shanghai Museum collection of recovered Warring States texts, the likelihood that we will discover that the “Fang ji” too was a pre-Qin product has increased.⁴⁹ Models of a *Lunyu* accretion process can accommodate either the assumption that the text had not reached a stage of completion warranting a name by the rise of the Qin or that it had. Here, I will make the conservative assumption that the “Fang ji” is a Han product and then suggest the alternative scenario.

The Qin-Han transition period is often viewed as a watershed for intellectual history in general and Confucianism in particular.⁵⁰ I believe it was, but not in the way it is usually construed. Over half a century ago, Kanaya Osamu 金谷治, a student of Takeuchi’s, published a radical rethinking of the role of Confucianism in the Qin period, which portrayed the Qin as an era when Confucianism was the beneficiary of important state support for purposes focused on the encyclopedic assemblage of the knowledge of the past. In what follows,

⁴⁸ For a survey of views, see Lin 2008. Lin notes (2008: 34) that Takeuchi regarded the “Fang ji” as pre-Qin but the reference to the *Lunyu* as a late commentarial addition.

⁴⁹ Li Xueqin 李學勤 believes that because the Guodian **Yucong* 1 text includes overlaps with the “Fang ji,” a pre-Qin date for the “Fang ji” has been proven, but as Scott Cook (2012: 886-887) argues, Li has overstated the evidence.

⁵⁰ John Henderson (1991: 39-40) notes a general relation of historical disjunctures of the scale of that occurring between pre- and post-Qin China to the treatment of texts from the prior era as canonically authoritative.

I will adapt Kanaya's insights to apply them to the question of the *Lunyu*'s etiology.⁵¹

Traditionally, the Qin period has been understood as an era of Confucian persecution: the Qin is said to have persecuted Ru and excluded them from governance; the Qin ban on books is seen as destroying Ru texts; the Qin is understood to have pursued a policy of eradicating the learning of the past.⁵² None of these claims stands up to scrutiny. All appear to be products of a rewriting of history to serve parallel interests of Ru and the Han court during the period of Ru ascendance to orthodoxy during the mid- to late second century BCE.

The records of the *Shiji* indicate that after the Qin conquest, a substantial number of Ru were appointed to the rank of "erudite," or *boshi* 博士. *Boshi*, including the Ru, maintained retinues of disciples at the capital, were consulted by the emperor, and were charged to assemble as an advisory body on important matters at court.⁵³ Despite significant tensions between Ru *boshi* and the government, recorded in the *Shiji*, Ru *boshi* remained part of the Qin court as late as 209 BCE, just as the Qin entered its final stage of dissolution.⁵⁴ In addition to advisory duties, Qin *boshi* were charged to "comprehend the past and present" (*tong gujin* 通古今).⁵⁵ The practical meaning of this phrase may be reflected in the terms of the book proscription of 213 BCE. While the Qin instituted a ban on the ownership of unapproved books and burned those in private possession, the government did not, in fact, destroy the texts held at court: *boshi*, as appointees in charge of intellectual knowledge, were specifically exempted from the ban as a consequence of their official duties (*zhi* 職).⁵⁶ This exemption indicates that *boshi* were charged to perform text-related services for the dynasty.

⁵¹ See Kanaya 1960: 230-257. I became aware of Kanaya's work through Martin Kern's excellent precis (Kern 2000: 191-194). Kern took to task Western writers who had been offering revisionist accounts of the Qin without awareness that Kanaya had anticipated such work with superior arguments; I was among their number.

⁵² I am omitting from this list the traditional tale of the murder of the Ru, which has been widely debunked (see Kanaya 1960: 234-235; Bodde 1987: 95-96).

⁵³ The appointment of Ru as *boshi* is confirmed in the *Shiji* "Fengshan shu" 封禪書 (28.1366), and some well known Ru are identified as Qin *boshi*, including those discussed below. Attention is often given to the tension between the First Emperor and the Ru that ensued after the emperor summoned them to advise him on the *fengshan* rite. More significant is his convening them in the first place.

⁵⁴ *Shiji* 99.2720-2721. Note that six years after the tensions of the *fengshan* incident we also find the *boshi* Shunyu Yue 淳于越, plainly a Ru, offering counsel at court (*Shiji* 6.254).

