

# Lexical means and illocutionary acts in Western Zhou ideology

(Wolfgang Behr, University of Zurich)

1. “**Ideology**”, an iffy notion; cf. Terry Eagleton’s list of 16 definitions (*Ideology: An Introduction*; London: Verso, 1991, pp. 1-2)
  - a) the process of production of meanings, signs and value in social life;
  - b) a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class;
  - c) ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power;
  - d) false ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power;
  - e) systematically distorted communication;
  - f) that which offers a position for a subject;
  - g) forms of thought motivated by social interests;

- h) identity thinking;
- i) socially necessary illusion;
- j) the conjuncture of discourse and power;
- k) the medium in which conscious social actors make sense of their world;
- l) action-oriented sets of beliefs;
- m) the confusion of linguistic and phenomenal reality;
- n) semiotic closure;
- o) the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relation to a social structure;
- p) the process whereby said life is converted to a natural reality.

- 1.1 = an enlarged version of David Minar's (1961) list of "six ways of talking about ideology":
- a) as a collection of certain ideas with certain kinds of *content*, usually normative;
  - b) as the *form or internal logical structure* that ideas have within a set;
  - c) by the role in which ideas play in *human social interaction*
  - d) by the role that ideas play in the *structure of an organization*
  - e) **as meaning, whose purpose is *persuasion*;**
  - f) as the *locus* of social interaction.

### 1.3 definition adopted for the purposes of this presentation:

*ideology,*

a system of action and meaning generation, aimed at influencing behaviour and cognition of people;

hence: entailing an implicit claim to truth and harnessing appropriate linguistic means, i.e. means which are coherent and/or persuasive.

## 2. Speech act theory (Austin, Searle ...)

- a semantic and pragmatic extension of the the theory of meaning in natural languages, proceeding from the insight (first explicitly formulated in Husserl 1911) that the meaning of utterances *made* in a given situation combines the propositional or referential content of sentences (spoken or written) with communicative *intentions* and other *functions*.
- central in philosophy of philosophy (cf. Searle and Vanderveken 1985, Apel 1976): how does a taxonomy of such devices relate to a taxonomy of possible speech acts?; how do speech acts relate to ethical norms?

- central in linguistics (cf. Bierwisch 1977, Wunderlich 1976): which *devices* (lexical, syntactic, prosodic ...) generate illocutionary force, i.e. the meaning conventionally retrievable as the result of a successful speech act?; how are they ordered?; what is the relationship between speech acts and conversational implicatures?

## 2.1 Searle's (1975) set of five illocutionary functions

- **[as] assertives or representatives** (commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition)
- **[di] directives** (cause the hearer to take a particular action)
- **[co] commissives** (commit the speaker to some future action)
- **[ex] expressives** (express the speaker's emotions and attitudes towards the proposition)
- **[de] declarations** (change the reality in accord with the proposition of the declaration)



2.2 or, in less formal language (Searle 1975: 369)

“There are not, as Wittgenstein (on one possible interpretation) and many others have claimed, an infinite or indefinite number of language games or uses of language. Rather, the illusion of limitless uses of language is engendered by an enormous unclarity about what constitutes the criteria for delimiting one language game or use of language from another. If we adopt illocutionary point as the basic notion on which to classify uses of language, then there are a rather limited number of basic things we do with language: we tell people how things are [assertives], we try to get them to do things [directives], we commit ourselves to doing things [commissives], we express our feelings and attitudes [expressives] and we bring about changes through our utterances [declarations]. Often, we do more than one of these at once in the same utterance.”

2.3 aside: speech act theory *avant la lettre*, cf. Zhang Xuecheng 章学誠 (1738-1801) on the language of the *Shangshu* 尚書 (*Wenshi tongyi* 文史通義 , 1985: 52; cf. Lian Xiuli 2011: 103)

(1) 《尚書》典謨之篇，記事而言具焉，訓誥之篇，記言而事亦見焉。古人事見於言，言以為事，未嘗分事言二物也。

“In the *dian* and *mo* chapters of the *Documents* events are recorded, but speech is likewise represented in them, in the *xun* and *gao* chapters speech is recorded, but events are also represented in them. For the people of antiquity an event became manifest in speech, but events were [also] made by speech: they did not differentiate between the two entities of event and speech.”

