1

Early Sources for Confucius

MICHAEL HUNTER

No discussion of Kongzi's 孔子 life, thought, or significance in the ancient Chinese context can proceed without first confronting two basic problems: (1) what are the earliest sources for Kongzi; and (2) which, if any, of these sources can be relied on for accurate information about him? How one goes about answering the latter question determines to a large extent the version of Kongzi one ends up with. Let us take each question in turn.[1]

The Sources

The simplest way to measure Kongzi's impact on the early textual record (with "early" defined as the period ending with the fall of the Eastern Han dynasty in 220 CE) is to count the number of sources[2] that include Kongzi sayings, stories, and testimonia. Such an approach yields a remarkably large and diverse assortment of texts that might be grouped into the categories below.

Kongzi-centric Anthologies

Far and away the most important collection of Kongzi material in the Chinese tradition is the *Lunyu* 論語 (*Analects*), a heterogeneous mix of stand-alone *zi yue* 子曰 (the Master says) sayings, mini-dialogues featuring Kongzi's followers and contemporaries, third-person descriptions of Kongzi's character and conduct, and sayings attributed to his followers. The *Lunyu* comprises approximately 16,000 characters across 500 or so entries in twenty chapters. (For more on the *Lunyu*, see below.)

The received version of the *Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語 (*Family Sayings of Confucius*), a much larger compendium (56,600 characters) of early Kongzi traditions, was compiled by Wang Su 王肅 (195–256) in the third century CE but contains a significant amount

A Concise Companion to Confucius, First Edition. Edited by Paul R. Goldin.

of material from earlier sources. Another third-century compilation that likely includes earlier material is the *Kong congzi* 孔叢子 (*Kong Masters Anthology*).

The "Kongzi shijia" 孔子世家 ("Hereditary House of Kongzi") and "Zhongni dizi liezhuan" ("Biographies of Zhong Ni's Disciples"), chapters 47 and 67 of Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (d. *c*. 86 BCE) *Shiji* 史記 (*Grand Scribe's Records*), also warrant special mention. As the earliest extant biography of Kongzi, the "Kongzi shijia" in particular has often been relied on to contextualize Kongzi sayings and stories found in other sources.

Canonical Traditions

The classic most closely associated with Kongzi in the early period, and the text most often said to have been "composed" (*zuo* 作) by Kongzi himself (e.g., at *Mengzi* 3B/9), is the *Chunqiu* 春秋 (*Annals*). However, the *Chunqiu*'s value as a source of Kongzi material is limited given that extant versions of the *Chunqiu* mention Kongzi only once. The version of the *Chunqiu* within the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (*Zuo Traditions*) recension includes only a brief entry appended to the end of the text and dated to the sixteenth year of the reign of Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公, or 479 BCE: "Summer, the fourth month, on the day *jichou*: Kong Qiu died" (夏四月己丑: 孔丘卒). Two other *Chunqiu* recensions, those of the *Gongyang* 公羊 and *Guliang* 穀梁 commentarial traditions, include the line "Kongzi was born" (孔子生) in brief entries dated to 552 BCE (note that Sima Qian dated Kongzi's birth to 551, the twenty-second year of Duke Xiang's 襄公 reign, not 552).[3] Of the three *Chunqiu* commentarial traditions, the *Zuozhuan* (fourth century BCE?)[4] quotes Kongzi most extensively (×43) and also includes a number of anecdotes in which Kongzi features as a character; the *Gongyang* and *Guliang* quote Kongzi only several times apiece.

The *Zhouyi* 周易 (*Zhou Changes*) includes about thirty quotations prefaced with the *zi yue* 子曰 ("the master said") quotation marker, material that has traditionally been interpreted as quotations of Kongzi despite the lack of any overt references to him. These quotations are clustered within two sections of the text, the *Wenyan* 文言 (*Patterned Words*) commentary to the first hexagram (*qian* 乾) and the *Xici zhuan* 繫辭傳 (*Commentary to the Appended Phrases*).

The richest source of Kongzi material among the classics is the *Liji* 禮記 (*Ritual Records*). Although the *Liji* anthology was probably compiled toward the end of the Western Han period (Baker 2006), the pre-imperial provenance of at least two of its chapters – "Zi yi" 緇衣 ("Black Robes") and "Zhongni xianju" 仲尼閒居 ("Zhong Ni at Leisure") – has been confirmed by recent manuscript finds. Twenty-two chapters of the *Liji* quote or reference Kongzi, with four chapters – "Zengzi wen" 曾子問 ("Zengzi Asked"), "Ai gong wen" 哀公問 ("Duke Ai Asked"), "Zhong Ni yanju" 仲尼燕居 ("Zhong Ni at Leisure"), and "Kongzi xianju" 孔子閒居 ("Kongzi At Rest") – consisting exclusively of Kongzi material. Three additional chapters – "Fang ji" 坊記 ("Embankment Record"), "Biao ji" 表記 ("Exemplary Record"), and "Zi yi" 緇衣 ("Black Robes") – are collections of *zi yue* 子曰 (the Master says) sayings. All told, the *Liji* includes more than 300 statements prefaced with *zi yue* or *Kongzi yue* (Kongzi said). The *Yili* 儀禮 (*Etiquette and Ritual*), another canonical ritual compendium, contains only a single Kongzi saying.

The *Xiaojing* 孝經 (*Classic of Filial Piety*) is a much shorter, 2,000-character, dialogue between Kongzi and his disciple Zengzi 曾子 on the subject of *xiao* 孝 (filial piety).

From the mid-Western Han (202 BCE–9 CE) onward, the belief that Kongzi was responsible for compiling and editing the canonical traditions of the *Yi*, *Shu* 書 (*Documents*), *Shi* 詩 (*Odes*), *Li* 禮 (*Rituals*), *Yue* 樂 (*Music*), and *Chunqiu* into a single, unified canon meant that all of the classics could, in theory, be read as sources of Kongzi's wisdom, regardless of whether they quoted or mentioned him.

Commentaries and Other Scholastic Texts

Within the *Yi* 易 (*Changes*) tradition, these include the several *Kongzi yue* and *zi yue* commentaries discovered in the Mawangdui 馬王堆 manuscript find dated to the early part of the Western Han period (see below), in addition to the *zi yue* commentary layers within the *Zhouyi* itself.

Within the *Shi* 詩 tradition, the largest source of Kongzi material is the *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 (*Outward Commentary to the Han Odes*), attributed to Han Ying 韓嬰 (second century BCE). The *Hanshi waizhuan* includes more than seventy sections with Kongzi sayings, stories, and testimonia. The commentary of the *Mao Shi* 毛詩 (*Mao Odes*) also includes a handful of Kongzi sayings. Among pre-Han sources, the so-named "Kongzi shilun" 孔子詩論 ("Kongzi on the *Odes*") manuscript from the looted Shanghai Museum collection presents Kongzi as a source of miscellaneous commentaries on the *Shi*.

Within the *Shu* 書 tradition, the Western Han *Shangshu dazhuan* 尚書大傳 (*Great Commentary to the Exalted Documents*), a text traditionally attributed to Fu Sheng 伏勝 (third–second century BCE), contains a few dozen Kongzi quotations. Chapter two of the *Kong congzi*, "Lun shu" 論書 ("Discussing the Documents"), consists of several dialogues between Kongzi and his disciples on the subject of the *Shu*.

Extant commentaries dating to the Eastern Han period, including Zhao Qi's趙岐 (110–201 CE) *Mengzi* commentary to the *Mengzi*, Wang Yi's王逸 (fl. *c.* 120 CE) *Chuci* 楚辭 (*Verses of Chu*) commentary, and the several commentaries attributed to Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200 CE), frequently invoke Kongzi but tend to borrow overwhelmingly from the *Lunyu*. Other scholastic texts that make liberal use of Kongzi include Xu Shen's 許慎 (*c.* 55–149 CE) *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (*Explanations of Characters Simple and Complex*) dictionary and the *Baihu tong* 白虎通 (*Summary of the White Tiger Hall [Discussions]*), which purports to be a summary of an imperial conference called in 79 CE to resolve disagreements over the interpretation of the classics.

Discrete *Kongzi yue* 孔子曰 (Kongzi said) comments on various canonical traditions can also be found scattered throughout the early corpus within many texts not exclusively devoted to commentary.