⁵⁵ *Hanshu* 19A.726.

⁵⁶ *Shiji* 6.255.

What those services may have been is suggested by the composition of the twenty-nine-chapter *Shangshu* 尚書, a book explicitly banned by the Qin. Perhaps the single greatest anomaly in the *Shangshu* is the fact that concluding an assemblage of chapters ascribed to the legendary sage-kings and the leading figures of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, the book closes with the “Qin shi” 秦誓 (Harangue of Qin), a speech by Duke Mu 穆公, ruler of the Spring and Autumn era state of Qin. While the inclusion of this coda in a canonical text has been explained as a Qin addition to an existing compilation,⁵⁷ there is, in fact, no reason to believe that any single canon of *shu* 書 had been fixed prior to the Qin conquest. Mohist and Confucian references to “*shu*” differ, and the term was used flexibly to refer to authoritative texts of antiquity, rather than a fixed canon.⁵⁸ It is far more cogent to conclude that the *Shangshu* was a compilation made by Qin *boshi* as part of their mandate to “comprehend the past and present.”⁵⁹ After all, the existence of the received text is due to its preservation by a Qin era Ru *boshi*, Fu Sheng 伏勝, about whom I will say more below.⁶⁰

A second example would be the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (*Annals of Lü Buwei*), ordinarily viewed as a preconquest product of Qin, assembled under the patronage of Prime Minister Lü Buwei 呂不韋, who, it is said, hung the completed text on the city wall of the state of Qin in 239 BCE, challenging anyone to improve it by a single word. There are serious problems with this dating of the text. Many of these have been identified by D.C. Lau, and include the puzzling location of the text’s brief afterword, titled “Xuyi” 序意, at the close of the first of the book’s three major components, the *ji* 紀 division, indicating that the following *lan* 覽 and *lun* 論 divisions were added at a later date.⁶¹ Moreover, the “Xuyi” chapter discusses only the twelve subdivisions of the *ji* division, and it does so in terms of a cosmological framework that is most reasonably understood not as a comment on the subdivisions as we have them today, but as a description solely of the lead chapters of the twelve subdivi-

⁵⁷ Matsumoto 1966: 581-582.

⁵⁸ Thus the explicit Qin ban on “*shu*” would have referred to all versions of such authoritative historical texts rather than a single version ancestral to the received *Shangshu*.

⁵⁹ Only four of the twenty books in the “Zhou shu” 周書 section of the *Shangshu* are cited in pre-Qin texts and manuscripts recovered to date, which may further indicate that the canonical bounds of the text were not set prior to the Qin.

⁶⁰ On this model, the “Da xue” 大學, which quotes the “Qin shi” at length, may also be seen to be a Qin *boshi* product; see Matsumoto 1966: 572-573, 581. A second philosophical summa, the “Zhong yong” 中庸, may also date from the Qin (Kanaya 1960: 355).

⁶¹ Lau 1991: esp. 46-53. For a brief summary of approaches to this issue, see Knoblock and Riegel 2000: 27-28.

sions, the calendrical *yueling* 月令 chapters, which appear as an independent text in the *Liji*. If the notion of a perfect text of 239 BCE is understood to be limited to the *yueling* chapters, the *Shiji* account is far more cogent, as it is difficult to credit the supposition that larger sections of the text could be accommodated in public display or deemed perfect to the last character. If we adopt this view, it is cogent to view the *Lüshi chungiu* compendium as almost entirely the later product of dynastic *boshi*; its encyclopedic digest of pre-Qin learning, collected in thematically organized groups of succinct chapters, would fit their mandate to “comprehend the past and present.”⁶²

Taken together, this evidence suggests that during the Qin, senior Ru masters were among those elevated to scholarly position as encyclopedists, charged with assembling and editing literary works that would, far from destroying the learning of the Classical era, preserve it in forms useful to the Qin court, which would alone have access to it. Viewing the Qin dynasty and the role of its Ru masters in this light, it is possible to see how a limited number of Ru may have gained access to a substantial range of source texts containing the sententious wisdom of Confucius and his disciples, whether attributed to them directly, as in the **Junzi wei li* and **Dizi wen* texts, or in an unattributed Confucian context, as in the case of **Yucong* 3 (*Thicket of Sayings*, 3). However, on the model I am proposing here, because the state-sponsored goal of Qin *boshi* projects was primarily pansectarian and curatorial, and not intended to nurture the growth of sectarian schools, it is unlikely that the *Lunyu* itself would have been an official Qin product. Moreover, judging from the highly organized editorial structure of the *Lüshi chungiu*, the disordered editorial form of the *Lunyu* does not resemble the type of text that the Qin court would have authorized.

