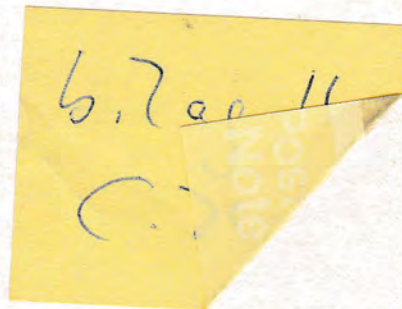


THE CLASSICAL CHINESE MODAL PARTICLE ㄝ

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I. Introductory Remarks

Joseph Henri Prémare, the incomparable pioneer in the field of Chinese grammar, wrote in 1730 "*Nulla enim littera proprie vacua est, sed in se semper aliquid significat*".¹ My teacher David Hawkes, from whom I ought to have learnt much more than I have, in the introduction to his translation of *Hung Lou Meng*, declared it his abiding principle to insist on translating everything he found in his sentences.²

The precise force of modal particles is notoriously difficult to pin down. But these modal particles do exist, and they should be no more neglected than the fine distinction between the aorist and the perfect forms of the verb in Classical Greek.³

In this article I aspire to live up to my teacher's abiding principle, and to vindicate Joseph Henri Prémare's grammatical statement, with respect to the modal particle *yi* 已. I hope that the result will be a sharper and more coherent overall picture of the semantics of the word *yi* 已 and of the semantics of sentences involving the particle *yi* 已.⁴ Since I am explicitly presenting much of the evidence my analysis is based on, the patient reader will, I hope, find it convenient to try out alternative interpretations of modal *yi* 已 to the one presented here. If someone comes up with a better solution, I shall not have presented the material in vain.

II. The Meanings of *Yi* 已

I shall begin by relating the grammatical usages of *yi* 已 to the verbal uses in a schematic way. I shall construe a sentence ending in modal *yi* 已 as deriving

¹ For properly speaking no character is 'empty'. Characters always do mean something in themselves.

² Tsau Shiue-chin, *The Story of the Stone*, vol. 1, p. 46.

³ Note incidentally the 'gnomic' uses of the generally past tense aorist in Classical Greek!

⁴ I do not claim originality for my interpretation. When Yan Shr-gu 顏師古 (581-645) observed on one occasion that *yi you er* 已猶耳 (*Jung-wen Da-tsz-dian* p. 4536), I think he came reasonably close to the truth. Chou Fa-kao (1975) is by far the best and the most detailed treatment of *yi* 已 to date.

by a process of grammaticalization from a complex sentence consisting of sentential subject followed by the predicate *yi* 已. We note that the origin of the modern particle *le* 了 has been shown to have similar verbal origins.

Let me try to set up a schema on the interrelated⁵ uses of *yi* 已:

1. Intransitive Verbal Uses:

1.1 *yi* 已 'to desist, to stop, to finish'

(1) 必不得已而去於斯三者何先。

"If you certainly (cannot manage to desist>) have no alternative but to give up one, which of these three would you put first?" (*Luen Yu* 12.7 (twice), cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 111)

The *Suen Tz* provides interesting evidence that *yi* means not just 'stop' (*jr* 止) but 'finish' (*cheng* 成):

(2) 修櫓輓輜具器械三月而後成。距闢又三月而後已。

To prepare the shielded wagons and make ready the necessary arms and equipment requires is only completed after three months; to pile up earthen ramps against the walls is first finished after another three months. (*Suen Tz* 3.4, cf. Griffith (1963) p. 78)

The *Lau Tz* conveniently links this to the 'exclamatory' *yi* 已:

(3) 不道早已。

If you do not behave according to the Way you come to an early end. (*Lau Tz* 30 and 55. Note the splendid verbal use of *dau* 道.)

Most significantly, in connection with our account of modal *yi* 已, we find the idiom *tze yi* 則已 'then that finishes the matter, then there is no more to be said':

(4) 死者無知則已。若有知吾何面目以見仲父以地下。

(A duke is about to commit suicide and says:) "If the dead have no knowledge, then there is no more to be said. But if they do have knowledge, then how will I be able to face Jung Fu in the underworld?"⁶ (*Guan Tz* ch. 32, ed. *Wan-you-wen-ku* vol. 2, p. 41)

1.1.1 *yi er* 已而 'when that was finished, then...> then after a while'

In S_1 *yi er* 已而 S_2 'S₁ and only after that S₂' the *yi* 已 must be taken to have S_1 as its subject: 'when S₁ was finished then (and only then) S₂'. Compare first,

⁵ The cases where *yi* 已 seems to be a phonetic loan for *yi* 以 are not important in our context. The extremely rare cases when it is supposed to be used as a demonstrative pronoun. *Luen Yu* 17.22, in any case, is not a case of pronominal *yi* 已, as Yang Bojun (1965) p. 197 rightly points out. Why the *Er Ya* 爾雅 dictionary defines *yi* 已 as *tsz* 此 remains something of a puzzle to me, unless this simply represents a mistaken forced attempt to make sense of *Luen Yu* 17.22. Guo Pu 郭璞 seems to think of it as a phonetic loan. (Cf. Liu Qi (1955) p. 132). Chou Fa-kao (1975) p. 315, footnote 2 disregards the question of the systematic interrelation of the various meanings of *yi* 已 which is the starting point of our investigation.

⁶ Contrast W. A. Rickett (1985) p. 429 "If, on dying, I had not known any better, it would be all right, but having known, how will I be able to fact Zhongfu in the netherworld?"

in preparation, the following example:

(5) 已殺孔父而弑瑯公。

He finished killing Kung Fu and then assassinated Duke Shang > Having already killed Kung Fu he then assassinated Duke Shang. (*Tzuo Juan*, Duke Huan 2.5)

(6) 期年不得魚，已而大魚食之。

For a whole year he did not catch any fish. (When this had finished >) finally a fish did bite... (*Juang Tz* 26.12, cf. Watson (1968) p. 296)

The combination *yi er* 已而 comes to mean something like 'then finally > then after a while':

(7) 始鄭梁一國也，已而別。

"Originally Jeng and Liang were one state. Then (when that had finished >) finally they were separated." (*Han Fei Tz* 30.38.3)

1.1.2 *yi tze* 已則 'when that was finished then... > then after a while'

Occasionally, we find the variant *yi tze* 已則:

(8) 其鄰之子非變也，已則變矣。

The neighbour's son would not change his ways. In the end he did change his ways. (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 13.3, ed. Chen Qiyou p. 689)

1.1.3 *yi hu* 已乎 '(I) am finished > alas!'

(9) 已乎已乎。

"I am done for! I am done for!" (*Tzuo Juan*, Duke Jau 12.8)

1.1.4 *yi yi* 已矣 '(I) am finished'

1.1.4.1 *yi yi hu* 已矣乎 '(I) am surely finished!'

(10) 已矣乎。

"I am surely done for!" (*Luen Yu* 5.27, 15.13)

1.1.4.2 *yi yi fu* 已矣夫 '(I) am done for, aren't I?'

(11) 鳳鳥不至，河不出圖。吾已矣夫。

"The Phoenix does not appear nor does the River offer up its Chart. I am done for, aren't I?" (*Luen Yu* 9.9, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 79 who—understandably—disregards the final *fu* 夫.)

1.1.5 *yi er* 已而 '(I) am finished, that's all'

The madman of Chu sings:

(12) 已而已而。

"(You) are done for, that's all! (You) are done for, that's all!" (*Luen Yu* 18.5, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 183 who disregards the troublesome final *er* 而, for which see *Tzuo Juan*, Shiuian 4 and *Luen Yu* 9.31 "It is not that I do not long for you; you house is far away, that's all!" and the note in A. Waley (1938) p. 145.)

1.1.6 *yi yan tzai* 已焉哉 '(I) am finished with respect to this'

(13) 已焉哉!

It is all over with respect to this! (*Shr Jing* 40. 1-3)

2. Transitive Verbal Uses:

2.1 *yi* 已 'to cause to finish'

Yi 已 is used transitively for 'to cause to finish in a job, remove from office':

(14) 三已之無愠色。

When they thrice dismissed him from office he showed no resentment on his face. (*Luen Yu* 5.19, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 43)

(15) 王之疾必可已矣。

His Majesty's illness may certainly be caused to come to an end. (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 11.2, ed. Chen Qiyu (1985) p. 578)

Finally we must quote an ancient definition of *yi* 已:

(16) 已: 成亡, (說): 爲衣成也, 治病亡也。

Canon: *yi*: 'to finish making', 'to cause to finish'.

Explanation: Of making a coat: to finish making.

Of curing an illness: 'to cause to finish'. (*Mo Tz*, A. C. Graham (1978) p. 323)

3. Adverbial Uses:

3.1 *yi* 已 'having finished (the process) > by then, by now, already'

Compare *yi ming yi* 已明矣 'is (or should be) clear by now'. *Yi* 已 'already' is the exact opposite of *wei* 未 'not yet'.

(17) 至治之法術已明矣, 而世學者弗知也。

The method of perfect government should by now be clear, but the scholars of our generation will not understand it. (*Han Fei Tz* 14.4.63. Cf. also *Jan Guo Tse* no. 126, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 521)

(18) 夫民之不及神農曾史亦已明矣。

That the common people cannot reach Shen Nung or Tzeng Shr should surely by now be clear. (*Han Fei Tz* 46.5.41)

(19) 敵救未至而一城已降。

Enemy relief had not yet arrived and one city had already surrendered. (*Wei Liau Tz*, ed. Zhong Zhaohua (1982) p. 26) Remembering that *wei* 未 has not only a temporal meaning 'not yet' but also a logical meaning 'not quite' (as in *wei bi* 未必 'not quite necessarily'), it will not come as a surprise that *yi* 已 not only has a temporal meaning 'already', but also a logical meaning 'fully, very, exceedingly'. (See 3.2.)⁷

3.1.1 *chang yi* 嘗已 'have experienced finishing > already'⁸

3.1.2 *ye yi* 業已 'have achieved finishing > already'⁹

⁷ Compare also the ordinary final particle *yi* 矣 which has a temporal function 'by that time' versus a logical function, notoriously after *tze* 則, when it means 'under such conditions'.

