

X
Tenth Couplet

融四歲 . 能 讓 梨 : 弟 於 長 . 宜 先 知
yung² ssu⁴ sui⁴ . neng² jang⁴ li²
ti⁴ yü² ch'ang³ . yi² hsien¹ chih¹

Rhyme: 支 chih¹ (“the whip“).

N.B.: We encountered “whip” rhymes in # V, VI and VIII, when the teaching methods of strict fathers and teachers were discussed. In the present context, treating of the relation between younger and elder brothers, a “whip” rhyme may surprise, especially in the case of the Benjamin. 小弟弟 “the cadet” is pampered by the whole family, to the point where he may remain infantile for life.* Yet, in exchange for the petting and all the tenderness and attention lavished on him, he is expected to show himself 敬 ching⁴ “submissive, yielding”, and the kanji displays “the whip” as an alternative to subservience.

*) The phenomenon of perpetual infancy corresponds to the Taoist ideal of the lao³ tzu³, 老子 “the old infant”, indeed the appellation of its patriarch. This ideal conditioned Chinese civilization. Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) noticed this fact, perhaps instinctively, and wondered: “Why does China sadly age forever in perpetual infancy?” This was at the end of the XVIII century, at the end of the glorious reign of Ch’ien Lung (1736-1796), when the Enlightenment reached the peak of its China craze.

Translation:

*Bright, at the age of four, was capable of ceding a pear.
A cadet's [correct comportment] towards elders ought to be
known foremost.*

> 弟 ti⁴ “the younger brother; to behave oneself properly as a younger (brother); to be subservient to one’s elders”. In the

latter acceptation it may read t'i⁴ and appear as 悌, an alternative graph.

Master Wang's Commentary

10-A

敦 倫 篤 誼 友 于 爲 重

tun¹ lun² tu^{3.5} yi⁴ yu³ yü² wei² chung⁴

Brotherly kindness and reverence are important in securing order and promoting correct behaviour.

The construction of this sentence is parallel to # 9-A.

> 敦 and 篤 are synonyms (*R.*, 1674 and 1647 “festigen“).

> 倫 “order”, public and social order, namely the famous “five relations” listed in the *Li chi*, Chung yung 20 (*C.*, p. 46; *L.*, p. 406-407), and in *MENCIUS*, *HY.* 3A/4 (*C.*, p. 424-425; *L.*, p. 252; cf. *M.*, 1.257.1099): father-son, sovereign-subject, husband-wife, senior-junior, friends.

> 誼 shows, aside from the “word”, that “under the roof, everything is in good order” (*W.* 165F). Homonymous and synonymous with 義 (cf. *Cd.*, p. 205a), it signifies the correct conduct of the family members among themselves (cf. # 10-B); hence, we may translate it as correct “behaviour”.

> 友 the kanji is actually composed of two right hands suggestive of kindly help and cooperation (*W.* 43P). It befits the elder brother (cf. # 10-B).

> 于 may be written with the “woman” radical (same pronunciation) and signify “polite, well behaved” (*Cd.*, p. 272 b). As it is synonymous with 恭 kung¹ “obedience, submissiveness”, it befits the cadet (cf. below, # 10-B). This, however, is only the “rejected meaning” (cf. below, N.B. 2).

> 友于 is a truncated quotation (cf. below) which became an expression. According to the definition given in *M.*, 2.3119.5, it means “respect and affection between elder and younger brothers”; according to *MTH.*, 7540.2, it means “to show kindness towards (a younger) brother”.

Quotation:

友于 *Shu ching*, V. XXI.1 (*L.*, p. 535):

惟爾令德孝恭. 惟孝友于兄弟. 克施有政. 命汝 ...
 (Thus spoke the king: “Chün-ch’en,) obedience (kung¹)
 [resulting from] filial piety is a noble (ling⁴) virtue which you
 possess to an eminent degree (first wei²). In consequence
 (second wei²) of your filial piety, you are, as an elder brother
 and as a younger brother [respectively,] cooperative and
reverent,* so much so that (k’o⁵) a fruitful (you³) government
 will spread out. We appoint you ... &c.

