THE LANGUAGE IN A LATE HAN TEXT:

班昭女誡

Ban Zhao, *Nǚ jìe* 'Warnings to Women'

With a comparison to W. A. C. H. Dobson, *Late Han Chinese*,
University of Toronto Press 1964

BY

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The analysis on which this article is based was originally inspired by a statement made by Professor W. A. C. H. Dobson about the text he has used for the *Late Han Chinese* (p. xvii): "The extent to which it is typical of other Late Han authors is yet to be determined, but most of its innovations are common to such Late Han writers as Jenq Shyuan (鄭玄), Wei Jau (韋昭), Gaw Yeow (高誘) and Wang Yih (王逸) when writing in similar vein."

The present article is not a review in the ordinary sense, and it offers no critique of Professor Dobson's work. In the Summary and Conclusion, however, comparison is made between the results achieved from the analysis and the conclusions presented by Professor Dobson in *Late Han Chinese*.

On the procedure:

Texts used: For the present analysis of the language in Ban Zhao's *Nǚ jìe* three different editions of the text have been compared, i.e. the version found in 陶宗儀: 說郛 *Táo Zongyí: Shuo fú*, and the versions found in Ban Zhao's biography under the heading 曹世叔妻 *Cáo Shì-shu qī* 'the wife of *Cáo Shì-shu*' in the 後漢書 *Hòu Hàn Shu* in the 縮印百衲本二十四史.

Sou-yìn bǎi-nà běn èr-shí-sì shǐ and in the Hòu Hàn Shu published by 應文嬋 Yīng Wén-chán.

The two texts presented in the two editions of the Hòu Hàn Shu are identical, while there are some slight variations in the Shuo fú. The commentary to the Hòu Hàn Shu version was written by 唐章懷太子 Táng Chang-huái tài-zǐ, who was the appointed heir of 高宗 Gāo Zōng but never became emperor. The Shuo fú version has no commentary.

Previous translations: Dr. Nancy Lee Swann has translated the Nǚ jiè in her excellent work *Pan Chao: Foremost Woman Scholar of China*.¹ Also Dr. Robert van Gulik has translated the treatise in his *Sexual Life in Ancient China*.² Dr. van Gulik, however, leaves out the preface, and his translation is on the whole inferior to Dr. Swann's. From the linguist's point of view neither one of these translations is totally satisfactory; therefore I have retranslated it in its entirety.

The present translation: The translation starts off from the graphic unit, i.e. the character. Each occurrence of each character was recorded on cards. Then every occurrence of each character was compared to every other occurrence of that same character. Then, and only then, a grouping according to meaning and function was attempted, whereupon a tentative translation was made.

This procedure is founded on the conviction that in a treatise such as the one under consideration cohesive significance is the ultimate criterion of correct interpretation.

The contents of the Nǚ jiè are very far removed from that of the most ancient texts, of which Arthur Waley writes in *The Way and its Power*³ (p. 101): "The earliest use of connected writing (as opposed to isolated magic pictures, developing into magic patterns) was an aid to memory. That is to say, its purpose was to help people not to forget what they knew already, whereas in more

¹ Swann, Nancy Lee, *Pan Chao: Foremost Woman Scholar of China*, New York 1932.

² Gulik, Robert van, *Sexual Life in Ancient China*, Leiden 1961.

³ Waley, Arthur, *The Way and its Power*, London 1965.

advanced communities the chief use of writing is to tell people things they have not heard before."

Ban Zhao states explicitly in the preface that she deals with something entirely new, namely formal and deliberate education of young girls. The preface to the treatise has the form of a personal letter to the daughters of the Cáo family, in which she wants them to copy the treatise in order to have it at hand in their future married lives.

We must take it for granted that a work of this kind has been written in order to convey a very definite meaning.

Lexical work: As a consequence of the importance attached to meaning, much attention has been paid to the "full words". This has involved a considerable amount of dictionary work. As this has been far too extensive to be accounted for in detail, only the guiding principles shall be given below.

In the lexical work only translations culled from texts older or contemporary with the Nŭ jĭe have been taken into account. The final interpretation, however, has been given only after comparison with all other occurrences (if any) of the same character in the text, and then always in context. Thus a translation suggested by the text itself has been preferred to any other.

Only when there seemed to be no other way out of the difficulties have corrupt text or wrong characters been considered. So for instance 詬 gòu 'disgrace' has once been substituted for 垢 gòu 'filth'. The characters are very similar in form and the *Grammata Serica Recensa*⁴ gives the same pronunciation for both of them, as well for the archaic as for the ancient period. It therefore seems to be justified to regard 詬 gòu as the best reading, as it gives a meaning which is much more consistent with the context.

Compounds: The question of the word is as perplexing in this text as it is in any other classical text. Wherever there is nothing to prevent it I have translated all combinations of, for example, near synonyms, with one word, but I can by no means prove that

⁴ Karlgren, B., *Grammata Serica Recensa*, BMFEA No. 29, 1957.

the combinations should be considered compound words rather than juxtaposed ones. The real problem is of course that the obvious examples of the kind George A. Kennedy deals with in "The Butterfly Case"⁵ are extremely rare.

In actual fact, the case seldom occurs that a character always appears in fixed combination with only one other character. The usual case is that the character can either be used alone or enter into combinations with several other characters. As will be shown, however, there is a tendency in the text to use single "full" characters only under certain conditions, and for this reason I have made it a rule of thumb to translate all combinations as units.

The translation has not been prepared to sound like good English. Instead it is intended to be as close an approximation to the original construction as can be made understandable through the medium of English.

Grammatical work: There are but two periods in the development of the Chinese language of which we are fairly well informed, namely the latter part of the pre-Qín era and modern times. A considerable amount of work is at present being done on the millenia in between, but in many cases we do not even know whether expression variants occur for grammatical or stylistic reasons.

For many of the ancient literary works, especially those belonging to the Confucian dogma, there is a traditional punctuation that is of great help to the linguist. In such cases, George A. Kennedy's method in his "Word-classes in Classical Chinese",⁶ making use of this fact, is indeed the easiest and probably the best way to approach the work.