⁶² There is actually no reason to mechanically separate the components of the *Lüshi chungiu* into pre-imperial and imperial eras. The process whereby a *yueling*-based proto-text, complete by 239 BCE, grew into the enormous received compendium could have been ongoing over a thirty-year period. There is no report that Lü Buwei’s stable of scholar-retainers left Qin after Lü’s disgrace and his death in 236 BCE, and it is possible that the Qin state continued to support them and may even have appointed some of these or other masters as *boshi* prior to the establishment of the imperial dynasty. Royal patronage of scholarly masters was a strategy of state legitimation from the time of Wei Wenhou 魏文侯 in the mid-fifth century BCE, and was a major reason the Qi kings sustained the academy at Jixia 稷下. The Qin imperial patronage of *boshi* described here was very likely an extension of Qin state practices during the prior era of conquest.

The Ru Underground of the Early Han and the Canonization of Confucius's Wisdom

While the Qin appears to have been a period when major Ru masters received state patronage and participated in state-sponsored bibliographic and editorial work, with the end of the Qin, the *boshi* corps lost its standing and, with it, their sanctioned possession of texts. While the book ban of 213 BCE remained in place after the dynasty's dissolution in 208 BCE, and it was not abrogated until 191 BCE, four years after the end of Liu Bang's 劉邦 reign as the founding ruler of the Han Dynasty. Apart from those items the former *boshi* retained, under ban and in hiding, the literary remains of the past were largely extinguished, not because of the Qin prohibition, but likely because of a bibliocaust that resulted from Xiang Yu's 項羽 invasion of the Wei River Valley in 208 BCE, when his troops burned to the ground the Qin palace compounds, where the dynasty's archive of banned texts would have been located.⁶³ Until the end of the Qin, the leading Ru and their followers would not have experienced a sharp separation from the writings of the past, but the context of the early Han would be well suited to the fourth stage of the *Lunyu*'s accretion process, involving heightened reverence by Ru for surviving Confucian texts, and a growing propensity to treat them as canonical.

The early Han proscription of unapproved texts would have had a particular impact on Confucianism because of Liu Bang's recorded distaste for Ru. Liu Bang's earliest Ru follower, the eccentric Li Yiji 酈食其, was, according to the *Shiji*, warned about this by being told that Liu Bang's habit when confronted with Ru scholars was to grab their hats and urinate into them.⁶⁴ The earliest Ru known to have worked his way into Liu Bang's graces after the conquest, the former Qin *boshi* Shusun Tong 叔孫通, carefully discarded his distinctive Ru apparel in favor of a Chu 楚-style work uniform when appearing at court.⁶⁵ Liu Bang's attitude towards Ru may have been a response to the conduct of Ru during the Qin-Han interregnum, when Confucians flocked to banners other than his. At the time of Chen She's 陳涉 initial rebellion against the Qin, the scion of Confucius's own clan, Kong Jia 孔甲, led Ru from the state of Lu down to Chu to throw in their lot with the rebels.⁶⁶ After the Xiang clan had taken control of

⁶³ *Shiji* 7.315.

⁶⁴ *Shiji* 97.2692.

⁶⁵ *Shiji* 99.2721. A second Ru, Lu Jia 陸賈, was admitted to Liu Bang's good graces as a consequence of diplomatic services rendered at the Han's southern borders; his *Shiji* biography describes Liu Bang's distaste for Ru and the classical canon (97.2699).