2.4 some examples (for extensive lists see, e.g., Kou Zhanmin 2010, Chen Yingjie 2009, Li Yihai 2009, Wu Zheyu 2008 etc.)

### 2.4.1 [assertives]

(2) 我𪚩 (聞) 殷述 (墜) 令 (命), 隹 (唯) 殷邊侯田 (甸) 孚 (于) 殷正百辟, 率肆酉 (酒), 古 (故) 喪自己。

(《大盂鼎》 5.2837, WL)

“We have heard<sup>as</sup> that Yin dropped the mandate, and that it were the margraves and bailiffs of the border areas of Yin and the civil servants in Yin proper, which all fell victim to alcohol, and therefore lost their garrisons.”

(3) 易 (賜) 遣采𠄎<sup>as</sup> [走+X] (《遣卣》 12.5402, WE)

“The fief bestowed upon Qian is called ?Can.”

## 2.4.2 [directives]

- (4) 「盂！迺（乃）鬻（詔）夾死（尸）嗣（嗣）戎，敏諫（速）罰訟，夙夕召（詔）我一人（一人）彝（烝）三（四）方，孚（于）我其適省先王受民受疆（疆）土。  
（《大盂鼎》 5.2837, WL）

“‘Yu! Be supportive<sup>as</sup> and, as my representative, take over<sup>as</sup> the responsibility for the deeds of war, be diligent<sup>as</sup> and swift<sup>as</sup> with penalties and legal matters, from dusk to dawn abet<sup>as</sup> me, the one person, to govern over the four lateral regions, be with me<sup>as</sup> in patrolling and inspecting the people and border zones, received from the earlier kings.’”

## 2.4.3 [comissives]

(5) 余小子司（嗣）朕皇考，肇帥井（型）先王且（祖）。

（《叔向父禹簋》 8.4242, WL）

“I, the little one, will succeed<sup>co</sup> my august deceased lineage ancestor, begin to emulate<sup>co</sup> and model<sup>co</sup> myself after the earlier kings and ancestors.”

(6) 令拜稽首，曰：小 [子] 迺學！（《令鼎》 5.2803, WL）

“Ling hit his head in proskynesis to the ground and said: ‘[I,] the little one, will copy<sup>co</sup> [this behaviour].’”

(7) 此其萬年無疆，**峻臣**天子。(《此鼎》 5.2821, WL)

May [I,] Ci enjoy myriads of years without boundaries, and change to serve<sup>co</sup> the Son of Heaven as a [true] retainer.

## 2.4.4 [expressives]

(8) 俗（欲）我弗乍（作）先王憂。（《毛公鼎》 5.2841, WL)

“I hope<sup>ex</sup> I will not make the former kings sorrowful.”

(9) 鬻（召）弗敢鬻（忘）王休異（冀）。

（《召卣 II》 MWX 101, WE)

“[I,] Shao do not make bold<sup>ex</sup> to forget the royal munificence and custody.”

(10) 妄害= (憲) 聖趨 (爽) , 寔處處宗室。

(《井人井人妄鐘》 MX 3.396, WM VI-WL)

“[I,] Ning, (\*xar.xar=) elated<sup>ex</sup>, sagely<sup>ex</sup> and illuminated<sup>ex</sup>, placed myself into position in the lineage chamber.”

(11) 余老矣。(《五年瑀生簋》 8.4292, WL)

“I have grown old.<sup>ex</sup>”



## 2.4.6 [declaratives]

(12) 今大赦（女）汝，鞭女（汝）五百，罰汝三百乎（錚）。  
 (《訓匱》 16.10285, WL)

“Today I greatly amnesty<sup>de</sup> You, have You flogged<sup>de</sup> 500 lashes,  
 and fine<sup>de</sup> You five-hundred *lüe*.”

(13) 公賞作冊大白馬。(《作冊大方鼎》 5.2758, WE)

“[I,] the patriarch bestow<sup>de</sup> upon [You,] the archivist, a big white horse.”

(14) 余其舍女（汝）臣十家。（《令鼎》 5.2803, WE)

“I accord<sup>de</sup> you ten families of retainers.”

(15) 王侃<sup>de</sup>大（太）保，易（賜）休 X 土。（《大保簋》 8.4140, WM)

“The king regales the Grand Protector, bestowing upon him munificence and the territories of X.”