For the Nǚ jī, however, there is no such tradition to rely on, and the commentary in the Hòu Hàn Shu is of very little help. The text as presented in the Shuo fú, which is the one I have used for my work, is a continuous flow of characters. Somehow the text had to be broken up into manageable pieces.

Only the first breaks are clearly marked through the chapter headings. Then, although many of the so-called "final particles"

⁵ Kennedy, George A., *Selected Works of . . .*, Yale Univ. Press 1964.

⁶ Op. cit.

found in pre-Qin texts also occur in the Nŭ jĭe, it could not be taken for granted that they mark ends of utterances, as this would be to state something definite about them before the examination had even been started.

Instead fragments of utterances were sought. I would like to term those fragments "predicates" in the sense: "here something is stated about something". Then with the aid of questions such as "Stated about what?" and "How much belongs to this statement?" characters were strung together. Wherever the strings met without overlapping and without any characters left over a punctuation mark was inserted.

No sinologist will be astonished to hear that the strings very often met over a "final particle".

This method of punctuation presupposes some fair knowledge of the language. It does in fact also involve a certain understanding of the functions of the particles. Knowledge of written Chinese of both earlier and later periods makes it possible for the sinologist to read texts of this kind with a reasonable degree of accuracy. To read a text in this manner means to interpret it through other media, not through totally unrelated languages but through other forms of Chinese.

If "Some Reflexions on the Difficulty of Translation" by Achilles Fang⁷ are to be taken seriously, this is the only correct way of reading classical Chinese. Such a first reading, however, leaves an impression of inexactitude and vagueness in the reader's mind. Therefore I hoped that it would be possible for me to make these vague impressions at least somewhat more concrete.

In order to achieve this end, all phrases that contain a character that in at least one of its occurrences seems to have particle function, have been compared.

While the functions became clearer, adjustments in the translation had to be made; thus form has influenced meaning just as meaning has influenced form.

The text.

Scope: The text as presented in the Shuo fú consists of 1683 characters. Some parts of the text, such as the main headline

⁷ In: Wright, Arthur F., *Studies in Chinese Thought*, Chicago 1953.

(a later addition) and several quotations, were excluded from the analysis. The chapter headings on the other hand are probably original. Chapter headings are known from texts older than the *Nǚ jìe* and in the Preface Ban Zhao states explicitly that she is going to write a treatise in seven chapters.

The text thus under consideration consists of 1584 characters and is composed of 493 different characters. As a comparison it may be mentioned that Isabella Y. Yen works with 336 different characters in *A Grammatical Analysis of Syau Jing*.⁸

Style of the treatise: Not only the contents but also the style of the treatise differs widely from that of for example the 書經 *Shu jing* of which Burton Watson says in *Early Chinese Literature*⁹ (p. 22f.): "... with one exception, all the documents contain large portions of direct speech, and many of them consist almost entirely of the texts of pronouncements and of declarations made by earlier rulers or their ministers. What little narrative there is serves in most cases simply to identify, in briefest terms, the speaker and the occasion for the speech." In the *Nǚ jìe* there are no such monologues, and, what is even more remarkable, quotations are rather few.

The preface: The style of the preface differs slightly from that of the main body of the work; therefore several of the characters that occur in the preface are not found in the rest of the text. As has already been mentioned the preface takes the form of a letter to the daughters of the Cáo family. It consists of a rudimentary autobiography and a confession of worry about the ignorant state of the young girls. That they cannot have been totally uneducated is obvious, however, for otherwise Ban Zhao would hardly have advised them to copy the treatise.

The treatise proper: In the main body of the text Ban Zhao discourses on the subject of women's education. She cautions the young girls against all the mistakes they might make in married life and gives them good advice on how to conduct themselves,

⁸ International Journal of American Linguistics, Vol. 26, No. 4, 1960.

⁹ Watson, Burton, *Early Chinese Literature*, Columbia Univ. Press, 1962.

the goal being to win the regard and affection of the husband's family, and thereby the love of the husband.

The composition is very strict, especially at the beginning of the treatise. A plan over the first chapter will reveal the tightly knit structure of the disposition.

Characters No.

- 1- 18 Here the historical background, which seems almost indispensable as a pretext for holding an opinion in ancient China, is introduced.
- 19- 53 In a sequence in the form of 11 characters + 也, 11 characters + 也, and 10 characters + 也, this background is enlarged upon.
- 54- 68 A 三者 ... 矣 sentence summarizes this sequence and reveals its significance.
- 69-158 In a sequence of three times 24 characters, each group followed by a 是謂 ... 也 clause, it is told how a woman should behave in order to live up to the ancient ideal.
- 159-195 The conclusion is contained in two antithetical passages beginning with 三者.

However, the strictness of the composition is slackened from chapter to chapter, and at the very end it is difficult to find any formal structure at all. Even in details the form loses its rigour, so for instance the building up of the periods becomes less strict: here an expected explanation is not found, there a parallel is not very well worked out.

Why this is so, we will never know. In the preface Ban Zhao speaks of illness that is getting worse, and perhaps a feeling of haste has urged her on. On the other hand she also says that she has been working on her Warnings every now and then, wherefore this variation may simply be a matter of different moods.

Monosyllables and compounds.

The question whether Chinese is or has ever been a monosyllabic language has often been discussed. Here I will only

briefly refer to such often quoted works as Professor Bernhard Karlgren's *Sound and Symbol in Chinese*,¹⁰ where he—although with much qualification—advocates the viewpoint that Chinese is basically monosyllabic, and George A. Kennedy's "The Monosyllabic Myth" and "The Butterfly Case",¹¹ where he tries to show that Chinese is called monosyllabic mainly because of the particular writing system it employs.