Historiographical Sources

In the pre-imperial era, these include the aforementioned *Zuozhuan* and the *Guoyu* 國語 (*Discourses of the States*), the latter of which contains only ten or so Kongzi quotations. Its Kongzi-centric biographies aside, the *Shiji* 史記 (*Grand Scribe's Records*) includes a large number of Kongzi quotations scattered throughout the work, particularly within *Taishigong yue* 太史公曰 (His Excellency the Grand Scribe says) comments, the *Shiji* postface, and other passages written in the voice of the *Shiji* author. Ban Gu's 班固 (32–92 CE) *Hanshu* 漢書 (*History of the Han*) and Fan Ye's 范曄 (398–445 CE) *Hou Hanshu* 後

漢書 (*History of the Later Han*) are invaluable sources for the representation and use of Kongzi in the Western Han, Xin, and Eastern Han dynasties, particularly as reflected in imperial edicts and memorials.

Masters Literature

Kongzi figures prominently in the masters texts of the early period, both as a quotable authority and positive exemplar and also as an object of derision and parody. Among sources attributed to the masters of the Warring States era, the pro-Kongzi *Mengzi* 孟子 of Meng Ke 孟軻 (fourth century?) and *Xunzi* 荀子 of Xun Qing 荀卿 (fourth–third century?) contain a substantial number of Kongzi sayings, stories, and testimonia, many of which are clustered within the last five chapters of the *Xunzi*. At the other extreme stands the *Mozi* 墨子 of Mo Di 墨翟 (fifth century?), who quotes or references Kongzi in several passages, all but one of which are polemical. The *Han Feizi* 韓非子 of Han Fei 韓非 (third century) and *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 of Yan Ying 晏嬰 (d. 500 BCE) contain dozens more quotations and references, many of which are critical. The Kongzi material of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, comprising close to a hundred Kongzi quotations and a number of Kongzi dialogues, is a mix of positive and negative portrayals. Particularly noteworthy is chapter 29, "Dao Zhi" 盜跖 ("Robber Zhi"), in which Kongzi fails to persuade a notorious brigand to follow a more virtuous path, with humiliating results.

In the Han period, Jia Yi's 賈誼 (*c.* 201–*c.* 169) *Xinshu* 新書 (*New Writings*), Lu Jia's 陸賈 (d. *c.* 150 BCE) *Xinyu* 新語 (*New Sayings*), Dong Zhongshu's 董仲舒 (*c.* 179–*c.* 104) *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 (*Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals*), Huan Tan's 桓譚 (43 BCE–23 CE) *Xinlun* 新論 (*New Discourses*), Yang Xiong's 揚雄 (53 BCE–18 CE) *Fayan* 法言 (*Model Sayings*), Wang Chong's 王充 (d. 100 CE) *Lunheng* 論衡 (*Discourse Balance*), Wang Fu's 王符 (*c.* 85–*c.* 163) *Qianfu lun* 潛夫論 (*Discourses of a Hidden Master*), and Xu Gan's 徐幹 (d. *c.* 217) *Zhonglun* 中論 (*Discourses that Hit the Mark*) all contain a substantial number of Kongzi references and quotations. Of particular note are the *Fayan*, a text modeled on the *Lunyu* in which Yang Xiong presents himself in the manner of a latter-day Kongzi, and chapter 28 of the *Lunheng*, "Wen Kong" 問孔 ("Interrogating Kongzi"), which poses a number of objections to the Kongzi of the *Lunyu*.

Other Compendia

In the Warring States period, these include the dozens of sayings, stories, and testimonia within the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (*The Annals of Lü Buwei*), a text compiled under the auspices of Lü Buwei 呂不韋 (d. 235 BCE), a powerful minister at the Qin court. Roughly a century later, the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 of Liu An 劉安 (d. 122 BCE), the King of Huainan, made frequent use of Kongzi as an exemplar and quotable authority.

In the latter part of the Western Han, the *Yantie lun* 鹽鐵論 (*Iron and Salt Discussions*), a record of a court debate between certain high officials and invited Ru 儒 in 81 BCE, includes dozens of Kongzi sayings and numerous references to various pieces of Kongzi lore. Imperial bibliographer and prolific compiler Liu Xiang 劉向 (77–6 BCE) included hundreds of Kongzi-related passages within his *Shuiyuan* 說苑 (*Garden of Persuasions*) and to a lesser extent in the *Xinxu* 新序 (*New Arrangement*) and *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 (*Traditions of Exemplary Women*).

The *Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記 (*The Elder Dai's Ritual Records*), a collection attributed to Dai De 戴德 (first century BCE) but which might date as late as the Eastern Han, includes five chapters consisting solely of Kongzi dialogues (39–41, 62, 65) and another seven chapters (68–71, 74–76) that are dialogues with an unnamed "master" (*zi* 子) who may or may not be Kongzi. One of these chapters is "Wu di de" 五帝德 ("The Virtues of the Five Thearchs"), a dialogue between Kongzi and Zai Wo 宰我 that was cited by Sima Qian in the first chapter of the *Shiji* (1.46).

Early Manuscript Finds

These include the twenty-three *zi yue* 子曰 sayings of the "Zi yi" 緇衣 ("Black Robes") manuscript discovered within a tomb dating to *c.* 300 BCE in the village of Guodian 郭店 find (Jingmen, Hubei province). Two tombs dating to the first few decades of the Western Han, the Mawangdui 馬王堆 find (Changsha, Hunan province) and the Shuangudui 雙古堆 find (Fuyang 阜陽, Anhui province), have yielded a number of commentaries on the *Yi* 易 and a list of Kongzi-related anecdote titles, respectively. Another tomb closed in *c.* 55 BCE in modern-day Dingzhou 定州 (Dingxian, Hebei province) included a fragmentary *Lunyu* manuscript together with a collection of other Kongzi dialogues and stories. A second *Lunyu* manuscript has been discovered in a tomb located outside Pyŏngyang, North Korea, which was closed in c. 45 BCE.

The most spectacular cache of Kongzi-related manuscripts is, unfortunately, a looted corpus purchased by the Shanghai Museum in 1994 on the Hong Kong antiquities market. Based on a comparative analysis of the script and on the fact that these bamboo strips became available just months after the discovery of the Guodian materials, it is thought that the Shanghai Museum corpus was looted from the same locale as the Guodian find, perhaps even from the same tomb complex. Sources of *Kongzi yue* material in this collection include the so-called "Kongzi shilun" 孔子詩論 ("Kongzi's Discussion of the *Odes*"), "Min zhi fumu" 民之父母 ("Father and Mother to the People"), "Zigao" 子羔, "Lu bang da han" 魯邦大旱 ("The Great Drought of Lu"), "Zhong Gong" 仲弓, "Xiang bang zhi dao 相邦之道" ("The Way of Ministering a State"), "Ji Kangzi wen yu Kongzi" 季康子問於孔子 ("Ji Kangzi Asked Kongzi"), "Junzi wei li" 君子為禮 ("The Noble Man in the Conduct of Ritual"), "Dizi wen" 弟子問 ("The Disciples Asked"), "Kongzi jian Ji Huanzi 孔子見季桓子" ("Kongzi Had an Audience with Ji Huanzi"), and "Yan Yuan wen yu Kongzi" 顏淵問於孔子 ("Yan Yuan Asked Kongzi") manuscripts. Two additional manuscripts – "Zi yi" 緇衣 ("Black Robes") and "Shi Liu wen yu fuzi" 史𠂤問於夫子 ("Scribe Liu Asked the Master") – are sources of *zi yue* material (see Scott Cook, Chapter 2, this volume).

Fragments of Possibly Early Sources known only from Later Collectanea

Many of these fragments were collected by Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 (1753–1818) in the *Kongzi jiyu* 孔子集語 (*Collected Sayings of Kongzi*) and by the editors of the *Kongzi – Zhou Qin Han Jin wenxianji* 孔子 - 周秦漢晉文獻集 *(Kongzi – Collected literature from the Zhou, Qin, Han, and Jin*). Of particular note are the numerous fragments of later Han apocrypha or revelatory texts that often quoted Kongzi as a prophet.

