

Luxuriant Gems of the Spring and Autumn. Attributed to Dong Zhongshu. Edited and translated by Sarah A. Queen and John S. Major. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. Pp. xii + 681. \$65.00.

As recognized from at least the time of Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), interpretation of the *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 is subject to a number of major difficulties, such as the authorship, authenticity, and unity of the text, whose readings may often be subject to question. It is therefore with considerable expectation that we receive this annotated introduction and translation, knowing that to be acceptable it must depend on a full appreciation of the intellectual movements of both Han times and later, with an ability to place its content in the context formed both by other writings and the institutional arrangements of the time. It is sadly necessary to warn readers that the book is not free of inaccuracies.

It would be a very bold scholar who would assert that the *Chunqiu fanlu*, available in different forms and lengths since Tang times, is an easy text. Since Song times at least scholars have suspected that it is a composite piece of writing that derives from a variety of sources, and no Chinese commentary is known before the Qing dynasty. While the book is attributed to Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, who may be dated at *c.* 198 to *c.* 107 b.c.e., such an authorship has long been subject to question. As far as may be known, no suggestions have been made that long passages that date from Tang times or later have been interpolated into the text as received. But the recognition that it includes material from different sources dated at various times throws doubt on how far the book should be taken as representing a single mode of thought, or as the conclusions reached by a group of scholars in agreement.

Undeterred by such doubts Professors Queen and Major are ready to dismiss problems of authenticity and dating and to treat the text as the “record of a living and thriving tradition of exegesis, based on the *Gongyang Commentary* to the *Spring and Autumn*, that addresses some of the most pressing concerns of the Han era” (p. 16). A statement or analysis of how *Gongyang* 公羊 learning differed from that of other groups of scholars would be of great help to readers. Certainly it is correct to acknowledge that at some stage this collection of writings was assembled and shown off to be treated as a single, unified text with its own message. But presentation of the received text within the context of China’s literary and intellectual development as a unity cannot ignore the fact that these problems exist and have a direct bearing on its interpretation. The implication that, thanks to an uncertainty of the dating or authorship of parts of the text, some writers may have relegated them to “the dust-bin of history” (p. 16) is an unfair charge to bring against professional scholars and requires support.

There are perhaps two general ways in which a study of the *Chunqiu fanlu* may be framed: as an account of its content that precedes a translation of the entire text; or as an analysis of its thought, illustrated by passages of the original. Neither way is a wholly satisfactory means of handling a book which some or even many scholars might regard as an anthology taken from a number of sources. The authors here have contrived to follow both of these methods, and succeed partly in the difficult but essential task of discriminating between sections that are of different origin.

Such discrimination is based here almost entirely on differences in the content of the book's passages. Certainly an attempt to explain the ideas of this text in terms of Western categories, definitions, and judgements may, if conducted with due care, lead to a valuable clarification. The danger lies in an unconscious imposition of such ideas on a text, culture, or a society where such assumptions may not necessarily be applicable and where they cannot be taken for granted. In a few cases this approach may lead to an excessively phrased description of events or ideas that cannot be easily verified, such as a reference to "the whole of Confucius's reform program" (p. 40); or "the sorry state of official recruitment," which, we are told "Dong insists, is surely the source of the anomalies that plague Emperor Wu's reign" (p. 196). Likewise the coining and use of the term "neofeudal" (p. 57) is likely to be confusing rather than meaningful.

Both in this book and in Professor Queen's earlier study¹ the *pian* 篇 are grouped together under categories of their contents, with some differences in the selections; e.g. *pian* nos. 18 to 22 are labelled "the Huang-Lao chapters" in the earlier but "Monarchical Principles" in the later work (see p. 195 for this change). Such differences suggest that categorization of such a type may well be subjective and should properly be supported by other approaches that might be of a more definite type. A thorough philological examination of the text could well suggest the isolation of certain chapters or passages, or the treatment of others as deriving from a source in common. Some allusions in the text, or its very statements, or the appearance of technical terms may point to institutions or usages that cannot be dated to the years of Dong Zhongshu, or even to Han times. A study of such "anachronisms," e.g., details in the grading of would-be officials as in *pian* no. 21, might well clarify some of these questions. As the authors note in at least some instances the presence or absence of citations from or allusions to other writings or modes of thought may well indicate how some chapters are to be isolated (e.g., the absence of references to the *Chunqiu* 春秋, in *pian* nos. 18 to 22 (see p. 185), or to *wu xing* 五行 elsewhere; or the complex of intellectual forms and ritual practice in *pian* no. 23).