(16) 王命虞侯矢，曰：「繇，侯<sup>de</sup>于宜！」

（《宜侯矢簋》 8.4320, WE)

“The king commanded Ze, the margrave of Yu, saying:  
“\*law, I enfeoff you as margrave at Yi.”

## 2.5 Changes towards the Eastern Zhou

2.5.1 psych-verbs and emotional verbs greatly increased (cf. Wu Zhenyu 2009) → more expressive language

oracle bone inscriptions: 26

bronze inscriptions: 42 –

- Western Zhou: 9 (!)
- Chunqiu: +4
- Zhanguo: +29

2.5.2 speech act verbs start being used to make self-referential statements, cf.

(17) implicit during the WM period, cf.:

包（浮）乃多辭，不用先王。（《牧簋》 WM)

“Stilted are your loquacious words, not employing the [ways of the] former kings.”

(18) explicit only in late Zhanguo times, cf.:

於乎，允筮（哉）若言，明蔡之于壺而肯（時）觀焉。

（《中山王響方壺》 15.9735, ZG.NL）

“Egad (\*ʔa.G<sup>s</sup>a), how trueful are these words!  
Conspicuously [I] had them carved into this *hú-vase*,  
so that they may be seen on it throughout time.”

3. "ambiperformative" inscriptions: enduring continuity Shang-Zhou
- 3.1 inscribing an utterance which declares an accomplishment, typically of the king, and at the same time is represented by an artefact which depicts (and reenacts in a sacrifice) the action which is being declared

### 3.1.2 the Zuoce Ban *yuan* 乍册般鼈

(L. Shang; 21.4x16x10 cm., 1605 gr.; *Zhongguo lishi wenwu* 2005.1)

a.



b. X-ray photo (Zhu Fenghan 2005)



■ 作册般電銘文X光片



c. Rubbing (*Jinlu* 967)



d. transcription (Zhu Fenghan 2005)

丙申，王逖殳(于)洹，隻(获)。王一射，𠄎(殛)射三，率亡(无)灋(废)矢。王令(命)寤(寢)馗(馗)兄(既)殳(于)乍(作)册般，曰：“奏殳(于)庸，乍(作)女(汝)宝”。

## e. translation

(cf. Zhu Fenghan 2005, Li Xueqin 2005, Wang Guanying 2005, Yuan Junjie 2006, Chao Fulin 2007, Zhag Xiuhua & Zhao Qingshi 2009, Liu Zhao 2009)

- |   |      |      |       |       |
|---|------|------|-------|-------|
|   | 4    | 3    | 2     | 1     |
| 1 | 般。   | 王命寢  | 王一射，  | 丙申，   |
|   | 曰：   | 寢馘   | 叔射三，  | 王弆于洹， |
| 2 | 奏于庸， | 貳于作冊 | 率無廢矢。 | 獲。    |
|   | 作汝寶。 |      |       |       |
| 3 |      |      |       |       |
| 4 |      |      |       |       |
- 1 “[Cyclical day] *bingshen*: what the King captured when he made a halt at the Huan river.
- 2 The king shot once, [I,] Ban shot three times. Not one of the arrows missed the target.
- 3 The King ordered Kui (“Ubiquitous”), Keeper of the Inner Palace Apartments to bestow [it, this giant turtle] upon [me,] Archive Maker
- 4 Ban, saying: ‘Perform [this unusual event] on a *yong*-bell, make it your treasure.’”

3.1.3 A rhino bone, excavated at Yinxu M11 in 2004, 16 carved characters, inlaid with turquoise powder (2005 *ZYKGF*X: 59-62; cf. Liu Zhao 2009)