⁸ This use first becomes common in Han times.

⁹ Also this use becomes common first in Han times. For a set of examples from *Shr Ji* 史記 see Hong Chengyu (1984) p. 177.

3.2 *yi* 已 'finishingly, consummately > fully, exceedingly'

(20) 二子之言已當矣。

"The two master's words were quite true, (but Wu Chi was dismembered and the Lord of Shang was pulled to pieces between carts.)" (*Han Fei Tz* 42.2.13, cf. W. K. Liao (1959) p. 210. There is a close parallel in *Han Fei Tz* 13.3.25.)

(21) 夫聖人之智固已多矣，其所守者有約故舉而必榮。愚人之智固已少矣，其所事者多故動而必窮矣。

Now the sage's intelligence is inherently quite considerable, but what he is concerned with is limited to the essential. Therefore when he acts he is sure to win public recognition. The moron's intelligence is inherently quite limited, but what he concerns himself with are many things. Therefore, when he moves he is bound to fail. (*Huai Nan Tz* 9, ed. Liu Wendian p. 31b, cf. R. Ames (1983) p. 205-6. *Shiun Tz* 11.110 has *yi* 以 'in order to' for our *yi* 已, but Liang Qixiong (1973) p. 154 prefers to read *yi* 已 without apparently being aware of the *Huai Nan Tz* reading which so nicely supports his suggested emendation/reading.)

Yi shen 已甚 'too much, excessively' becomes a current idiom in Classical Chinese, but we also find *yi tai* 已太 in *Shr Jing*, a usage which I have not found in later texts:

(22) 無已太康。

We must make sure not to be too excessively joyful. (*Shr Jing* 114.1, 114.2, and 114.3)¹⁰

4. Uses as Sentence Final Particle

4.1 *S yi* 已 'S(, that) finishes/ed the matter > definitely S, *enfin* S'

Modal *yi* 已 turns out to be very unevenly distributed in pre-Han literature. The short *Luen Yu* contain no less than 23 occurrences of modal *yi* 已 outside the *er yi* 而已 pattern. The much longer *Han Fei Tz* 韓非子, contains very little evidence on modal *yi* 已. I find exactly one example involving the current idiom *yi ... yi* 亦 ... 已:

(23) 說以悅進來遠亦可舍已。

The claim that one should please those who are near and cause those who are far away to come closer is quite definitely to be rejected. (*Han Fei Tz* 38.8.47)¹¹

4.1.1 *S yi fu* 已夫 'S, and that finishes/ed the matter, or is it not so? > definitely S, isn't that so?'4.1.2 *S yi yi* 已矣 'S, that finishes/ed the matter, this is a currently relevant state of affairs > definitely S!'

¹⁰ Gao Heng (1980) p. 150 surely misinterprets *wu yi* 無已 as *bu yau* 不要.

¹¹ Here the *ke* 可 invites final *ye* 也, and the *yi* 亦 invites final *yi* 矣. One is tempted, here, as in a considerable number of other cases, to construe *yi* 已 as a combination *ye yi* 也矣. It is worth keeping this possibility in mind as we proceed with our enquiries.

When we have the construction like *yi yi* 已矣 at the end of a sentence I think we generally¹² do not have two particles but a sentence-anaphoric semi-grammaticalized verb *yi* 已 'and that is definit(iv)e' followed by a post-verbal particle *yi* 矣. We thus have a theoretically interesting instance of a 'particle' which retains enough 'verbality' to qualify for another verbal particle to follow it. We have yet another piece of evidence of the softness of categorial boundaries in Classical Chinese grammar.¹³

4.1.3 *S yi hu* 已乎 'S, that finishes/ed the matter, and this is surely (or: is this) so! (?)> definitely S!'

The combination *yi hu* 已乎 is exhortative and emphatic:

(24) 子未可以已乎。

You definitely cannot act as yet! (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 257)

The combination can also mark the questioning of a definitive statement, as in *Juang Tz* 23.38.

4.1.4 *S yi tzai* 已哉 'S, that finishes/ed the matter, and this is emphatically so!'

4.2 *S ye yi* 也已 'S is judged to be true, that finishes the matter'

When we seem to have a sentence followed by the construction *ye yi* 也已 we do not have a sentence followed by two particles but rather a sentence which ends in its sentence-final particle *ye* 也, and then a sentence-anaphoric semi-grammaticalized verb *yi* 已 'and that is definitive/definite'.

4.2.1 *S ye yi yi* 也已矣 'S is judged to be true, and this finishes/ed the matter, and this is a currently relevant state of affairs!'¹⁴

When we seem to have a sentence followed by the particles *ye yi yi* 也已矣 we actually have a sentence in *ye* 也 followed by a sentence-anaphoric semi-grammaticalized verb *yi* 已 'and that is definit(iv)e' which in turn is modified by the verbal particle *yi* 矣.

4.3 *S er yi* 而已 'S, and that finishes the matter>S and that is all.'

The construction *er yi* (*yi*) 而已(矣) 'and that is all' is current enough, but it still remains less than adequately understood. *Yi* 已 is, I suppose, generally recognized as a verb here which is linked with the preceding sentence by the anaphoric connective *er* 而 'and/but it/he'. That is why we can have the verbal particle *yi* 矣 after *er yi* 而已.

A number of problems arise. Firstly, one might suppose that *er yi* 而已 after a verbal sentence corresponds to *yi* 已 after a nominal sentence, since *er* 而 links

¹² There are certain exceptions like:

以人望人則賢者可知已矣。

... then the talented men may **definitely** be recognized. (*Li Ji, Biau Ji*, ed. Couvreur vol. 2, p. 488).

Here the final *yi* 矣 seems connected with the *tze* 則. It does not seem to link with our *yi* 已.

¹³ Cf. C. Harbsmeier (1979) p. 155-219 and C. Harbsmeier (forthcoming) "Where do Chinese Nouns Come From?"

¹⁴ This is a colloquialism current in *Luen Yu*.

verbal predicates. However, the facts are otherwise. *Er yi* 而已 turns out to occur in nominal sentences, as in *Luen Yu* 4.15 and *Luen Yu* 8.20, and *yi* 已 alone frequently marks verbal sentences. Thus the distribution of *yi* 已 versus *er yi* (*yi*) 而已 (矣) cannot simply be explained in terms of the nominal or verbal character of the sentence modified.

Secondly, there is a problem about the uneven distribution of *er yi* 而已 versus *er yi yi* 而已矣 which will be taken up below. Thirdly, there is a crucial problem about the scope of *er yi* 而已 'that is all'. The point is that we need to ask 'What is all?'. To put the matter more technically: What is the subject of the (semi-grammaticalized) verb *yi* 已? For convenience of presentation we shall write the scope of *er yi* 而已 in capitals.

The scope of *er yi* 而已 may be the subject of the sentence:

(25) 非獨此五國爲然而已也。

It is not only THESE FIVE STATES that are like this. All the ruined states in the world are like this. (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 367, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p.1300)

The scope or subject of *yi* 已 in *er yi* 而已 may be a number predicate:

(26) 有婦人焉九人而已。

"With a woman among them they were **only** NINE PERSONS." (*Luen Yu* 8:20. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 75 writes: "there were, in fact, only nine," which suggests a combination of restrictive quantification with definite mood.)

It may even be a nominal predicate:

(27) 夫子之道忠恕而已矣。

"Our Master's Way is **simply** this: LOYALTY, CONSIDERATION." (*Luen Yu* 4.15. I follow the translation in A. Waley (1938) p. 105. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 33 is uncharacteristically discursive: "The way of the Master consists in doing one's best and in using oneself as a measure to gauge others. That is all." The crucial point for us is that D. C. Lau, unlike A. Waley, fails to make clear the scope of *er yi* 而已.)

The subject of *yi* 已 may also be a time-expression preceding the main verb:

(28) 回也其心三月不違仁，其餘則日月至焉而已矣。

"As for Huei, his heart does not offend against benevolence for three months (at a time). The others attain it **only** for A DAY OR A MONTH." (*Luen Yu* 6.7. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 49 translates: "The others attain benevolence merely by fits and starts." This may be acceptable as a loose paraphrase of the ancient commentary (ed. Liou Bau-nan, *Wan-you-wen-ku* vol. 2, p. 10) but it certainly does not translate the original.)

The relevant time expression may come after the main verb:

(29) 苟有用我者期月而已可也。

"If anyone were to really employ me for **only as much as** A FULL YEAR (the result) would be acceptable. (*Luen Yu* 13.10. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 125 fails to

recognize the force of *gou* 苟 in spite of the fact that the old commentary gives the correct and current gloss *cheng* 誠 'really', then leaves out our *er yi* 而已 and mistranslates: "If anyone were to employ me, in a year's time I would have brought things to a satisfactory state...". Again A. Waley (1938) p. 173f is superior to D. C. Lau in precision of thought, not to speak of style: "If only someone were to make use of me, even for a single year...")

The subject or scope of *yi* 已 may be the object of the main verb:

(30) 子誠齊人也，知管仲晏子而已矣。

"You are a genuine Chi man: you know **only** of GUAN JUNG AND YAN TZ." (*Meng Tz* 1A1, our translation follows D. C. Lau (1984) p. 51 which at this point is perfectly satisfactory and explicit.)