*) Namely, “you are a 友兄 and a 于弟”.

> 惟 makes a *distinctio*: first, “to an eminent degree”; second, “consequently”.

> 孝恭 : *M.*, 3.6952.60 understands it as a binome, “to submit piously to the will of one’s parents”. *P’ei*, however, does not list this binome. Whether binome or asyndeton is of little importance, since, according to the rules of the hieroglyphic style (A determines B, B determines C, and C is “what it is all about”) the first 孝 determines 恭, meaning “filial obedience”.

> 有 “fertile, yielding a rich harvest” (*Odes*).

> 施 may be read at will, shih⁴ or shih¹ “to spread out, to extend” as in *Yi ching*, *H.Y.* 1/1, p. 1a & b, 德施普也 (...) 雲行雨施 “his virtue spreads out to all places (...) clouds wander and rain spreads”.

N.B. 1: Our text alludes to the theory of the 三才 san¹ ts’ai², the “THREE forces”, i.e. Heaven, Earth and the emperor, a central theme of Confucian cosmology. The emperor (一人) is possessed of divine charisms such as omnipotence, omniscience, &c., and his virtue affects positively (his vices negatively) the everlasting sexual intercourse of Heaven and Earth, thus allowing the seasons to alternate harmoniously, the rain to fall on time, the earth to produce abundant crops (cf. *Li chi*, *Yüeh ling* 月令). Acting like the rays emanating from the sun, each mandarin spreads the imperial charisms / virtues “under Heaven”, and extends their beneficial effects

over the territory entrusted to his administration (read *GRANET!*).

This royal word was quoted (with alterations) by Confucius in answer to the question, why he did not bother holding a public office himself (*Lun yü, HY. 3/2/21: L., p. 152-153; C., p. 82-83*):

書云孝乎：惟孝友于兄弟。施於有政：
是亦為政：奚其為為政

What does the Shu [ching] say about filial piety? ‘Consequent to your filial piety you are cooperative and reverent [respectively] as an elder brother and as a younger brother.’ To propagate [these virtues] for the fruitful government [of any household]: verily, this is a public function too. Why should this (exercising a public function) be done [solely] by holding office?

克 / 於：in the *Shu ching* the virtues of filial piety and fraternal harmony are taken as criteria for appointing a man to public office. In contrast, Confucius argues (and the commentary explains it at length) that to establish these virtues within all the families under Heaven, is also a public function; hence, there is no need for him, Confucius, to hold a governmental office in addition. For Master Wang this is an important thought and he quotes the pericope twice, here and in 9-G. Not everybody can attain a mandarin position; but everybody can propagate virtue by ruling his own family in a virtuous fashion, and at least try “to let virtue shine brightly” 明明德 (*Ta hsioh, incipit, cf. # 9-B*).

N.B. 2: The *Lun yü* commentary (following the quotation of # 9-G) defines:

善兄弟曰友：書言。君陳能孝於親。友於兄弟
Harmonious brotherhood is called 友. Paraphrase of the Shu [ching text]: Chün-ch'en was filial with his parents and cooperative with his brothers.

Notice that, by reading 於 instead of the original 于, the commentary rejects to the B-level the interpretation to which

preference was given in translating the above lines of the *Shu ching* and the *Lun yü*.

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10-B

兄弟之義幼學所宜知也

hsiung¹ ti⁴ chih¹ yi⁴ . yu⁴ hsioh^{2.5} so³ yi² chih¹ yeh³

It is fitting for schoolboys to know the correct comportment between elder and younger brothers.

> 義 “the correct comportment”. There are FIVE: 五 義 (*M.*, 1.257.175.1): 父 義 . 母 慈 . 兄 友 . 弟 恭 . 子 孝 , *the father is righteous, the mother compassionate, the elder brother cooperative, the younger brother respectful, and the children filial*. Among these, the correct comportment of elder and younger brothers towards each other are 友 and 恭, respectively, or simply 友 (cf. # 10-A).

N.B.: This list of FIVE *yi*'s fits our context because of the way in which it contrasts with the FIVE *lun* 五 倫 (# 10-A). These regulate social life in general. According to *M.* (loc. cit. above), the present set of FIVE *yi*'s, is taken from the commentary to the *Kuo yü*. There are, however, other ways in which to count the *yi*'s, namely there may be FOUR *yi*'s, 孝 弟 忠 信, “filial piety”, “brotherly love”, “fidelity” and “truthfulness” (cf. *DORÉ*, XIV, pp. 506-510); and there may be TEN *yi*'s, counted differently in the *Li ki*, *Li yü*n, *H.Y.* 9/23 (*C.*, p. 516-517), the *San tzu ching* (cf. *GILES*, p. 45-49, *DES MICHELS*, pp. 44-47) and the *Purple pearl* (cf. *M.*, 2.2695.59). Giles points out: “The difficulty is to make out the ten”. The hesitancy in counting the *yi*'s is caused most certainly by the fact that TEN is taken not so much for its numeric value, but for its numerological significance, indicating fullness, completeness.

> 幼學 is a binome. It looks like a quotation, but, strictly speaking, it is not. We read in the *Li chi*, Ch'ü li, *HY*. 1/8 (C., I, p. 8):

人生十年曰幼學

At ten years, a man is called a 'youth', and he goes to school.

The caesura between 幼 and 學 is mandatory as it follows on from similar constructions of term-and-definition of the nine subsequent ages, e.g. 二十曰弱冠 *at twenty, he is called a 'weakling', and he receives the cap.* (&c., and) 百曰期頤 *at hundred, he is called a 'terminator', and he is entertained.* However, all grammatical rules notwithstanding, several of these name-and-characterisations have become expressions: 弱冠, literally “a weakling’s cap”, in reality means “a young man of twenty; one who has not yet been capped” (*MTH.*, 3128.4); 期頤 “a terminator’s entertainment” means “a centenarian” (*MTH.*, 526.b); and 幼學, literally “the studies of a youth” (actually the name of a book which Couvreur integrated into his dictionary, cf. *Cd.*, p. XIIc), means “young pupils” (*MTH.*, 7544.9; *M.*, 4.9193.19). As for the school age, cf. # 2-P, quotation, and # 3₂-C, quotation.

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10-C

漢時魯國孔融年始四歲即知友愛敬讓之道

han⁴ shih² lu³ kuo^{2.5} k'ung³ yung²

nien² shih³ ssu⁴ sui⁴ tsi^{2.5} chih¹ yu³ ai⁴ ching⁴ jang⁴ chih¹ tao⁴

In Han times, in the State of Lu, there was K'ung Yung. Barely four years old, he already knew the ways of affectionate deference.

K'ung Yung is said to be the descendant of Confucius in the twentieth generation. His biography can be found in the *Hou Han shu*, ch. 103; *San kuo chih*, ch. 12; *Jen ming ttt.*, p. 43c; *M.*, 3.6933.238-240; *GILES*, # 1046 & 375; for a picture of the scene, the legend, and the bibliography, see *DORÉ*, III, *La doctrine du confucéisme*, Tome XIV, p. 507.

> 融 yung³ “steam issuing forth” (MTH, 7566); according to the *Shuo wen* it means properly 炊氣上出也 “escaping kitchen fumes” (cf. 先炊 hsien¹ ch’ui¹ “the kitchen fumes of yore” meaning “my deceased mother”). However, the kanji may also mean “harmony, to shine brightly, tall, big”; and, as an anthroponym, it was chosen, presumably, as a flattering quotation of the *Odes*, HY. 63/247/3 (L., p. 476 and note), where it is glossed 明之盛 “the fullness of intelligence”. But alas! 孔 k’ung³ meaning “a hole”, “the warm vapours that rise from the hole” lend themselves to naughty interpretations akin to Yellow Fragrance, the hero of filial piety mentioned in # IX. The name of this paragon of cadet’s submissiveness has become a euphemism for “the fart”.

> 年始四歲, within the second or third year, a child starts “to smile and to laugh, to grasp and to hug” consciously, hence to exteriorise his positive feelings at will (cf. # 1₁-F). Now, at the beginning of his fourth year of age, our infant prodigy succeeded in making a marvelous show of modesty: good manners restrained his boyish gluttony.

> 友愛 “hearty mutual affection” among brothers, but also among friends. For a Confucian definition of friendship, see *OLTMANN*. (also # 10-K, Appendix) The expression is not of classical origin (M., 2.3119.1.I and II). K’ung Yung explains his behaviour not as an act of “hearty mutual affection”, but, in an abstract way, as dictated by 禮 li³ “the Ceremonies”, viz. the Chinese orthopraxy. We shall therefore consider 友愛 as a secondary motive, and translate it as an adjective.

Quotation:

敬讓之道

“the ways of deference” (literally “the way of self-control and self-restraint”, *C. reverentiae et obsequii via*) is quoted from the *Li chi*, Ching chiai, HY. 26/3 (C., II, p. 357-358):

Whoever esteems and observes the Ceremonies (禮) is a scholar (士) possessed of moral principles. Whoever does not esteem the Ceremonies and does not observe them is vulgar and devoid of moral principles. [The Ceremonies are]*

the ways of deference. (&c.: When observed in the ancestors' hall ... When at court ...) *When [the Ceremonies are] observed in the family, mutual affection (親) governs the relations between father and son, and concord (和) those between elder and younger brothers. (...) This is what Confucius meant when he said: "To keep the grandees quiet, and the mob under control, nothing is more expedient than the Ceremonies."* **

*) ... for, indeed, no one knows the Ceremonies unless he has studied them (cf. # 2-B, allusion).

**) Apophthegm also quoted in the *Hsiao ching*.

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10-D

時有饋送其家梨一筐

shih² yu³ k'uei⁴ sung⁴ chi² chia¹ li² yi^{1.5} k'uang¹

In those days, a basket of pears was sent to his family as a present.

> 饋送 is not necessarily "a farewell present" (*MTH.*, 3669.7): it may be quite generally any sort of present given for whatever reason (*M.*, 12.44382.18).

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10-E

諸兄競取之

chu¹ hsiung¹ ching⁴ ts'ü³ chih¹

The elder brothers wrangled [with each other] in order to get [the biggest] one.

Surprised by the inappropriate behaviour of the K'ung boys, one is tempted to correct the text and read, instead of 競 ching⁴ "to wrangle", 兢 ching¹ "each one at his own turn."

> 兢 cf. *W.* 97I (and C): 从二兄各執一丰: 兢 shows *two brothers, each holding his own tally* (chieh⁴), meaning "to be respectful of each other's right"; and among Chinese brothers, the "pecking order" is clear: the senior first, the cadet last. No

need to quarrel. This edifying emendation would allure, were it only warranted either by lexicography, or by the Manchu translation; unfortunately, *geren ahôta temxendume gairede*, renders word for word the Chinese as it stands. No, the elder K'ung boys were rascals.

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10-F

融獨後又擇其最小者取之

yung² tu^{2.5} hou⁴ yu⁴ tse^{2.5} ch'i² tsui⁴ hsiao³ che³ ts'ü³ chih¹

Bright, all by himself, stood behind; and he also selected among them (viz. the pears left over by his brothers) the very smallest one and took it.

> 獨 is properly “a baboon” (hence the “dog” radical). The kanji rings a derogatory and a laudatory note (a sexual hint, as by other simians, is possible but not attested):

a) Derogatory: applicable *infra*, in # 10-G;

b) Laudatory: The kanji carries the connotation (applicable here) of “extraordinary, remarkable”.

> 又 emphasises the contrast to the other boys' behaviour: “not only did Yung stay behind, but he also ... ”

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10-G

人問：爾何獨取小者

答曰：我本小兒。當取小者

jen² wen² erh³ ho² tu^{2.5} ts'ü³ hsiao³ che³

ta^{2.5} yüeh^{1.5} wo³ pen⁴ hsiao³ erh² tang¹ ts'ü³ hsiao³ che³

People asked: “Why do you alone take a small one?”

He answered: “[Because] I am myself the youngest son, it befits [me] to take the smallest [pear].”

... rather than “since I am *a little boy*, it befits me to take a small fruit”. K'ung Yung thinks not in terms of size or quantity, but in terms of rank: being the youngest son present, he holds the lowest rank, and therefore it befits him to come last and pick the smallest.

> 爾 is the proper way of addressing little boys (*MTH.*, 1754, quoting Hu Shih, notwithstanding) cf. *Cd.*, p. 63a, quoting *MENCIUS, HY. 57/7b/31* (*C.*, p. 645; *L.* p. 494):

人能充無受爾汝之實

... if people would take utmost care in order to avoid being addressed as 爾 or as 汝 ...

[爾汝] 人所輕賤之稱 erh³ and ju³ may be used to address persons deemed “lightweight” or of a low rank. Cf. also the explications of *C.* and *L.*, *loc. cit.* above. In the present context, however, “the baboon”, 獮, could make sense as a word of endearment.

> 小兒, meaning 我, “I, your son”, is an expression of modesty to be used by adults only (*MTH.*, 2605 (a) 1). 小兒子 hsiao³ erh² tzu⁰ “the youngest son” (*MTH.*, 2605.20), meaning, the youngest son present: for there were altogether seven K’ung boys, and our Bright was the fourth; but since at that time Bright was in his fourth year of age (= western style, “three years past”), whatever younger brothers there may have been, they were not yet able to choose pears by themselves.

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10-H

即此可觀其謙恭敬讓之一端

tsi^{2.5} ts’u³ k’o³ kuan¹ ch’i² ch’ien¹ kung¹ ching⁴ jang⁴ chih¹
yi^{1.5} tuan¹

[By] this one [trait] one may judge of the absolute perfection of his modesty and politeness.

> 謙恭 “modesty” (*M.*, 10.35821.11), “respectful, unassuming” (*MTH.*, 885.9, same *R.*, 5134), not classic.

> 敬讓 “to be deferential” (*MTH.*, 1138.33), cf. above, # 10-C and *Li chi*, quotation.

> 端 “perfect, irreproachable”;

> — “unique, absolute”.

> 一 端 “a part, a division, a section, a group” (*MTH.*, 6541.5, same *M.*, 1.1.1499) not applicable here. Cf. *infra*, quotation.

The above interpretation is certainly appealing and would be fine, were it not that 一 端 is a well-known *Li chi* quotation (*P'ei*, p. 595c-596a; also quoted in the *Chia yü*); and that the Manchu scholars, instead of grouping the kanjis two by two, counted four virtues. All things considered, let the orthodox translation read:

[Starting from] this [example,] we may meditate upon the single principle of his (viz. the boy's) modesty (ch'ien¹), politeness (kung¹), deference (ching⁴), obsequiousness (jang⁴).

This one principle is 弟 ti⁴, the submissiveness of the cadet towards the senior; or, more generally, the Ceremonies, 禮, as quoted above, in # 10-C.

Quotation:

一 端 *Li chi*, Tsi yi, *HY.* 0 (*C.* II, p. 278-279):

夫言豈一端而已。夫各有所當也

In sum, how could there be only one criterium of correctness. Each [case] calls for its own criterium to be applied.

