

**“Tracing linguistic variability in Old Chinese:  
what, if anything, was *yǎn*?”**

The image shows the character 雅 (yǎ) in seal script. It is a large, bold, black character with a complex structure, featuring a prominent vertical stroke on the left and a series of horizontal strokes on the right.

**IACL-25 /  
Budapest**

The image shows the character 嚴 (yán) in seal script. It is a large, bold, black character with a complex structure, featuring a prominent vertical stroke on the left and a series of horizontal strokes on the right.

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1. Idea of a pre-imperial *koinē* of Old Chinese largely based on a single, heavily disputed passage from *Lúnyǔ* 論語 (7.18):

(1) 子 所 雅 言 詩 書 執 禮 皆 雅 言 也。  
 \* tsəʔ s-qhraʔN-gʳaʔŋan s-tə s-ta tip rʳijʔ kʳrij N-gʳaʔŋan lAʔ  
 master<sub>REL</sub> refined language<sub>song</sub>documenthandler<sub>ritual</sub>QNT.allrefined language<sub>COP</sub>

. cf. the excavated Eastern Hàn version :

(1') [□所雅言]詩書執禮疾皆雅言也 (*Dìngzhōu* 定州 158)

editors: 「疾，今本無。為執禮激揚之聲。」, ‘the sound of excitement in carrying out a ritual’ (sic!); cf. LY 7.13 子之所慎：齊，戰，疾。

## 1.1 four common variants of parsing the passage

- a. 子所雅言：詩書執禮，皆雅言也。

“On which occasion the master spoke in *yǎ* manner: the *Odes*, the *Documents*, when handling the *Rituals* — [on all such occasions] he spoke in *yǎ* manner.

- b. 子所雅言詩書執禮，皆雅言也。

“The master *yǎ*-talked about the *Odes*, the *Documents* and the handling of the *Rituals* — all of this is what he *yǎ*-talked about.”

c. 子所雅言詩書。執禮，皆雅言也。

“The *Odes* and the *Documents* are what the master talked about in *yǎ* manner; When he handled the *Rituals*, it was always using the *yǎ* manner of talking.”

d. 子所雅言詩書執（→ 藝）禮，皆雅言也。（執 \*tip / 藝 \*ɲet-s)

“The master *yǎ*-talked about the *Odes*, the *Documents*, the *[Six]Arts*, and the *Rituals* – all of this is what he *yǎ*-talked about.”

2. What does 雅 mean in Warring States parallel passages?

2.1 “a correct”, or “elegant, refined” *behavior*, opposed the sphere of social alterity, vulgarity

(1) 容貌、態度、進退、趨行，由禮則雅，不由禮則夷固僻違庸眾而野。  
(*Xúnzǐ* 《修身》 2.2)

“If facial expressions, attitudes, entering and withdrawing or gait demeanor are guided by traditional etiquette, then one is *yǎ* (correct/ refined?); if not, one will become barbarian, uncouth, unsocial, recalcitrant, profane, vulgar and provincial.”

## 2.2 a manner, acquired socially, in different regions

- (2) 譬之越人安越，楚人安楚，君子安雅。是非知能材性然也，是注錯習俗之節異也。(Xúnzǐ 《榮辱》 4.8)

“Compare this to a person from \*Gwat being content with \*Gwat, a person from \*s.ra-ʔ being content with \*s.ra-ʔ, a gentleman being content with \*N-G<sup>s</sup>ra-ʔ (**what is refined?**): this is not so on account of knowledge, capacity, talent or inborn nature, it is so on account of the differences between the constraints to which they adhere to in their conventions and customs.” (cf. 9.4 「君子安位」, 13.8 「君子安禮樂利」)

cf.

(2) 工匠之子，莫不繼事，而都國之民安習其服，居楚而楚，居越而越，居夏而夏，是非天性也，積靡使然也。(Xúnzǐ 《儒效》 8.11)

“No son of a carpenter fails to continue his father's trade. The inhabitants of a city or country are satisfied to practice its peculiarities of custom. Those who live in Chǔ have the characteristics of Chǔ; Those who live in Yue have the characteristics of Yuè; and those who live in Xià have the characteristics of Xià [\*g<sup>ɿ</sup>ra-?]. This is not due to the qualities endowed by their inborn nature from Heaven, but is the result of accumulated ‘polishing’.” (K&R, II:12)

(on the relationship between 雅 and 夏, cf. below)

## 2.3 distinguished from other predicates signalling low prestige

### a. in ethics/politics

(3) 王者之制：道不過三代，法不二後王；道過三代謂之蕩，法二後王謂之不雅。(Xúnzǐ 《王制》)

“The institutions of someone behaving like a proper king: His way [of guidance] does not go beyond that of the Three Dynasties, his model does not deviate from that of the Later Kings; a way which goes beyond that of the Three Dynasties is called ‘shaky’, a model which deviates from that of the Later Kings is called non-*yǎ* (ignoble?).”

### b. in music

子曰：（…）惡鄭聲之亂雅樂也（…）。(Lúnyǔ 《陽貨》 17.18)

“The master said: ( …) I hate the way the sound of Zhèng confuses *yǎ* (refined?) music. (...)”



## 2.4 but only a mid-level of prestige:

- (4) 故有俗人者，有俗儒者，有雅儒者，有大儒者。不學問，無正義，以富利為隆，是俗人者也。[...] 法後王，一制度，隆禮義而殺詩書；其言行已有大法矣，然而明不能齊法教之所不及，聞見之所未至，則知不能類也；知之曰知之，不知曰不知，內不自以誣，外不自以欺，以是尊賢畏法而不敢怠傲：是雅儒者也。(Xúnzǐ 《儒效》 8.10;)

“Accordingly, there are vulgar Ru, cultivated Ru, and great Ru. Those who have no education, lack rectitude and moral principles, and consider wealth and material gain as exalted are vulgar common people. [...] [The cultivated Ru] model themselves after the Later Kings, unify rules and regulations, exalt ritual and moral principles, and give less importance to the Odes and Documents. Their discourse and conduct unincorporate the Great Model.

Nonetheless their intelligence cannot solve a problem that the model and their instruction did not cover. What their study and experience have not yet reached, their knowledge cannot properly classify. When they know something, they say that they know it; and when they do not know it, they say that they do not. Within they do not declude themselves about what they know. Without they do not deceive others concerning it. Because of this they honor the worthy, stand in awe of the model, and do not presume to be either lax or overbearing. Such are the **cultivated** Ru.” (K&R 80)

## 2.5 a persuasive way of speaking

(5) [仁人 …] 所以說之者，必將雅文辯慧之君子也。(*Xúnzǐ* 《富國》 8.10)

“[As for a benevolent person ...] The means he uses to persuade others must be those of a gentleman who is **elegantly** correct in form and of discriminating intelligence. (K&R, II: 136)

## 2.6 During the Hàn and Early Medieval period: a refined, correct type of music

- (6) 樂所以必歌者何？夫歌者，口言之也。[...] 禮貴忠何？禮者，盛不足節有餘。[...] 樂尚雅？雅者，古正也，所以遠鄭聲也。(*Báihǔ tōng* 《禮樂》 42.15)

“Why must music [always be accompanied by] singing? Singing expresses through the mouth [the sentiments of man]. (...) Why is it that in rites virtue is given to equilibrium? [The practise of] rites is to fill out where there is an insufficiency, and to moderate where there is a surplus. (...) Why is it that in music the *ya*[-melody] is highly esteemed? *Ya* anciently meant *cheng* ‘correct’. [The *ya*-melody] therefore differs widely from the music of Cheng.” (Tjan II: 390)

- (7) 或問：「交五聲、十二律也，或雅或鄭，何也？」曰：「中正則雅，多哇則鄭。」(*Fǎyán* 《吾子》 2.4)

“Someone asked: ‘If we combine the *five sounds* [of the pentatonic scale] with the [sounds of the] *twelve pitchpipes*, why is it that we sometimes obtain *yǎ* [refined music?] and sometimes [the music of] Zhèng?’ [Yáng Xióng said]: ‘If centered and correct, then it is *yǎ* (?refined), if excessive and chunked up, then it is [the music of] Zhèng’.” (cf. von Zach 1931: 7, l’Haridon 2010: 15).

(8) 雅琴者、樂之統也，與八音並行。（…）故琴之為言禁也，雅之為言正也，言君子守正以自禁也。夫以正雅之聲，動感正意，故善心勝、邪惡禁。（*Fēngsú tōngyì* 《琴》）

“*yǎ* and *qín* are an interconnected principle of music, moving in parallel to the *eight sounds* (=the eight categories of musical instruments: metal, stone, string, bamboo, gourd, clay, leather, wood). (...) Therefore: The motivation for the designation *qín* [\*C.Gəm] is ‘to be restrained’ *jìn* [\*krəm-s], the motivation for the designation *yǎ* is ‘to be correct’, that is to say a gentleman guards what is correct by restraining himself. In sum: through correct and *yǎ* (?decent) sounds, correct ideas are aroused, therefore the good spirit prevails, the heterodox and evil is restrained.”

## 2.7 a correct way of speaking, maintaining old pronunciations

### (9) Zhèng Xuán 鄭玄 on *Lúnyǔ* 7.18 (《論語注疏》 7.7)

讀先王典法，必正言其音，然後義全，故不可有所諱。禮不誦，故言執”

“When one reads out aloud the statutes and laws of the Early Kings, it is necessary to pronounce their sounds correctly, only then their meaning becomes complete; therefore there must be no instance where one taboos [an ancient pronunciation]. The *Rituals* are not cantillated. Therefore [the text] talks about ‘to handle’.”

· akin to something called *fǎyán* 法言 ‘normative words’ during the Hàn? –

### (10) 非先王之法言不感道也 (*Xiàojìng* 4.1)

“If it is not the normative words of the Early Kings, they dare not to utter them.”

## 2.8 an (argumentatively, ethically) persuasive way of speaking

(11) 《論衡》者，論之平也。口則務在明言，筆則務在露文。高士之文雅，言無不可曉，指無不可睹。(Lùnhéng 《自紀》 85; cf. Forke 68)

“‘Lùn héng’, that is to say the ‘balancing of discourses’. Discoursing orally, the task is to be clear in one’s expressions; discoursing in writing, the task is to make one’s text accessible. The texts of eminent scholars are yǎ (?refined), there is nothing in their expressions which can not be understood, and nothing in what they refer to, which can not be apprehended.”