⁶⁶ The *Shiji* tells us he became a *boshi* for Chen She (which suggests Chen's own imperial ambitions); *Shiji* 121.3116. The affinity of Ru for Chu was natural: their home region, Lu,

the rebellion, Xiang Yu arranged for the puppet king of Chu to appoint him as the Duke of Lu. Ultimately, the Ru clustered there, joining the forces of Lu as the last holdouts against the conquering armies of Liu Bang.⁶⁷

This background helps account for the hostility of the early Han court towards the Ru, but its implication for the history of Confucian texts—particularly in relation to the process of canonization—is probably best conveyed by the experience of the Qin *boshi* Fu Sheng, from whom the received *Shangshu* text is derived. Fu had preserved his copy of the *Shangshu* by hiding it in a wall; he recovered it only after so many years had passed that the greater part of the text had been destroyed. He taught the chapters that remained privately to Ru in the Shandong region for years, until word of his knowledge reached the Han court in the time of Wendi 文帝, when the Emperor was taking early steps to loosen the dynasty's exclusion of Ru.⁶⁸

As a *boshi* Fu Sheng would not have needed to hide his *Shangshu* text during the Qin period: he was exempt from the book ban. However, for seventeen years after the fall of the Qin, his private possession of the text would have been a legal violation, which would account for the extended period in which he kept it hidden. And although Liu Bang's son lifted the ban in 191 BCE, after his death three years later, with power consolidated in the hands of Empress Lü 呂太后 until 180 BCE, Confucians would likely have remained a suspect group, still distrusted for their resistance to the Han founding, and standing in stark opposition to the dominant ideologies of the state, Legalism and Huang-Lao 黃老. It is under these conditions that some Confucian texts retained by former Qin *boshi* like Fu Sheng and the students of the following generation who received them in inheritance would have come to be treated as sacred remnants of an authoritative past, to be edited only under conservative of principles of interpolation and appendage, rather than by reediting and rationalizing the whole as components were added.

Two features of this historical model of the fourth stage of the *Lunyu* accretion process make it attractive. First, while it is not hard to find within the Qin-Han era a period of Ru retrenchment that involved a sense of disjuncture from the past and a magnified valuation of surviving texts, under the common

had been under Chu control for several decades prior to the Qin conquest, and Chu patronage of Ru was reflected in its elevation of the last great pre-Qin Ru, Xunzi 荀子, to official position (Eno 1990: 134).

⁶⁷ *Shiji* 7.337-338. Shusun Tong, the former Qin *boshi* who ultimately defected to Liu Bang, was distinguished from fellow Ru only by the timing of his jump from the sinking Xiang family ship: after his flight from Qin he first served Xiang Liang 項梁 and Xiang Yu before concluding that it would be more prudent to discard his Confucian insignia and serve the Han house on the eve of its victory.

⁶⁸ *Shiji* 121.3124-3125.

assumption that with the rise of the Qin Confucianism was suppressed and its texts destroyed it is more difficult to identify a period when collection of disparate texts, a necessary stage of the *Lunyu* accretion process, would have occurred. Second, the model explains the late emergence of any reference to the title “*Lunyu*,” as the text assembled during the Qin-Han period, regardless of the dates of its component sources, would have been a new construct.

However, a case can also be made for an earlier collection process, as might be required if the date of the “Fang ji”, with its reference to the *Lunyu*, were found to predate the Qin. For example, although the masters assembled at Jixia 稷下 in Qi during the late fourth and third centuries BCE are said not to have had official duties, most scholars agree that a group of them was responsible for the generation or collection of texts that grew into the *Guanzi* 管子 compendium.⁶⁹ Ru such as Xunzi 荀子 were masters at Jixia, and if text collocation was part of the Jixia tradition he or other Ru masters could have been part of that effort.⁷⁰ Moreover, according to the *Shiji*, the office of *boshi* was first instituted in the state of Lu, perhaps during the time of Duke Mu (r. 415-383 BCE), when Confucian masters such as Zisi and Zengzi’s son Zeng Shen 曾申 were receiving some form of court patronage.⁷¹ Those who consider it likely that the collocation of *Lunyu* source texts began early may take the account of this first formalization of scholarly bureaucracy as an anchor point. It is also valid to note that if the “Tianxia 天下” chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, which claims that the scholar Hui Shi 惠施 possessed five cartloads of texts, was plausible to early readers, it signifies the possibility of private text collection on a scale that might lead to redacted compilations like the *Lunyu*.⁷² While I regard these earlier periods as less likely for the major curatorial work that produced the *Lunyu*, I do think it reasonable to see the largest of the *Lunyu* source texts, the *Shanglun* Core Source, as edited significantly earlier than the Qin, perhaps at Jixia or at the courts of the great third-century BCE warlords famous for patronizing vast scholar entourages prior to Lü Buwei. We can, at least, say that it is unlikely to have been a post-Qin compendium, since its topical reorganization of the materials of which it is comprised suggests that the

⁶⁹ See Rickett 1985: 15-19, and the nuanced analysis in Kanaya 1987: 320-324.