(31) 故治天下及國在乎定分而已矣。

"Therefore the governing of the world and the state consists in **nothing other than** FIXING THE DIVISION OF DUTIES." (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 17.6, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1110, *Shen Zi Fragments* no. 82, P. M. Thompson (1979) p. 280)

Finally, the subject of *yi* 已 may appear to be the whole sentence:

(32) 子曰：不占而已矣。

The Master said: "(It is that) HE DOES NOT CONDUCT (PROPER) PROGNOSTICATION, **that is all**." (*Luen Yu* 13.22, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 129)

(33) 莫已知也斯已而已矣。

"If it is the case that no one recognizes him, then HE SHOULD GIVE UP, **that is all**." (*Luen Yu* 14.39, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 145 who takes *jr* 知 'recognize somebody's talents' in its ordinary meaning 'understand'.)

4.3.1 *S er yi yi* 而已矣 'S, and that finishes/ed the matter, and this is a currently relevant state of affairs>S and that is all (!15)'

4.3.2 *S er yi hu* 而已乎 'S, and that finishes the matter, and this is surely so!>it is (is it) just that S!(?)'

(34) 如期而已乎。

"Is that all?" (*Luen Yu* 14.42, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 147)

4.3.3 *S er yi er* 而已耳 'S, and that finishes/ed the matter, and that's it>S, and that is simply all there is to it!'

(35) 焉知其所終，焉知其所始，正而待之而已耳。

Confucius said: "How do we know what is an end? How do we know what is a beginning? The only thing for us is just to wait." (*Juang Tz* 20.60. I quote the translation in B. Watson (1968) p. 218 which captures the relevant nuances

¹⁵ In the texts which regularly have both *er yi* 而已 and *er yi yi* 而已矣 we may express the nuance of the final *yi* 矣 by an exclamation mark. But for the texts which either have only *er yi* 而已 or *er yi yi* 而已矣 it seems implausible to assume that the final *yi* 矣 makes a significant difference since it does not contrast with its absence.

admirably. Cf. *Shiun Tz* 1.36, (Köster (1968) p. 8) and *Shiun Tz* 13.12. I found another example in *Han Shr Wai Juan* 9.7)

Our schema obviously needs to be checked against the uses of *yi* 已 in pre-Han literature. We shall concentrate on the problematic usages particularly of modal *yi* 已. The reader is invited to consider in each instance to what extent the passage quoted admits of a unified interpretation along the lines suggested, or whether some other glosses would give a more coherent picture.

The question of what particles *yi* 已 may be a fusion of will be left for separate discussion at a later stage. It is in any case an **etymological** question which has no direct relevance to our semantic and syntactic purpose, although it is a question which one wants to keep in mind as one surveys the evidence. Some neat possibilities come to mind, such as a derivation of *yi* 已 from a combination of *ye* 也 and the ordinary *yi* 已. Moreover, ordinary *yi* 矣 might be taken as another grammaticalized version of the verb *yi* 已. We would then have two distinct grammaticalizations of the same verb. But it is by no means a foregone conclusion that *yi* 已 and the ordinary *yi* 已 had the same pronunciation in Classical times, although this is the view adopted in B. Karlgren's *Grammata Serica Recensa* p. 384. Chou Fa-kao (1975) p. 315 argues that the two pronunciations were different.

All this must remain in the backs of our minds as we set out, in the first instance, to sort out the semantics of the particles in ancient Chinese texts.

It is even more important to keep in mind that since I am proposing to analyse modal *yi* 已 as a grammaticalized verb, there arises a problem of **the degree of grammaticalization**. Since one theoretically could construe modal *yi* 已 as the main verb with a sentential subject, to what extent should one interpret *yi* 已 in such an etymologizing way? I cannot discuss this problem for each passage I quote. Instead, I must ask the reader to keep in mind the theoretically problematic question of the degree of grammaticalization of *yi* 已 in each case.

The finest modern translators have reacted quite differently to the uncertainty about the modal *yi* 已. D. C. Lau is in my view one of the finest translators of Classical Chinese philosophical literature. D. C. Lau is typical of the majority of translators: he mostly disregards our modal *yi* 已, but he occasionally attributes various meanings to it as and when this seems to suit the context. This method creates a disconcerting fuzziness in the translation which I believe is in the mind of the translator rather than in the texts themselves.

D. C. Lau's method is systematically avoided by A. C. Graham who refuses to assign arbitrary meanings to what we call modal *yi* 已 as long as he has no reliable interpretation for the particle.

Let us now see if we can find such a reliable interpretation. We shall proceed book by book, and we shall aim at treating **all** relevant cases, not just the ones

that happen to bear out our interpretation particularly well. This, I hope, will show up the limitations of what is achieved in the present paper.

III. The Use of Modal *yi* 已 in Pre-Han Literature

In what follows I shall treat exhaustively the uses of modal *yi* 已 in the indexed (and some of the non-indexed) pre-Han literature. The order in which the books are treated is not always chronological.

Shu Jing

The grammar of the ancient parts of *Shu Jing* is special in many ways, and the particle *yi* 已 makes no exception. There are eight relevant cases of *yi* 已 in all. In no less than seven of these, *yi* 已 is sentence-initial and precedes first or second person pronouns. All cases of the particle *yi* 已 are in direct speech. Perhaps this initial *yi* 已 is exclamatory like the later *yi hu* 已乎 'I am finished > alas'. This, in any case, is the traditional interpretation.

(36) 已予惟小子。

"I am **but** a little child, that is all." (*Shu Jing* 27.54 and 27.308)

(37) 已汝惟小子。

"You are **but** a little child." (*Shu Jing* 29.274 and 29.483, cf. 33.261)

(38) 已汝乃其速由滋義率殺。

"You should **definitely** speedily, according to these norms of right, kill them all." (*Shu Jing* 29.658, cf. Karlgren p. 40 no. 17)

(39) 已若茲監日。

"Being an inspector like this I **definit(ive)ly** say: ..." (*Shu Jing* 31.237, cf. Karlgren p. 48 no. 8)

We also find one case of the sentence-final *yi* 已.

(40) 公定予往已。

"You, prince, have arranged for my going, **and that is definitive.**" (*Shu Jing* 33.511, Karlgren p. 53 no. 21)

The idiom *er yi* 而已 is absent in *Shu Jing*. It turns out to be absent also in *Shr Jing*, which is less than surprising since *er yi* 而已 strikes us as perhaps a somewhat prosaic idiom.

Shr Jing

It is well worth giving an exhaustive survey of *yi* 已 in *Shr Jing*, for the usages we here observe will help us to understand the later grammaticalized usages of the word.

(41) 夫也不良，國人知之，知而不已。

"He is my husband, but is not good. The people in the state know this, but he will not **stop.**" (*Shr Jing* 141.1, cf. also 172.3, 191.4, 198.2, 235.2, 262.6, 267.1, and *wu yi* 無已 in *Shr Jing* 110.1, *wei yi* 未已 129.3.)

Closely connected is the question:

(42) 心之憂矣曷維其已。

“The grief of the heart, when will it **end**?” (*Shr Jing* 27.1)

Yi 已 may, in this function, be nominalized:

(43) 至于已斯亡。

“When it comes to **the end** then they are ruined.” (*Shr Jing* 223.4)

The so-called exclamative auxiliary *yi* 已 is closely connected:

(44) 亦已焉哉。

“It is surely **all over** with respect to this.” (*Shr Jing* 58.6)

When it comes to *yi* 已 ‘excessively’, this again can be naturally derived from the basic meaning: ‘finish>go all the way>go to excess>going to excess>excessively’.¹⁶ Consider first:

(45) 鷄鳴不已。

“The cocks crow and do not **finish**>the cocks crow **incessantly**.” (*Shr Jing* 90.3)

(46) 或不已于行。

“Some never **cease** going on their expeditions.” (*Shr Jing* 205.4)

Unnegated *yi* 已 in this pre-verbal position comes to be translatable as ‘by now, already’ in later books, as we shall see below.

Next we have:

(47) 彼譖人者亦已大甚。

“These slanderers, they are surely **too excessive**.” (*Shr Jing* 200.1, cf. also relevant examples in *Shr Jing* 198.1, 257.9)

This completes our account of all occurrences of *yi* 已 in *Shr Jing*. We find few clear traces of grammaticalization.

Li Ji: “*Tan Gung*”

The *Tan Gung* section of *Li Ji*, like the *Luen Yu*, is an important document in the early history of colloquial Chinese. Here, in any case, is a survey of all the relevant instances of *yi* 已 that I have found in reading that fascinating text.

There are no cases of the current idiom *bu de yi* 不得已 ‘cannot help’, but the source of this idiom comes out beautifully in

(48) 得已則吾欲已。

“If I can refrain (from doing this) then I will **refrain**.” (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 226, cf. *ibidem* p. 240)

There are four cases of *yi* 已 ‘already’, three of them accompanied by the final reflex *yi* 已:

(49) 鄉者已告矣。

“Some time ago I have (finished>) **already** announced it.” (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed.

¹⁶ See the *Jeng Yi* commentary to *Shr* no 114, first stanza.