¹ Sarah A. Queen, *From chronicle to canon: The hermeneutics of the Spring and Autumn, according to Tung Chung-shu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

It is in any event a pleasure to welcome the translation of one of China's early texts into English, thereby making its content available both to specialists in China's early intellectual history and to readers whose primary interests are in other cultures or disciplines. And immediate difficulties lie in this task. Scholars and historians of China require the support of detailed annotation for the statements that this book includes; they would thus appreciate some further information that is not given, such as precise referencing, evidence for textual emendation (suitably added on p. 324 for the addition of the character *mo* 莫) or the reasons behind a choice of the terms used in translation (e.g., for *tingwei* 廷尉; see the note to p. 9 below). On the other hand readers from other disciplines may well require some basic explanations or information with which their colleagues will be familiar, such as the dates of a dynasty or an individual (e.g., p. 55 for the Liang dynasty). Long as this book is, the addition of such information would contrive to ease the reader's task of understanding the subject.

Professors Queen and Major see the *Chunqiu fanlu* as a collection of writings assembled to serve the particular purpose of explaining the teaching of one type or element of China's traditional ways of thought. This was the element that was put forward in the *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳, one of several commentaries or annotations of the *Chunqiu*, whose authorship was ascribed to Kongzi 孔子. Readers of this book would have appreciated an explanation of the differences between the attitudes of the *Gongyang zhuan* and other annotations such as the *Guliang zhuan* 穀梁傳, featuring as they do in a major way in China's scholarly discussions, sometimes with political implications. There also arises the question of the part that the *Chunqiu* and its lessons may have taken in scholarly discussions and in what ways it was influential. Thus we find a very great difference between the low frequency with which passages from the *Chunqiu fanlu* are cited in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 of Li Fang 李昉 (983), as compared with those from the *Bohu tong* 白虎通.

As readers may need reminding, the textual history of the work is not encouraging, with Ouyang Xiu noting in 1037 that the extant copy ran to no more than forty *pian*, and other scholars of Song times observing its deficiencies. No full annotation of the text had been framed until the eighteenth century.

To these observations we may add the suggestion that parts of the book may have derived from a summary of the case that some protagonists made at the discussions held in the Chamber of the White Tiger in c.e. 79; and that the name of Dong Zhongshu, a master of *Gongyang* of a former age, was attached to the account so as to lend it authority.

Zhangdi 章帝 (r. 76–89), under whose rule the debate took place, had a predilection for other texts, named as the *Guwen shangshu* 古文尚書 and *Zuoshi zhuan*

左氏傳。² It was Ban Gu's 班固 account of the debate, in the *Bohu tong*, that came to be cited frequently in the encyclopaedic collections of the Tang period; expositions of the views of an opposing party, such as may be seen in the *Chunqiu fanlu*, and were of a personal nature, were more wisely to be kept in private hands and not widely circulated.

China's traditional scholars have questioned whether some parts of the text that lies before us have been misplaced, and Professors Queen and Major have been at pains to show how the existing *pian* are better seen as including a number of sections that should be separated. Such suggestions may well be valid; but if the *Chunqiu fanlu*, or parts of it, do indeed derive from a reporter's account of the debate, it would be understandable that their presentation of the statements that were advanced might well be disjointed and incoherent, rather than being formed as coherent, well ordered arguments that lay behind a theory.

This suggestion may be supported by the following considerations.