To give one a sense of the scale of this corpus, Sun Xingyan's *Kongzi jiyu*, which omits material from the *Lunyu* and several other well-known sources, totals 106,000 characters across 800 or so entries, with a median length of 78 characters. A modern edition of the text, the *Kongzi jiyu jiaobu* 孔子集語校補 (*Collected Sayings of Kongzi, collated and supplemented*), adds another 500 passages from sources omitted by Sun Xingyan and runs to over 600 pages. My own collection of Kongzi-related passages drawn from a digital database of early sources consists of roughly 4,500 entries totaling hundreds of thousands of characters. All told, extant sources preserve close to 4,000 Kongzi quotations and hundreds of stories and dialogues.

Even this cursory overview permits a few rough generalizations about Kongzi and his place within early textual culture. First, and most obviously, Kongzi was important. Beginning at least as far back as the fourth century BCE, early authors did a lot of thinking and writing through and about Kongzi. If the late fourth-century BCE Shanghai Museum manuscript corpus is any indication, interest in Kongzi went well beyond the received textual record, so much so that future manuscript finds might reveal the traditional Kongzi to have been the tip of the iceberg. Second, Kongzi material appears in certain kinds of texts more often than in others. The fact that the list includes no texts of a technical, legal, administrative, or occult nature would seem to indicate that Kongzi's influence was limited to a scholastic sphere. Third, while it is not surprising to find Kongzi quotations in texts associated with the Ru 儒 tradition, Kongzi also appears in texts like the *Mozi*, *Han Feizi*, and *Zhuangzi* with very different ideological commitments. Arguably, Kongzi's most vociferous critic, Mozi himself in a brief dialogue from *Mozi* book 48, "Gong Mengzi" 公孟子, is said to have "cited" or perhaps even "praised" (*cheng* 稱) Kongzi:

> Master Mo was engaged in disputation with Master Cheng when he cited Kongzi. Master Cheng asked him, "How can you criticize the Ru and cite Kongzi?" Master Mo said, "This is a case of something being both appropriate and unalterable. When birds learn of vexing heat and drought they fly up high, and when fish learn of vexing heat and drought they swim downward. In situations like these not even the best-laid plans of Yu and Tang could alter this. Although birds and fish can be called foolish, even Yu and Tang would follow them at times. Now, should I never cite Kongzi"?
>
> 子墨子與程子辯, 稱於孔子。程子曰: "非儒, 何故稱於孔子也?" 子墨子曰: "是亦當而不可易者也。今鳥聞熱旱之憂則高, 魚聞熱旱之憂則下, 當此雖禹湯為之謀, 必不能易矣。鳥魚可謂愚矣, 禹湯猶云因焉。今翟曾無稱於孔子乎?"[5]

Despite elsewhere deriding Kongzi as a hypocrite, a bad influence, and a purveyor of clichés,[6] even Mozi acknowledged Kongzi's value as a quotable authority. Whoever he was, whatever he might have taught, "Kongzi" was a common rhetorical resource.

The Challenges Therein

Setting aside for the moment the question of their reliability, early sources of Kongzi material present any number of challenges to modern students of these texts. The practical challenge of sorting through these sources to identify the Kongzi-related material

therein is not to be underestimated, especially not for the beginning student. Readers of Chinese can avail themselves of resources like the *Kongzi jiyu jiaobu* 孔子集語校補 or the *Kongzi wenxian ji*; however, despite the plethora of translations of the *Lunyu* in English and various other modern languages, to the best of my knowledge these collections have been translated only into modern Chinese (e.g., Meng Qingxiang and Meng Fanhong 2003).

Even deciding which texts or passages belong to "Kongzi" is complicated by a number of factors, including the widespread use of the undefined *zi yue* 子曰 (a/the Master says) quotation marker. In a text like the *Lunyu* whose interest in Kongzi is obvious, identifying the "Master" of "the Master says" is unproblematic. But the lack of explicit identifiers in a number of other *zi yue* texts (including in the *Zhouyi*; see Li Xueqin 1995, 376–79 and Scarpari 2007, 463) is more suggestive of a generic as opposed to a specific master figure, in which case we might translate *zi yue* as "The following is worthy of a true master" or "The following is masterfully said." The boundary between *Kongzi yue* and *junzi yue* 君子曰 (a noble man says) sayings, some of which were interpreted as Kongzi sayings as early as the Han period, is similarly porous.[7]

Compounding the diversity of Kongzi-related sources is the diversity of representations within individual texts. Unlike, say, the earliest sources for Socrates, which overwhelmingly prefer the dialogue form, or the biographical narratives of the synoptic gospels, the earliest sources for Kongzi employ a wide range of genres. For instance, the *Lunyu* consists for the most part of stand-alone sayings prefaced with the words *zi yue* 子曰 (The Master said), but also includes a large number of mini-dialogues with his followers and contemporaries, and even a whole chapter devoted to third-person descriptions of Kongzi's ritual conduct. In the *Zuozhuan*, Kongzi appears most often as a disembodied commenter but also as a character within the main narrative, just as the *Lüshi chunqiu* invokes Kongzi as a source of discrete comments but also includes a number of Kongzi dialogues and anecdotes. The assorted Kongzi-related manuscripts of the late fourth-century BCE Shanghai Museum corpus present Kongzi as a source of various commentaries on the *Odes* ("Kongzi shilun," "Min zhi fumu"), as a character in dialogues with his students (e.g., "Zigao," "Dizi wen"), and as a character within a mini-narrative in which he advises Duke Ai of Lu 魯哀公 on the occasion of a drought ("Lu bang da han"). Strikingly, no Kongzi-related manuscript in the collection appears to refer to any other, nor do Kongzi's quoted utterances exhibit any overlap from one manuscript to the next.

Even when one encounters multiple versions of the same saying or story, those versions tend to vary significantly from one source to the next, especially in the Warring States context. Such examples abound in the early corpus, as when one third-century text includes an anecdote capped with a "Kongzi said" comment, but a roughly contemporaneous text includes the same anecdote and comment without any mention of Kongzi,[8] or when one text treats a Kongzi saying as an independent proverb, but another treats it as a situated comment on something else.[9] In such instances, it is usually impossible to determine which of the two versions might have come first. The author of the "Tan Gong" 檀弓 chapter of the *Liji* called attention to this phenomenon in a dialogue featuring the disciples Zengzi 曾子, Youzi 有子, and Zixia 子夏. The episode opens with Zengzi quoting Kongzi on the topic of "loss" (*sang* 喪) – "losing one's position one should wish for swift poverty; losing one's life one should wish for swift decay" (喪欲速貧, 死欲速朽) – after which Youzi declares

the saying to be unworthy of a *junzi* 君子, and Zixia confirms that it was intended as a comment on two specific individuals not as a generalizable maxim. Although the episode can be read as evidence of an interest in original, historically situated representations of Kongzi, what prompts that interest in "Tan Gong" is the apparently widespread habit of decontextualizing or recontextualizing Kongzi material.

Probably the best attested piece of Kongzi lore from the Warring States period is the story of his travails "between Chen and Cai" (陳蔡之間), when Kongzi and his followers were trapped and starving far from home. (According to Sima Qian's version of the story [*Shiji* 47.1930], the leaders of Chen and Cai sent soldiers to surround Kongzi and his followers out of a fear that Kongzi would succeed in becoming an advisor to the state of Chu 楚 and thereby guarantee Chu's hegemony in the region. Other sources tend not to explain the circumstances of Kongzi's predicament.) Early sources, including the *Mozi*, *Xunzi*, *Zhuangzi*, *Lüshi chunqiu*, *Shiji*, *Hanshi waizhun*, *Lunyu*, and *Shuiyuan*, preserve at least a dozen versions of the story, with additional references in a number of other texts. A striking feature of these narratives is the extent to which authors agreed about the general outline of the story but not its substance. For instance, there are two versions of the story in the *Lüshi chunqiu*, both of which open with the line "Kongzi was in dire straits between Chen and Cai" (孔子窮於陳、蔡之間). However, one version has Zilu 子路 and Zigong 子貢 asking Kongzi to explain how a truly noble man like himself could meet with such "disgraceful" (*chou* 醜) circumstances, and the other has Kongzi wrongly accusing Yan Hui 顏回 of sneaking food to ease his hunger.[10] Likewise, all three versions in the *Zhuangzi* open with the line "Kongzi was at [in dire straits/surrounded] between Chen and Cai and for seven days had no food to cook" (孔子[窮/圍]於陳蔡之間, 七日不火食). One version closely parallels the first *Lüshi chunqiu* story above, but the second develops as a conversation between Kongzi and Yan Hui, and the third as an encounter between Kongzi and a certain Taigong Ren 大公任, who argues that Kongzi brought his troubles on himself.[11] The *Mozi* author used the very same story ("When Kong So-and-so was in dire straits between Chen and Cai" 孔某窮於蔡陳之閒) to represent Kongzi as a rank hypocrite who happily threw his morals out of the window when faced with starvation.[12] The variability of these episodes and the Kongzi quotations therein encourages us to read "between Chen and Cai" narratives as "historical romances" (to borrow Jeffrey Riegel's apt label; see Riegel 1986, 13), as a literary subgenre of Kongzi anecdote whose details early authors were free to vary as they saw fit.[13] Although perhaps not as dramatic as those observed in "between Chen and Cai" stories, similar variations can be found across many other Kongzi traditions.