⁷⁰ The *Xunzi* includes chapters that bear resemblance to the *Lunyu*, for example, “Faxing” 法行 and portions of “Zidao” 子道; scholars generally view these as late chapters, but they could be based on school materials assembled by Xunzi’s Jixia circle.

⁷¹ *Shiji*, 119.3101; see Qian 1956 (158) for the ascription to Duke Mu’s reign. The *Shiji* account is vague and linked to anecdotal material in a way that may suggest less historical reliability than Qian Mu attributed to it. The *Hanshu* also speaks of *boshi* established in the state of Wei 魏 (51.2327).

⁷² However, five cartloads of bamboo texts might amount to no more than a single bookcase of modern books. State-sponsored archives may have been a necessity for broad text collection.

Shanglun Core Source's own sources were not yet regarded as canonical inheritances from a bygone world.

Closing the Canon

As for the final stage of *Lunyu* redaction, the reported multiplicity of *Lunyu* editions during the Han that so fascinated Takeuchi Yoshio indicates that certain aspects of the text continued to be contested for some time. However, apart from Wang Chong's account of texts with widely disparate numbers of *juan* 卷, which Takeuchi took to be source texts that continued to be circulated independently, accounts seem to suggest that there were basically three Han variants (the Lu, Qi, and Gu editions), which differed in only minor respects. The partial *Lunyu* manuscript recovered from a grave in Dingzhou 定州, Hebei, sealed in 55 BCE, is not far removed from the received text, with sections of all twenty books among the recovered strips. Although the total number of strips accounts for only about 45 percent of the present text, and the original order of passages in the bamboo manuscript cannot be determined, it suggests that the received text was essentially determined by the mid-first century BCE.⁷³

Half a century earlier, some circulating versions may not yet have incorporated all twenty current books. The *Shiji* cites over 120 passages found in the *Lunyu*, most virtually verbatim, but no passages are cited from books 8, 16, or 20. This may be because the text Sima Qian relied on did not include them—books 16 and 20 are often regarded as among the latest to be added to the *Lunyu*, for reasons of form and content.⁷⁴ However, it may also simply be a matter of chance. The *Shiji* most frequently cites passages that characterize Confucius or the disciples or that record conversations between them, and the three books include only a small handful of such passages.

Conclusion

When addressing issues of interpretation and dating for the *Lunyu*, whether of the entire text or component elements of it, an accretion approach is neces-

⁷³ Hebei sheng wenwu yanjiusuo 1997, preface.

⁷⁴ Book 8 features a string of sayings by the disciple Zeng Shen, and it may be that components of the *Lunyu* celebrating Zeng Shen were absent from Sima Qian's copy of the text. Despite his apparent influence among prominent Ru groups, Zeng Shen is almost completely ignored by the *Shiji*, and his words are nowhere quoted. (These points were suggested to me by Michael Hunter.)

sary to accommodate the overriding problem of editorial disorder. If issues of “authenticity” are set aside and questions of the text’s connection to the historical Confucius are acknowledged to be insoluble on present evidence, an accretion approach can accommodate ranges of dating solutions that fit available evidence while addressing the critical issue of textual disorder in the *Lunyu*.

I have tried here to clarify the nature of textual accretion, illustrate varieties of accretion theories of the *Lunyu*, and demonstrate the flexibility of the accretion approach by providing alternative historical applications of a five-stage template that I believe is necessary for any successful model of the *Lunyu*’s development. I hope that my proposal of how the Qin-Han transition was critical to the *Lunyu*’s development will be persuasive and fit future new evidence. But if it does not prevail in its particulars, an analytic structure involving multiple stages of redaction accompanied by a growing attitude of textual canonicity will still be needed to account for the *Lunyu*’s mix of order and disorder.

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