In a number of instances the two texts address the same subject; the division of the *pian* into sections that Queen and Major suggest accords with the conduct of a debate rather than with a written essay that was directed to a particular subject; and the form of discourse of some of the chapters derives from an open discussion.

We thus find that *pian* no. 4 (6 "Wang dao" 王道) of the *Chunqiu fanlu*, which discusses the rule of certain kings of mythology, is resonant with passages of the *Bohu tong*. We read the view that the *Gongyang* school took of the sequences of dynastic rule and change in *Chunqiu fanlu* 7 (23 "Sandai gai zhi zhi wen" 三代改制質文, p. 198) and in *Bohu tong* 7 (20 "Kaochu" 攷黜, p. 316).³ *Jue* 爵, in the sense of grades or social ranking, forms the subject of *CQFL* 8 (28 "Jue guo" 爵國), p. 233 and *BHT* 1 (1 "Jue"), pp. 6–16. Both of the texts are concerned with heirs and their nomination, in *CQFL* 9 (33 "Guan de" 觀德), p. 273 and *BHT* 4 (7 "Feng gong hou" 封公侯), pp. 147–49, as they are with terminology, in *CQFL* 10 (35 "Shencha minghao" 深察名號), p. 284, and *BHT* 2 (2 "Hao" 號), p. 43, and the correct forms of ceremonial presents, in *CQFL* 16 (72 "Zhi zhi" 執贄), p. 419 and *BHT* 8 (26 "Rui zhi" 瑞贄), p. 355. The term *wu xing* 五行 appears in the titles of nine *pian*

² See *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), *juan* 卷 36, p. 1236; Anne Cheng, *Étude sur le confucianisme Han: L'élaboration d'une tradition exégétique sur les classiques* (Paris: Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, Collège de France, 1985), p. 105.

³ References are to Su Yu 蘇輿 *Chunqiu fanlu yizheng* 春秋繁露義證 (1914 [preface 1909]), ed. Zhong Zhe 鍾哲 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992); and Chen Li 陳立, *Bohu tong shuzheng* 白虎通疏證 (preface 1832), ed. Wu Zeyu 吳則虞 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994). See Michael Loewe, *Dong Zhongshu, a "Confucian" Heritage and the Chunqiu fanlu* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011), p. 303.

of the *Chunqiu fanlu* (nos. 36, 42, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64); their contents may be compared with that of *pian* 9 of the *Bohu tong*, which is entitled simply by that term. Other instances may surely be found in which the *Chunqiu fanlu* and the *Bohu tong* each record explanations of the same problem of state or institutional usage.

The *pian* of the *Bohu tong* are divided into sections, each one of which is followed by its own title. Professors Queen and Major likewise see their text as including a number of separate sections, as perhaps did some of China's traditional scholars such as Ling Shu 凌曙 (1775–1829) who may also have suggested places where paragraphs or sections have been misplaced. Due account must certainly be given to such observations and suggestions. But if it is supposed that the *Chunqiu fanlu* or parts of it derive from a record of the discussions of c.e. 79, the book must be considered as such rather than as a presentation of ideas and principles that strives to be systematic. The *Chunqiu fanlu* concerns matters of great importance in the ordering of a society and the way in which it is governed; one could expect or hope that essays that were directed to such subjects would be set out in a comprehensive and well directed manner, as they are to be found in texts such as the *Lun heng* 論衡 or *Qianfu lun* 潛夫論. But open discussions of such topics, as we are told took place in Luoyang in 79, may well have taken meandering turns, and it is not impossible that the *Chunqiu fanlu* may retain such diversifications by following what actually took place. Those of us who have attended seminars may well be aware of the difference between an open discussion and a finalised article.

The form of some passages may reveal that the text may be following the stages of a debate. They record statements or opinions put forward by an unnamed speaker (*huo zhe yue* 或者曰), or an objection raised against what has been expressed (*nan zhe yue* 難者曰, *CQFL* 3 [5 “Jing hua” 精華], p. 88); and in one case we have an answer (*ying zhe yue* 應者曰).⁴ Dialogue form, however, is by no means restricted to parts of the *Chunqiu fanlu*. It forms the structure of the *Yantie lun* 鹽鐵論 and it is used as a rhetorical device in the *Lun heng*.