The amount of historical or biographical detail tends to vary considerably from one Kongzi passage to the next. At one extreme stand the numerous instances in which authors quoted Kongzi as a disembodied source of discrete comments on various figures, sayings, and stories from all over the Central States (*zhongguo* 中國). Many of these comments are introduced with the phrase "Kongzi heard this and said" (孔子聞之曰), typically without any additional explanation as to how Kongzi came by his information, as if authors were far more interested in the substance of Kongzi's judgments than in the circumstances of their origin (Schaberg 2005, 19). Early authors' seemingly cavalier attitude to biographical detail is also evident in the anachronistic use of Kongzi to comment on events that postdated his death (Henry 2003). A number of Kongzi dialogues, especially those featuring Kongzi's disciples, are similarly ahistorical, although

the inclusion of a named lord or minister sometimes allows one to infer at least some information about the encounter's purported period and locale. At the other end of the spectrum, a number of anecdotes make reference to specific episodes from Kongzi's life, including his tenure as an official in Lu 魯 and his wanderings around the Central States in search of a lord who would recognize his worth and accept him as an advisor. (The *Lüshi chunqiu*'s statement [*SBCK* 14/18b] that Kongzi met with over eighty rulers on his travels is a gross exaggeration, at least judging from extant dialogues featuring Kongzi and contemporary political leaders.) On current evidence, the first author to attempt to weave these various strands together into a coherent biographical narrative was Sima Qian in the "Kongzi shijia." Prior to that point, there is little evidence of an interest in relating different versions of Kongzi to one another.

The range of topics that elicited comment by Kongzi is also impressive. These include the practice and theory of ritual (*li* 禮), matters of governance (*zheng* 政), traditional virtues like *ren* 仁 (humaneness) and *xiao* 孝 (filial piety), the praiseworthiness of various (pseudo-)historical figures, the understanding or recognition of others (*zhi ren* 知人), importance of learning (*xue* 學), the value and meaning of the canonical traditions, and the interpretation of extraordinary phenomena like droughts and strange flora and fauna. Although a complete inventory of these topics is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is worth noting that the question of what Kongzi did or did not speak about was apparently a controversial topic in the early period. The Zigong 子貢 of *Lunyu* 5/13 declares that Kongzi's statements on the subject of *xing* 性 (human nature) "cannot be heard" (不可得而聞), just as the Mengzi of *Mengzi* 1A/7 claims that "later generations have no traditions" (後世無傳) concerning Kongzi's teachings on the hegemons Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 and Duke Wen of Jin 晉文公. However, Zigong's testimony is contradicted by Kongzi's pronouncements on *xing* 性 in the "Kongzi shilun" and *Han Feizi*, not to mention *Lunyu* 17/2 ("The Master said, 'By nature we are close to one another, by habit we are far apart'" 子曰: 性相近也, 習相遠也);[14] those looking for Kongzi's statements on dukes Huan and Wen need look no further than *Lunyu* 14/15 or *Mengzi* 4B/21, where Mengzi characterizes the *Chunqiu* as a text "whose content concerns Dukes Huan and Wen" (其事則齊桓晉文). In light of such contradictions, *Lunyu* 5/13 and *Mengzi* 1A/7 should perhaps be read not as impartial descriptions of contemporaneous Kongzi traditions but as efforts to constrain the range of topics for which Kongzi was invoked.

Without assuming that an earlier source is necessarily a more reliable one,[15] sorting these sources diachronically is no easy task owing to the uncertain chronologies and composite nature of so many early texts, especially those purporting to have originated in the Warring States period, but which were redacted or compiled in the Han or later. In this respect, the problem of producing a timeline of Kongzi-related sources is an extension of the challenges inherent in dating ancient texts generally. Judging from the wealth of Kongzi-related texts within the Shanghai Museum manuscript collection, the "Kongzi" phenomenon seems to have achieved a critical mass by the late fourth century BCE at the latest. However, determining with any certainty which versions of Kongzi predate that stage may be impossible in the absence of additional, scientifically excavated manuscript finds dating to the fifth or early fourth centuries.

The possibility that some Kongzi material was added to earlier sources at a later stage is particularly strong in the case of a text like the *Chunqiu*, the first text said to have been

"composed" (*zuo* 作) by Kongzi himself (e.g., at *Mengzi* 3B/9). As noted above, however, Kongzi material within the extant versions of the *Chunqiu* is restricted to a short line apiece. With such a tiny textual footprint, it is difficult to dismiss the possibility that a later editor added Kongzi material to the *Chunqiu* in order to enshrine Kongzi's association with it. It has also been suggested that Kongzi material within the *Zuozhuan* was added at a later stage by an editor eager to enhance Kongzi's profile within the text (Henry 1999).

Perhaps most problematically of all, extant pre-imperial sources provide few, if any, indications that the "Kongzi" phenomenon depended on any written sources whatsoever, let alone a specific Kongzi canon. The earliest extant source to have drawn attention to the problem of reconstructing Kongzi's life and thought is *Han Feizi* chapter 50, "Xian xue" 顯學 ("Showing Off Learning"):

> After Kongzi and Mozi [died] the Ru split into eight [factions] and the Mohists into three. What each faction included and excluded contradicted the others'. Nevertheless, they all refer to themselves as the true Kongzi or Mozi. Kongzi and Mozi cannot be resurrected, so who is to settle [the question] of learning nowadays?
>
> 孔墨之後, 儒分為八, 墨離為三, 取舍相反、不同, 而皆自謂真孔墨。孔墨不可復生, 將誰使定世之學乎?[16]

Despite its polemical thrust, the passage is noteworthy insofar as it frames the problem in terms of people not sources. The author criticizes others not for claiming to possess to the true teachings of Kongzi and Mozi, but for "saying that they themselves are the true Kongzi and Mozi," as if speaking in the voice of these long-dead masters mattered more than merely transmitting their teachings. The ideal authority is imagined as a fully resurrected Kongzi (or Mozi) as opposed to a lifeless text. In the following episode from the "Zhong Ni dizi liezhuan," even Kongzi's closest students are depicted as trying to set up a new Kongzi to replace the old, with predictable consequences:

> After Kongzi died his disciples missed him dearly. You Ruo resembled Kongzi and so Kongzi's disciples cooperated to establish him as their master and attend to him just as they had attended to Kongzi. One day the disciples entered to ask, "Previously when the Master was about to depart he had us carry rain gear, and before long it rained. A disciple asked him, 'How did you know that it would rain, Master?' The Master said, 'Does not the *Ode* say, "When the moon is in the Hyades there will be torrential rains."' Last night wasn't the moon in the Hyades?' Another day, the moon was in the Hyades but it didn't rain. Shang Que was old and childless and his mother arranged another wife for him. Kongzi sent him to Qi but his mother begged him not to. Kongzi said, 'Do not worry! Shang Que will have five sons after he is forty.' Sure enough, Kongzi turned out to be right. We ask you, how did the Master know these things?" You Ruo was silent and could not answer. The disciples all arose and said, "Master You should retire. This is not your seat!"
>
> 孔子既沒, 弟子思慕, 有若狀似孔子, 弟子相與共立為師, 師之如夫子時也。他日, 弟子進問曰: 昔夫子當行, 使弟子持雨具, 已而果雨。弟子問曰: 夫子何以知之? 夫子曰: 詩不云乎? 月離于畢, 俾滂沱矣。昨暮月不宿畢乎? 他日, 月宿畢, 竟不雨。商瞿年長無子, 其母為取室。孔子使之齊, 瞿母請之。孔子曰: 無憂, 瞿年四十後當有五丈夫子。已而果然。問夫子何以知此? 有若默然無以應。弟子起曰: 有子避之, 此非子之座也![17]

In a comically pathetic attempt to resurrect their master, the disciples establish You Ruo 有若 – "Having a Likeness" – as their teacher only to realize the futility of their efforts when he proves unable to answer their questions. Within the context of the *Shiji*, the source of the earliest known biography of Kongzi, the episode also reads as a surprisingly bleak assessment of the prospects of understanding the true Kongzi from the scattered accounts of his life and teachings.