壬午，王巡于鬻廛（儻），  
 征（延）田于麥泉（麓），  
 隻（獲）兕，亞易（賜）

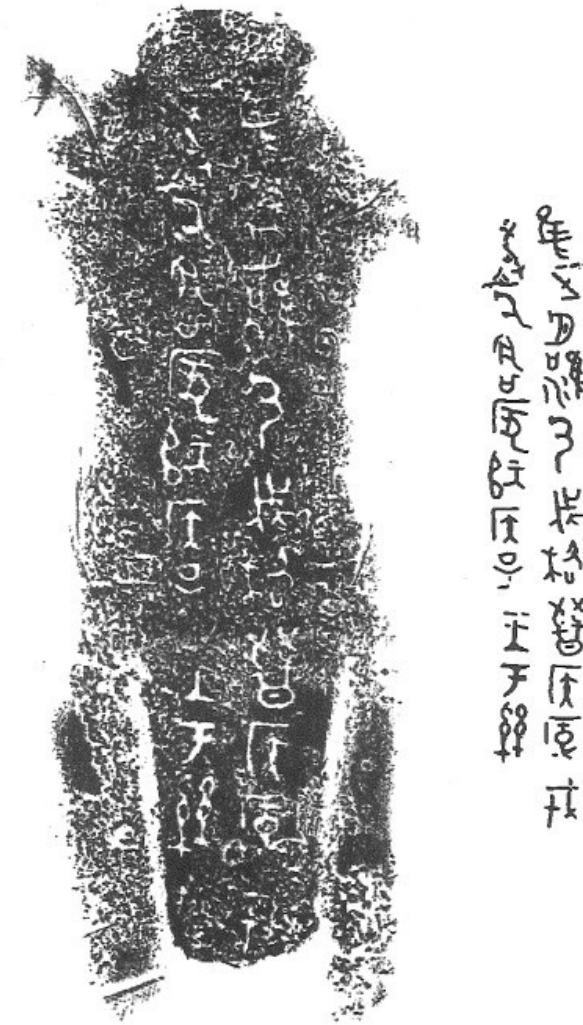
[Cyclical day] *renwu*: the King made halt at the encampment shrine of Shao, then continued to hunt in the the Meadows of Mai. He captured a rhino. The Ya-[official title] presents as a gift ....



3.1.4 ambiperformative inscriptions II:  
the Jinhou tongren 晉侯銅人  
*Jinchu* 968, Late WZ; h. 17.2 cm.)



a. rubbing



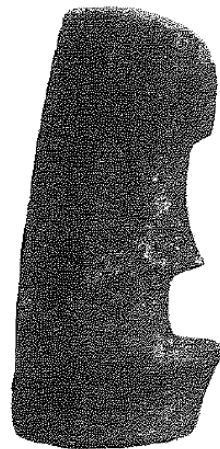
## b. translation

- 1 It was in the fifth month, when the Huai barbarians came attacking, that the margrave of Jin took up arms and captured their lord, Commander Yan.
- 2 The margrave extols the king through this [bronze figurine].

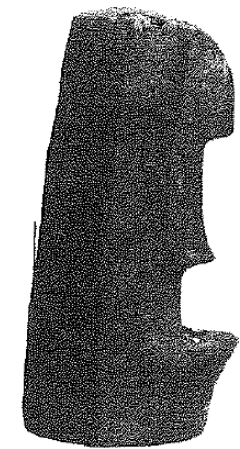
侯于五月淮尸夷伐格晉侯(侯)搏戎隻(獲)畢(厥)君冢師  
 侯于五月淮尸夷伐格晉侯(侯)搏戎隻(獲)畢(厥)君冢師  
 侯于五月淮尸夷伐格晉侯(侯)搏戎隻(獲)畢(厥)君冢師

### 3.15 the Xu *jumo* (bow end)-inscriptions (*WW* 2002.10, *GWZYZJ* 24, Li Jiahao 2009)

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎



𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎



附圖一 距末甲 (《新收》1380)

附圖二 距末乙 (《新收》1379)

(甲)	忤乍 (作) 距模	*m <sup>ɿ</sup> at	A
	用差商國	*k-w <sup>ɿ</sup> ək	B
(乙)	光 (廣) 張上 [下]	*g <sup>ɿ</sup> raʔ	a
	四夫 (方) 是備	*bək	B

“Xu (\*q<sup>w</sup>h(r)a → 郝 \*hrak) had this bow end made,  
use it to assist the fiefdom of Shāng (i.e. 宋).  
Widely draw the bow, above [and below],  
the four lateral regions will submit to you.”

Envoi:

We recognize the ambiperformative nature of these curious inscriptions, because the hunting, shooting or capturing events cast in bronze *and* inscribed in a speech act are easily classified as a performance.

In the case of bronze vessels, bells, and weapons, the underlying event is less easily recognizable, because it might be simply an ancestral ritual, in which the bronze artefact serves as a sacrificial medium, reenacting the *zongfa* system (“貴貴，親親” ), and used to communicate with the spirits.

Nonetheless, Kern may be right in claiming that such inscribed vessels, too, are *always* part of a larger performative structure, and may therefore easily be employed for any kind of ideological (religious, political ...) purpose.