(12) 平原君欣然曰 “吾不戲子，無所聞此雅言也。

(Kǒngcóngzǐ 《儒服》 12)

“Prince P’ing-yüan was pleased and said; ‘Had I not provoked you, I would not have heard these sterling words of yours’.” (Ariel 1989: 136)



## 2.9 an elevated, persuasive way of *writing* (mediality change)

(13)冀俗人觀書而自覺，故直露其文，集以俗言。或譴謂之淺。答曰：以聖典而示小雅，以雅言而說丘野，不得所曉，無不逆者。(Lùnhéng 《自紀》 85; cf. Forke 68–9)

“Hoping that the common people would become self-conscious by reading [my two books, I] purposely made my texts straightforward and accessible, and garnished them with common expressions. If some reproved me by calling them shallow, I would reply: if one used the *Sacred Statutes* to expound the Lesser *Elegantiae*, or if one used the *yǎyán* (?language of the *Elegantiae*) to convince the hillbillies, one would end up not being understood by them and they would unanimously go against it.”

## 2.10 an old-fashioned, antiquated way of speaking

(14) 充書違詭於俗。或難曰：[...] 荅曰：論貴是而不務華，事尚然而不高合。論說辯然否，安得不譎常心、逆俗耳？如當從眾、順人心者循舊守雅，諷習而已，何辯之有？ (*Lùnhéng* 《自紀》 85)

“The book of Wang Ch'ung is of another type than the usual writings. The following objection might be raised against it: (...) I reply that in arguing the essential thing is truth, not elegance, that the facts should at all events be correct, and that *consensus* is not the highest aim. Investigating a question, one discusses the *pros* and *cons*, how would it be possible not to deviate from old ideas and perhaps offend the ears of the common hearer? (...) If we were to go by majority, and to conform to the public feeling, we could only follow the good old rules and *precedents*, and recite them over and over again, but how could there be any discussion?” (Forke 73)

## 2.11 an archaic pronunciation standard, now lost, opposed to dialects

(15) 假、徂、懷、摧、詹、戾、艘，至也。邠唐冀兗之間曰假，或曰徂。齊楚之會郊或曰懷。摧、詹、戾，楚語也。艘，宋語也。皆古雅之別語也，今則或同。

“*jiǎ, gé, huái, cuī, zhān, lì, jiè* [mean] ‘to arrive at’. In the areas of Bīn, Táng, Jì and Yǎn they say *jiǎ* [ $^{*}(Cə.)k^{r}ra?$ ] or *gé* [ $^{*}k^{r}rak$ ]; in the outlying regions of Qí and Chǔ they say *huái* [ $^{*}g^{r}ruj$ ]. *Cuī* [ $^{*}dz^{r}uj$ ], *zhān* [ $^{*}tam$ ], *lì* [ $^{*}r^{r}et-s$ ] are Chǔ-expressions. *Jiè* [ $^{*}k^{r}rət-s$ ] is a Sòng expression. These are all expressions deviating from the classical *yǎ* (?refined standard), some of which have eventually merged today.” (*Fāngyán* 1.13)

## 2.12 a correct standard, opposed to regional languages

(16) 雅，義也；義，正也。五方之言不同，皆以近正為主也。 (*Shì míng*  
《釋典藝》 20.18)

“*yǎ* means ‘to be appropriate’ (*yì*), *yì* means ‘to be correct’. The languages of the five directions do not correspond to each other, such that it is always the most important thing to approximate what is correct.”

2.13 continued by many modern authors, such as

(17) Yú Zhèngxiè 俞正燮 (1775–1840) commenting on people in Fújiàn and Guǎngdōng not knowing Mandarin (不諳官話):

謹案：詩書執禮，孔子皆用雅言，不用齊魯音。而經史多有方言。學者貴知之。然必立一雅言為之准，而後方言可附類而通也。（《癸巳存稿》9）

“I cautiously submit: For the *Odes*, *Documents* and when handling rituals, Confucius always used *yǎyán*, he did not use the readings of Qí-Lǚ. But in the classics and histories there are often dialectal expressions, which the scholars appreciate to know. However, it is necessary to first establish one *yǎyán* (?standard language) as a reference, only then the dialectal expressions may be categorized and understood.”

(cf. also 劉寶楠，劉臺拱，阮元，章炳麟 et al.)

3.1 a new interpretation for *yǎ* 雅 as ‘constant(ly)’, ‘regular(ly)’, arising with

(18) Chéng Yí 程頤 (1033–1107):

雅，素之雅。禮，當時所執行而非書也。詩書執禮，皆孔子素所常言也。

“*yǎ* is the *yǎ* as in ‘regularly’. Rituals at the time were something practiced, not [just] something written about. The *Odes*, the *Documents* and the handling of the *Rituals*: it was the constant practice of Confucius to regularly talk about all of these.”

### 3.2 accepted by Zhū Xī 朱熹 (1130–1200)

(19) 雅，常也；執，守也。《詩》以理情性，《書》以道政事，禮以謹節文，皆切於日用之實，故常言之。(《論語精義》1982: 97).

“*yǎ* means ‘constantly’, *zhí* ‘to maintain’. Since ordering the basic nature by the *Odes*, guiding political affairs by the *Documents*, and carefully restraining culture by the *Rituals* are all close to the realities of daily application, he spoke often about them.”

(and many later authors, e.g. Huáng Zōngxī 黃宗羲 (1610–1695) 「雅言，猶言素所言耳」《宋元學案·屏山鳴道集說略》 etc.)

### 3.3 interim summary:

- *yǎ* 雅 has two possible basic meanings:
  - (A) ‘elevated’ → ‘elegant’, most likely referring to a social register of language/diction/pronunciation; well-attested during the late WS period
  - (B) ‘common’ → ‘often’, well attested only under the Hàn
- *yǎ* 雅 can **not** be shown to refer to an ancient linguistic standard (as opposed to the dialects) before the Early Hàn reconstruction of a unified pre-imperial past



4. The relationship between *yǎ* 雅 and *xià* 夏 (cf. Chen Zhi 2007)
- 4.1 interchangeability known from loans in the edited literature:
- a. cf. *Xúnzǐ* 4.8 : 8.11 above (安雅~居夏?)
  - b. *Mòzǐ* (28.8) quotes *Shījīng* “Huáng yǐ” 黄矣 as 「…先王之書《大夏》之道…」
  - c. personal name 子雅 in *Zuǒzhuàn* (9.28) quoted as 子夏 in *Hánfēizǐ* 韓非子 (2.2)

d. first explicitly discussed by Wáng Yǐnzhī 王引之 (1766–1834):

(20) 古者，夏雅二字互通，故《左傳》齊大夫「子雅」《韓子·外儲說右篇》作「子夏」。

“In ancient times, the character *ya* and the character *hsia* were interchangeable. Thus in the *Tsuo-chuan Tzu-ya*, a subject from the state of Ch'i, is also named Tzu-*hsia* in the first part of the “Wai-Ch'u-shuo” chapter in the *Han-fei-tzu*”. (Chen Zhi transl., 2007: 3.2)

## 4.2 and more recently confirmed by excavated texts

- a. GD 《緇衣》 7, 7, 35-36, 36 : 「大夏（雅）員（云）...」,  
（小）夏（雅）員（云）...」, 「大夏（雅）云...」



- b. SB 《詩論》 2: 「大夏（雅），盛德也，多言□□」  
《緇衣》 4, 18, 18 「大／小夏（雅）云...」,



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### 4.3 phonology:

雅 *yǎ* < MC *\*ngaeX* (五下切, 疑麻上二開, 魚部)

< OC *\*N-g<sup>ʳ</sup>ra-ʔ* ‘kind of musical instrument’

< OC *\*ŋ<sup>ʳ</sup>ra-ʔ* ‘proper, refined’

夏 *xià* < MC *\*haeH* (胡雅切, 匣麻去二開, 魚部) < *\*g<sup>ʳ</sup>ra-(ʔ)s*

(GY: 春夏」) → ‘summer’

< MC *\*haeX* (胡駕切, 匣麻上二開, 魚部) < *\*g<sup>ʳ</sup>ra-ʔ*

(GY: 「大也, 又諸夏。亦州名, 秦屬上郡…」) → ‘great’/‘a dynasty’

- etymology of dynastic name unknown (cf. Behr, *AsSt* 61.3, 2008, 727–54)
- loan contact entirely possible (28 contacts 疑: velar/uvular stops, 30 contacts 匣: velar nasal in the Chǔ corpus of Lǐu Bō 2013);
- paronomastically relevant, but unlikely to be reflexes of the same root!

## 4.4 word family of 雅, morphology, etymology

### 4.4.1 ~ A (‘elevated’ → ‘elegant’)?

- a. if indeed < \*N-G<sup>r</sup>ra-ʔ, there is no clear function for a nasal prefix in a noun: \*m- marks instrumental nouns, body parts.
- b. likelier: derived by \*N- from the uvular root attested in \*C.qa-ʔ > \*kjoX > jǔ 舉 ‘to raise, lift’ ~ \*C.Ga-ʔ > \*yoX > yú 昇 ‘lift up together, bring’ – a detransitive (anti-accusative; or ‘mediopassive forming adjectives’ in the models of Jīn Lǐxīn 2005, Wáng Yuèting) derivation → ‘to be elevated’

- c. cf. in the same word family (GSR 89): 車 \*C.qa > \*khjo > jǔ ~ \*t.qha > \*tsyhae > chē ‘carriage, chariot’ (if not loan from Tocharian!; function of \*t- marking inalienable nouns unclear); 與 \*C.Ga-? > \*yoX > yǔ ‘be fine’ (*Shī*), \*C.Ga > \*yo > yú ‘be dignified’ (*Lúnyǔ* 10.2 「君在，踽踽如也，與與如也」); \*C.Ga-s > \*yoH > yù ‘be fine’ (*Shī* 「伐木許許，醴酒有藇」)
- d. cf. possible *xiéshēng*-contacts to series of 疋: for the meaning ‘correct, proper’, cf. 諳 \*sjoX < \*s-nga-? ‘able, wise, talented’ (\*s-ŋa < \*\*s-N-Gra, since 疋 yǎ < \*ngaeX < \*N-G-); for the meaning ‘often, regularly’, cf. 胥 ‘all, complete’; cf. 《經典釋文》郭璞《爾雅序》「夫爾疋者」.

e. possible relationship to Chǔ 楚 \*s.ra-ʔ (< \*\*s-ŋ-r-a-ʔ, ~ ZZSF),

(21) cf. Zhāng Tàiyán 章太炎 (1868–1936) “夏人” in: *Kuǐshū* 《榘書》 (1901: 4)

此以知雅<sub>1</sub>則同夏，而疋<sub>2</sub>與楚同聲，其文皆假借。故二雅<sub>1</sub>者，夏、楚之謂也。」

“And thereby we know that *yǎ*<sub>1</sub> corresponds to *xià*, and that *yǎ*<sub>2</sub> shares a phonophoric with Chǔ, the characters are both phonetic loans. Therefore the two *yǎ*<sub>1</sub> (sections of the *Odes*) are designations of Xià and Chǔ.”