In defending their persistent use of the term “Confucian,” the authors write, “[w]e regard ‘Confucianism’ as a capacious, somewhat baggy term, rather like ‘Christianity’ or ‘Marxism’” (p. 13). They distinguish their use of the term as applying to Han time writers from its use in a title of a much later mode of thought known as Neo-Confucianism, or as a description of scholars of the seventeenth century. They use the term to “acknowledge that they [i.e., Dong Zhongshu and some of his contemporaries] regarded Confucius as the pre-eminent sage of human history and the author of the *Spring and Autumn* and accepted that text (seen through the lens of the

⁴ E.g., see *CQFL* 3 (4 “Yu ying” 玉英), pp. 75, 78; 3 (5 “Jing hua”), p. 85; 10 (35 “Shencha minghao”), p. 303.

Gongyang Commentary) as the authoritative and canonical guide to creating a good society and a just and effective government in their own time” (p. 13).

Loose and indiscriminate use of other terms elsewhere, whether “baggy” or not, can hardly justify its adoption in a scholarly volume, and such a claim cannot pass without question. It has to be shown that Dong Zhongshu, whose references to Kongzi in his memorials are slight, or his contemporaries, saw him as such a pre-eminent master. Major differences in political and social thought and practice separated the time of Kongzi and that of the Western Han emperors such that the assumptions of the fifth century b.c.e. could not be simply applied to the time of an established empire. While it may well be convenient to categorise Chinese teachings under major headings, be they Confucian, Legalist, Daoist, or Mohist, an implication that such modes of thought were exclusive of the ideas of another group can only be misleading.

The term “Confucianism” as a translation of *ru* 儒 was evolved by some of the Protestant missionaries who were preaching their faith in China in the nineteenth century, and it was presumably on the advice of their Chinese teachers that they did so. Such teachers would have been transmitting what had by their time become an article of faith in Kongzi’s heritage. However, it cannot be assumed that such a usage always prevailed over the centuries. As a category of writings that lay in the imperial library at the end of Western Han, *ru* included four *pian* of Zhuang Zhu 莊助 and the *Yantie lun*, a work which can hardly be described as “Confucian.” In our own time the term is being put to even more general and imprecise use, with the official establishment of some four hundred so called “Confucian Institutes,” whatever their connection with Kongzi may be. As a parallel, we may likewise ask in what way and how effectively the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth feature in organizations such as the Young Mens’ Christian Association.

Pian no. 5 “Jing hua” addresses the means adopted to induce a fall of rain. In doing so it concerns a major problem that the greater part of the population of the Han empire faced and which engaged the attention of a number of scholars. The chapter is basically concerned with the movements of the yin-yang cycle, thereby forming an exception to Professors Queen and Major’s statement (p. 56) that, with the exception of *pian* no. 12, chapters that are termed “Exegetical Principles” are “virtually devoid of references to yin-yang or Five-Phase cosmology” (p. 56). The chapter certainly does not refer to the *wu xing*. It alludes to appeals for rain that took the form of beating drums and assaulting the spirit of the earth, with the use of a red silken cord to express such a threat. Comparison may be drawn with two other *pian* of the *Chunqiu fanlu* that treat the means of attracting and discouraging rain (*pian* nos. 74 and 75), and also with other means of bringing about a downpour. A passage in the *Bohu tong* interprets the onset of drought in terms of yin’s victory over yang

and likewise includes a reference to the use of a red cord (*BHT* 6, 16 “Zai bian” 災變, pp. 272–73). Elsewhere we read of the steps that Dong Zhongshu took. He too attributed a lack of rain to the movements of the yin-yang cycle, and he would take active steps to close the physical means of entry for yang, and to open that for yin. At the same time he is said to have set out clay models of dragons, with the expectation that they would mount aloft into the sky and provoke the fall of rain.⁵