In actual fact it is very difficult to find any "full" characters that are never used in isolation, for the Chinese are, no doubt, in the habit of splitting their two-syllable units. This is perhaps particularly true of older stages of development, but that it happens even in modern spoken Chinese is amply shown by Professor Y. R. Chao in his article "Formal and Semantic Discrepancies between Different Levels of Chinese Structure".¹² So for example: "So, similarly, one says frequently *tiawle i-woanshang de wuu* 跳了一晚上的舞 'danced an evening of dancing', where *tiawwu* was not really verb and cognate object, as in English 'danced a dance' but merely a compound of two synonymous verbs *tiaw* 'skip' and *wuu* 'dance'."

On the other hand, that a unit can be split does not necessarily mean that it is not a word. German *anschen* is usually considered a word, although in some forms and under certain conditions it is split, as in: "Wir sahen ihn an."

Although much valuable work has been done on the question of the compound units, the problem has not yet been solved. There is much to support the opinions of the two schools, for which Professor Karlgren and George A. Kennedy have here been chosen as representatives.

It is not my intention to attempt a solution here, not to take sides with either school, only to show that in the *Nǚ jiè* there is a tendency to use full characters in a special way, in that monosyllables are used only under certain conditions.

Only one pair of characters has been chosen to prove this point, namely 夫 婦 *fu fù*, which is very frequent in the text. In the translation it has been given as 'husband and wife', but

¹⁰ Karlgren, B., *Sound and Symbol in Chinese*, Hong Kong, 1962.

¹¹ Kennedy, George A., *op. cit.*

¹² BIHP No. 28, Part 1., 1956.

could just as well, perhaps even better, have been rendered as 'married couple'. These characters are found six times in combination.

When in parallels and contrasted to each other both characters may appear alone: 夫不御婦... 婦不事夫 *fu bú yù fù ... fù bú shì fu ...* '(if) the husband not directs the wife, ... (and if) the wife not serves the husband' /Ch 2/.

Also in contrast with other family relationship terms 夫 *fu* is used alone, while 婦 *fù* is never found in such contrast: 姑忿而夫愠 *gu fèn ér fu yùn* 'the mother-in-law (will be) angry and the husband grieved' /Ch 7/.

夫 *fu* also enters another type of combination: 則侮夫之心生矣 *zé wǔ fu zhī xīn shēng yǐ* 'then a mind despising of the husband develops' /Ch 3/. 侮夫 *wǔ fu* has a VO-binding, but the combination acts as a unit, as will be seen, when the different parts of the following example are compared: 侮夫不節謹呵從之忿怒不止楚撻從之 *wǔ fu bù jié qīn he cóng zhī, fèn nù bù zhǐ chǔ tà cóng zhī* '(if) despising the husband (is) not checked, reprimands follow it, (and if) anger not (is) stopped, flogging follows it' /Ch 3/.

Otherwise 'the husband' is referred to as 夫主 *fu zhǔ*, and in one instance as 君子 *jūn zǐ*. 'The wife' on the other hand is expressed as either 婦人 *fù rén* or in one instance 妻婦 *qī fù*.

Both 夫 *fu* and 婦 *fù* do, indeed, appear alone also outside parallels and without being contrasted to each other or other family relationship terms. However, all those passages can—with one exception—be traced back to texts older than the one under consideration.

The same tendency is present in the use of other family relationship terms, which, because of the subject matter of the treatise, are of fairly high frequency. Thus 'the younger sisters-in-law' are referred to as 叔妹 *shú mèi* and 'the older and younger sisters-in-law' as 嫂妹 *sǎo mèi*, but in one parallel we find both 嫂 *sǎo* and 妹 *mèi* used alone: 於嫂則託名... 於妹則因寵 *yú sǎo zé tuō míng ... yú mèi zé yīn chǒng*

'with (respect to) the elder sisters-in-law (she) is attendant . . . with (respect to) the younger sisters-in-law then (she) relies on affection' /Ch 7/.

Whether the same is true of other characters than the family relationship terms is difficult to say. The text is too short, and only very few other characters appear both as monosyllables and in combination with other characters.

The negatives.

There is only a single occurrence of 未 wèi in the text: 而患名稱之不聞黜辱之在身未之見也 *ér huàn míng cheng zhi bù wén chu rǔ zhi zài shen wèi zhi jīan yě* '(that one) calls her dreadful names is not heard of, (and that one) disgraces her in person never has that been seen' /Ch 1/.

The two phrases are semiparallel, yet 不 bù is used in the first and 未 wèi in the second.

Phrases of the kind 未之聞也 wèi zhi wén yě are very common in earlier texts. Resumptive 之 zhi is almost always present where 未 wèi is used. It may very well be that such phrases were regarded as idioms in Late Han times, and that the authoress has chosen 不聞 bù wén instead in order to avoid cumbersome repetition of 之 zhi.¹³

There may be some difference in meaning between the two constructions, as indicated in the translation, but the variation may just as well only be a matter of style.

The negative 勿 wù also occurs very sparingly in the text, that is only twice.

In two parallel phrases 勿 wù is used in the first and 不 bù in the second: 勿憚風夜 . . . 不辭劇易 *wù dàn fēng yè . . . bù cí jù yì* 'not fear dawn (or) dusk . . . , (and) not refuse (what is) troublesome (or) easy' /Ch 1/. If 勿 wù should be considered prohibitive, the same would hold good for 不 bù.

That the variation is to be considered a matter of style is confirmed by the second example: 勿得違戾是非 *wù děi wéi lì*

¹³ Cf. Mullie, Jos., "Le mot-particule 之 tche", *T'oung Pao*, Vol. 36, 1940.

shì fei '(the wife) should not oppose (neither) right (nor) wrong' /Ch 6/. Here 勿 wù negates a modal auxiliary verb. There is no other instance of 得 dèi in the text, but other auxiliary verbs are negated with 不 bù, as will be shown below.

In no less than 21 instances out of 56 不 bù is used to negate a modal auxiliary verb, as for instance in: 天固不可逃夫固不可離也 *tiān gù bù kě táo fu gù bù kě lí yě* 'heaven certainly may not (be) absconded, (and) the husband certainly may not be left' /Ch 5/; 此謂不能專心正色矣 *cǐ wèi bù néng zhuan xīn zhèng sè yǐ* 'this is called not to be able to (be) wholehearted (and) correct (in) appearance' /Ch 5/; 說所不當道觀所不當視 *shuō suǒ bù dāng dào guān suǒ bù dāng shì* '(if she) says that, what ought not to be uttered, (and) regards that, what ought not to be seen' /Ch 5/.