- f. in the 平聲-reading \*N-G<sup>f</sup>ra onomatopoetically related to wū 烏 < \*'u < \*q<sup>f</sup>a 'crow, raven'; cf.

(22) 雅，楚鳥也。一名鸞，一名卑居。秦謂之雅。从隹牙聲。(Shuō wén 2269)

“yǎ, a ‘crow’ [wū 烏, \*q<sup>f</sup>a] in Chǔ, which has an alternative name yù (鸞 \*m-qa), and another one bēijū (卑居 \*pe-k(r)a). It is called yǎ (雅 \*N-G<sup>f</sup>ra-?) in Qín; derived from zhuī ‘short tailed bird’, yá (牙 \*m-G<sup>f</sup>ra) is phonophoric.”

- . cf. 鴉 yā < \*'ae < \*q<sup>f</sup>ra ‘raven, crow’ (a type-A variant)



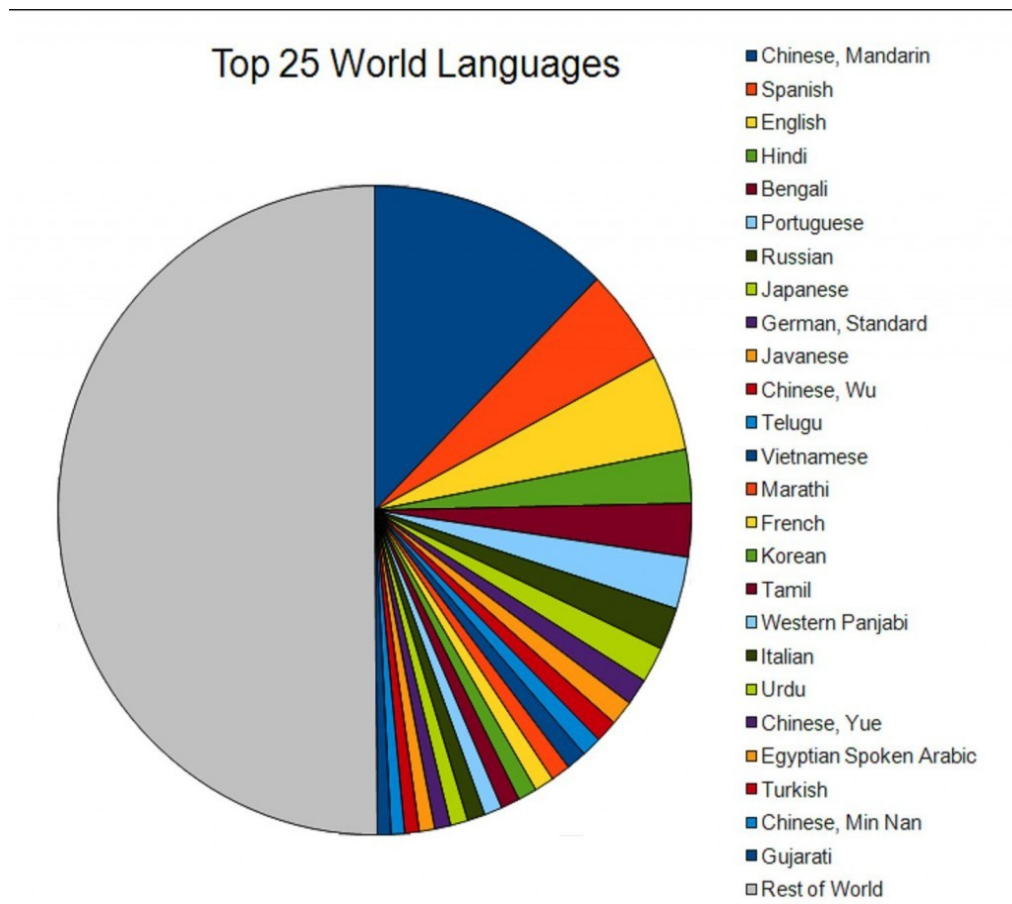
#### 4.4.2 ~B ‘regular’ → ‘often’

- g. if from velar root \*ŋ<sup>ʳ</sup>ra-ʔ – relationship to 語 *yǔ* (\**ngjoX* < \*ŋa-ʔ) ‘to speak’ can not be excluded: \*-r- marks distributives=multiple participants or intensives= multiple actions → ‘to intensively speak about’ / ‘to communicate with each other, discourse’ ? N.b., designations for we-group, powerful languages corsslinguistically often just mean ‘language’, like ethnonyms for we-groups often simply mean ‘man, person’.