References to the text are given to D. C. Lau’s fine edition, which was intended to bring textual differences to the fore, with the stated choice of the readings that he believed to be correct. None could dispute the immense contribution that D. C. Lau and his colleagues have provided in this way for the major works of China’s early literature. However, those of us who knew and worked with that fine scholar would never assume that he advised the study of a text without full attention to the existence of different readings and the annotation of China’s own traditional scholars. In the present instance he would surely have required attention to Su Yu’s edition, which Professors Queen and Major did indeed consult; inclusion of references thereto would have been of great benefit to readers of this volume. They would also have appreciated the inclusion of Chinese characters for proper names and terms with greater frequency.

Regrettably a number of errors are to be found, be they of reference, interpretation or translation.

p. 5, n. 20. Reliance on a report in the *Daily Mail* of 5 August 2014 for the contents found in the tomb of Liu Fei 劉非 is insufficient for a scholarly publication; reference should be to the excavation report in *Kaogu* 考古, 2013, no. 10, pp. 3–68.

p. 6. *Zhong dafu* 中大夫 is rendered as “grand master to the palace,” thereby giving a false impression of a dignitary of higher rank and importance than that of the post.

p. 9. The rendering of *tingwei* as “chamberlain for law enforcement” is far from suitable and is somewhat misleading. While “chamberlain” is used to denote certain dignitaries in a royal or imperial palace, the *tingwei* was within a completely different category, being one of the nine all but most senior officials of the government, junior only to the chancellor (*chengxing* 丞相) and the imperial counsellor (*yushi dafu* 御史大夫). The duties of this official, whose title is sometimes rendered as Commandant for Justice (by A. F. P. Hulswé and Hans Bielenstein) or Commissioner for Trials were in no way limited to enforcement of the laws, which fell to other officials.

⁵ See Loewe, *Dong Zhongshu*, p. 165, with references to *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), *juan* 121, p. 3128; *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), *juan* 56, p. 2524; Huang Hui 黃暉, *Lun heng jiaoshi* 論衡校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), *juan* 6 (47 “Luan long” 亂龍), p. 693.

p. 55. Qi Shaonan 齊召南 (1703–1768) implicitly confirms the doubts of this reviewer whether *wen ju* 聞舉 should be taken as the title of a piece of writing; see the notes in Wang Xianqian 王先謙, *Han shu buzhu* 漢書補注 (Changsha: Xushou tang 虛受堂, 1900), *juan* 56, p. 21a.

p. 57. Creation of the term “neofeudal,” whatever that term may be intended to mean, is not appropriate to the establishment of the kingdoms of Western Han.

p. 58. Jia Yi 賈誼 is described as advising Jingdi 景帝. While the date when Jia Yi died is not known for certain, there is nothing to show that he lived until Jingdi’s reign (157–141 b.c.e.).

p. 58. *Shi wei tianzi shi suo bu jian, ting suo bu wen* 使為天子視所不見，聽所不聞 (Su, p. 313) is rendered “to enable the Son of Heaven to observe what he could not see [personally, and] perceive what he could not hear.” More accurately the text should be translated as “to bring it about that they [i.e., the ruling authorities established in remote regions] should on behalf of the Son of Heaven observe what he did not see and listen to what he did not hear.” *Zhuhou zhi wei yan, you zhuhou ye* 諸侯之為言，猶諸侯也 (Su, p. 314) is rendered “That is why the expression ‘Lords of the Land’ (*zhuhou* 諸侯) resembles the expression ‘numerous servants’ (*zhuhou* 諸候),” and this is difficult to comprehend. A different version would read “the actions and words of the *zhuhou* 諸侯 are like those of an observer *zhuhou* 諸候.”

pp. 62–63, nn. 44, 47. The references should be to *Han shu* 88, p. 3616 and not to *Shiji*, *juan* 121, pp. 3127, 3129. Rather than “he established a tradition of transmission of his own,” the text *zi you zhuan* 自有傳, referring to Dong Zhongshu and Sui Meng 眭孟, means “he has a biography of his own,” as may be seen in *Han shu*, *juan* 56, p. 2495 and *juan* 75, p. 3153.