Other (ostensibly) pre-imperial authors tended to speak through and about Kongzi without ever naming their sources, let alone pausing to question or defend the legitimacy of any particular representation. Exceptions include polemical texts like "Xian xue" and passages in which an author seeks to defend Kongzi's reputation against spurious gossip and misquotations. Even at these moments, however, the criterion for assessing the validity of a story was not historical so much as ethical – what was deemed worthy of a "noble man" (*junzi* 君子). For example, the Mengzi of *Mengzi* 5A/8 judges Kongzi sayings and stories primarily according to how well they sustain a certain ideal, as if he cannot entertain the possibility that Kongzi was less than perfectly virtuous: "If Kongzi had stayed with an ulcer doctor and the servant Qi Huan, how could he have been Kongzi?" (若孔子主癰疽與侍人瘠環, 何以為孔子).

Mengzi's handling of a mistaken Kongzi quotation in *Mengzi* 5A/4 is also instructive:

> Xianqiu Meng asked, "A saying has it that 'a lord cannot make a man of resplendent virtue his minister, nor can a father make him a son.' Shun stood facing south and Yao led all the vassal lords to face north at court. Shun's father Gu Sou also faced north at court. Seeing Gu Sou, Shun furrowed his brow. Kongzi said, 'At that time the world was endangered and teetering on the edge.' I do not know if this story is true or not."
>
> Mengzi said, "No! This is not the saying of a noble man. It is the talk of rubes from eastern Qi. When Yao was an old man Shun took over the government. The *Canon of Yao* states that 'after twenty-eight years Fangxun passed away, the people grieved as if they had lost a parent, and all within the four seas gave up music for a time.' Kongzi said, 'Heaven does not have two suns; the people do not have two kings.' If Shun was already the Son of Heaven when he led all the vassal lords to mourn Yao for three years, then there would have been two Sons of Heaven."
>
> 咸丘蒙問曰: 語云, 盛德之士, 君不得而臣, 父不得而子 。舜南面而立, 堯帥諸侯北面而朝之, 瞽瞍亦北面而朝之。舜見瞽瞍, 其容有蹙。孔子曰: 於斯時也, 天下殆哉, 岌岌乎!不識此語誠然乎哉。孟子曰: 否; 此非君子之言, 齊東野人之語也。堯老而舜攝也。堯典曰: 二十有八載, 放勛乃徂落, 百姓如喪考妣, 三年, 四海遏密八音。孔子曰: 天無二日, 民無二王。舜既為天子矣, 又帥天下諸侯以為堯三年喪, 是二天子矣.[18]

Some centuries later, an author like Wang Chong 王充 (d. 100 CE) living in the far more literate milieu of the Eastern Han could dismiss a spurious Kongzi anecdote by pointing out that "when you consult the text of the *Lunyu*, you will not find these words; when you examine the traditions of the Six Classics, they also do not have this story" (案論語之文, 不見此言; 考六經之傳, 亦無此語). But the Mengzi of *Mengzi* 5A/4 does not have recourse to a particular source of Kongzi material. Instead, Mengzi must defend Yao, Shun, and Kongzi with an appeal to ethical standards ("this is not the saying of a noble man"), to logic ("If Shun was already the Son of Heaven … then there would have been two Sons of Heaven"), to the traditional authority of the *Canon of Yao*, and to an

alternate Kongzi saying (one with parallels in the "Zengzi wen" and "Fang ji" chapters of the *Liji* [*SBCK* 6/4b & 15/13a]).

Now contrast that response with Mengzi's handling of a mistaken *Shi* quotation in the continuation of the same episode, after Xianqiu Meng quotes the "Bei shan" 北山 ("Northern Hills") ode to ask whether Shun's father served Shun as his subject, the implication being that Shun's filial piety compromised his royal authority and vice versa. Mengzi refutes Xianqiu Meng's reading ("This is not what this *Shi* means" 是詩也, 非是之謂也) and then goes on to establish a few guidelines for *Shi* interpretation: "those who would explain a *Shi* should not use the [interpretation of its] words to impair the [interpretation of its] phrasing, or the [interpretation of its] phrasing to impair the [interpretation of its] intent" (說詩者, 不以文害辭, 不以辭害志). Xianqiu Meng's mistake with the *Shi* is one of misconstruing a text whose legitimacy is taken for granted. As Mengzi cannot reject the quotation itself, he must contradict Xianqiu Meng's understanding of it, hence his digression on *Shi* interpretation. But when Mengzi disagrees with a Kongzi quotation, he rejects the saying outright and replaces it with an entirely different one that better supports his argument. The content of the *Shi* is given, the substance of Kongzi's teachings is not, thus Mengzi must establish what Kongzi said before he can proceed with his argument. This is not a problem that would have arisen had the author of *Mengzi* 5A/4 had access to a recognized collection of Kongzi sayings (Hunter 2014).

The *Lunyu*

For the past 2,000 years or so, the standard solution to the superabundance and messiness of Kongzi-related sources has been the one first articulated by the bibliographers of the Han dynasty beginning in the late Western Han: simply rely on the *Lunyu*, the *Selected Sayings* of Kongzi. For Liu Xiang, the official charged by Emperor Cheng 成帝 (r. 33–7 BCE) in 26 BCE with cataloging the imperial library, the *Lunyu* was a source of "fine sayings recorded by Kongzi's disciples" (孔子弟子記諸善言); for Liu Xiang's son 劉歆 (46 BCE –23 CE) and for Ban Gu, the *Lunyu* was a text compiled by Kongzi's disciples in the years immediately following his death from their personal "records" (*ji* 記) of the master's "sayings" (*yan* 言) and "talk" (*yu* 語).[19] Here the bibliographers' emphasis on Kongzi's spoken words is significant given the perception of Kongzi as author of the *Chunqiu* classic. Reading Kongzi's wisdom from the *Chunqiu* entailed a complicated hermeneutics to decode his "subtle words" (*wei yan* 微言) from the text, thus making it an inconvenient source of Kongzi's teachings. Not surprisingly, quotations of the "*Chunqiu*" in Han sources are just as likely to borrow from one of the three commentarial traditions as they are from the *Chunqiu* itself. When dealing with the *quotable* Kongzi, the Han bibliographers tell us, no text is more authoritative than the *Lunyu*. Thanks in large part to their account of the text, no source has had a greater impact on the imagination of Kongzi than the approximately 16,000 characters of the *Lunyu*.[20]

Beginning a conversation about Kongzi with the *Lunyu* has the great virtue of establishing a fixed, convenient, and eminently quotable version of Kongzi, one which exerted a tremendous influence on the East Asian literary and intellectual tradition. On the other hand, the dating and history of the *Lunyu* is not uncontroversial.