註言不可以一概也 *Commentary, paraphrase: It is wrong to use only one yardstick.*

Sit modus in rebus (a Latin proverb saying: “An appropriate measure should be kept in all things.”). The story goes that, on one occasion, Confucius appeared to officiate less ceremoniously than he should have done. Questioned by the disciples, Confucius explained that, since the circumstances had changed, the ritual must be changed accordingly; and he concludes with the above statement. By using the expression 一 端, Master Wang actually turns his statement around to the contrary. No, there is no simple recipe for achieving perfection; and 禮, the Ceremonies, should be adjusted to the circumstances. A point truly to be meditated, 可觀. Sublime theory is one thing; practice is something else; and they should not be mistaken for one another: Chinese wisdom. (For similar wizardry, the duck-and-drake of a quotation modifying the general statement, cf. # 1₁-H.)

> 概 kai⁴ is properly the stick with which to level the grain in a dry measure: “rule, general law, in general”.

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10-I

日後罹鉤黨禍
jih^{4.5} hou⁴ li² kou¹ tang³ huo⁴

Later on he was caught in the disaster of a conspiracy.

> 日後 “later on, at a later time” is not of classical origin: *R.*, 3105; *M.*, 5.13733.296.

> 罹禍 “to suffer a disaster, to be caught in a disaster” *M.*, 9.28347.2; cf. # I₁, Ode 70, 1/5-7.

> 鉤黨 “a conspiracy” *M.*, 11.40319.67; *Cd.*, p. 331c.

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10-J

兄弟一門爭死
hsiung¹ ti⁴ yi^{1.5} men² cheng¹ ssu³

The brothers and their fellow conspirators vied for death.

The *Shih shuo shin yü* (II:V), relating the disaster, tells that, after K’ung Yung was executed, his friend prostrated himself over the corpse and implored to be killed too. The man was arrested, but Ts’ao Ts’ao pardoned him.

> 一門 may mean “the entire house”, 家 (including all the members, alive or dead, of a family); or “the entire clan”, 同族; or “the whole party” of the conspiracy, 黨 (*M.*, 1.1.2215).

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10-K

其孝友之風燦然千古矣
ch’i² hsiao⁴ you³ chih¹ feng¹ ts’an⁴ jan² ts’ien¹ ku³ yi³

These illustrious examples of filial piety and of brotherly cooperation shine over a thousand generations.

Yes, perhaps. But notice also that this first part of the children's primer *San tzu ching* (# I till # X) opens and closes with a disaster. Under the Manchu rule of law and order, a mandarin's career was fairly secure; however, looking at Ming times, at T'ang times, one finds that there was hardly an author of any importance who did not serve a term in exile (if he was lucky!). One really wonders how anyone in his right mind could choose such a career – but yet: the *San tzu ching*, in its present form, is of the Manchus.

> 其 “these”, or “their”, examples, namely of Huang Hsiang (# IX), of K'ung Yung (# X), and the like. There exist two series of 24 examples of filial piety each (cf. *DORÉ*, loc. cit. # IX); and if no similar list illustrative of “brotherly cooperation” exists, it is, presumably, because factionalism was endemic to Chinese society at all times (cf. above # 10-I) and it was felt to be in the public interest not to encourage it further. Examples of mutual support among brothers/friends were well known from literature, above all from the “Romance of the Three Kingdoms” *San kuo chih* 三國志 (cf. *FEIFEL*, p. 372) and its “sworn brothers of the Peach Grove”, Liu Pei, Chang Fei, and Kuan Yü 劉備. 張飛. 關羽 (who were deified to be appositely the patron gods of merchants).

> 友 “cooperation” was defined as “harmonious brotherhood” 善兄弟曰友 (cf. # 10-A, N.B.). However, it includes not only brothers, it also includes friends (cf. above # 10-C).



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The "Phoenix".