p. 63. The translation of *wei Zhaodi jian dafu* 為昭帝諫大夫 (*Han shu*, *juan* 88, p. 3616), with reference to Ying gong 嬴公, as “remonstrating with the great officers on behalf of Emperor Yuan” is incorrect. It should read “held the post of Advisory counsellor (*jian dafu* 諫大夫) during Zhaodi’s reign.” Zhaodi reigned from 87 to 74 b.c.e., Yuandi 元帝 from 48 to 33 b.c.e.

p. 116, n. 21. Translation from the *Chunqiu* reads somewhat curiously “Summer. The tenth month”; for “tenth” read “fourth” month.

p. 194. We read that “chapters 18 through 22 preserve materials that are best understood as expressions of the syncretic stream of political thought that enjoyed imperial patronage during the formative years of the Han.” It would be clearer if the subjects of these *pian* could be identified, and the expressions “syncretic stream,” “imperial patronage,” and “formative years” merit explanation. There is in fact a variety of subjects mentioned in these *pian*, ranging from the value of *wuwei* 無為 to ways of testing a person’s abilities, and the place of the ruler in the realm, such that it is questionable how far they should be treated together.

pp. 194–95. We read of the “Huang-Lao atmosphere of Emperor Jing’s court.” More specifically it was the Empress Dowager Dou 竇, empress of Wendi 文帝, who is reported to have favoured these ideas; and readers need a reminder of their contrast with the ruthless policies of Jingdi’s government.

pp. 196, 633. *Jin zhi junshou xianling* 今之郡守縣令 is rendered “[c]urrently the governors of the commanderies and prefects of the provinces” (*Han shu*, *juan* 56, p. 2512). The *xian*, usually rendered “counties” or “prefectures” were subordinate units of the commanderies (*jun* 郡), and were under the control of a magistrate (*ling* 令 or *chang* 長); translation as “province” is inappropriate and misleading. That term is regularly adopted to translate *sheng* 省, an administrative unit that was introduced from Yuan times, and was large enough to include the territory of a number of units previously known as *jun*. As used here “province” implies that the *xian* were at a higher ranking level than the *jun*. *Xian* is more correctly translated as prefecture as on p. 541.

p. 213. Translation of *pian* 21 (Su, p. 177) renders *tiandao jiju zhong jing yi wei guang* 天道積聚眾精以為光 as “The Way of Heaven accumulates and collects an abundance of quintessence in order to be radiant”; and in the following phrase, said of the *sheng ren* 聖人, *jiju zhong shan yiwei gong* 積聚眾善以為功 is rendered “accumulates and collects an abundance of excellence in order to be meritorious.” Different interpretations would read “collects the quintessence from a multiplicity of phenomena,” and “collects excellence from a large number of actions.”

p. 324. The title of *pian* no. 31 reads *shen zhi yang zhong yu yi* 身之養重於義 (Su, p. 263). As given here it includes the addition of the character *mo* 莫 before *zhong*, and while this may well be correct, it does not appear in traditional editions and it is not mentioned by D. C. Lau. Su Yu observes, and Professors Queen and Major repeat, that the addition of the character is present in a work entitled *Huang shi ri chao* 黃氏日鈔. Readers of today would appreciate the identification of Huang shi as Huang Zhen 黃震, style Dongfa 東發, *fl.* 1270, to be distinguished from a man of the same name, style Boqi 伯起, *fl.* 1040.

p. 633. *Tianxia* 天下 is mistranslated as “empire.”

p. 634. *Li* 吏, incorrectly rendered as “clerk” in some other writings, is translated here as “subofficial functionary,” following Charles O. Hucker. However well this expression may apply to the Ming or Qing dynasties, in which Hucker specialized, it can hardly be used in respect of Han institutions, and if it is so used it requires explanation. In Western Han usage *li* is the regular term for “official.” It was only later that *guan* 官, which first denoted an “official post” rather than a person, was later used to do so.

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