Most scholars agree that the *Lunyu*'s conspicuous heterogeneity is indicative of a composite, multilayered text. Many have argued that at least part of the text dates to the early Warring States period and/or accurately reflects the teaching of the historical Kongzi, even if it contains some material added as late as the Han period. Thus, one of the main challenges for modern *Lunyu* scholarship has been to determine which parts date to which periods, the ultimate goal being to identify its pristine core.[21]

Still other scholars (myself included) have taken a more critical view of the *Lunyu*'s traditional dating based in large part on the observation that the earliest evidence of a *Lunyu* text dates to the second half of the second century BCE, a period roughly coinciding with the reign of Emperor Wu 武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE).[22] Not only does the title "*Lunyu*" not appear in any text prior to the Western Han, the earliest verifiable quotations or citations of the *Lunyu* date to roughly the same period. In fact, the received *Lunyu* seems to have exerted little to no influence on the pre-Han imagination of Kongzi. By my count, fewer than 10 percent of Kongzi quotations in pre-Han sources exhibit textual parallels with the Kongzi sayings of the *Lunyu*, the majority of which exhibit variants so significant as to rule out their identification as quotations of a *Lunyu* text.[23]

Moreover, there is good reason to think that the *Lunyu*'s rise as the preeminent source of the quotable Kongzi was made possible by the patronage of the Han imperium. Some of the earliest references to a *Lunyu* text describe it as a textbook for the education of Han princes, with mastery of the *Lunyu* cited as a key qualification in Liu Qu's 劉去 appointment as King of Guangchuan 廣川 in 91 BCE and in the nomination of Emperor Xuan 宣帝 in 74 BCE. In 82 BCE, an edict issued in the name of the underage Emperor Zhao also listed the *Lunyu* among the texts he was studying.[24] With the *Lunyu*'s value affirmed at the highest level of Han society, the authors of edicts and memorials in the latter half of the Western Han typically looked to the *Lunyu* for their Kongzi quotations, prior to which Kongzi's influence on the imperial stage was minimal to non-existent. Given this backdrop, Han bibliographers' characterization of the *Lunyu* as an authentic record compiled in the fifth century BCE reads as a convenient backstory for an important text with an otherwise problematic history (Hunter 2017).

To be sure, just because we lack evidence for a pre-Han *Lunyu* does not mean that the text did not originate in an earlier period. Indeed, the study of *Lunyu* intertextuality reveals any number of *Lunyu* passages (e.g., the "between Chen and Cai" mini-narrative at *Lunyu* 15/2) with obvious antecedents in pre-Han textual traditions. However, the issue is not whether the *Lunyu* might contain material from the Warring States period, but whether inclusion in the *Lunyu* is itself a sufficient criterion for treating a given piece of Kongzi material as uniquely early or authentic. In light of the Han origins of its canonicity, and in the absence of a pre-Han *Lunyu* manuscript or some other direct evidence of its existence and authority in the Warring States period, the *Lunyu* has no special claim on our imagination of Kongzi.

The Kongzi Problem

For readers who began this chapter hoping to learn something about who Kongzi *really* was, the discussion thus far is likely to be disappointing. Especially for the beginning student, the practical challenges of managing and reading a corpus as voluminous,

scattered, and diverse as this one are formidable, all the more so if one does not begin with a canon like the *Lunyu*. Modern students might take some solace in the knowledge that the scale of Kongzi's wisdom also intimidated some ancient authors, at least judging from the following anecdote from the eleventh chapter of the *Shuiyuan* (*SBCK* 19b–20a):

> Viscount Jian of Zhao asked Zigong, "What sort of man is Kongzi?" Zigong replied, "I am incapable of understanding him." Viscount Jian was displeased and said, "You served Kongzi for several decades before completing your studies and leaving him, so when I ask you [what sort of man he is] how can you say that you are incapable of understanding him?" Zigong said, "I am like a thirsty man who drinks from the rivers and seas: I merely know when I've had enough. Kongzi is like the rivers and seas. How could someone like me be worthy of understanding him?" Viscount Jian said, "Zigong's words are excellent!"
>
> 趙簡子問子貢曰: 孔子為人何如? 子貢對曰: 賜不能識也。簡子不說曰: 夫子事孔子數十年, 終業而去之, 寡人問子, 子曰不能識, 何也? 子貢曰: 賜譬渴者之飲江海, 知足而已, 孔子猶江海也, 賜則奚足以識之。簡子曰: 善哉!子貢之言也.

Despite its eloquence, Zigong's response is unsatisfying for modern readers hoping to learn something about the historical Kongzi, Viscount Jian's concluding praise notwithstanding. If even one of Kongzi's closest followers had such trouble, how are we supposed to go about understanding Kongzi?

Let us step out of the early Chinese context for a moment to consider the parallel case of Socrates (*c*. 469–399 BCE).[25] From an early China scholar's perspective, the sources of Socrates' life and thought are an embarrassment of riches. Socrates' existence is confirmed by one contemporary fifth-century source, Aristophanes' (*c*. 446–386 BCE) *Clouds*, as well as a number of Socratic dialogues written in the decades immediately following his death in 399 BCE. Although Plato's (420s–348/47 BCE) dialogues are the best known of these, other associates of Socrates also participated in the genre, including Aeschines of Sphettus (430/20–after 375/6 BCE; seven dialogues, all lost), Phaedo of Elis (b. 418/16 BCE; two dialogues, both lost), Euclides of Megara (450/35–*c*. 365; six dialogues, all lost), Antisthenes (*c*. 445–*c*. 365; a number of dialogues, all lost), and Xenophon (430–354), whose *Symposium*, *Memorabilia*, *Oeconomicus*, and *Apology* are extant. Aristotle names yet another figure, a certain Alexamenos of Teos, as the first person to have penned a Socratic dialogue (Döring 2011, 25). Excavators of the Athenian agora in the 1950s even claimed to have confirmed a detail from Xenophon's account of Socrates in the *Memorabilia* and from Diogenes Laertios' (third century CE?) *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* after discovering a cup engraved with the name "Simon" at the site of a leather-working shop. They speculated that this person was the same Simon said to have owned a leather shop frequented by Socrates and who reportedly made notes of their conversations (Lang 1978, 16; Döring 2011, 34–36).[26] Even if (as seems likely) such speculation is unfounded, the mere possibility of establishing a material connection with the historical Socrates, however tenuous, illustrates the advantageous position of Socrates studies relative to Kongzi studies.

Extant sources for Socrates more or less agree on a few basic biographical details: Socrates was an Athenian and a conversationalist of some repute who was sentenced to death by his fellow citizens. But scholars of the period continue to disagree

about the historical value of these often contradictory accounts, particularly with respect to Socrates' doxography. The earliest source, Aristophanes' *Clouds*, is an obvious parody, and reconciling the many contradictory accounts even within Plato's dialogues is exceedingly difficult (Dorion 2011, 6–10). Occasionally, Plato even drops hints that his version of events might be less than completely accurate. In the *Phaedo*, the dialogue that purports to recount the circumstances of Socrates' death, he even has the narrator go out of his way to note that Plato himself was absent due to illness (*Phaedo* 59b).

The proliferation of Socratic dialogues in the fourth century BCE is one hint that these texts were, first and foremost, a dynamic genre of intellectual discourse; they were not intended to be read as historically accurate records. As Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar posed the problem in their introduction to the Blackwell *Companion to Socrates*,

> Given that Plato, like Xenophon and the other Socratics, were writing in a literary genre well described as "biographical experiments" that aim at "capturing the potentialities rather than the realities of individual lives" (Momigliano 1993: 46), what hope is there for reconstructing the historical Socrates from these representations? The representations conflict at the most basic level: Socrates affirms and denies that the good is pleasure (Plato, *Gorgias* 495a–99b, but cf. *Protagoras* 351b–e, 354de); Socrates does and doesn't investigate questions of natural science (Aristophanes, *Clouds* 217–33; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A.6.987b1–3; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.1.11–16, 4.7.2–10; Plato, *Phaedo* 96d–99e, but cf. *Apology* 26de); Socrates disavows and avows having knowledge (Plato, *Apology* 21b–23b, *Theaetetus* 150cd, but cf. *Apology* 29b). So why suppose that the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues was the historical Socrates, rather than the Socrates of Xenophon's Socratic writings, or the Socrates of Aeschines, or Aristippus, or indeed of the hostile witness Aristophanes?
>
> (Ahbel-Rappe and Kamtekar 2006, xiv–xv)

Ahbel-Rappe and Kamtekar go on to suggest that sources of Socrates "might be better used as guides to the thinking of their authors or for the recovery of philosophically brilliant portraits of Socrates."