Couvreur p. 254, cf. also p. 123, 139, and 179 without final *yi* 矣)

I find five cases of *yi* 已 'exceedingly':

(50) 於野則已疏，於寢則已重。

"If one does it in the open countryside that is **excessively** distant. If one does it in the bedchamber that is **excessively** much." (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 137, cf. *ibidem* p. 204, 144, 261)

Our modal *yi* 已 comes in

(51) 以死者不可別已。

"They **definitely**>**simply** consider that the dead cannot be distinguished." (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 201)

(52) 生事畢而鬼神始已。

"Then serving the dead as if he were living is over, and there **definitely**>**finally** begins the serving the spirits of the deceased." (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 241)

The combination *ye yi* 也已 seems to have an emphatic declarative force, as indeed we should expect:

(53) 晏子可謂知禮也已。

"Yan Tz may **definitely**>**properly** be said to be knowledgeable about rites!" (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 212)

We also find a less idiomatic variant of *er yi* 而已 which indicates that at the time *er yi* 而已 was perhaps not quite established as a very current fixed idiom:

(54) 吾得正而斃焉斯已矣。

"I must die in pursuance of what is right, **and that is all.**" (We might also translate: 'If I must die in pursuance of what is right, **then so be it!**', as R. P. Kramers has kindly pointed out to me.) (*Li Ji, Tan Gung*, ed. Couvreur p. 126. For *er yi* 而已 see *ibidem* p. 174.)

This completes the analysis of all the relevant instances of *yi* 已 that I have come across in *Tan Gung*.

Li Ji other than "Tan Gung"

There is no complete concordance to *Li Ji*. While I am reasonably confident that I have not overlooked many instances of *yi* 已 in the *Tan Gung* section, my treatment of the rest of *Li Ji* must be based on a more cursory reading of the text and on all the examples referred to—but unfortunately not properly located—in Shi Mingcan (1974).

While a text like *Han Shr Wai Juan* has practically no modal *yi* 已 it turns out that the particle is common in the later parts of the *Li Ji*. There are several possible reasons for this. The parts in which modal *yi* 已 comes are in fact early, or they are unadulterated quotations in later compilations, or they are deliberate archaizing usages.

(55) 有司所授舍則公館已。

"Dwellings allocated by officials **definitely count as public dwellings.**" (*Li Ji, Tzeng Tz Wen*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 1, p. 459)

(56) 聖人矣。

"... such a man **definitely is a sage.**" (*Li Ji, Jung Ni Yan Jiu*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 383)

(57) 既蜡而收民息已。

"After the sacrifice, when the harvest was finished, the people would **definitely/ simply rest.**" (*Li Ji, Jiau Te Sheng*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 1, p. 598)

(58) 君雖未知喪臣服已。

"Even if the ruler had not yet learnt of the mourning, the servants would **definitely put on mourning clothes.**" (*Li Ji, Sang Fu Shiau Ji*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 1, p. 753)

Finally, two rather puzzling examples in which sentence-final *yi* 已 is glossed as pre-verbal *yi* 已:

(59) 爲兄弟既餘喪已。及其葬也反服其服。

"If the brothers had **definitely/by then** taken off their mourning garments, then when it came to the burial, they would again take on their mourning garments." (*Li Ji, Sang Fu Shiau Ji*, cf. Couvreur (1913) vol. 1, p. 772 who understands this *yi* 已 as if it was the adverbial 'already' in his literal Latin rendering: *si exuerant luqubria jam, adveniente ejus humatione, rursus induebant suas vestes funebres* and Suen Shidan's admirable commentary (ed. WYWK vol. 9, p. 56), in his paraphrase, does transpose the *yi* 已 to the pre-verbal position. Similar observations apply to *Li Ji, Tza Ji*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 200, ed. WYWK vol. 11, p. 60.)

Yi yi 已矣 in Li Ji

(60) 亡矣，喪矣，不可復見已矣。

"He was gone. He was lost. He could **definitely/by then** not be seen again." (*Li Ji, Wen Sang*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 555)

(61) 以人望人則賢者可知已矣。

"If he looks at men in terms of (other) men, then the talented ones may **definitely** be recognized." (*Li Ji, Biau Ji*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 488, who glosses our *yi* 已 as 'et nihil amplius' (and nothing further), which does not quite seem to make sense in the context. By the way, Séraphim Couvreur's literal Latin paraphrases are always of much greater use to the grammarians than his translations into French.)

Ye yi yi 也已矣 in Li Ji

(62) 後世雖有作者虞帝弗可及也已矣。

"In later ages, even if there arose (*scil.* true rulers) Emperor Yu could **definitely** not be reached/equalled." (*Li Ji, Biau Ji*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 501)

Ye yi 也已 in Li Ji

(63) 所謂孝也已。

“In a case like that that **definitely** is what is called filial piety.” (*Li Ji, Ji Yu*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 302)

(64) 祭者教之本也已。

“Sacrifice is the basis of education.” (*Li Ji, Ji Tung*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 333)

(65) 是爲成其親之名也矣。

“This **definitely** is what is called establishing one’s parents’ name.” (*Li Ji, An Gung Wen*, ed. Couvreur (1913) vol. 2, p. 373)

Luen Yu

The ungrammaticalized uses of *yi* 已 in *Luen Yu* have been discussed as part of the schema above.

Pre-verbal *yi* 已 in *Luen Yu*

We find the idioms *yi shen* 已甚 ‘too much’ (*Luen Yu* 8.10). One other case may be related to this use:

(66) 道之不行已知之矣。

“That the Way is not practised he (**already**>) knows full well.” (*Luen Yu* 18.7, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 187: “As for putting the Way into practice, he knows all along that it is hopeless.” *Yi* 已 can mean ‘by then, already’, but surely never ever ‘all along’.)

If my suggestion is correct we have the logical pair *wei jr* 未知 (*Luen Yu* 5.19) ‘be not quite sure’ versus *yi jr* 已知 ‘be quite sure’ just as we have the temporal pair *wei* 未 ‘not yet’ versus *yi* 已 ‘already’. This is a crucial parallelism.

Finally, we find the idiom *yi jiou yi* 已久矣 ‘already for a long time’ in *Luen Yu* 17.19.

Sentence-final *yi yi* 已矣 in *Luen Yu*

Curiously, *yi* 已 on its own never occurs sentence—finally in *Luen Yu*. It is always combined with other particles.

(67) 士見危致命，見得思義，祭思敬，喪思哀，其可已矣。

“When a knight is ready to lay down his life in the face of danger, does not forget what is right at the sight of gain, and does not forget reverence during a sacrifice nor sorrow while in mourning, then (such a knight) must **definitely** be acceptable!” (*Luen Yu* 19.1, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 191 who in this instance renders our *yi* 已 as ‘perhaps’: “One can, perhaps, be satisfied with a Gentleman who is ready to lay down his life...”. I have found no evidence that *yi* 已 ever can mean anything like ‘perhaps’. Quite the contrary: it gives sentences a definitive flavour. It may be that D. C. Lau is translating the *chi* 其 by ‘perhaps’. In that case N. G. D. Malmqvist (1982) has shown that interpretation to be

mistaken.¹⁷)

(68) 若聖與仁吾豈敢抑爲之不厭誨人不倦則可謂云而已矣。

"How dare I claim to be a sage or a benevolent man. I may **definitely/simply** be said to study without flagging and to teach without growing weary." (*Luen Yu* 7.34, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 65: "Perhaps it might be said of me that I learn without flagging..." Confucius might have used a word for 'perhaps', but it so happens that he did not.)

(69) 賜也始可與言詩已矣。

"With Tz-gung one can **definitely>properly** begin to talk about the Songs." (*Luen Yu* 1.15, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 7 who translates *yi* 已 as if it could work as a restrictive quantifier on the subject, an interpretation for which I have found no evidence: "Ssu, only with a man like you can one discuss the *Odes*."¹⁸)

Compare a relevant passage:

(70) 能去八疵无行四患而始可教已。

Not until you get rid of the eight blemishes and avoid the four mischiefs can one **definitely>properly** begin to teach you. (*Juang Tz* 31.26, cf. A. C. Graham p. 251)

Ye yi 也已 in *Luen Yu*

(71) 攻乎異端斯害也已。

"To attack a task from the wrong end will **definitely/simply** do harm." (*Luen Yu* 2.16,¹⁹ cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 15: "... can do nothing but harm," which is satisfactory.)

(72) 欲罷不能, 既竭吾才, 如有所立卓而, 雖欲從之未由也已。

"I cannot give up even if I wanted to, but, having done all I can, it (the Way of Confucius) seems to rise sheer above me and I **definitely/simply** have no way of going after it, however much I may want to." (*Luen Yu* 9.11, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 79 who disregards our *yi* 已.)

(73) 四五十而無聞焉其終也已。

"If by the age of forty or fifty he has not distinguished himself in something, then he is **quite definitely** not worth standing in awe of." (*Luen Yu* 9.24,²⁰ contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 83 who disregards our *yi* 已 as well as *yi* 已 'surely' and writes: "... one can say, I suppose, that he does not deserve to be held in awe." 'I suppose' is pretty exactly the opposite of what *yi* 已 means if our interpretation

17 For the grammar of *yun er* 云爾 see A. C. Graham's important article on the subject "The verbs of direct speech in Classical Chinese", in *Acta Orientalia* (Copenhagen) 1983.

18 Cf. the similar *Luen Yu* 3.8. Note that *ye* 也 after proper names is not normally used in addressing the person named, although it does predominantly occur in direct speech. Here, the force of the *ye* 也 is brought out rather nicely by Karlgren's suggested paraphrase into German: *der Tzu Kung, mit dem kann man an fangen über das Buch der Gesänge zu reden.*

19 Some editions write *ye yi yi* 也已矣.

20 Some texts read *ye yi yi* 也已矣 for *ye yi* 也已, but all texts have our *yi* 已.

is correct.)

(74) 年四十而見惡焉，其終也已。

“If by the age of forty a man is still disliked he **definitely** is finished.” (*Luen Yu* 17.26, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 181 who disregards our *yi* 已.)

(75) 未之也已，何必公山氏之之也。

“We **definitely/simply** have nowhere to go. But why must we go to Gung-shan?” (*Luen Yu* 17.5, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 174: “We may have nowhere [to go, but...]” which would have fitted the context well enough, but happens to be entirely unsupported by the evidence on *yi* 已.)