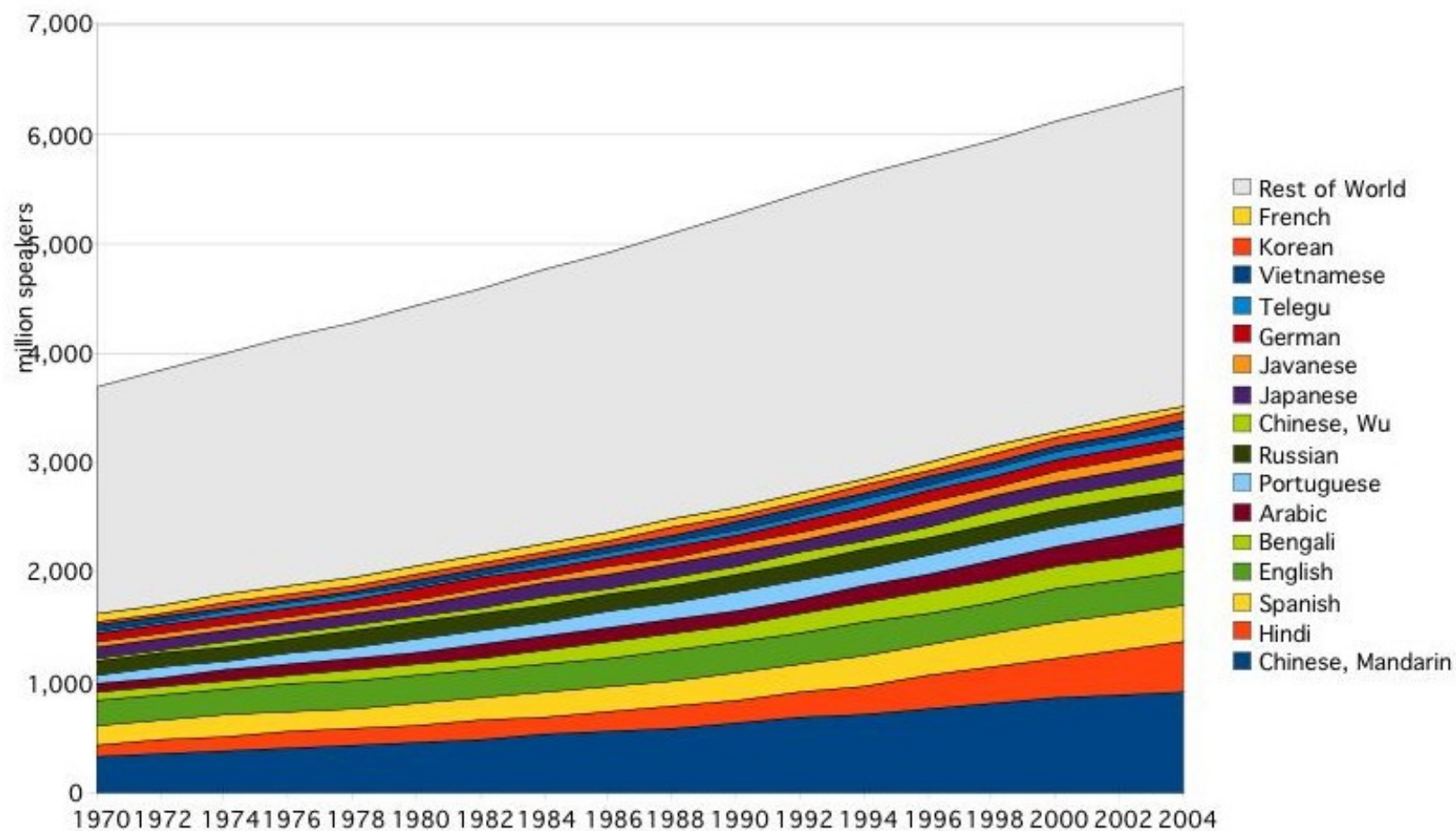
## 5. Variability vs. standardization

### 5.1 Linguistic diversity today, some numbers

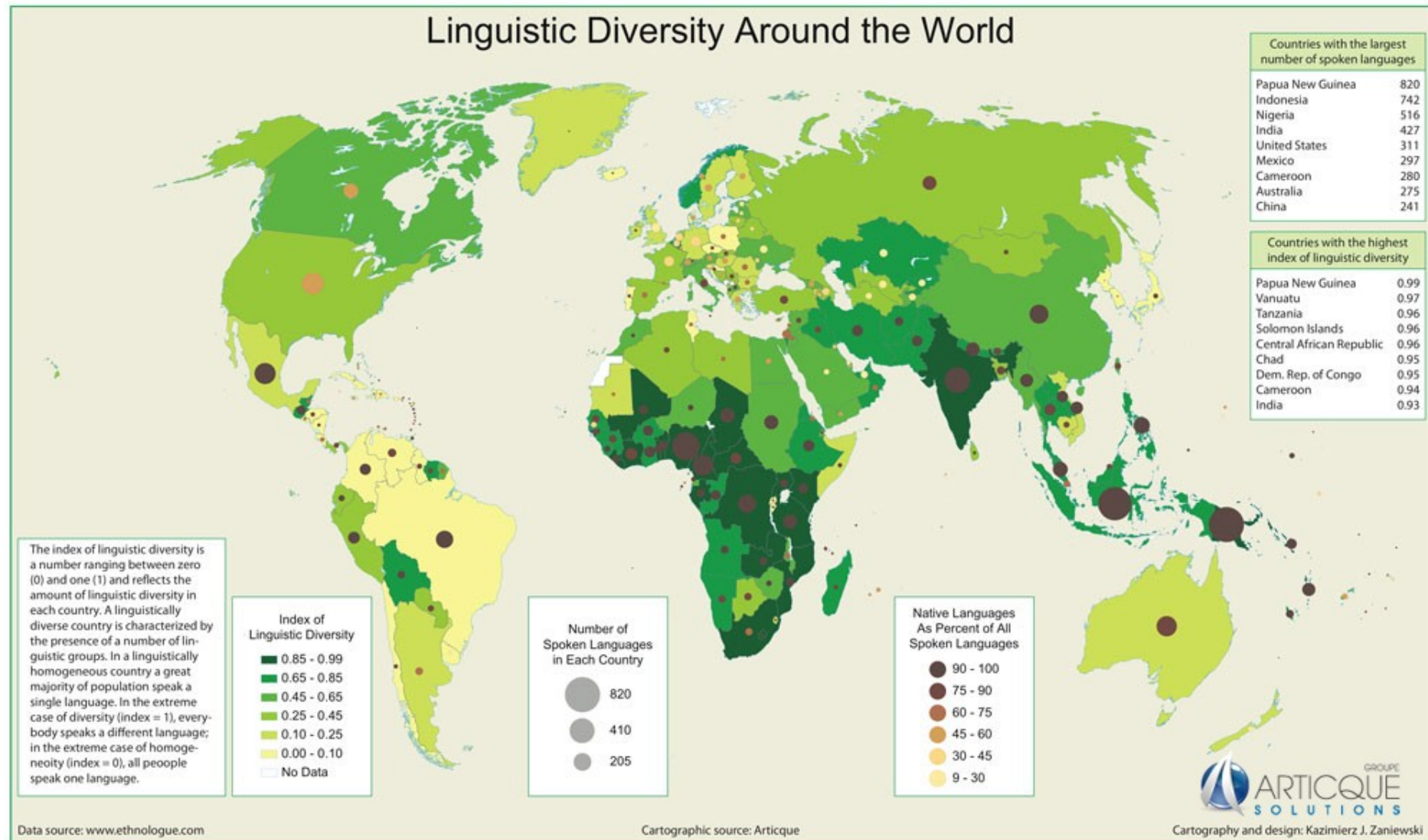
### 5.2 the 25 most widely spoken “languages” today worldwide (based upon Hatmon & Loh 2010; [www.terralingua.org/linguisticdiversity/](http://www.terralingua.org/linguisticdiversity/))



### 5.3 the dynamics of “language” growth 1970 – 2004



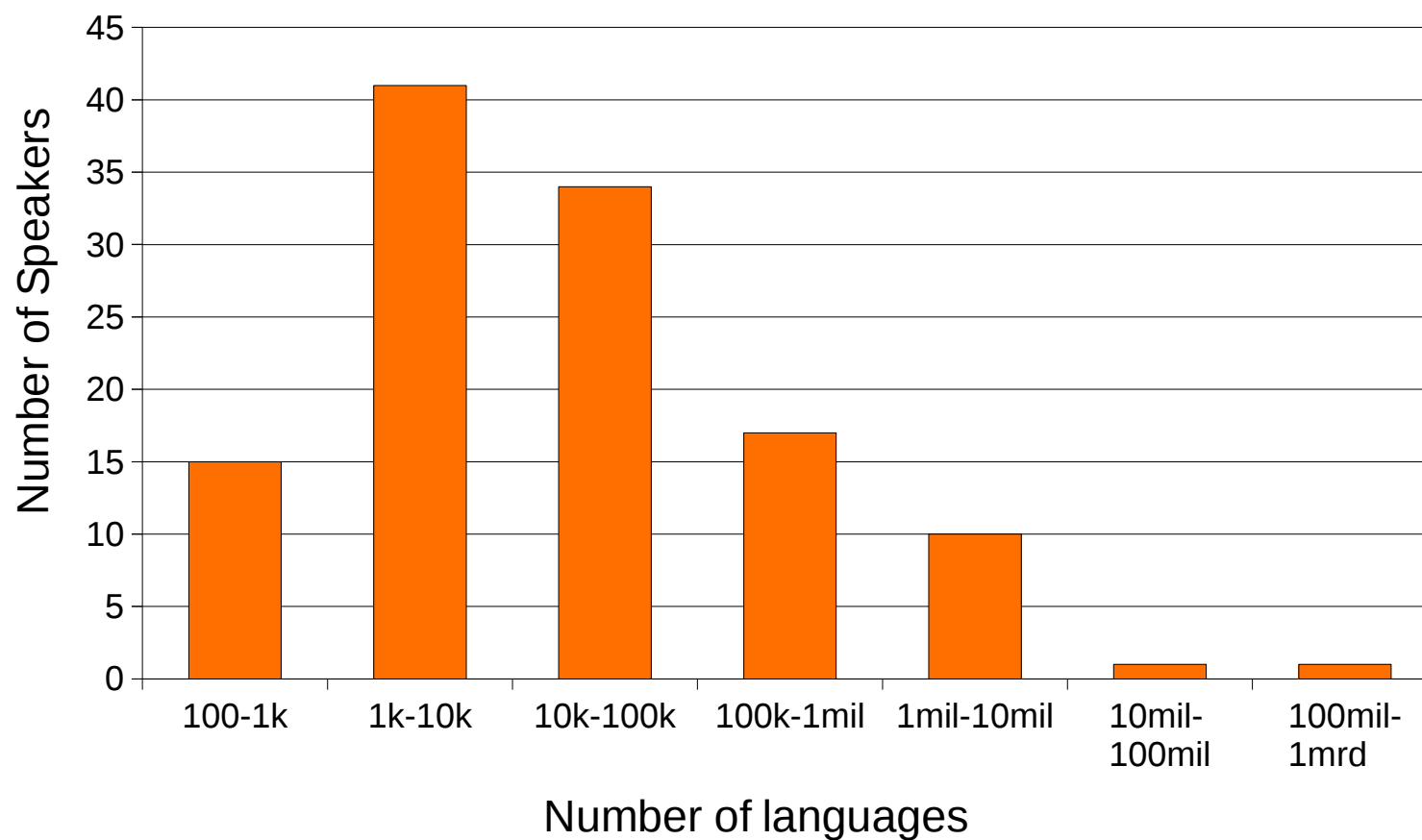
## 5.4 geographic distribution of linguistic diversity (data source: ethnologue)



## 5.5 some dimensions

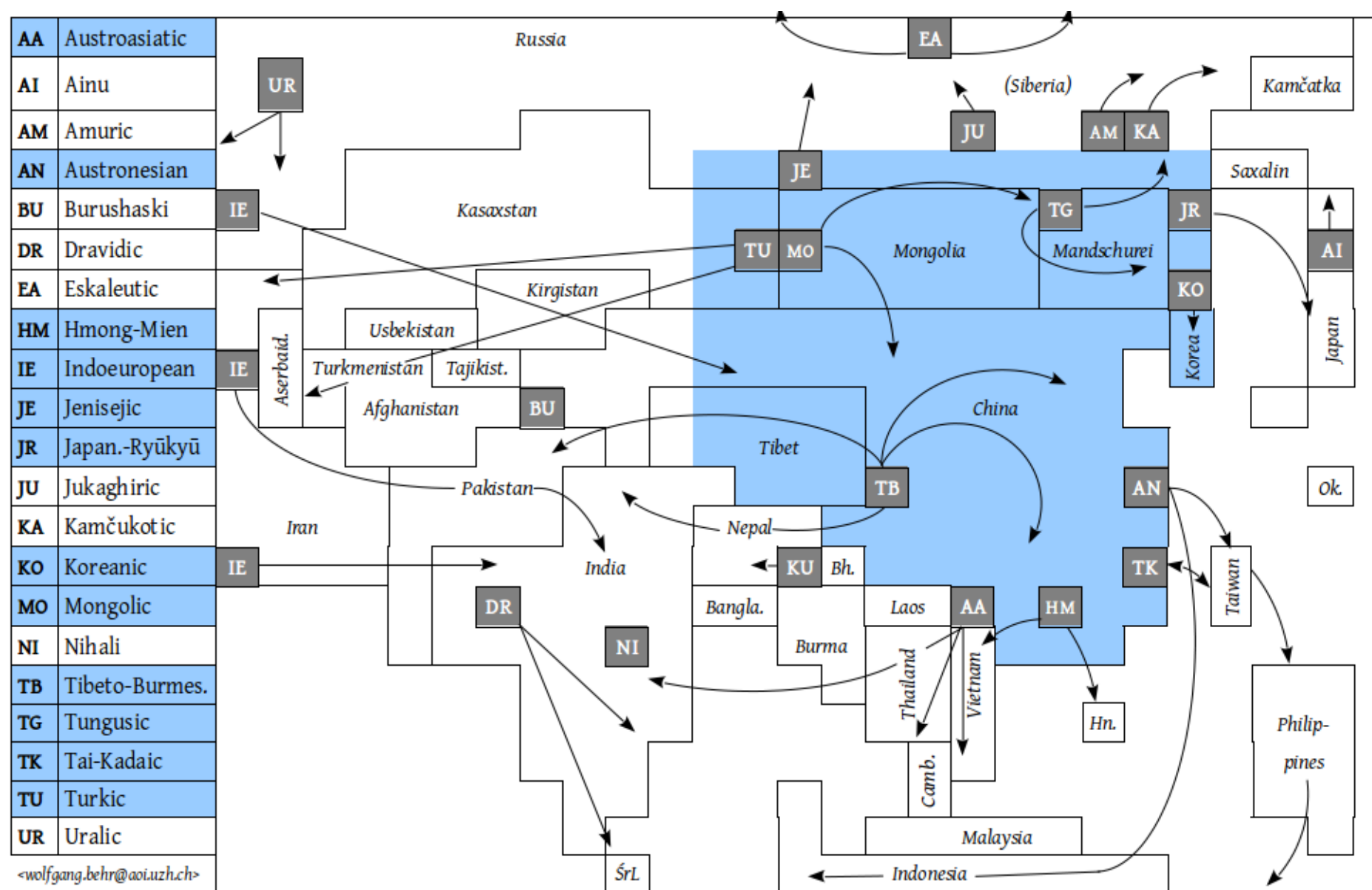
- number of “languages” spoken worldwide – ca. **6.800** (ethnologue)
- “language” extinction 1970–2005 – ca. **20%**
- number of “languages” *ever* spoken since Recent Out of Africa (ROA) spread of modern humans (-60 kya) – ca. **100.000** (Bickel 2013)
- population of China: 27.VI.2017, 06:41:38 – **1.386.048.226**, of which ca. **95.7%** “Hàn Chinese” (countrysimeters.info/en/China)
- number of “languages” spoken in China today: **214** (ethnologue)
- more realistically, but including 5 creoles and the Austronesian languages of Taiwan: **129** (Sun Hongkai 2006.b, Sun, Hu Zengyi, Huang Xing 2006)

## 5.6 distribution of speaker sizes in the PRC (data: Sun Hongkai 2006.b)



5.7 Linguistic diversity in Early China? Precious little instructive sources!  
(Behr 2004, 2010, Boltz 2010, forthcoming)

5.8 Linguistic diversity in East Asia during the late Neolithic and early bronze age, based on typological clusters (Janhunen 1998, Gassmann & Behr 2005, 2013)





5.9 The internal differentiation of Sinitic during the Western Hàn empire, partially reconstructable from the *Regional expressions from foreign states and glosses on words from extinct eras collected by the “light charrette of officials”* (*Yóuxuān shǐzhě juédài yǔ shì biéguó fāngyán* 輶軒使者絕代語釋別國方言) by Yáng Xióng 揚雄 (ca. 53 B.C.-18 A.D.) and other Eastern Hàn/Early Medieval glossographies

(cf. Lǐ, Lǐ, Yáng & Huá 1992; cf. Huá Xuéchéng 2003)

I. Qín-Jìn	V: Qí-Lǚ	IX: Chǔ
II: Zhōu-Hán-Zhèng	VI: Dōng-Qí, Hǎidài	X: Nán-Chǔ
III: Zhào-Wèi	VII: Yāndài	XI: Nán-Yuè
IV: Wèi-Sòng	VIII: Běi-Yān, Cháoxiǎn	XII: Wú-Yuè

## Mostly Sinitic

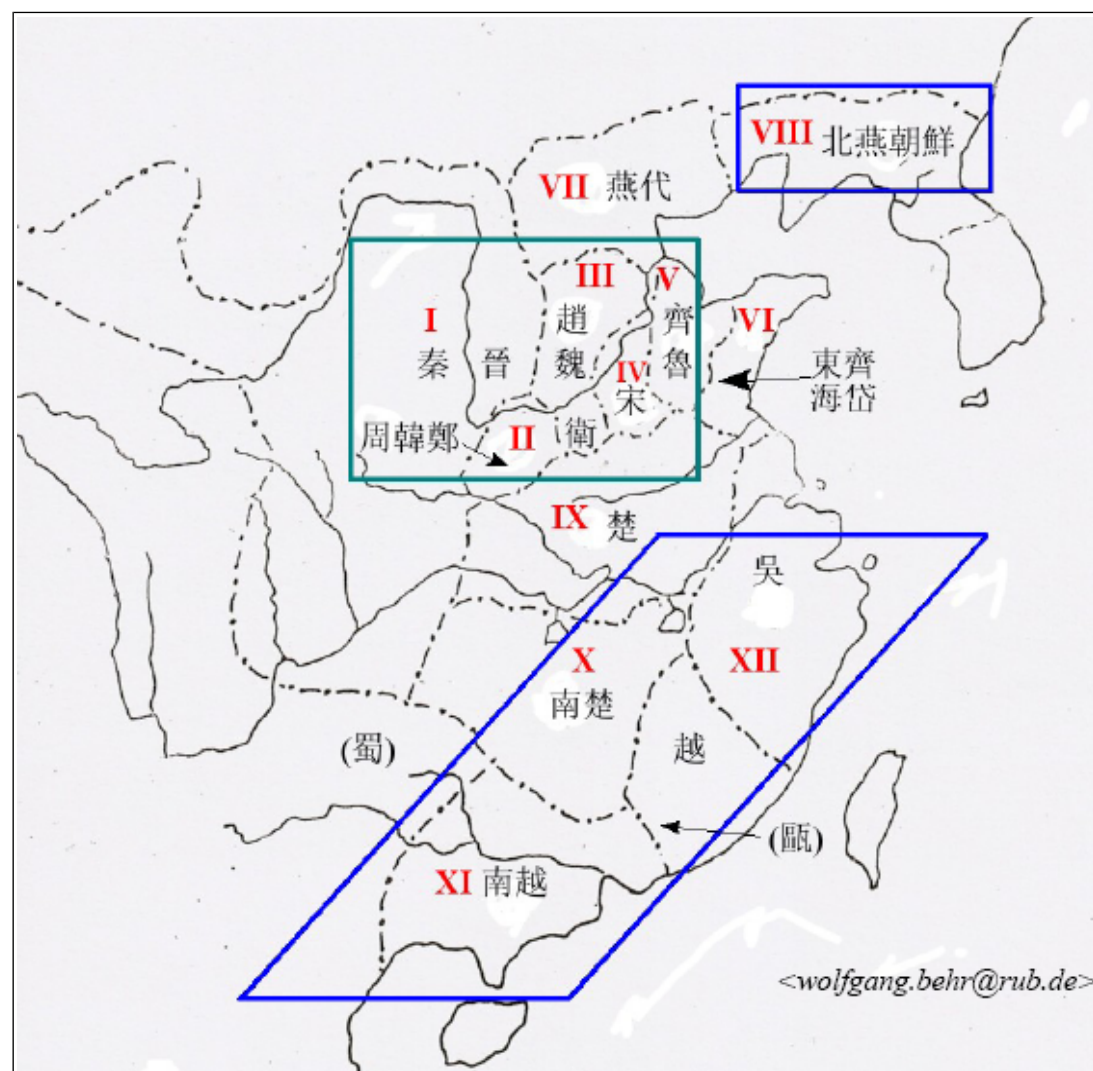
- I 秦 晉
- II 周 韓 鄭
- III 趙 魏
- IV 衛 宋
- V 齊 魯

## Mixed Zone

- VI 東齊 海岱
- VII 燕代
- IX 楚

## Mostly Non-Sinitic

- VIII 北燕 朝鮮
- X 南楚
- XI 南越
- XII 吳 越



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## 6. Old Chinese as a creole language?

### 6.1 Some literature (pro & con)

Ansaldo, Umberto & Stephen Matthews, “Typical creoles and simple languages: The case of Sinitic”, *Linguistic Typology* 5 (2001) 2/3: 311–326.

Ballard, W. L., “The mother soup: A South China recipe for tonometamorphogenesis”, *Computational Analysis of African and Asian Languages* 22 (1984): 43–70.

Behr, Wolfgang, “Role of language in early Chinese constructions of ethnic identity”, *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 37 (2010) 4: 567–587.

Bisang, Walter, “On the evolution of complexity – sometimes less is more in East and mainland Southeast Asia”, in: Geoffrey Sampson et al., eds., *Language Complexity as an Evolving Variable*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, 34–49.

Chén Qíguāng 陳其光, “Hànyǔ yuánliú shèxiǎng” 漢語源流設想, *Minzú Yǔwén* 民族語文 1996 (5): 28–37.

DeLancey, Scott, “Language Replacement and the Spread of Tibeto-Burman”, *Journal of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society* 3 (2010) 1: 40–55.

DeLancey, Scott “The origins of Sinitic”, in: Zhuo Jing-Schmidt (ed.), *Increased Empiricism: Recent advances in Chinese Linguistics*, Amsterdam & Philadelphia: J. Benjamins 2013, 73–99.

DeLancey, Scott, “Creolization in the Divergence of the Tibeto-Burman Languages”, in: in Nathan Hill and Tom Owen-Smith, eds., *Transhimalayan Linguistics*, Berlin: DeGruyter, 2017, 41–70.

Dèng Xiǎohuá 鄧曉華, “Shìlùn Nán Zhōngguó Hànrén jí Hànyǔ de láiyuán” 試論南中國漢人及漢語的來源, 《日本國立民族學博物館調查報告》20 号 2001: 1–12.

Elvin, Mark, “Some Reflections on the Use of ‘Styles of Scientific Thinking’ to Disaggregate and Sharpen Comparisons Between China and Europe from Song to Mid-Qing Times (960±1850 CE)”, *History of Technology* 25 (2004): 53–103.

McWhorter, John, “The world’s simplest grammars are creole grammars”, *Linguistic Typology* 5 (2007): 125–166.

McWhorter, John, *Language interrupted: Signs of non-native acquisition in standard language grammars*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

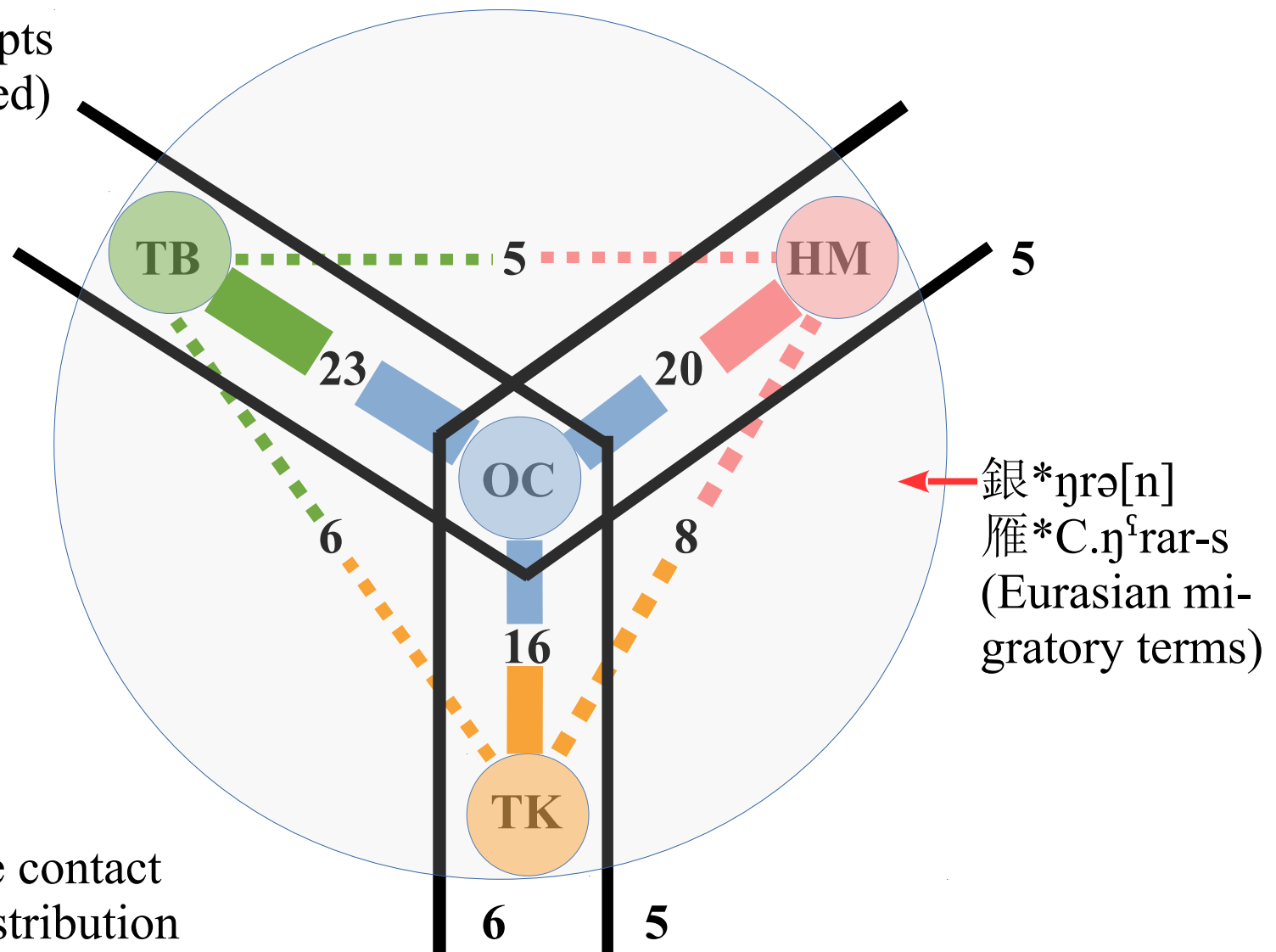
## 6.3 Distribution of 40 EA cognate concepts attested in OBI (Chén 1996)

OC~TB	OC~HM	OC~TK	(HM~TK	TB~TK	TB~HM)
OC~TB~HM	OC~HM~TK	OC~TB~TK	OC~TB~HM~TK		

NUM		PRN		BODY		ANIMAL		METAL		V		ADJ		N	
TWO	二	1PRN	我	HEAD	首	HORSE	馬	BRONZE	金	GO	行	RED	赤	NEEDLE	針
THREE	三	2PRN	爾	EYE	目	COW	牛	SILVER	銀	STAND	立	YELLOW	黃	NAME	名
FOUR	四			NOSE	自	ELEPH.	象	COPPER	銅	SIT	坐	WHITE	白	SUN	日
FIVE	五			EAR	耳	CHICKEN	雞			EAT	食	SHARP	利		
				BLOOD	血	DOG.1	犬			WASH	洗	SWEET	甘		
						DOG.2	狗			KILL	殺				
						HARE	兔			DIE	死				
						GOOSE	雁			FLY	飛				
						BUG	蟲								
						FISH	魚								

## 6.4

Shared concepts  
(lines weighted)



- looks like contact driven distribution

## 6.5 Prototypical creole languages (McWhorter 1998, 2001, 2005) have:

- SVO-constituent order +
- little or no inflectional morphology +
- no semantically contingent derivational morphology –
- no usage of tone
  - a. to differentiate monosyllables –
  - b. for grammatical purposes –

→ not all ‘simple’ languages are necessarily creole languages!  
(cf. Ansaldo & Matthews 2001, Sampson 2005)

7. Glimpses at various types of variation in OC and the question of standardized language
- 7.1 lexical variation already commented upon in the pre-Qín period (Rèn Xuéliáng 1992)
- (23) 樹木有曼根，有直根。根者，書之所謂柢也。柢也者，木之所以建生也；曼根者，木之所以持生也（《韓非子：解老》 20.19.3）  
“Trees have *spread roots* and *straight roots*. The *straight roots*, are what is called ‘basic root’ (*dǐ*) in the book. The *basic root* is that through which the tree establishes life; it is the spread roots through which the tree maintains life.”



## 7.2 syntactic variation encountered within one quotation

- (24) a. 諺曰：「無過亂門」。(《左傳:昭公十九年》)  
b. 人有言曰：「唯亂門之無過」(《左傳:昭公二十二年》)  
c. 人有言曰：「無過亂人之門。」(《國語:周語下》)

- which is the most colloquial of these versions?
- is this a phenomenon of register, style, genre, dialect ... ?

### 7.3 “colloquial inversion” with particle insertion?

(Yáng Fèngxián & Yáng Qìngzhī 2002)

- (25)
- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| i. N V1 → V1 PART N                    | 野哉由也 (LY 13.3)     |
| ii. S P V1 → V1 PART S P               | 惜乎，夫子之說君子也。 (12.8) |
| iii. VP V1 → V1 PART VP                | 果哉，末之難矣！ (14.39)   |
| iv. [S 之 P] <sub>s</sub> PO            |                    |
| → P O PART [S 之 P] <sub>s</sub>        | 有是哉，子之迂也！ (13.3)   |
| v. NP <sub>1</sub> NP <sub>2</sub> 也   |                    |
| → NP <sub>2</sub> PART NP <sub>1</sub> | 小人哉，樊須也！ (13.4)    |

7.4 The 1920ies debate: are the grammatical differences encountered in pre-Qín texts stylistic or dialectal variants (Forke on Karlgren 1929)

(26) “Now, Forke’s fundamental idea is so obviously erroneous. It ought to be clear to any unbiased reader that the dialogues of the *Lun yü*, *Meng-tsi* and *Chuang-tsi*, the dramatically narrated episodes of the *Tso chuan* etc., are the purest possible reproductions of a spoken language. We can positively hear the speakers with all their little curious turnings, anacoluthic sentences, exclamations etc.” (Karlgren 1929 / Malmqvist 2011: 191).

## 7.5 Dialogues

(27) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (8.2/1): 曾子有疾，召門弟子曰：

「 啟	予 足!	啟	予 手	!
*kk <sup>h</sup> e-q	la tsok!	kk <sup>h</sup> e-q	la hnu-q!	
<i>unwrap</i>	1SG <i>foot</i>	<i>unwrap</i>	1SG <i>hand</i>	

《詩》云‘戰戰兢兢，如臨深淵，如履薄冰。’

而 今 而 後 吾 知 ‘免夫’！ 小子！」  
 \*nə kim nə ggo-s, ŋŋa tre ‘mro[r]-q.p(r)a’! sew-q.tsə-q  
 CONJ *today* CONJ *after* 1SG *know* *spare.man* *little.child-INT*

“When Zēng zǐ was sick, he called together the pupils of his sect and said: ‘Unwrap my feet, unpack my hands! In the *Odes* it is said: *\*tan-s=tan-s kin=kin* (“*trembling and trepidarious*”), as if approaching a deep abyss, as if treading on thin ice. And from now on I’ll know it forever: ‘I’ve been spared’, oh boys!’

- *imperative unmarked, exclamative unmarked*

(28) 《禮記》 *Lǐjì* (19·3/29):

賓牟賈起，免席而請曰：「夫武之備戒之已久，則既聞命矣，敢問：遲之遲而又久，何也？」

子曰：「居！吾語女。」

\*k(r)a! ŋŋa ŋ(r)a na-q

*squat* 1-NFOC *say* 2-FOC

“Bīnmóu Jià rose to his feet, and, having left the seating mattress addressed [Confucius] with the following request: ‘Master, I have heard Your instructions about the long-lasting warning signals of Wǔ, but let me still ask you: How is it, that after the first delay there is another, even longer one?’ The master said: ‘**Sit! I tell you.**’

➤ *imperative unmarked, valency slot unfilled.*

(29) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (5·19/2)

子張問曰：“令尹子文…何如？”子曰：“忠矣。”曰：“仁矣乎？”曰：“未知，焉得仁？”“崔子弑齊君…何如？”子曰：“清矣。”曰：“仁矣乎？”曰：“未知。焉得仁？”

“zǐ-Zhāng asked: ‘Minister zǐ-Wén ... what do you think of him?’

The master said: ‘[He] was loyal!’.

[zǐ-Zhāng] said: ‘Was [he] human?’

[Confucius] said: ‘Don’t know. How would he have managed to be human?!’

‘Master Cuī killed the Lord of Qí ... what do you think of him?’

The master said: ‘[He] was pure.’

[zǐ-Zhāng] said: ‘Was [he] human?’

[Confucius] said: ‘Don’t know. Why should he have managed to be human?!’”

➤ *lapidary, excessive null-subject build-up*

(30) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (5·4/1)

子貢問曰：「賜也，何如？」 \*s-lek-s llaj-q, ggaj na?

子曰：「女器也。」 \*na-q k<sup>h</sup>rət-s llaj-q.

曰：「何器也？」 \*ggaj k<sup>h</sup>rət-s llaj-q.

曰：「瑚璉也。」 \*gga=ren-q llaj-q.

“zǐ-Gòng asked: ‘About *me*, Cì, what do [You] think of me?’

The master said: ‘You are a vessel.’

[He said]: ‘What kind of vessel?’

[He said]: ‘A *húlián*.’”

## 7.6 Expressive particle stacking

### (31) 《左傳》 *Zuǒzhuàn* (9·25·2/16)

晏子立於崔氏之門外。

其人曰：「死乎？」

\*sij-q GGa?

曰：「獨吾君也乎哉，  
吾死也？！」

\*ddok ŋ̃a kur-tsə llaj-q GGa tsə,  
ŋ̃a sij-q GGa?!”

曰：「行乎？」

\*Cə-ggraŋ GGa?”

曰：「吾罪也乎哉，  
吾亡也？」

\*ŋ̃a ddzuj-q llaj-q GGa tsə,  
ŋ̃a maŋ llaj-q?!”

“zǐ-Yǎn stood in front of the house of the Cuī-clan and some guys of them said: ‘Are you dying?’ He: ‘Was he my lord alone or what?! – Why would I die?! They: ‘Are you leaving?’. He: ‘Is it my fault or what?! – Why should I leave?’”



(32) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (35, 憲問)

子 曰： 「 莫 我 知 也 夫 」 ”

\*tsə-q wa-t: ‘mma-k ŋaj-q tre llaj-q ba!’

*master*-INT *say*-ASP.PFV NEG-DISTR 1-FOC *know* PART PART

子貢曰： “ 「 何為其莫知子也？ 」

\*tse-q kkoŋ-s wat: ‘ggaj G<sup>w</sup>raj gə mak tre tsə-q llaj-q?’

“The master said: ‘There’s **really** nobody, who **would** know me!’

zǐ-Gòng said: ‘What’s that supposed to mean that *nobody knows You?*’”

(33) 《墨子》 *Mòzǐ* (39·13·1)

孔丘與其門弟子閒坐，曰：「夫舜見瞽叟（然就）〔就然〕，  
此時天下（坡）〔圾〕乎！」

周 公 旦 非 人 也 邪」

\*tiw Cə.qqoŋ ttan-s \*pə-(tə-)wuj nin llaj-q sGA

N.pr. *duke* N.pr. NEG-(APPL)-COP *person* PART PART

“Kǒng Qiū sat around idle with the pupils of his sect and asked: ‘Now, when Shùn met the (blind) master drummer \*Na-n.dzu-s, back then the world was still a wasteland! Wasn’t Dàn, the Duke of Zhōu **really** a true man?!’”

## 7.7 The “*X-ye* 也 phenomenon” (Karlgren 1951/Malmqvist 2011: 221), oral copula focalization

- (34) “Our *X-ye* phenomenon is priceless, for it reveals that the recorded conversations are reproductions – on the whole quite faithful reproductions though of crude to some extent ‘tidied’ up – of the real conversations which they represent. In the extensive quoted conversations we have a mirror of the colloquial of the Chou era ... And since the narrative and descriptive texts have quite the same language (auxiliaries, word sequence, constructions, vocabulary) as these lengthy conversations with but modest divergences, notably our contrast *X-ye/X*, we can conclude that the literary language of the Chou, what we call Classical Chinese, was very closely akin indeed to the colloquial of the time, being merely a stylistically somewhat pruned version of that colloquial.”

(35) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (15·3)

子曰：「賜也，女以予為多學而識之者與？」對曰：「然，非與？」曰：「非也，予一以貫之。」

“The master said: ‘**Ci**, do you think of me as someone who memorizes the many things he has learned?’ He replied: ‘Yes – is it not so?’ [Confucius] said: ‘It is not. I file things together with a single thread.’”

(36) 《禮記·雜記下》 *Lǐjì* (15·3)

子貢觀於蠟。孔子曰：「賜也樂乎？」對曰：「一國之人皆若狂，賜未知其樂也！」

“zǐ-Gòng had observed the year-end ‘candle’ sacrifice. Confucius said: ‘Were you happy with it, Cì?’ He replied: ‘The people of the whole fiefdom were all like mad, I really don’t know how I would find pleasure in that!’”

## 8.1 Swearing & denigrating in Old Chinese

## 8.2 Definitions (互訓)

(37) 《說文》 *Shuōwén* (4820, 4821)

a. 𦉰: 罵也。从网从言。网皐人。

“*lì* (\*raj-s) means ‘to swear at’ (*mà* < \*m-rra-s). (Synsemantically) derived from 网 ‘net’ und 言 ‘tongue/to speak’, [i.e.] ‘to capture the sins of another person.’

b. 𦉰: 詈也。从网馬聲。

“*mà* (\*m-rra-s) means ‘to swear at’ (*lì* < \*raj-s). (Phonosemantically) derived from 网 ‘net’, 馬 (\*m-rra-q) is phonophoric.”

### 8.3 other early words from the lexical field of ‘cursing’ (7)

詬	<i>gòu</i>	< *kko-q	‘to scold at, curse’
謗	<i>bàng</i>	< *ppaŋ-s	‘to slander so., speak foul of’
訾	<i>zǐ</i>	< *tse-q	‘to humiliate so.’
謾	<i>màn</i>	< *mmon-s	‘lie about so.’
謾誕	<i>màndàn</i>	< *moon-s.llan-q	‘grandiloquently lie about someone’
誚/譙	<i>qiào</i>	< *dze <sup>w</sup> k-s	‘to reprimand, to publicly criticize so.’
喝	<i>hè</i>	< *qq <sup>h</sup> at	‘to yell at someone’

## 8.4 four pre-imperial semantic fields: metaphors/metonymies, narratives referring to

- *animals*
- *appearance*
- *ethnic difference*
- *social status*

(cf. Liú Fùgēn 劉福根, *Hànyǔ lìcí yánjiū — Hànyǔ màlì xiǎoshǐ* 漢語詈詞研究—漢語罵詈小史, Hángzhōu: Zhèjiāng Rénmín 2008)

- *n.b.*: genital / sexual/ fecal curses only (& rarely) attested since the LMC period! Cf.

(38) 《祖堂集》 *Zǔtángjí* 15.11 (Anderl 2006: 317)

問：「如何是菩提？」師便咄云：「出去！莫向這里痢！」

“X asked: ‘How is *bodhi* (enlightenment)?’ The master thereupon cursed (LMC \**twat*) him, saying: ‘Get out? Do not shit in this place here!’”

(39) *GUZUN*, ZZ 118:666b7 (Anderl 2006: 382–3 )

我早是將一塊屎驀口抹了！

“I have already smeared a piece of shit on your mouth!”



## a. animal related

(40) 《左傳》 *Zuǒzhuàn* (9·23·8/2)

對曰：「多則多矣，抑君似鼠。夫鼠晝伏夜動，不穴於寢廟，畏人故也。今君聞晉之亂，而後作焉，寧將事之，非鼠如何？」

“[Xi] replied: ‘It may be that you have achieved a lot, but you, my Lord, are like a **rat**. Yet a **rat** hides during the day and is active at night, it has its hideouts in sleeping rooms and ancestral temples. Only now, that you have heard from the usurpation in Jin, you became active in this case. If it had stayed calm, then you would be serving [Jin] in the future. Now, if that’s not **rat**like – what then?!’”

## (41) 《左傳》 (10·28·2/7)

甚美，光可以鑑，名曰玄妻。樂正后夔取之，生伯封，實有  
豕心，貪惛無饜，忿類無期，謂之封豕。有窮后羿滅之 …

“[She] was very beautiful, so much that one could mirror oneself in her splendor and she was named ‘The dark wife’. Prince Kuí, head of the musical bureau (under Shùn) took her on as wife and she gave birth to Elder Fēng. Now [he] really had the heart of a **pig**, he was insatiable, **greedy and gluttonous, easily irritated and totally perverted**, such that he was called ‘Fēng, the **pig**’. Yì, the prince of the Yǒuqióng, annihilated him …”

b. ethnicity/region/appearance related

(42) 《孟子》 *Mèngzǐ* (5A4)

孟子曰：「否。此非君子之言，齊東野人之語也」

“Mèngzǐ said: ‘No. This is not the speech of a gentleman, these are the words of a **hillbilly** from the East of Qí’”

(43) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (9.13)

子欲居九夷。或曰：“**陋**，如之何！”子曰：“君子居之，何**陋**之有？”

“The master desired to dwell among the Nine Barbarians. Someone addressed him: ‘They are (**narrow**[-minded] → ) **ruffians**, how will you go about that?’ The master said: ‘If a gentleman lives among them, what kind of ruffianity could there be?’”

(44) 《國語》 *Guóyǔ* (8B)

范蠡曰：“王孫子，昔吾先君固周室之不成子也，故濱于東海之陂，黿鼉魚鱉之與處，而蛙黽之與同渚。餘雖覩然而人面哉，吾猶禽獸也，又安知是譏譏者乎？”

“Fàn Lí said: ‘My dear Wángsūn, anciently my ancestors settled on the banks of the Eastern Sea, because the House of Zhōu did not grant them baronhood, and they dwell together with sea turtles, alligators, fish and tortoises, and persevere in the quagmires together with frogs and amphibians. **It is really a disgrace that I have a human countenance, yet I am still a wild beast.** How, then, should I be in a position to understand this rhetorical refinement?!’”

c. status related

(45) 《左傳》 (Wen 1)

呼， 役夫， 宜君王之剝女...

“Hey there, you **corvée slave**, it would be well fitting His Majesty had you killed ...”

## 4.9 and when the master gets all fed up ....

(46) 《論語》 *Lúnyǔ* (17·15/1)

子曰：

「鄙 夫！ 可 與 事 君 也 與 哉」

\*prə-q p(rə) kk<sup>h</sup>aj-q la-q m-s-rə-s kur llaj-q la ttseq?!

<i>mean</i>	<i>man</i>	<i>be.</i>	COM	VOL-DENOM	<i>lord</i>	PART	PART	PART
		<i>admissible</i>		<i>-serve-DIR</i>				

“The master said: ‘**Lowly person! How on earth could** one serve with him under the same ruler**?!**’”

9. Best arguments in favour of a shared, normative language during the Eastern Zhōu:

9.1 Stability of the rhyming system in bronze inscriptions: little diachronic, almost *no* diatopic/dialectal variance across a vast geographic area, cf.

(47) Wáng Guówéi 王國維 (1877–1927)

惟前哲言韻，皆以《詩·三百五篇》為主。余更蒐周世韻語，見於金石文字者，得數十篇。中有杞、鄆、邾，許、徐、楚諸國之文字，出商、魯二《頌》與《十五國風》之外。其時，亦上起宗周，下訖戰國，互五六百年。然其用韻，與《三百篇》無乎不合，

“Now, when the earlier erudites talked about rhymes, they mainly relied upon the *305 Chapters of the Odes*. I continued the collection of rhymed passages from the Zhōu period and found several dozen sections among the epigraphic written evidence on stone and bronze. Among them there are inscriptions from the states of Qǐ, Zēng, Xǔ, Zhū, Xú und Chǔ, which geographically extend beyond the *Shāng* and *Lǚ Hymns* and the *Airs of the Fifteen States* and diachronically span a period of over five-, sixhundred years, beginning with Ancestral Zhōu down to the Warring States period. Yet their usage of rhyming does not deviate at all from the *Three Hundred Chapters*.

(《兩周金石文韻讀》, 1917, in: *Wáng Guāntáng xiānshēng quánjí* 王觀堂先生全集, vol. 6: 1965-1988, Táiběi: Wénhuá 文華 1961-68; ; for a full discussion of the text including the passage cf. Behr 1997: 85–91; cf. Yú Suìshēng 1988=1995, 1993; Luó Jiāngwén 1995, Chén Shìyì 2006, Liú Bō 2013: 26–27).



(48) Guō Mòruò on pre-Qín unification tendencies

自春秋而后，氏族畛域漸就混同，文化色彩亦漸趨畫一，彝銘，則北自燕晉，南迄徐吳，東自齊邾，西迄秦都，構思既見從同，用韻亦復一致，是足徵周末之中州確已有『書同文，行同倫』之實際。未幾至嬴秦而一統，勢所必然也。

“From the Springs and Autumns period onwards, the boundaries of clans and lineages gradually merged and the cultural variety also eventually tended towards unification. In bronze inscriptions from Yan and Jin in the North to Xu and Wu in the South, from Qi and Zhu in the East to Qin and Ru in the West, the concepts encountered were unanimous and moreover their use of rhyme was uniform, which suffices to prove that factually the *‘use of the same graphs in writing and of the same wheels in transport’* was definitely in place within the central provinces towards the end of the Zhou already; it was by no means only immediately after the Ying emperor’s unification of Qin that it developed as a matter of course. (《兩周金文辭大系考釋·序》, 2nd ed., 1931).

9.2 For a relatively detailed argumentation see Yú Suíshēng 喻遂生 (1993, 1995; cf. also Behr 2008, 2017)

- typical series in \*-aŋ or \*-ə show *no* regional patterning in 列國金文
- Dǒng Tónghé's (1938) four Chǔ properties (rhyme contacts 東:陽, 之:幽, 侯魚, 真耕, in traditional parlance) occur widely outside Chǔ texts in the edited literature, and in RBI
- “Without doubt, dialects existed in ancient times, but a shared language also without doubt and its influence was enormous. (...)” (古代的方言方音肯定是存在的, 但古代的通語也肯定存在而且影响是巨大的.)
- this may be a property of “a language used in a solemn environment” (一種用於莊嚴場合的語言), such that bronze inscriptions are “a normatively elegant shared language” (一種典雅的通語)

### 9.3 no communication problems in interstate exchanges

- *ode*-citation culture in court dialogues described in *Zuǒzhuàn* 左傳 and *Guóyǔ*, shared even by members of non-sinitic states (cf. Pines 2004)
- 68 instances of *fùshī* 賦詩 by members of 9 states:  
魯 (27) > 鄭 (18) 晉 (12) > 楚 (3) > 衛, 秦 (2) > 莒, 齊, 小邾, 宋 (1)
- all focused on 雅-sections of the *Odes* with the exception of Zhèng 鄭 (Máo Zhènghuá 2004)
- rise of *yǎyán* at the same time as dating of the two *yǎ*-sections? (Máo Zhènghuá 2004)

9.4 instances of interstate diplomatic visits (*pìnǐ* 聘禮) recorded in Chǔ excavated documents: no communication problems, no interpreters mentioned (Liú Bō 2013: 28), e.g.

- |                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| · 鄧客臧嘉問王於戚郢之歲   | 鄧客銅量 (《集成》 16-10373) |
| · 秦客公孫鞅問王於戚郢之歲  | 天星觀一號墓竹簡             |
| · 東周之客許郢至胙於戚郢之歲 | 包山 12                |
| · 宋客盛公邊聘楚之歲     | 包山 125               |
| · 齊客張果問王於戚郢之歲   | 望山 M1-1              |

etc.

(+ more recent examples in 《繫年》

## 9.5 further arguments (Liú Bō 2013; 28–30)

- - the very fact that the edited literature can be used to decipher excavated texts and vice versa
  - scribal culture maintained largely by government officials, unlikely to use dialects, writing for illiterate common people (as in 包山《疋獄》 訴狀 ‘legal charges’)
  - phonetic proximity of orthographic variants of the same represented word in different states
  - no marked contrast of initial system in SB corpus (Diss. Hú Hǎiqióng 2011)

10. If such an awareness of a normative language existed, is there an attempt to compensate for phonological deviation/change within the earliest Chinese writing system? – possibly!

10.1 phonophoric determination (加聲符) conspicuously rare, if compared to other early logographic writing systems, but does occur from OBI onwards

## 10.2.1 two exx. from Liú Zhāo (rev. ed., 2011)

(49) a. 鳳 ‘phoenix’:



(《合》 14225) —



(《合》 30259)

b. \*bum-s &gt; \*bjungwH :: + [p 凡] \*brom &gt; \*bjom

. reflecting main vowel change?

(50) a. 禽 ‘catch bird with net’



—



(《合》 10273)

b. \*Cə.Gəm &gt; \*gim :: + [p 今] \*krəm &gt; \*kim

. reflecting change of initial?



. cf. Mǎ Jiāxían (2012) with 9 further OBI exx.



10.3 contrary to unintentional character corruption (*ébiàn* 訛變, cf. for a superb typology Zhāng Fēng 2012), the following character developments are the most likely to reflect *intentional* character change, especially phoneticization (Liú Zhāo 2005, Yè Yùyīng 2005, 2006, 2009, Zhāng Yuànlì 2012, Mǎ Jiāxián 2012, Xǔ Yánhuī 2013)

a. secondary phonophoric doubling (ca. 90 exx.)

- (51) a. 羽 yú < \**hjuX* < \**G<sup>w</sup>(r)a-q* 1. “feathers”, 2. “a musical note”  
 b. 𪛗 (BS.128, 188), SX 《隨縣》 .6  
 +p 于 yǔ < \**hjuX* < \**G<sup>w</sup>wa*

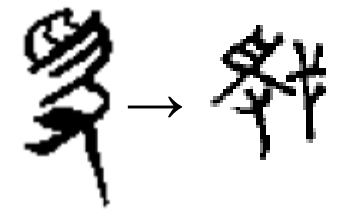
𪛗 (BS.269) → 𪛗 (BS 128)

b. secondary phonetic determination of synsemantic or phonosemantic bases  
(ca. 45 exx.)

(52) a. 爰 *yuán* < *\*hjwon* < *\*G<sup>w</sup>a[n]* “N.pr.” (?轅)

b. 𡗗 《望山》 1.61

+p 干 *gān* < *\*kan* < *\*k<sup>ʳ</sup>a[n,r]*



(53) a. 𡗗, 𡗗 *zhī* < *\*tsyik* < *\*tək*

(OBI: 1. for 識 commemorate, remember” *\*tək-s*, 2. 1. for 食 *\*m-lək*, 3. n. for a red-coloured sacrificial cow, 4. pl. n.)




b. 𡗗 (SB.II.從政 A12): 「唯世不𡗗」 (cf. Hé 2003)





+p 𡗗 *chǐ* < *\*tsyhiX* < *\*thə-q*



c. phoneticization by shape change (ca. 70 exx.)



(54) 鬲 *lì* < \**lek* < \**k.r<sup>1</sup>ek* ‘a vessel name’

OBI  (*Jia* 2132),  (*Yi* 2544),  (*Cui* 1543) →

BI  (孟鼎),  (令簋),  (同姜鬲),  (邠伯鬲) →

ZG  (GD窮.2),  (SB.II.容.40) →  (SB SB.II.容.13)

CORRUPTION: vessel bottom → sheep → two hands & REANALYSIS as

 (QH.祭公.14),  (GD.語III.64a) = 鬲 *chì* < \**syeh* < \**hlek-s*

(55) 赤 *chì* < \**tsyhek* < \**t-q<sup>h</sup>ak* ‘red’ (Yè Yùyīng 2009: 357–358)

OBI ,  : [s 火] + [s 大] → BI  (頌鼎)  (弭伯簋) →

ZG  (邾公華鐘),  (天星觀遣策簡),  (望山 M2·38),

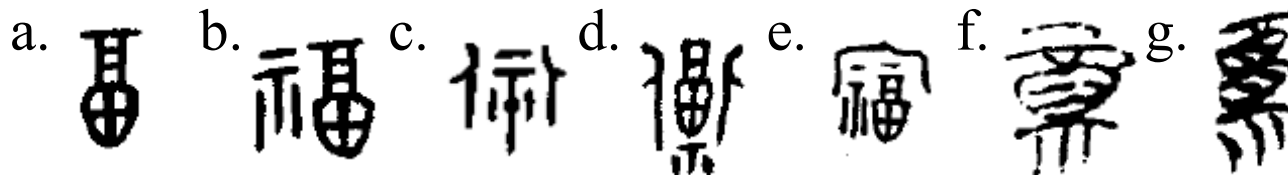
“” (包山 102)。

CORRUPTION: fire → REANALYSIS armpit ~ + [p 亦]

亦 *yì* < \**yek* < \**m-qak*

### 6.3 “character blending” (Jiāng Xuéwāng 2004 on *yìtǐ róuhé* 異體揉合): merely variation or a conscious process?

- (56)a. 畐 《士福鐘》 *fú* < *\*bjuwk* < *\*bək* “blessings, luck” (BARE **p**)
- b. 福 《士福鐘》 + [s 示] ‘altar’ *\*pjuwk* < *\*pək* (+ **s**)
- c. 𠂔 《呈者鼎》 [p 畐]~[p 北] ‘north’ *\*pok* < *\*pʰək* (REPLACE **p**)
- d. 𠂔 《周乎卣》 [p 畐]+[p 北]+[s 示] (BLEND b.~c.)
- e. 𠂔 《邾大宰鐘 B》 𠂔 [s 宀] ‘roof, dwelling’ (+ **s**)
- f. 𠂔 《楚帛書 B》 (DELETE **p2**)
- g. 𠂔 《郭·成之 17》 (DOUBLE **p1**)



## Conclusions:

- too early to say how many of these phenomena reflect contact and/or substrate interference, dialects, sociolects or diachrony, or even a conscious “orthoepic” repair strategy attempting to adhere to a normative pronunciation after sound change
- but: corpus size steadily growing, potentially allowing rare glimpses into breaches of “orthographic conservatism” (Park 2014)
- need to study variation in excavated texts to understand the norm (if any) in the transmitted literature!