These Western classicists' willingness to acknowledge the impossibility of reconstructing the real Socrates, despite his exalted status in the Western tradition and the (relative) wealth of nearly contemporaneous sources at their disposal, is instructive. At the same time, it seems reasonable to infer that Socrates would not have inspired so many later writers had he not possessed an extraordinary charisma, or at least an extraordinary reputation. Applying that logic to Kongzi, it is easy to imagine "Kong Qiu," or "Zhongni," or "Kongzi" as a similarly charismatic individual who personally influenced so many people as to guarantee his legacy in subsequent generations. Perhaps, like Plato and Xenophon, Kongzi's students and acquaintances ultimately deserve credit for generating enough interest in Kongzi for others to begin quoting his sayings and telling stories about his wisdom and exploits. But as with Socrates, there is no need to assume that interest in Kongzi was predicated on the preservation and transmission of historically accurate records (*ji* 記). The Socrates and Kongzi phenomena may have only required reputations (*ming* 名) so extraordinary that they generated a vibrant literary market for stories about "Socrates" and "Kongzi."

Whatever the origins of the Kongzi phenomenon, abandoning the search for the true Kongzi need not be considered a failure or setback as we await the excavation of some new and improved Kongzi canon. If, as seems likely, the earliest authors of Kongzi material depended less on written sources than we do, then there is reason to hope that reorienting Kongzi studies around "Kongzi" as a dynamic and creative genre of intellectual discourse might bring us closer to the thinking of those who participated in the Kongzi phenomenon. In the process, we might even come to appreciate the real genius of "Kongzi" (if it is possible to speak in such terms) as a projection of the collective early Chinese imagination of wisdom and virtue.

Notes

1 Many of the arguments and observations in this chapter are drawn from my recent monograph, *Confucius beyond the* Analects (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

2 With some exceptions, sources are listed according to their traditional dating and attributions. The problems of sorting Kongzi-related sources chronologically are discussed below. The best single guide to the origins and histories of the major early Chinese sources is still Loewe (1993).

3 See *Zuozhuan* Ai 16 (*SBCK* 30/6b), *Gongyang* and *Guliang* Xiang 21 (*SBCK* 9/12a and 9/10a, respectively), and *Shiji* 14.640. In the *Gongyang* and *Guliang*, the announcement of Kongzi's follows two solar eclipses dated to the ninth and tenth months of 552 BCE, an astronomical impossibility (Jensen 2002, 186–88).

4 For the argument that the *Zuozhuan* dates to the fourth century, see the appendix to Schaberg (2001a); for the view that the text is a more or less accurate record of the period it purports to represent, see Pines (2002, 26–39).

5 *Mozi* 48 (*SBCK* 12/13b–14a).

6 See the last six entries of *Mozi* 39, "Fei Ru xia" 非儒下 ("Against the Ru, Part Two").

7 See, e.g., the coda to the *Gongyang* (*SBCK* 12/8b–9b), which follows a discussion of Kongzi with the question "Why did the *junzi* make the *Chunqiu*?" ("君子曷為為春秋"). In the Eastern Han period, Wang Chong at *Lunheng* 27 (*SBCK* 8/15b) interpreted at least one *junzi yue* 君子曰 saying from the *Gongyang* (Zhuang 7, *SBCK* 3/7b) as a Kongzi saying: "'*junzi*' refers to Kongzi" ("君子者, 孔子也"). For an example of an earlier Kongzi quotation treated as a *junzi yue* statement in a later text, see *Hanshi waizhuan* 3 (*SBCK* 3/9b) and *Shuiyuan* 1 (*SBCK* 1/16b).

8 See, e.g., the anecdote about Duke Wen of Jin 晉文公 at *Han Feizi* 32 (*SBCK* 11/10b) and *Lüshi chunqiu* 19/6 (*SBCK* 19/16a), only the former of which mentions Kongzi.

9 See, e.g., *Mengzi* 2A/1 (*SBCK* 3/3b) and *Lüshi chunqiu* 19/3 (*SBCK* 19/7a), the latter of which presents the same Kongzi saying as a comment on the virtuous rule of Shun 舜 and Yu 禹.

10 See *Lüshi chunqiu* 14/6 (*SBCK* 14/17a–18a) and 17/3 (*SBCK* 17/9b–10a).

11 See *Zhuangzi* 28 (*SBCK* 9/27b–28b) and 20 (*SBCK* 20b–21a and 24b–25a).

12 *Mozi* 39 (9/22a).

13 Riegel also argues that these "literary remains of Confucius's life consist of bits and pieces of ancient poetry which in their origins had nothing to do with Confucius and even predated him" (1985, 14). For the argument that "between Chen and Cai" material in the *Lunyu* has more in common with the *Zhuangzi* than with "Ruist" texts like the *Mengzi* and *Xunzi*, see Makeham (1998).

14 *Han Feizi* 22 (*SBCK* 8/3a); for "Kongzi shilun," see Huang Huaixin (2004, 19: the repeated phrase "the people's nature was ever thus" 民性固然).

15 For example, the earliest extant source for Socrates is Aristophanes' (*c*. 446–386) *Clouds*, whose irreverent if not libelous take on Socrates could never be mistaken for a reliable account of his life and thought.

16 *Han Feizi* book 50 (*SBCK* 19/7a).

17 *Shiji* 67.2216. In a shorter version of the story at *Mengzi* 3A/4 (*SCBK* 5/14a), Zengzi scolds the other disciples for failing to understand that Kongzi's "brilliance could not be outdone" (皜皜乎不可尚已). Cf. *Fayan* 12 (*SBCK* 12/2b): "Ziyou and Zixia got his writings but they didn't get why [Kongzi] wrote them; Zai Wo and Zigong got his sayings but they didn't get why [Kongzi] said them; Yan Yuan and Min Ziqian got his conduct but they didn't get why he conducted himself in that way" (子遊、子夏得其書矣, 未得其所以書也; 宰我、子貢得其言矣, 未得其所以言也; 顏淵、閔子騫得其行矣, 未得其所以行也).

18 *SBCK* 9/6b–8a.

19 See the preface to the *Lunyu jijie* 論語集解 (*SBCK* 1/1a) and the *Lunyu* entry within the "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志 ("Record of Arts and Letters") bibliography at *Hanshu* 30.1716.

20 An excellent illustration of the *Lunyu*'s dominance within Kongzi studies is Luo Anxian (2008), which devotes a mere thirteen pages to "Kongzi sixiang shiliao 孔子思想史料" ("Sources of Kongzi's Thought"), the first eight of which concern the *Lunyu*. Zhu Weizheng (2002, 98) observed that only a handful of the hundreds of scholarly articles on Kongzi's thought published between 1949 and the 1980s make use of Kongzi material outside the *Lunyu*.

21 In the modern era, see, e.g., Waley (1938); Creel (1949); Van Zoeren (1991); Cheng (1993); Lau (2000). The most extreme example of this approach is Brooks and Brooks (1998), reviewed critically in Schaberg (2001b) and Nylan (2014, lxi). See also Weingarten (2010, 56–57) for the conclusion that "the relevance of most of the criteria that scholars have so far used to distinguish textual layers in the *Lunyu* and to assign relative dates to them is debatable." For a useful recent introduction to the history of *Lunyu* translations and studies, see Nylan (2014).

22 See Tsuda (1946); Zhao Zhenxin (1961); Kaneto (1972–81); Zhu Weizheng (1986); Makeham (1996); Csikszentmihalyi (2001, 2002); Weingarten (2010). For a dissenting view, see especially Goldin (forthcoming).

23 The one glaring exception to this claim is *Mengzi* 7B/37, in which Kongzi comments on multiple Kongzi sayings with *Lunyu* parallels in series. For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the *Mengzi* and *Lunyu*, including a discussion of the likelihood that the compilation of the received *Mengzi* postdated the rise of the *Lunyu* in the Western Han, see Hunter (2014).

24 See *Hanshu* 53.2428, 8.238, and 7.223.

25 See also Haupt (2006, 18–20), for a comparison between Kongzi and Jesus. For a summary of the problems involved in reconstructing the historical Jesus, see Tuckett (2001); for a summary of past reconstruction efforts, see Paget (2001). Especially useful is Tuckett's discussion (pp. 132–37) of the criteria various scholars have derived for identifying historically accurate sources.

26 For the relevant primary sources, see Xenophon (*Memorabilia* 4.2) and Diogenes Laertios (*Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, 2.13.122). "*Simon*" was also the name of a dialogue written by Phaedo of Elis.

References

Ahbel-Rappe, Sara and Kamtekar, Rachana (2006). "Introduction," in *Companion to Socrates*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Baker, Timothy (2006). "The Imperial Ancestral Temple in China's Western Han Dynasty: Institutional Tradition and Personal Belief," PhD thesis, Harvard University.