(76) 君子食無求飽，居無求安，敏於事而慎於言，就有道而正焉，可謂好學也已。

“When the gentleman seeks neither a full belly nor a comfortable home, when he is quick in action but cautious in speech, when he goes to men who have achieved the Way to have himself put right, then he may **definitely > properly** be called *hau shiue* 好學 (eager to learn).” (*Luen Yu* 1.14,²¹ contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 7 who disregards our *yi* 已.)

(77) 能近取譬可謂仁之方也已。

“The ability to take as analogy what is near at hand may **definitely > properly** be called the method of benevolence.” (*Luen Yu* 6.30, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 55 who disregards our *yi* 已.)

(78) 如有周公之才之美，使驕且吝其餘不足觀也已。

“Even with a man as gifted as the Duke of Jou, if he was arrogant and miserly, then the rest of his qualities would **definitely** not be worth looking (admirably) at.” (*Luen Yu* 8.11,²² contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 71 who disregards our *yi* 已.)

Ye yi yi 也已矣 in *Luen Yu*

This colloquial idiom seems largely limited to *Luen Yu*.²³

(79) 泰伯其可謂至德也已矣，三以天下讓民無得而稱焉。

“Tai Bo may **definitely/properly** be said to be a man of perfect moral charisma! Three times he abdicated his right to rule over the Empire, and yet he left behind nothing the common people could acclaim.” (*Luen Yu* 8.1, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 69 “Surely T'ai Po can be said to be...” *Yi* 已, on our interpretation is not suggestive but definitive, apodictive, unlike the suggestive *yi* 亦 ‘aiso’, ‘surely’.)

(80) 周之德其可謂至德也已矣。

“The moral charisma of the Jou should **definitely** be called perfect moral charisma!” (*Luen Yu* 8.20, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 75 who disregards our particles.)

²¹ Editions of the *Luen Yu* have various sets of final particles here, but all editions have, among other things, the crucial *yi* 已.

²² Some editions have *ye yi yi* 也已矣 for *ye yi* 也已. All editions have our crucial *yi* 已.

²³ Cf. however *Li Ji*, *Biau Ji*, ed. Couvreur vol. 2, p. 500 for an example outside that text.

(81) 日知其所亡，月無忘其能，可謂好學也已矣。

“A man who knows in the course of the day what he lacks and who does not forget in the course of a month what he has mastered, such a man may **definitely/ properly** be said to be *hau shiue* 好學 ‘eager to learn!’” (*Luen Yu* 19.5, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 191 “A man can, indeed, be said to be eager to learn who is...”.)

(82) 浸潤之譖，膚受之愆不行焉可謂明也已矣，...可謂遠也已矣。

“When a man is not influenced by slanders which are assiduously repeated or by complaints for which he feels a direct sympathy he may **definitely > properly** be called *ming* ‘clear-sighted!’ Such a man may **definitely > properly** be called *yuan* ‘far-sighted!’” (*Luen Yu* 12.6, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 111 who disregards our particles.)

(83) 說而不繹從而不改吾未如之何也已矣。

“I **definitely/simply** can do nothing with the man who gives assent but does not rectify himself or the man who is pleased (with what is right) but does not reform himself!” (*Luen Yu* 9.24, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 83 who disregards our particles.)

(84) 不曰如之何如之何者吾未如之何也已矣。

“There is **definitely/simply** nothing I can do with a man who is not constantly saying: ‘What am I to do? What am I to do?’” (*Luen Yu* 15.16, contrast D. C. Lau (1983) p. 153 who disregards our particles.)

Finally, the trickiest of the examples:

(85) 亦各言其志也已矣。

“They **quite (definitely >) simply** each spoke of their ambitions.” (*Luen Yu* 11.24, cf. D. C. Lau (1983) p. 105)

Why does the Master add the *yi* 已? I believe it is because he is repeating with definitive emphasis something he has maintained using the same words (but without the *yi* 已 we are interested in) a moment before.

Meng Tz

In *Meng Tz* I count no less than 48 instances of *er yi yi* 而已矣 and three of *er yi* 而已 without *yi* 矣. (Cf. *Meng Tz* 6B2 and 6B8)

There are four cases of *bu de yi* 不得已 ‘cannot help it’ and thirteen verbal uses which need not interest here. Two cases of *yi shen* 已甚 ‘excessively much’ (3B7, 4B10) as well as a single instance (1B16) of *yi* 已 ‘by then, by now, already’ are also unproblematic. That leaves the cases of final *yi* 已 to be interpreted.

(86) 然則王之所大欲可知已。

“In that case one can **definitely/simply** understand what the thing is that you greatly desire.” (*Meng Tz* 1A7, contrast D. C. Lau (1984) p. 19 and W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 12 who disregard our *yi* 已.)

(87) 苟無恒心放辟邪侈無不爲已。

“If they really have no constant minds they will go astray and fall into

excesses, and there will **definitely/simply** be nothing at which they stop." (*Meng Tz* 1A7, contrast D. C. Lau (1984) p. 21 and W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 13 fail to get the nuance 'if really' (traditional gloss *cheng* 誠) expressed by *gou* 苟, and then disregard our *yi* 已. Similar observations apply to *Meng Tz* 3A3, D. C. Lau (1984) p. 97.)

(88) 援而止之而止者是亦不屑去已。

"When pressed to stay he stayed, and this **quite definitely** was because he regarded it as beneath his dignity to leave!" (*Meng Tz* 2A9, cf. D. C. Lau (1984) p. 71. There is another exactly parallel example. W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 165 disregards our *yi* 已.)

(89) 皜皜乎不可尚已。

"So immaculate was he that his whiteness could **definitely/simply** not be surpassed." (*Meng Tz* 3A4, contrast D. C. Lau (1984) p. 109 and W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 119 who disregard our *yi* 已.)

Yi yi 已矣 in *Meng Tz*

(90) 由是觀之則君子之所養可知之已矣。

"From this one can **definitely/simply** understand what it is a gentleman cultivates in himself!" (*Meng Tz* 3B7, contrast D. C. Lau (1984) p. 127 and W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 81 who disregard our *yi* 已.)

(91) 是則章子已矣。

"To his way of thinking, unless he acted in this way, his offence would be the greater. That is **definitely/simply** Jang-tz ('s way of thinking)!" (*Meng Tz* 4B30, cf. D. C. Lau (1984) p. 173: "That is Chang Tzu for you." which does attempt to capture the right nuance. Cf. W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 60.)

Ye yi yi 也已矣 in *Meng Tz*

(92) 此亦妄人也已矣。

"He **quite definitely** must be judged a deluded person!" (*Meng Tz* 4B28, contrast D. C. Lau (1984) p. 171 who disregards our *yi* 已. W. A. C. H. Dobson (1963) p. 134 translates *yi* 已 by 'after all'.)

Tzuo Juan

It may be worth reminding ourselves that *yi* 已 at the end of a sentence need not be the grammatical particle *yi* 已:

(93) 我焉得已。

"How can I help it?" (*Tzuo Juan*, Shiang 27.5)

We have here a neat illustration how negative polarity items like the English 'ever' recur also in questions. ('Have you ever heard of such a thing?') *De yi* 得已 is such a negative polarity item.

The long book *Tzuo Juan* provides a clear stylistic contrast with the *Meng Tz*

with regard to *er yi* 而已.²⁴ I count 44 cases of *er yi* 而已 'and that finishes the matter', and not one single instance of *er yi yi* 而已矣.²⁵ Supposing that the *Tzuo Juan* is the work of many hands, it is remarkable that a grammatical feature such as the absence of the (possible) *yi* 矣 after *er yi* 而已 should be maintained throughout by a number of conspiring scribes, or artificially introduced at a later stage.²⁶ By far the most likely conclusion is Karlgren's, that we do have, in the *Tzuo Juan* as in the *Meng Tz*, works written in a dialect of Chinese. *Han Fei Tz*, we might add, is already writing a kind of *koiné* Chinese, a form of ancient *pu-tung-hua*.

Sentence-final *yi* 已 in *Tzuo Juan*

Consider first the particle *yi* 已, as it regularly co-occurs with *yi* 亦 'also, surely' to make an idiom which I understand as 'quite definitely':

(94) 既而悔之亦無及已。

"... Afterwards, even if I repent it one **quite definitely** could do nothing about it." (*Tzuo Juan*, Jau 20.2, ed. S. Couvreur (1951) p. 305. In *Shuo Yuan* 4.10, ed. Jau Shan-yi p. 91 I find a closely similar statement expressed with *ye* 也 instead of *yi* 已.)

After having listened to a great deal of music, and after having commented on each item he has heard, Ji Ja exclaims:

(95) 若有他樂吾不敢請已。

"The greatest moral power has nothing to add to this! If there are other kind of music, I **definitely** do not presume to ask (to hear them)." (*Tzuo Juan*, Shiang 29.8, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 535)

Ye yi 也已 in *Tzuo Juan*

The combination *ye yi* 也已, which is totally absent in *Meng Tz*, is an important part of the grammatical repertory of *Tzuo Juan*:

(96) 此時也弗可失也已。

"This (moment) chance must **definitely** not be missed!" (*Tzuo Juan*, Jau 27.3)

Here some texts have *ye* 也 others have *yi* 已. The hesitation is significant, for I do find both co-occurring in the same syntactic context:

(97) 弗可改也已。

"He could **definitely** not be changed!" (*Tzuo Juan*, Shi 7.3 and Ai 12.3. Cf. also Cheng 2.2, Jau 1 fu 7, Ding 6.5 where *fu ke* 弗可 is made emphatic by final *ye yi*

²⁴ Our findings at this point give further support to Bernhard Karlgren's observations regarding the grammatical contrasts between *Meng Tz* and the *Tzuo Juan*.

²⁵ Wrongly, Karlgren writes of the phrase *er yi yi* 而已矣 "which is common in all texts, even in such as otherwise never or but seldom have double finals" (B. Karlgren (1951) "Excursions in Chinese Grammar", BMFEA 23 p. 121.) The facts fit his general views of *Tzuo Juan* a great deal better than he realized.

²⁶ It is not maintained in the *Gu-liang Juan*, Duke Shi 19.7 "It is a case of a correct use of names, and that finishes the matter." or in *Gung-yang Juan*, cf. Yin 1.3.

也已。²⁷ Elsewhere *fu ke* 弗可 is followed simply by *yi* 已:

(98) 弗可滅已。

A gentleman says: "... (His injustice) is **definitely** uneraseable!" (*Tzuo Juan*, Jau 31.6 (Ed. S. Couvreur (1951) p. 470, Yang Bojun (1981) p. 1512)

In all these cases, except the last one, we have not general moral judgements (where *ye* 也 alone would be sufficient) but urgent advice, where *ye yi* 也已 is colloquially idiomatic. Unnegated pre-verbal *ke* 可 'be ...able' is made emphatic in the same way in *Tzuo Juan*, Juang 23 fu, Shiang 28.6, Shiang 29.5, Jau 11.8. *Neng* 能 'can' is made emphatic with *ye yi* 也已 in Shi 30.6, Jau 22.2.

Sometimes we have *yi* ... *ye yi* 亦 ... 也已:

(99) 其亦無能爲也已。

"... They **quite definitely** cannot do anything about it!" (*Tzuo Juan*, Jau 22.2 (not listed in Harvard Yenching Index), ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 346)

I count twenty cases of *ye yi* 也已 in the *Tzuo Juan*, none in *Meng Tz*, and only one isolated example in *Gung-yang Juan*, Ai 6.8 We have accounted for only twelve, and the remaining eight cases deserve our close attention.

There is one splendid *ye yi* 也已 between a subordinate and a main clause:

(100) 先自弃也已, 亦何繼之有。

"If you first **definitely** abandon yourself (!) what continuity can there be?" (*Tzuo Juan*, Shi 11 fu 1, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 282: "*Ouand dès le commencement, on s'abandonne ainsi soi-même, comment peut-on continuer longtemps?*")

In subordinate clauses our *ye yi* 也已 is somewhat curious. The curiousness of the phenomenon is paralleled by the impossibility of introducing an exclamation mark after a subordinate clause. Main clauses pose no such problem.

(101) 鄭伯其死乎。自弃也已。視流而行速。

"The Baron of Jeng looks as if he must die. He is **definitely** abandoning himself! His eyes are wandering (against the rules of proper behaviour), and when he walks he hurries (also against the rules of proper behaviour)..." (*Tzuo Juan*, Cheng fu 1, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 52)

(102) 夫先自敗也已。安能敗我。

Tz Shi said: "... Such a person will **definitely** ruin himself in the first place! How can he defeat me?" (*Tzuo Juan*, Ai 1 fu 4, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 602)

When the Duke of Jin learns of the death of a certain Tz Yu he is simply delighted and exclaims:

(103) 莫余毒也已。

"He will **definitely** no longer poison me (spoil my joys)!" (*Tzuo Juan*, Shi 28.6 and Shiuian 12. fu 2, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 400: "*Il n'empoisonnera plus ma joie.*" An exclamation mark would surely have been in place in Couvreur's translation.)

²⁷ Cf. E.G. Pulleyblank (1978).

(104) 物亦如之至於煩乃舍也已。

“... Things are also like that: when they reach an excessive stage they **definitely** leave off!” (*Tzuo Juan*, Jau 1 fu 8, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 96)

(105) 陳氏之不亡則國其國也已。

“... If the Chen clan still has not disappeared the state **definitely** will be his!” (*Tzuo Juan*, Jau 26 fu 5, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 419)

(106) 三占皆傷曰：吾不(可)用也已。

The Marshal was three times injured in three battles, and he said: “I am **definitely/simply** useless!” (*Tzuo Juan*, Ding 4.16, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 513, ed. Yang Bojun (1981) p. 1546, quite plausibly reads *bu ke yung ye yi* 不可用也已.)

We note one problematic case:

(107) 猶可終歲不及此次也已。

“He can still live for a complete cycle of Jupiter (but at his death) Jupiter will **definitely** not have reached this point!” (*Tzuo Juan*, Shiang 30.7, ed. Couvreur (1951) p. 555)

This completes our survey of all the occurrences of the sentence-final particle *yi* 已 in *Tzuo Juan*. Following Karlgren, one might expect the situation to be similar in *Guo Yu*. Let us see.

Guo Yu

In *Guo Yu* we find nineteen *er yi yi* 而已矣 and only two *er yi* 而已。

We find our *ye yi* 也已 after *ke* 可:

(108) 此其利也不可失也已。

“This is the advantage, and it **definitely** must not be lost.” (*Guo Yu* 20, ed. SBBY (sz-bu bei-yau) p. 2a)

And after *yi* 亦 ‘surely’:

(109) 其至者亦將不能之會也已。

“... If he arrives he will **quite definitely** be unable to (go and meet) join battle with us.” (*Guo Yu* 19, ed. SBBY p. 10b, tr. Harlez p. 243)

(110) 失其利也雖悔之必無及已。

“If you miss this advantage, then even if you regret, it is (**quite definitely**) bound to be too late.” (*Guo Yu* 20.1, ed. SBBY p. 2a. The *Gung Shiu* edition obliges us by reading *yi* 亦 ‘surely’ for *bi* 必 ‘certainly’. (Cf. *Guo Yu*, ed. Shanghai *Gu-ji chu-ban-she* 1978 p. 634, note 6) We do seem to have identified an idiom here.)

(111) 吾知逃也已。

“I **definitely** know how to get out of things!” (*Guo Yu* 18, ed. SBBY p. 11a)

(112) 夫差先自敗也已。焉能敗人。

“Fu Chai is **definitely** ruining himself! How can he defeat others?” (*Guo Yu* 18, ed. SBBY p. 8a)

Compare incidentally:

(113) 已自拔其本矣。何能以久？

“... He has **already** pulled out his own root (i. e. loyalty). How can he last long?” (*Guo Yu* 8, ed. SBBY p. 5b)

Could the correct interpretation of *yi* 已 in contexts like (114) be ‘**definitely/already!**’?

With this question we complete our survey of all cases of sentence-final *yi* 已 in *Guo Yu*.

Juang Tz

The *Juang Tz* is a text rich in colloquialisms, and it is rich in the kind of *yi* 已 that interests us. The question is whether the interpretation of *yi* 已 suggested by the preceding analyses yields plausible interpretations of the many relevant *Juang Tz* contexts. As mentioned above, A. C. Graham’s excellent translation disregards modal *yi* 已 throughout on the sensible grounds that it is insufficiently well understood.

(114) 湯之間棘也是已。

(South of Chu there is the tree Mingling, which grows through a spring of five hundred years....) “Tang’s questions to Ji were **definitely** about this.” (*Juang Tz* 1.13, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 44)

(115) 地籟則衆竅是已。人籟則比竹是已。敢問天籟？

“The pipes of earth, these are **definitely**>**simply** the various hollows (in the earth that have just been described). The pipes of men, these are **definitely**>**simply** arrays of tubes. But may I ask about the pipes of Heaven?” (*Juang Tz* 2.8, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 49)

(116) 此所游已。

(My Teacher, O my Teacher! He chops fine the myriad things but it is not cruelty. His bounty extends to a myriad ages but it is not goodwill. He is elder to the most ancient but it is not growing old. He overhangs heaven and bears up earth and cuts up and sculpts all shapes but it is not skill.) “This is **definitely**>**simply** his way of roaming!” (*Juang Tz* 6.89, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 91)

(117) 然則是至人之德已乎？

“This **definitely**>**simply** is (all there is to) the moral charisma of a Perfect Man?” (*Juang Tz* 23.38, A. C. Graham (1981) has not translated this passage, but cf. Burton Watson (1968) p. 253)

(118) 是衛生之經已。

“This is **definitely**>**simply** the basic guideline of the preservation of life.” (*Juang Tz* 23.38 and 23.40, cf. Burton Watson (1968) p. 253)

(119) 吾自以爲至達已。

“I **definitely/simply** considered myself as perfectly accomplished in understanding.” (*Juang Tz* 17.67, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 154 and B. Watson p. 186)

(120) 而離朱是已?

(Thus to web the eyesight deranges the Five Colours, vitiates emblems and designs by excess, by the dazzle of greens and yellows and multicoloured vestments, or would you deny it?) "And Li Ju was **definitely/simply** a case of that." (*Juang Tz* 8.4, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 200 and B. Watson p. 98. There are three more precisely similar examples in the immediate context.)

(121) 自三代以下者是已?

"Since as far back as the Three Dynasties onwards it has **definitely/simply** been like this!" (*Juang Tz* 10.40, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 210)

(122) 吾既不及已夫?

"We had **definitely/simply** failed to get anywhere, hadn't we?" (*Juang Tz* 14.23, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 165)

(123) 然則君之所讀者古人之糟粕已夫?

"Then what my lord is reading **definitely>simply** is the dregs of the men of old, isn't it?" (*Juang Tz* 13.70 and 13.74, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 140)

(124) 若其殘生損性則盜跖亦伯夷已。

"In the damage to life and harm to nature Robber Jr quite **definitely/simply** a Bo Yi." (*Juang Tz* 8.26, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 202)

(125) 若此之時，則至治已。

"At times like this, then there **definitely** is perfect government." (*Juang Tz* 11.32, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 209)

(126) 闔不亦問是已奚惑然爲?

"You should quite **definitely/simply** enquire about this! Why do you muddle on in a confused way?" (*Juang Tz* 24.110, contrast B. Watson p. 279)

(127) 古之人乎於此言已。

"The ancients, at this point (i. e. after the preliminary libations), would **definitely** conduct conversation." (*Juang Tz* 24.66, contrast B. Watson (1968) p. 271. Liou Kiao-hway (1969) p. 201 gets the general sense right.)

(128) 將已生爲喪也，以死爲反也，是以分已。

"The considered life as 'being lost' and death as a 'returning home'. In this way they were (**definitely>**) already divided." (*Juang Tz* 23.59, cf. Watson p. 257)

(129) 天知予僻陋慢池奔予而死已矣!

"He that was Heaven to me knew that I am coarse and rude, that is why he **definitely/simply** abandoned me and died!" (*Juang Tz* 22.54, cf. A. C. Graham (1981) p. 162 who translates the *yi* 已 as an independent sentence: "Enough!")

Finally we must focus on an example for which one must be especially grateful: an apparent counterexample.

(130) 若是則汝何爲驚已?

"Why did you (**definitely (?) simply (?) get scared>**) get that scared?" (*Juang Tz* 32.2, cf. B. Watson p. 353)

No commentaries seem to have worried about this *yi* 已, but in fact it is very puzzling. What I find surprising in the present survey is the fact that there are so few of these puzzling cases. It is the paucity (in spite of the possibility) of these which suggests that we may be on the right track in our interpretation of the semantics of *yi* 已. After all, our interpretation of modal *yi* 已 has empirical content only to the extent that it **excludes** the occurrence of *yi* 已 after many kinds of sentences.

Mo Tz

In *Mo Tz* I count 14 cases of *er yi yi* 而已矣 and seven cases of *er yi* 而已.²⁸ Three times we find the phrase

(131) 事已...

When the matter was over... (*Mo Tz* 70.73, 70.74, 70.102, see also *Shiun Tz* 26.26.)

This connects with later uses of *yi* 已 as a sentence connective.

We have verbal *yi* 已 with *yi* 亦 'surely' in a characteristic idiom:

(132) 死人毋知亦已。

If the dead do not have knowledge then that surely is the end of the matter. (*Mo Tz* 31.26)

We find not *ye yi* 也已 but *yi* 已 alone after *ke* 可 in the following tricky passage which we may or may not include in the direct speech attributed to *Mo Tz*:

(133) 既以鬼神有無之別以爲不可不察已。

Mo Tz said: "... Since there is a distinction between the existence or non-existence of ghosts, therefore we **definitely** have to investigate the matter." (*Mo Tz* 31.9)

(134) 國家之亂既可得而知已。

The ruin of the state can **definitely** at this stage be known. (*Mo Tz* 9.14)

(135) 家既已治國之道盡此已邪?

"When the state is well governed, is this **definitely/simply** all there is to (running) a state?" (*Mo Tz* 13.28, Y. P. Mei 74; cf. 13.35 for a precisely similar example.)

This completes our account of all cases of sentence-final and related *yi* 已 in *Mo Tz*.²⁹

Liu Shr Chuen Chiou

In *Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* I find seven cases of *er yi* 而已 versus 22 cases of *er yi yi* 而已矣.

The co-occurrence of *yi* 已 with *gu* 固 'certainly, inherently' goes nicely with our interpretation:

²⁸ Unfortunately, these cannot be attributed to the schools of Mohism established in A. C. Graham (1985).

²⁹ There are no relevant occurrences of *yi* 已 in *Yi Jing*.

(136) 是寡人之命固盡已，子無復言矣。

“My allotted time **definitely** is out. Don't say more about it.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 6.4, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 348, tr. Lin Pinshi p. 163, Wilhelm p. 76)

(137) 所夢固秋鴛已。

“What he dreamt about was certainly (**definitely**>) **nothing other** than the Chiou Jia race.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 24.5, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1618, Wilhelm p. 428)

Similarly for *jen* 真 ‘genuinely’:

(138) 此真所謂士已!

“If one shows these four forms of behaviour may one be called a ‘knight?’” The King of Chi replied:) “This genuinely and **definitely** is what one calls a knight!” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 16.8, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1020. Chen notes an early gloss to the effect that one edition reads the ordinary *yi* 矣 for *yi* 已. He comments that *yi* 已 and the ordinary *yi* 矣 are synonymous.)

Similarly for *bi* 必 ‘necessarily’:

(139) 此必是已。

“This is **definitely** bound to be the man!” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 18.2, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1156)

A significant majority of examples with modal *yi* 已 are nominal sentences in *Liu Shr Chuen Chiou*:

(140) 六君者是已。

“The six rulers were **definitely** cases in point.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 2.4, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 96)

(141) 公孫鞅，鄭平，續經，公孫竭是已。

“Gung-suen Yang, Jeng Ping, Shiu Jing and Gung-suen Jie are **definitely** examples of this.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 22.2, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1491)

(142) 正名審分是治之嚮已。

“The correct use of names and recognition of social divisions are **definitely** the reins of good government.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 17.1, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1030)

(143) 是所以加於子之上已。

“This **definitely** is what I excel you by.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 17.8, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1133)

(144) 此其所以觀後世已。

“This is **definitely/precisely** what one can use as a model for future generations.” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 24.5, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1618)

(145) 此人主之所以失天下之士也已。

“This is **definitely** the way to lose the knights of the world!” (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 19.8, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1311)

However, verbal cases do exist:

(146) 夫大義之不成，既有成已...

"Although the great aim is not achieved, something is definitely achieved." (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 26.2, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1706)

(147) 必又見之已因以爲酬!

"(The Chancellor is fond of weapons....) He is definitely bound to have a look at them! (Then (on the basis of them:) use them as a present when you drink his health.)" (*Liu Shr Chuen Chiou* 22.1, ed. Chen Qiyou (1985) p. 1482 and footnote 27)³⁰

Shiun Tz

In *Shiun Tz* I count ten cases of *er yi* 而已 and seven cases of *er yi yi* 而已矣. There is one interesting case of *fei te ... er yi ye* 非特 ... 而已也 'it is not as if... and that was all'³¹

(148) 是善惡之分已。

Mencius says: "Human nature is good." I reply: "This is not so! All men in the world, past and present, agree that goodness is that which is upright, reasonable and orderly, and evil is that which is prejudiced, irresponsible, and chaotic. That definitely is the distinction between 'good' and 'evil'." (*Shiun Tz* 23.36, contrast tr. Watson p. 162, cf. Köster (1968) p. 307)

(149) 鄉鄉而飽已矣!

"They definitely/simply eat delicacies to their hearts' content!" (*Shiun Tz* 4.52, ed. Yang Liuqiao, Ji-nan (1985) p. 83)

Final *yi* 已 combines with *yi* 亦 'surely':

(150) 此亦榮辱安危之衢已。

(Yang Ju cried at a crossroads: "This is a place where you make a tiny mistake and you will find you have gone a thousand *li* astray, isn't it!" He cried bitterly as he said this.) Now here quite definitely is a crossroads where you can choose between glory and disgrace, safety and danger, survival and ruin. (And there is more to wail about here than at (Yang Ju's) crossroads. Alas and alack! Those who rule over others do not wake up to this in a thousand years!) (*Shiun Tz* 11.86, cf. Köster (1968) p. 142, Liang Qixiong p. 152)

(151) 是杆杆亦富人已。

"Such a person surely is definitely a superbly rich man." (*Shiun Tz* 8.45, cf. Köster (1968) p. 76, Liang Qixiong p. 82)

(152) 人之情欲是已。

They reply: "Human nature definitely is like this." (*Shiun Tz* 18.117, Liang Qixiong p. 256)

³⁰ There is a significant problem of punctuation here: Xu Weiyu's standard edition punctuates as we do, but Chen Qiyou's writes 必又見之。已，因以……。 Chen's reading of our passage is possible but not the most plausible in view of our survey of *yi* 已。

³¹ *Shiun Tz* 10.116, which recurs with *tu* 徒 for *te* 特 in *Guan Tz* 3.52-8.

(153) 是亂國已。

(If you want to find out if a country is well governed or in chaos, whether it is good or not, then you can see the indications already at the border. If the military guards roam all over the place to check and if the customs officers inspect everything,) that sort of place is **definitely** a chaotic state. (*Shiun Tz* 10.88, cf. Köster (1968) p. 124, Liang Qixiong p. 132)

The final *yi* 已 here is far from incidental, it recurs seven times in exactly parallel contexts. The force of *yi* 已 in these contexts seems clear enough: **already** from these indications you can **definitely** conclude that the state or ruler is such-and-such.

(154) 至成康則案無誅已。

"When it came to (the kings) Cheng and Kang there **definitely** were no executions (any more)." (*Shiun Tz* 27.70, cf. Köster (1968) p. 354, cf. the parallel in *Shiun Tz* 7.15 which has the ordinary *yi* 矣 for our *yi* 已.)

(155) 先王之道則堯舜已，六貳之博則天府已。

(If you do not know about something, ask about Yau and Shuen. If you are short of something, look for it in the Imperial Archives.) "The Way of the former kings is **definitely** a matter of Yau and Shuen. As regards the range of the six arts, then it is **definitely** a matter of the Imperial Archives." (*Shiun Tz* 27.80, cf. Köster (1968) p. 355, *Shiun Tz shin ju* p. 459, here as everywhere else, fails to comment on final *yi* 已. This in many ways excellent book consistently disregards final *yi* 已 in its paraphrases.)

(156) 此三其美德已。

"These three (qualities) are **definitely** his admirable moral charisma." (*Shiun Tz* 32.10, cf. Köster (1968) p. 387)

This completes our survey of all relevant cases of *yi* 已 in *Shiun Tz*.

Jan Guo Tse

A cursory reading of *Jan Guo Tse* yields the following picture.

Modal *yi* 已 is commonly used in the parts I have perused:

(157) 雖堯舜禹湯復生弗能改已。

"Even if Yau, Shuen, Yu and Tang were born again they **definitely** could not change this." (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 93, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 281. Cf. *Shr Ji* 79, ed. Takigawa p. 8 which retains our *yi* 已 because Sz-ma Chian is quoting an old source and not writing his own prose.)

(158) 今攻齊，此君之大時也已。

"Now to attack Chin is **definitely** a great opportunity for you." (*Jan Guo Tse*, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 264)

(159) 殘亂宋，德強齊定身封此亦百世之一時已。

"To ruin Sung, to strengthen Chi, and to make safe your own status, this is **definitely** an opportunity that comes once in a hundred generations." (*Jan Guo*

Tse no. 82, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 270, cf. also *ibidem* no. 363, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 1268)

(160) 乃所謂無王已!

"Then that is **definitely** nothing other than what is called 'not having (needing) a king'!" (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 95, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 305. *Shr Ji* 130, ed. Takigawa p. 21 omits our *yi* 已.)

(161) 王乃是也已!

"Your Majesty is **definitely/simply** nothing other than a case of this." (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 111, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 375)

(162) 其母在秦, 則魏秦之縣也已!

"His mother being in Chin, Wei would **definitely/simply** be a province of Chin." (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 86, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 355)

(163) 則鴻臺之宮, 桑林之苑, 非王之有已!

"Then the palace at Hung Tai and the park at Sang Lin will **definitely** not be under your control!" (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 393, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 1365)

(164) 後雖悔之不可得也已!

"Then, even if you should repent this, you **definitely** cannot do anything!" (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 95, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 264)

(165) 秦盡韓魏之上黨太原之西秦之有已。

"Chin has already got all of Shang-dang, Tai-yuan and Shi-du from Han and Wei. These **definitely** belong to the Chin." (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 44, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 33, contrast Crump (1970) p. 53. Compare *ibidem* no. 43, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 30, Crump (1970) p. 52 for another example.)

(166) 此亦淖齒李兌之類已。

"This will **definitely** be same as in the case of Nau Chr and Li Duei." (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 96, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 306, cf. Crump (1970) p. 108. *Shr Ji* 130, ed. Takigawa p. 22 omits our *yi* 已.)

(167) 蔡聖侯之事因是已。

"The affairs of Lord Sheng Hou of Tsai are **definitely** along these lines." (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 219, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 818, cf. especially p. 822 footnote 11. There are four structurally parallel examples in the context.)

(168) 先生置之, 勿復言已!

"Forget about it, sir! **Definitely/simply** do not speak about it!" (*Jan Guo Tse* no. 227, ed. Zhu Zugeng (1985) p. 853)

In the absence of a proper index to the *Jan Guo Tse* I am unfortunately unable to give a complete picture of the use of the colloquialism modal *yi* 已 in that book. But the contrast with the *Han Fei Tz* is clear enough. This is not the place to speculate on the exact conclusions to be drawn concerning the nature and date of these two texts. But it does seem natural to indulge in the hypo-

thesis that those parts of the *Jan Guo Tse* which do contain our modal *yi* 已 probably belong to the earlier rather than later strata of that composite text. Much of the *Jan Guo Tse* is evidently written in a late *koinè* Chinese style belonging to the late 3rd and the 2nd century BC. But in contrast with the *Han Fei Tz* the *Jan Guo Tse* would also seem to contain certain not inconsiderable earlier strata. The *Han Fei Tz* is a more coherently mid to late 3rd century work.

Han Shr Wai Juan

A survey of *Han Shr Wai Juan* reveals a situation remarkably similar to that in *Han Fei Tz*. I found only two stray relevant examples:

(169) 文王亦可謂大儒已。

King Wen may **definitely/properly** be called a great *ru*. (*Han Shr Wai Juan* 5.5, ed. Xu Weiyu (1980) p. 174. Cf. J. R. Hightower (1952) p. 166 "King Wen can certainly be called a Great Confucian" which is perfectly satisfactory.)

(170) 嘻，吾子殆可以言書已。

"Ah! With you one may **definitely/properly** speak of the Book of History." (*Han Shr Wai Juan* 2.29, ed. Xu Weiyu (1980) p. 73. J. R. Hightower (1952) mistranslates: "Ah, sir, now you can discuss the Odes," as if *yi* 已 meant the same as the ordinary *yi* 矣, and as if there was no unanimous tradition to read *yi* 以 'with' as *yu* 與 'with'. The fact that Hightower reads *shr* 詩 for *shu* 書 need not interest us here.)

IV. Concluding Remarks

It is my impression that our modal *yi* 已 is an early colloquialism which, like the exclamation mark which one so often is tempted to use in translating *yi* 已, we are more likely to find in dialogue than in other kinds of texts. Modal *yi* 已 has tended to disappear from Literary Chinese around the time of *Han Fei Tz*. From our point of view the text of *Jan Guo Tse* draws on sources representing an earlier stage of Chinese grammar than the *Han Fei Tz*. However, there are a few archaizing examples, like those in *Han Shr Wai Juan* which must not be overlooked. Moreover, Sz-ma Chian writes in his postface to the *Shr Ji*:

(171) 察其所以，皆失其本已。

When we investigate the reasons for this, it is **definitely** all because they lost sight of what is essential. (*Shr Ji* 130, ed. Takigawa p. 24.)

There is no question of Sz-ma Chian quoting an earlier source here. He just occasionally uses a particle which has gone out of colloquial use by his time. Such modal *yi* 已 are, I think, best seen as archaisms. They were in any case sufficiently anomalous in *Shr Ji* for the authors of the *Ji Jie* 集解 commentary to take to trouble to explain that *yi* 已 here is a *yu jung jr tsz* 語終之辭, a sentence-final particle, a gloss that became standard. Thus, when we look at this counter-example in detail we find that it ends up confirming our generalization that *yi*

已 was not an integral part of colloquial or literary Han Chinese.

The varying degree to which Literary Chinese writers of later ages used archaizing 已 need not concern us here.

Modal 已 does have its successors in early colloquial Chinese. In the colloquial text *Bai Yu Jing* 百喻經, translated from the Sanskrit in 492 A. D.,³² the cases of 已 after a subordinate in a construction of the type S_1 已 S_2 'when S_1 was finished, then S_2 ' is simply ubiquitous.

The construction is common in the colloquial literature even before *Bai Yu Jing*.³³ I have a lingering doubt that 已 here is a usage which was incorporated into Buddhist hybrid Chinese in order to convey in Chinese Sanskrit constructions. The *Bai Yu Jing* may be a colloquial text, but it is also heavily Sanskrit-inspired. One does smell syntactic interference with a foreign language in many places. But as we have seen, the usage has its ancient roots in pre-Han literature.

In any case, this 已 is increasingly replaced by, and its functions are taken over by, the verb *liau/le* 了 in such texts as the *Liou Tzu Tan Jing* 六祖壇經 (ed. P. B. Yampolski (1967) Appendix p. 1-30) dating probably from the eighth century AD.³⁴ *Liau/le* 了 in that sutra seems to function as a semi-grammaticalized verb with sentential subjects, just as we have construed early 已.

(172) 大師說法了韋使君官寮僧衆俗譚言。

When the Great Master had finished explaining the *dharma* (the Imperial Delegate Wei, the government officials, and the monks and laymen uttered words of praise.) (*Liou Tzu Tan Jing* 33, tr. P. B. Yampolski (1967) p. 155)

Liau/le 了 in turn is on its way towards being grammaticalized as a particle. But that is a different story which has recently been studied in considerable detail in an admirable article by Mei Tsu-lin (1981). Quite properly, Mei Tsu-lin compares the verbs *jing* 竟, *chi* 訖, and *bi* 畢 with 已 as predecessors of the modern Chinese *le* 了. But among these verbs, 已 is unique in that it has a clear pre-history of grammaticalization. It is this pre-history which was the subject of the present paper, which was concerned with the colloquial language of the pre-Han period.

³² An annotated and complete Russian translation of this work by I.S. Gurevic, with a most informative 49 page introduction by L. N. Men'shikov has just been published (Moskva 1986). I am very grateful to Herbert Franke for sending me a copy of this important contribution to the study of early Buddhist colloquial Chinese literature. For a comprehensive survey of the earliest Buddhist translation literature see now E. Zürcher's masterly survey *A New Look at the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Texts* (58 pages, cyclostyled) which includes a 22 page annotated survey of the Chinese Buddhist texts of the Later Han period. I must thank A. C. Graham for drawing my attention to this singularly useful work.

³³ I. S. Gurevich (1974) p. 101-103 interprets 14 fascinating examples gleaned from early colloquial literature.

³⁴ Indeed, I note with satisfaction that the Tang commentary on *Li Ji, Tan Gung* states categorically *yi you liau ye* 已猶了也 '已 works like *liau* 了'. I can only say that I agree with this sentiment.

I hope I have shown through a fairly exhaustive presentation of examples that the meaning of modal *yi* 已 historically, syntactically and semantically may not be as vague as translators have made it appear, and as the conflicting glosses in current grammars³⁵ might tempt one to believe.

But perhaps, in the end, the precise meaning of modal *yi* 已 is in the eye of the beholder. Maybe modalities are inherently a little bit like beauty in that way? Who knows?

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³⁵ The historical doxography on the particle *yi* 已 would make an interesting study in its own right which falls outside the scope of the present study.

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