In five instances 'must necessarily' is expressed by a double negative, 不可 bù kě or 不能 bù néng: 由斯言之不可不重也 *yóu sī yán zhī bù kě bù zhòng yě* 'hence (one) says it (that it) must be honoured' /Ch 2/; 直者不能不爭曲者不能不訟 *zhí zhě bù néng bù zhēng qū zhě bù néng bù sòng* 'this just has to be remonstrated (with, and) this unjust has to be reprimanded' /Ch 3/.

Otherwise 不 bù is used to negate adjectives that are used predicatively: 鄙人愚暗受性不敏 *bǐ rén yú àn shòu xìng bù mǐn* '(this) unworthy person (is) unenlightened (and her) temperament (is) inactive' /Preface/.

Where it negates a verb, and another adverb precedes the verb, 不 bù is placed in front of the adverb, as is seen in the first part of following example: 而不漸訓誨不聞婦禮 *ér bú jiàn xùn huì bù wén fù lǐ* 'and (are) not gradually educated (and do) not hear (about) wifely propriety' /Preface/.

In most of its occurrences 莫 mò is used as a negative pronoun, in several instances combined with 若 ruò: 然則修身莫若敬避彊莫若順 *rán zé xiū shēn mò ruò jìng bì qiáng mò ruò shùn* 'accordingly, (in) cultivating oneself nothing is like reverence, (in) avoiding strength nothing is like obedience' /Ch 3/.

莫 mò can also be prohibitive:¹⁴ 有善莫名有惡莫辭
yǒu shàn mò míng yǒu è mò cí '(should she) have deserts (they)
shall not be named, (should she) have faults (they) shall not be
excused' /Ch 1/.

In one instance 莫 mò negates a verb: 皆莫知叔妹之
不可失而能和之以求親其蔽也哉 jie mò zhi
shù mèi zhi bù kě shì ér bù néng hé zhi yǐ qiú qīn qí bì yě zai
'both not understand that the younger sisters-in-law not may be
lost and not be able to accord with them thereby to obtain in-
timacy, (this is) stupidity, is it not?' /Ch 7/.

有 yǒu is never preceded by a negation in the text.¹⁵ The
negative form of 有 yǒu is 無 wú. There is, however, only one
passage in the text, where they occur in contrast: 禮夫有再
娶之義婦無二適之文 lǐ fū yǒu zài qǔ zhī yì fù wú èr
shì zhī wén 'in the Lǐ Jì, regarding the husband there is the
concept of again taking a wife, (but) regarding the wife there is
no expression of twice marrying' /Ch 5/.

¹⁴ Cf. 王力: 古代漢語 (p. 247), Peking 1962-64.

¹⁵ Thus the intriguing 不有 bù yǒu does not occur. This combination,
however, is not unknown in Late Han texts, there are no less than eight occurrences
in 王充: 論衡集解, Taipei 1958. To the best of my know-
ledge they have not been listed anywhere else, wherefore I quote them all here:

p. 11 line 2: 莫不有命

p. 248 line 8: 志不有為

p. 270 line 9: 人生莫不有力

p. 290 line 12: 非不有光營也

p. 410 line 6: 豈不有以哉

p. 411 line 11: 安得不有好文之聲

p. 412 line 8: 不有殊卓之聲

p. 487 line 3, 4: 不能不有吉凶

These phrases do not seem to be culled from earlier works. As will be noticed
only half of them contain more than one negative. Cf. also Serruys, Paul L.-M.,
A Grammatical Note on the use of Pu-yu 不有 in Literary Chinese, Phil Theta
Annual, Vol. 4, 1953 and Ratchnevsky, Paul, "Zur Frage der Fusion im archaischen
Chinesischen" in *Beiträge zum Problem des Wortes im Chinesischen II*, Berlin 1964.

In the text there is one instance, where it can be said with absolute certainty that 無 wú is used to negate a transitive verb: 無好戲笑 wú hào xì xiao 'not be fond of jocularities' /Ch 1/. The same phrase reoccurs later in the text, but then it is negated with 不 bù: 不好戲笑 bú hào xì xiao /Ch 4/.

Following this indication I translate 無 wú as simple 'not' even in a long sequence of parallels: 耳無塗聽目無邪視 出無冶容入無廢飾 ěr wú tú tīng mù wú xié shì chū wú yě róng rù wú fèi shì . . . '(if her) ears do not hear anything bad, (and her) eyes do not ogle, (if) when going out (she) does not better (her) appearance, when going in (she) does not neglect (her) clothing . . . /Ch 5/.

Chains of parallels are often tricky, because they seem to allow the author a certain "poetic license". Here the chain, as often happens, starts off with a pair of phrases that have a proverbial ring. I cannot find this in earlier works, but feel strongly inclined to finish it off by adding 口無道惡語 kǒu wú dào è yǔ, where 道惡語 dào è yǔ is culled from the text itself. That the phrases are such stuff as proverbs are made on is also shown by the fact that one half is still used as an idiom in the form: 目不邪視 mù bù xié shì. Both Chiang Ker Chiu, *Chinese Idioms*¹⁶ and Huang Yen-kai, *A Dictionary of Chinese Idiomatic Phrases*¹⁷ have 不 bù, where the text has 無 wú. No source is given in either dictionary.

If each phrase were found in isolation the most natural translation would be the imperative 'don't', but the chain is part of a longer descriptive passage. The whole passage is by means of 若夫 rùo fū 'if on the other hand' contrasted to: 若夫動靜輕脫視聽狹輸入則亂髮壞形出則窈窕作態說所不當道觀所不當視此謂不能專心正色矣 rùo fū dòng jìng qīng tuō shì tīng xiá shū rù zé luàn fǎ huài xíng chū zé yǎo tiào zuò tài shuō suǒ bù dāng dào guān shì cǐ wèi bù néng zhuān xīn zhèng sè yǐ

¹⁶ Chiang Ker Chiu, *Chinese Idioms*, Singapore.

¹⁷ Huang Yen-kai, *A Dictionary of Chinese Idiomatic Phrases*, Hong Kong 1964.

bù dang shì cǐ wèi bù néng zhuan xīn zhèng sè yǐ 'if on the other hand (her) conduct (is) careless, (and her) perceptions narrow-minded, (if) in going in, then unkempt (and) disheveled, in going out, then alluring (and) affected (and if she) says that, what ought not to be uttered, (and) regards that, what ought not to be seen, this is called not to be able to be wholehearted (and) correct (in) appearance'.

This latter passage can under no circumstances be regarded as imperative. I therefore take it to be: If she does not do such and such a thing, then . . . , and: If she does such and such a thing, then . . .

As is shown below, also 非 *fei* negates verbs in some instances. Thus all the negatives in the text are found where in older texts 不 *bù* would be expected.

One must always take into account the untidiness of language when attempting a grammatical analysis, but the text under consideration seems to be composed mainly of exceptions to grammatical rules.

This is more easily demonstrated in connection with the negatives, but in fact the same impreciseness is found in most other constructions. Thus the translator often feels that the text is like a system of n equations in $n + 1$ unknowns.

*The functions of 也 *yě* and 矣 *yǐ*.*

There is no other grammatical feature in which the present text so decidedly differs from every text of the archaic period as it does with regard to the A B *yě* construction.

In the pre-Qín texts this construction is of high frequency, but it is almost totally absent from the present text, although 也 *yě* is one of the most frequent characters with a total of 41 occurrences.

Some few passages reveal the A B *yě* pattern: 故曰敬順之道婦之大禮也 *gù yue jìng shùn zhī dào fù zhī dà lǐ yě* 'consequently quote: the way of obedience is the wife's great rule of propriety' /Ch 3/. As will be discussed below, however, all passages preceeded by 曰 *yue* except this one can be traced back to older texts, wherefore there is every reason to believe that this phrase also is a quotation or a semiquotation.

A similar pattern is found also in: 斯乃榮辱之本而顯否之基也 *sī nǎi róng rǔ zhī běn ér xiǎn pǐ zhī jī yě* 'this, then, (is) the foundation of glory (or) dishonour (and) the basis of display (or) concealment' /Ch 7/. I interpret this passage as A nǎi B₁ ér B₂ yě.

Perhaps also the latter part of the next example could be interpreted as A B yě: 方斯二者其用一也 *fang sī èr zhě qí yòng yì yě* '(if) these two are compared, their application (is) one' /Ch 2/. I do believe, however, that the numbers should be regarded as adjectives in the text. There are several numbers in the text, but most of them are found either preceeded by 第 *dì* in the chapter headings or followed by 者 *zhě* elsewhere in the text, wherefore very little could be said about them.

In a parallel 也 *yě* is found with 非 *fei*: 夫敬非它持久之謂也 夫順非它寬裕之謂也 *fú jìng fei tuó chí jiǔ zhī wèi yě fú shùn fei tuó kuān yù zhī wèi yě* 'speaking of reverence, (it is) not anything else (but) a designation of endurance, (and) as to obedience (it is) not anything else (but) a designation of magnanimousness' /Ch 3/. The construction is here not a simple negative form of the A B yě as 非 *fei* negates only 它 *tou* and not the whole predicate. The basic meaning of the passages would not be altered if the 非 *fei* 它 *fei tuo* were removed.

非...也 *fei... yě* is also found in: 然所求者亦非謂佞媚苟親也 *rán suǒ qiú zhě yì fei wèi nìng mèi gǒu qīn yě* 'but what is sought is not flattery (and) frivolous intimacy either' /Ch 5/. In this example 非 *fei* negates a verb. 謂 *wèi* is undoubtedly a verb and is probably used for 為 *wéi* 'to be'.

In the preface a more complicated 非...也 *fei... yě* construction is found: 實非鄙人庶幾所望也 *shí fei bǐ rén shù jǐ suǒ wàng yě* 'this (is) not what this unworthy person(s) hopes had considered' /Preface/. 實 *shí* is used only once in the text. Here it is very tempting, indeed, to interpret and transcribe it as if it were 是 *shì* as has been done in the translation. Otherwise 非 *fei* must be regarded as a negative verb, and be trans-

lated as it is in: 自非聖人鮮能無過 *zì fei shèng rén xiǎn néng wú guò* 'oneself not being a sage, few are able not to transgress' /Ch 7/. It should be noted, however, that while 非 *fei* negates the whole of the predicate in the previous example, here it negates only the noun 聖人 *shèng rén*.

The A 者 *zhě* B 也 *yě* construction, where both parts are of nominal character, is also often found in older texts. As is found with 非...也 *fei...yě* above, the outer frame of the formula is present in the text, but the function is different: 持久者知止足也寬裕者尚恭下也 *chí jiǔ zhě zhī zhǐ zú yě kuan yù zhě shàng gōng xià yě* 'this endurance (is) to understand (to be) satisfied, (and) this magnanimousness (is) to value submission' /Ch 3/. 持久 *chí jiǔ* and 寬裕 *kuan yù* are units of nominal value; 知 *zhī* and 尚 *shàng*, on the other hand, cannot be anything but verbs in these passages.

Thus 也 *yě* has lost its very definite grammatical role and is often merely a marker of the end of utterances. It has become a kind of punctuation mark. This use of 也 *yě* is known also from earlier texts, but given the qualifications above this use can be said to be the only one found in the *Nǚ jìe*.

The role of the A B 也 *yě* construction has to some extent been taken over by A 謂 *wèi* B (*yě*), which will be treated below in connection with the characters signalling quotation and reported speech. In this construction 也 *yě* is not obligatory: 是謂婦言 *shì wèi fù yán* 'this is called wifely speech' /Ch 4/.

矣 *yǐ* is also found at the end of similar passages: 此則謂專心正色矣 *cǐ zé wèi zhuan xīn zhèng sè yǐ* 'then this is called wholeheartedness (and) correct appearance' /Ch 5/.

In one instance the phrase following 謂 *wèi* is verbal: 此謂不能專心正色矣 *cǐ wèi bù néng zhuan xīn zhèng sè yǐ* 'this is called not to be able to (be) wholehearted (and) correct (in) appearance' /Ch 5/.

Several of the passages which end with 矣 *yǐ* contain the idea 'condition being fulfilled, then ...' expressed in different ways:

媒黷既生語言過矣 xiè dú jì shēng yǔ yán guò yǐ
 'indignity having developed, the talk transgresses' /Ch 3/; 訟爭
 既施則有忿怒之事矣 sòng zhēng jì shī zé yǒu fèn nù zhī shì
 yǐ 'remonstrations having been exposed, then there will be mat-
 ters of anger' /Ch 3/; 恩義俱廢夫婦離矣 ēn yì jù fèi
 fū fù lǐ yǐ '(if) kindness (and) righteousness both fail, husband
 (and) wife (are) at variance' /Ch 3/. This is probably not mere
 coincidence, as 也 yě is not found in similar contexts.

There is, however, considerable overlapping in the use of 矣 yǐ
 and 也 yě, and it is not easy to say, why 矣 yǐ should have been
 preferred in: 三者蓋女人之常道禮法之典教矣 sān zhě gài
 nǚ rén zhī cháng dào lǐ fǎ zhī diǎn jiào yǐ 'these
 three cover a woman's established propriety-code's dogma'
 /Ch 1/.

The character 之 zhī.

With its total of 79 occurrences 之 zhī is the most frequent of
 all characters in the text.

The most important function of 之 zhī in the text is to form
 units: it serves as a link between words or within phrases. In
 general these units function as nouns within an utterance.

Noun may be linked to noun: 夫婦之道參配陰陽
 fū fù zhī dào cān pèi yīn yáng 'the way of husband and wife is
 integrated in the Yin (and) Yang' /Ch 2/. The created unit is of
 noun character and functions as subject in the clause.

A unit of this kind may be found wherever a noun may be used;
 thus it functions as an object in: 是以禮貴男女之際
 shì yǐ lǐ guì nán nǚ zhī jì 'this with propriety dignifies the sexes'
 connection' /Ch 2/.

The chain held together with 之 zhī may have several links:
 三者蓋女人之常道禮法之典教矣 sān zhě gài nǚ
 rén zhī cháng dào lǐ fǎ zhī diǎn jiào yǐ 'these three cover a wo-
 man's established propriety-code's dogma' /Ch 1/. The long ex-
 pression between 蓋 gài and 矣 yǐ is nominal and is the object
 of 蓋 gài.

A VO-construction may also be part of such constructions: 則侮夫之心生矣 *zé wǔ fu zhī xīn shēng yǐ* 'then a mind despising of the husband develops' /Ch 3/. It is here not a question of "despise the husband's mind" but of a "despise-the-husbandly mind".

In the next passage the 再娶 *zài qǔ* and 二適 *èr shì* are verbs that are linked to nouns in the same manner: 禮夫有再娶之義 婦無二適之文 *lǐ fu yǒu zài qǔ zhī yì fù wú èr shì zhī wén* 'in the Lǐ Jì, regarding the husband there is the concept of again taking a wife, (but) regarding the wife there is no expression of twice marrying' /Ch 5/.

Also elements that would form a clause without the particle may be linked together in the same way: 察今之君子徒知妻婦之不可不御 威儀之不可不整 *chá jīn zhī jūn zǐ tú zhī qī fù zhī bù kě bú yù wēi yí zhī bù kě bù zhěng* 'considering the gentlemen of today, (they) only understand that the wife must be directed (and) that dignity must be in order' /Ch 2/. 知 *zhī* is a transitive verb that has two direct objects 妻婦之不可不御 *qī fù zhī bù kě bú yù* and 威儀之不可不整 *wēi yí zhī bù kě bù zhěng*.

In one passage the units linked by 之 *zhī* enter a construction, which has the outer form of an A B *yě* construction: 婦人之得意於夫舅姑之愛已也 *fù rén zhī dé yì yú fū jiù gū zhī ài jǐ yě* 'that the wife wins the desire of the husband, is (because) the parents-in-law love her' /Ch 7/. I have intercalated "because" in the translation, since the inner relationship between the two parts of the passage differs from the simple equation A = B.

之 *zhī* does also occur after transitive verbs, e.g. in the function where it is usually interpreted as a personal pronoun: 侮夫不節 謹呵從之 忿怒不止 楚撻從之 *wǔ fu bù jié qīn he cóng zhī fèn nù bù zhǐ chǔ tà cóng zhī* '(if) despising the husband not (is) checked, reprimands follow it, (and if) anger (is) not stopped, flogging follows it' /Ch 3/. In one passage it will then have to be understood as an indirect object:

權八歲始教之書 lǐ ba suì shǐ jiào zhī shū 'Li Jì (has it that at) eight years of age (one should) begin to teach them script' /Ch 2/.

之 zhi is also found in several expressions that are common in older texts, as for instance 未之見 wèi zhī jiàn. Those expressions should probably be regarded as idiomatic phrases in this text, wherefore they fall outside the scope of the present analysis.

Quotations and reported speech.

Because of the style of the treatise the characters signalling quotation and reported speech occur but sparingly.

In one instance 云 yún is found in its time-honoured use: 詩云 shī yún 'Shi Jing quote' /Ch 7/.

The use of 云 yún with quotations from the Shi Jing is fairly stable in most older works, but in Mencius we find some instances of 詩曰 shī yue. Preceding quotations from other classical works 曰 yue is used more often than is 云 yún.

In the text 云 yún is once used to signal a quotation from a popular saying: 故鄙諺有云 gù bǐ yàn yǒu yún 'consequently there is a rustic proverb quote' /Ch 3/.

Reported speech is also introduced by 云 yún: 夫雖云愛舅姑云非 fū suī yún ài jǔ gū yún fēi 'though the husband says: "I like it!", (but) the parents-in-law say: "We detest it!"' /Ch 6/. In this rudimentary dialogue—if, indeed, it should be regarded as a dialogue at all—the meaning of 云 yún 'say' is still very close to 'quote' in the other examples.

In one instance it does not seem as if any work or person were quoted: 夫云婦德不必才明絕異也 fū yún fù dé bú bì cái míng jué yì yě 'however, (I) say, wifely character (is) not necessarily (that her) gifts (are) extreme' /Ch 4/. In all probability the authoress here relates her own opinion, and the meaning would be 'I say', 'I tell you' or even 'let it be said'.

曰 yue is used to signal quotations from older texts: 易曰 yì yue 'Yi Jing quote' /Ch 7/. 故女憲曰 gù nǚ xiàn yue 'con-

sequently *Patterns for Women* quote' /Ch 5/. Nǚ xiàn is supposed to be a now lost text.

Also before semiquotations 曰 yue is used: 故曰夫者天也 gù yue fu zhě tiān yě 'consequently quote: the husband is Heaven' /Ch 5/. In the 儀禮 Yí Lǐ we find: 夫者妻之天也 fu zhě qī zhī tiān yě, which would be the phrase Ban Zhao had in mind.

Perhaps also the following passage is based on a quotation, although I have not been able to trace it: 故曰敬順之道婦之大禮也 gù yue jìng shùn zhī dào fù zhī dà lǐ yě 'consequently quote: the way of obedience is the wife's great rule of propriety' /Ch 3/. If this is really a quotation, this would of course explain why 婦 fù is here used alone.

Once 曰 yue is used to mark off the items in an enumeration: 女有四行一曰婦德二曰婦言... nǚ yǒu sì xíng yì yue fù dé èr yue fù yán... 'a woman has four actions, the first quote: wifely character, the second quote: wifely speech...' /Ch 4/. The expressions 婦德 fù dé, 婦言 fù yán etc., are culled from the 禮記 Lǐ Jì.

Thus 曰 yue is never used to signal reported speech but only to mark quotations from older texts.

In one instance 言 yán immediately preceeds a quotation: 故人有言 gù rén yǒu yán 'the ancients had a saying' /Ch 4/. 言 yán can of course be said to signal the following quotation, but I regard it as an object of 有 yǒu rather than a mere mark. One would, in fact, expect a 云 yún or 曰 yue to follow 言 yán.

There are other instances of 言 yán used nominally either alone or in combination with 語 yǔ: 言有是非 yán yǒu shì fēi 'as for speech, there is right (and) wrong' /Ch 3/. 語言既過 yǔ yán jì guò 'the talk having transgressed' /Ch 3/.

On the other hand in one phrase 言 yán must be understood as a verb: 時然後言 shí rán hòu yán '(when) time (is) due then speak' /Ch 4/.

Three times 言 yán occurs in the formulaic phrases: 由斯

言之 yóu sì yán zhī 'hence (one) says it' /Ch 2/, and 由此言之 yóu cǐ yán zhī 'hence (one) says it' /Ch 7/. I regard 言 yán as a verb with 之 zhī as its object and translate accordingly, but probably the phrases ought to be classified as idioms in the text.

道 dào, which was to become the most commonly used marker of reported speech from medieval times down to recent times, is not so used in the text. Twice, however, it is used for 'utter': 擇辭而說不道惡語 zhé cí ér shuō bú dào è yǔ 'choose the words and then speak, not utter wrong words' /Ch 4/, and: 說所不當道 shuō suǒ bù dāng dào '(if she) says that, what ought not to be uttered' /Ch 5/.

Incidentally these two examples also contain the only two instances of 說 shuō in the text. They are both full verbs meaning 'speak', 'say'.

The phrases 此之謂也 cǐ zhī wèi yě 'this (one) calls it' /Ch 4 and 7/ and 其斯之謂也 qí sī zhī wèi yě 'this (one) says about it' /Ch 7/ pose special problems. In earlier texts we often find similar phrases used at the end of quotations, often in combination with an introductory phrase like 詩云 Shī yún or 書曰 Shū yue. Where there is no such introduction, the phrases may still very well mark a reference to older literature.

In Late Han texts phrases of this type are certainly stereotyped and may probably be regarded as markers of the end of a quotation and probably as an archaistic embellishment at that. There are several other quotations in the text, but only those from the Classics are so marked.

謂 wèi 'say', 'tell', 'call' is one of the most interesting characters in the text.

Apart from the archaic phrases mentioned above, the use of 謂 wèi is very consistent, in that there are no less than seven instances of 是謂 shì wèi and one of 此謂 cǐ wèi. In all these examples it is very tempting to regard 謂 wèi simply as a copula: 是謂執勤也 shì wèi zhí qín yě 'this is called zealousness' /Ch 1/, 此謂不能專心正色矣 cǐ wèi bù

néng zhuan xin zhèng sè yǐ 'this is called not to be able to (be) wholehearted (and) correct (in) appearance' /Ch 5/. Still not a single example is really decisive, as there is nothing to prevent one from translating the phrase 'this is called' or 'this may be said to be'.

Incidentally, the commentary in chapter 7 provides an example of different nature: 君子謂夫也 jun zǐ wèi fu yě 'junzǐ is the husband'. 君子 jun zǐ is not called 夫 fu to be sure, wherefore it may safely be said that 謂 wèi in the Táng dynasty commentary is used as a copula. In the text on the other hand, 是謂 shì wèi is used to sum up the very long and unwieldy descriptive passages in order to give a designation to that which has been described.

It is doubtful, however, whether one could defend the translation 'is called' in cases where 謂 wèi is used without a preceeding 是 shì: 然所求者亦非謂佞媚苟親也 rán sǒu qú zhě yì fēi wèi nìng mèi gǒu qīn yě 'but what is sought is not flattery (and) frivolous intimacy either' /Ch 5/.

I regard it as significant that this last example is found in the latter half of the text, where the composition has lost most of its rigour.

Thus 謂 wèi offers a very good illustration of semantic development, as it clearly shows the change in meaning from 'to be called' to 'to be'.

Summary and conclusion.

The present work represents an attempt to interpret a Late Han text with the aid of evidence provided by the text itself.

Thus the achieved results are based on an idiolect, but several of the features typical for the text under consideration also seem characteristic for other Late Han texts.

Within the text there is a remarkable change of style in that the tightly knit structure of the first chapters is gradually slackened until it is difficult to find any structuring of the disposition at all. To use Professor Dobson's terminology in *Late Han Chinese* (hereafter LH) it can be said that at the beginning of her treatise Ban Zhao employs a variety of "Late Han Classical Chinese",

while the later chapters are written in "Late Han Literary Chinese". These terms are defined in LH Appendix 2: "Late Han Literary Chinese confines itself to contemporary grammatical forms, is free and uncontrived but prolix. Late Han Classical Chinese borrows from Archaic grammatical forms, is mannered, patterned, and terse."

The statements pertaining to grammatical forms may not be valid for the Nŭ jìe, however, for with very few exceptions it is impossible to say whether any changes in grammar or vocabulary accompany the change in style.

In LH Chapter 10: Conclusion, p. 101, Professor Dobson remarks that "the single word of LAC tends to be replaced by the compound word in Late Han". The question whether Chinese is or has ever been monosyllabic in nature has often been discussed. However, few attempts have been made to show under which conditions a syllable which normally occurs in combinations may be used in isolation.

In the text there is a tendency to use monosyllabic "full" words only in parallels or in contrast to semantically related words. In quotations and semiquotations from older works, however, these same monosyllables may occur also under other conditions.

The lack of preciseness in the use of the negatives in Late Han texts has also been noted by Professor Dobson. In the Nŭ jìe all the negatives represented in the text are found to negate a verb in one or several instances, and the meaning seems to be "not to verb" and nothing else. The text as a whole gives the reader a feeling of impreciseness, and impreciseness is easily demonstrated in the use of the negatives. Thus in parallels 不 bù may be used in one part and some other negative in the other, although the context is grammatically identical. In two otherwise completely identical phrases 不 bù is used in one phrase 無 wú in the other.

In LH 3.1 Note 無 wú is said to negate 有 yǒu. In the text under consideration on the other hand 有 yǒu is never preceded by a negation. The expression for nonexistence is 無 wú. In most of its occurrences, however, 無 wú negates a verb, the meaning being 'not to verb'.

There is some overlapping in the use of the particles 也 *yě* and 矣 *yǐ* in the text. 也 *yě* for instance is usually found at the end of phrases introduced by 是 謂 *shì wèi* or 此 謂 *cǐ wèi*, but in some instances 也 *yě* is replaced by 矣 *yǐ*. However, it does not seem as if the characters were used indiscriminately in all functions, as 矣 *yǐ* but never 也 *yě* is found at the end of passages containing the idea "condition being fulfilled, then . . ." expressed in different ways.

The passages preceding 也 *yě* usually contain a verb. 也 *yě* has become a mere punctuation mark, and its precise grammatical role in the A B *yě* construction seems to be obsolescent in Late Han texts.

Professor Dobson says in LH 5.4.i: "Thus the final particles, in common with many particles already described, display the same trend towards the erosion of meaning, the blunting of distinctions, and the reduction in role, that characterizes the Archaic-Han Shift."

The most important function of the character 之 *zhi* in the text is to form units in that it serves as a link between words and within phrases. The elements linked together are of various kinds; thus a noun may be linked to a noun, but also a VO-construction or a verb may be linked to a noun. Where the subject and the predicate of a clause are connected with 之 *zhi*, the clause forms a unit of similar kind. Such units linked by 之 *zhi* are of nominal value, and they may occur wherever a noun may be found.

之 *zhi* is also found after transitive verbs, but this usage is comparatively rare in the text.

In LH 2.1.i examples of personal pronouns followed by 之 *zhi* are given: "Wu (吾), woo (我) and eel (爾) occur in Late Han in the determinative role, with that role marked by the particle of determination *jy* 之." This usage is unknown to the Nü jle, but then it should be taken into consideration that there are but a few personal pronouns in the text. 吾 *wú* and 汝 *rǔ* do not occur outside the preface, and 我 *wǒ* is only found once in the text in the meaning 'we (= the women or the wives)'. 爾 *ěr* is not used as a personal pronoun. Where it occurs it is used in the sense 'thus', 'in this manner'.

The characters 云 yún and 曰 yue are used to introduce quotations and reported speech. An occurrence of 此之謂 cǐ zhi wèi or 其斯之謂 qí si zhi wèi on the other hand marks the end of a quotation from the Classics.

謂 wèi is otherwise used in such a way that it is tempting to translate it as a copula. Longer statements are often summarized and explained in the formula 是謂...也 shì wèi ... yě. Perhaps the correct translation would be 'this is', but as the rendering 'this is called' is possible, I prefer to regard 謂 wèi as a full verb in the formula, although in other instances it must be regarded as a copula, a function where one would expect 為 wéi rather than 謂 wèi.

The tendency to use 謂 wèi for 為 wéi (and wèi) is discussed in LH 4.4.i.

As may be discerned from the comparisons above, the text under consideration exhibits traits of both similarity and dissimilarity as compared to the 孟子章句 Mèng Zǐ Zhang Jù by 趙岐 Zhào Qí, the text used by Professor Dobson for his analysis.

The dissimilarities may be due to several factors. First of all the text of the Nŭ jìe is about a century older than that of the 孟子章句 Mèng Zǐ Zhang Jù, and it is only to be expected that a language will change to some extent within a period of a hundred years. Differences in style may also be the reason for dissimilarity. It should also be borne in mind that in actual fact it is the language of two persons rather than of two periods that has been analyzed.

All this taken into consideration, however, it may be said that the language of the Nŭ jìe displays closer resemblance to that of the 孟子章句 Mèng Zǐ Zhang Jù as described by Professor Dobson than to any pre-Qín text, in regard to style and diction as well as to important grammatical features.

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