Brooks, E. Bruce and A. Taeko Brooks (1998). *The Original Analects: Sayings of Confucius and His Successors, 0479–0249*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cheng, Anne (1993). "Lun yü 論語," in Michael Loewe (ed.), *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*. University of California, Berkley: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, pp. 313–23.

Creel, Herrlee Glessner (1949). *Confucius, the Man and the Myth*. New York: Day.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mark (2001). "Confucius," in David Noel Freedman and Michael James Mcclymond (eds.), *The Rivers of Paradise: Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, and Muhammad as Religious Founders*. Cambridge: Eerdmans, pp. 233–308.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mark (2002). "Confucius and the *Analects* in the Han," in Bryan Van Norden (ed.), *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 134–62.

Döring, Kurt (2011). "The Students of Socrates," in Donald R. Morrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–24.

Dorion, Louis-André (2011). "The Rise and Fall of the Socratic Problem," in Donald R. Morrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–23.

Goldin, Paul R. (forthcoming). "Confucius and His Disciples in the *Analects*: Or, Why the Traditional Chronology is Right," in Michael Hunter, Martin Kern, and Oliver Weingarten (eds.), *The Analects Revisited: New Perspectives on the Dating of a Classic*. Leiden: Brill.

Haupt, Christiane (2006). "Und der Meister sprach …: Die Darstellung des Konfuzius in Texten der Zhanguo- und Frühen Han-zeit," PhD thesis, Ludwig-Maximilians University, Munich.

Hanshu 漢書 (1962). Comp. Ban Gu 班固. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju.

Henry, Eric (1999). "'Junzi Yue' versus 'Zhongni Yue' in *Zuozhuan*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 59: 125–61.

Henry, Eric (2003). "Anachronisms in *Lüshi Chunqiu* and *Shuo Yuan*," *Early Medieval China*, 9: 127–38.

Huang Huaixin 黃懷信 (2004). *Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書"詩論"解義. Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe.

Hunter, Michael (2014). "Did Mencius Know the *Analects*?" *T'oung Pao*, 100: 1–47.

Hunter, Michael (2017). *Confucius beyond the Analects*. Leiden: Brill.

Jensen, Lionel M. (2002). "The Genesis of Kongzi in Ancient Narrative: The Figurative as Historical," in Thomas Wilson (ed.), *On Sacred Grounds: Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius, Harvard East Asian Monographs 217*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 175–221.

Jiang Yihua 姜義華, Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, & Wu Genliang 吳根梁 (1990). *Kongzi – Zhou Qin Han Jin wenxianji* 孔子 – 周秦漢晉文獻集. Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1972). "Kōshi to sono jidai: Rongo hihan oboegaki 孔子とその時代: 論語批判覚書," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 4: 101–14.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1973). "Kobun Rongo kō: Shiki deshi iu, Kansho Geibunshi 古文論語考: 史記弟子云, 漢書藝文志," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 5: 43–59.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1974). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō: Kōshi seika, sono 'Rongo' seiritsu shiron 史記「論語」考: 世家、その「論語」成立試論," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 6: 14–38.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守(1975). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō, sono ni: Chūji deshi retsuden yori Rongo seiritsu ni tsuite 史記「論語」考、その二: 仲尼弟子列伝より論語成立について," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 7: 51–70.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1976). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō, sono san: Hongi – Hassho no Rongo seiritsu shiryō ni tsuite 史記「論語」考、その三: 本紀 – 八書の論語成立資料について," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 8: 45–59.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1977). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō, sono yon: Seika inyō Kōshi yori Rongo no seiritsu ni tsuite 史記「論語」考、その四: 世家引用孔子言より論語の成立について," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 9: 101–18.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1978). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō, sono go: Hakui retsuden o ronjite Rongo Kōshi gen ni oyobu 史記「論語」考、その五: 伯夷列伝を論じて論語孔子言に及ぶ," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 10: 65–79.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1979). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō, sono roku: Sōketsu no seiritsu ni tsuite 史記「論語」考、その六: 總結の成立について," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 11: 19–26.

Kaneto Mamoru金戸守 (1980). "Shiki 'Rongo' kōyo 史記「論語」考余," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 12: 21–32.

Kaneto Mamoru 金戸守 (1981). "Shiki 'Rongo' kō, yozoku: Kansho yori mita Rongo seiritsu kō 史記「論語」考、余続: 漢書より見た論語成立考," *Shitennōji Joshi Daigaku Kiyō*, 13: 17–29.

Kongzi jiyu jiaobu 孔子集語校補 (1998). Comp. Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 et al. Jinan: Qi Lu shushe.

Lau, D. C. ([1979] 2000). *The Analects,* 2000 bilingual edn. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Lang, Mabel L. (1978). *Socrates in the Agora*. Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Li Xueqin 李學勤 (1995). "Basic Considerations on the Commentaries of the Silk Manuscript 'Book of Changes'," *Early China*, 20: 367–80.

Loewe, Michael (ed.) (1993). *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*. University of California, Berkley: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies.

Luo Anxian 羅安憲 (2008). *Zhongguo Kongxue shi* 中國孔學史. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe.

Makeham, John (1996). "The Formation of *Lunyu* as a Book," *Monumenta Serica*, 44: 1–24.

Makeham, John (1998). "Between Chen and Cai: *Zhuangzi* and the *Analects*," in Roger T. Ames (ed.), *Wandering at Ease in the* Zhuangzi. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Meng Qingxiang 孟慶祥 and Meng Fanhong 繁紅 (2003). *Kongzi jiyu yizhu* 孔子集語譯注. Harbin: Heilong jiang renmin chubanshe.

Momigliano, Arnaldo (1993). *The Development of Greek Biography*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Nylan, Michael (ed.) (2014). *The Analects: the Simon Leys Translation, Interpretations*, Norton Critical Editions. New York: W. W. Norton.

Paget, James Carleton (2001). "Quests for the Historical Jesus," in Markus Bockmuehl (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 138–55.

Pines, Yuri (2002). *Foundations of Confucian Thought: Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period (722–453 BCE)*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Riegel, Jeffrey (1986). "Poetry and the Legend of Confucius' Exile," *Journal of the American Oriental Society.* 106: 13–22.

Scarpari, Maurizio (2007). "*Zi Yue*, 'the Master Said …', Or Didn't He?" in Antonio Rigopoulos (ed.),*Guru, the Spiritual Master in Eastern and Western Traditions: Authority and Charisma*. Venice: Venetian Academy of Indian Studies, D.K. Printworld, pp. 437–69.

Schaberg, David (2001a). *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press.

Schaberg, David (2001b). "Review: 'Sell it! Sell it!': Recent Translations of *Lunyu*," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)*, 23: 115–39.

Schaberg, David (2005). "Platitude and Persona: *Junzi* Comments in the *Zuozhuan* and Beyond," in Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, Achim Mittag and Jörn Rüsen (eds.), *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism, and Ideology: Chinese Historiography and Historical Culture From a New Comparative Perspective*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 177–98.

Shiji 史記 (1959). Compiled by Sima Qian 司馬遷. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju.

Sibu congkan (chubian) 四部叢刊 (初編) (1922). Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan; digitized by the Unihan Digital Technology Co., Ltd., in 2001, version 1.0.

Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 (1946). *Rongo to Kōshi no shisō* 論語と孔子の思想. Tokyo: Iwanami.

Tuckett, Christopher (2001). "Sources and Methods," in Markus Bockmuehl (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 122–37.

Van Zoeren, Steven Jay (1991). *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Waley, Arthur (1938). *The Analects of Confucius*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Weingarten, Oliver (2010). "Textual Representations of a Sage: Studies of pre-Qin and Western Han sources on Confucius (551–479 BC)," PhD thesis, Cambridge University.

Zhao Zhenxin 趙貞信 (1961). "*Lunyu* jiujing shi shei bianzuan de《論語》究竟是誰編纂的," *Beijing Shifan Daxue xuebao*, 4: 11–24.

Zhu Weizheng 朱維錚 (1986). "Lunyu jieji cuoshuo 論語結集脞説," *Kongzi yanjiu* 孔子研究, 1: 40–52.

Zhu Weizheng 朱維錚 (2002). *Zhongguo jingxue shi shi jiang* 中國經學史十講. Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe.