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The Master Said: To Study and . . .
To Søren Egerod on the Occasion of His Sixty-Seventh Birthday

Editors:
Birthe Arendrup
Simon B. Heilesen
Jens Østergård Petersen

Ex-officio editor of the series:
Head of Department, East Asian Institute
University of Copenhagen
Njalsgade 80
DK - 2300 Copenhagen S.

Layout and typescript:
Faculty of Letters,
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Calligraphy
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Contents

The Firefly and the Streetlight

usanne Jorn

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Some Desultory Speculations on Non-Restrictive Modification of Nouns and Parentheses in Latin and Pre-Han Chinese

Christoph Harbsmeier

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> Korf erfindet eine Mittagszeitung
> WELCHE, WENN MAN SIE GELESEN HAT,
> IST MAN SATT.
> Ganz ohne Zubereitung
> irgendeiner andern Speise.
> Jeder auch nur etwas Weise
> hält das Blatt.[1]

Here we have restrictive noun modification. In the highlighted passage we have ungrammatical restrictive modification.

Translation can bring out such syntactic gaps with particular clarity. Discussing Modern Chinese Wang Li has observed:

> When we translate from Western languages into Chinese the sentential form of secondary clauses faces us with very great difficulties. [...] When we have a two-layered secondary sentence form, then unless we break it up into a kind of parataxis, translation is practically impossible. For example, if we translate "They murdered all they met whom they supposed to be gentlemen" literally into 他們殺害了所遇見的他們以為是上流人的一切, then the result is simply an uninterpretable Chinese sentence. Again, when we come across a non-restrictive clause, our literal translation cannot distinguish it from the restrictive clause. Try to compare "He had four sons, who became lawyers" with "He had four sons that became lawyers." If we use a literal translation then we have no way of translating them into two different forms.[2]

Keeping in mind Wang Li's observations I turn to the case of Latin in order to compare it with its contemporary, Classical Chinese. Consider an example: *Epicurus non satis politus est eis artibus, quas qui tenent eruditi appellantur*, "Epicurus is not sufficiently polished in those arts WHICH THOSE WHO MAINTAIN ARE CALLED ERUDITE."[3]

The Firefly and the Streetlight

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One humid night in a very hot climate a firefly said to a streetlight, "Isn't it boring to stand still, not being able to turn your light off and on by yourself?"

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We can transform this hypotactic structure into an unproblematic paratactic series of two statements: "There are some arts that are such that if you maintain them you become erudite. Epicurus is not

sufficiently polished in these." I call this a paratactic paraphrase of a hypotactic construction.

The problematic clauses here are all restrictive relative clauses, and they are elementary teasers for English-speaking beginning students of Latin. In order to translate them into English one has to compensate through inventiveness for some neatly defined structural inadequacies of the English language. One has to analyze the convoluted Latin into a paratactic sequence of simpler parts.

Learning Latin consists partly in developing routine strategies to elegantly circumvent such notorious gaps in English.

In Classical Chinese, even more than in English, we would tend to circumvent problematic complexity by replacing what in Latin is one hypotactic sentence organized around one single grammatical focus with a paratactic sequence of sentences with many foci.

Non-Restrictive Modification of Names and Pronouns

Compare:

I prefer leg of lamb, which is tender. (Non-restrictive modification)
I prefer leg of lamb that is tender. (Restrictive modification)

In Modern Chinese we commonly find non-restrictive constructions like this one: 可憐的我 BE-MISERABLE'S ME, "poor old me," while in Classical Chinese we have *qiang Qin* 强秦 STRONG QIN, "Qin, which is strong."[4] Consider a range of such modifiers in Latin: *Admirantur Alexandrum, qui si diutius vixisset totum orbem terrarum subegisset.* - "They admire Alexander, who, if he had lived longer, would have subjugated the whole world." This sentence works in an English literal translation. In Classical Chinese we would be tempted to produce a paraphrase consisting essentially of two paratactically organized sentences: "If Alexander had lived longer he would have subjugated the whole world. And they admire him for it." But the subtle problem is whether the speaker here on all readings of the sentence is committed to the view (that if he had lived longer Alexander would have subjugated the whole world) which he clearly attributes to Alexander's admirers. We must keep this problem in mind.

Admirantur Alexandrum cuius si vita longior fuisset totum orbem terrarum subegisset. - "They admire Alexander, WHOSE IF LIFE HAD BEEN LONGER, i.e. who, if his life had been longer, would have subjugated the whole world." Here the English language cannot reproduce the Latin complexity straightforwardly. The same is true of the following: *Admirantur Alexandrum, cui si vita longior contigisset, to-*

tum orbem terrarum subegisset. - "They admire Alexander, FOR WHOM IF LIFE HAD HAPPENED TO BE LONGER HE WOULD HAVE SUBJUGATED THE WHOLE WORLD." In Classical Chinese we might try a paratactic paraphrase like this: "If for Alexander life had been longer he would have subjugated the whole world. So they admire him." The paraphrase works for the last two Latin sentences.

Admirantur Alexandrum quem si vivum fortuna diutius reservasset, totum orbem terrarum subegisset. - "They admire Alexander WHOM IF FORTUNE HAD PRESERVED ALIVE LONGER HE WOULD HAVE SUBJUGATED THE WHOLE WORLD." A paratactic Chinese paraphrase might proceed along these lines: "They admire Alexander. If fortune had preserved him alive longer, he would have subjugated the whole world."

Admirantur Alexandrum a quo nisi deus vitam immature abstulisset, totum orbem terrarum subegisset. - "They admire Alexander, FROM WHOM UNLESS GOD HAD TAKEN AWAY THE LIFE PREMATURELY, WOULD HAVE SUBJUGATED THE WHOLE WORLD." A paratactic Chinese paraphrase might proceed along these lines: "They admire Alexander. If God had not taken his life prematurely he would have subjugated the whole world."

There is a neat semantic contrast between the Latin and all these coordinate paraphrases: The Latin speaker can go on in the next sentence to deny the admirers' judgment on Alexander and insist that he would have been bound to turn out a flop. The non-restrictive relative clause, that is, may be construed to fall inside as well as outside the scope of the word *admirantur*, "they admire," and it may be maintained only by the admirers, not by the speaker/user of this sentence.

Simple non-restrictive modification of personal names is common in pre-Han Chinese. In the *Tan Gong* section of *Liji*,[5] we naturally reproduce the Chinese 其子尊己 as "his son Zun Ji." Here are some further typical examples: 余一人 "I, who am the single person (i.e. the ruler)";[6] 僑如之弟焚如 "Jiao Ru's younger brother Fen Ru";[7] 公殺其傅杜原款 "The duke killed his father Du Yuankuan."[8]

A quasi-variable like *jia* 甲 in Chinese legal texts may be used as a head with a non-restrictive modifier, as in *dai fu jia* 大夫甲 "the dignitary X[9] and *nü zi jia* 女子甲 "the woman X."[10]

One must continue to hunt for more complex cases of non-restrictive modification of proper names in early texts. Here is one surprising early case: 翼九宗五正頃父之子嘉父 "Jia Fu, son of Qing Fu, who held the offices *jiu zong* and *wu zheng* in Yi."[11] If I had not seen this noun phrase in an early Chinese text I would have thought it was structurally un-Chinese.

In *Shiji* we find much more complex examples such as: 伍子胥初所與俱亡故楚太子建之子勝者 "Sheng, son of the former heir apparent of Chu by the name Jian, with whom Wu Zixu had fled before."[12] This is a truly memorable example even for *Shiji* which is notable for its increased complexity in noun modification. Certainly there is no parallel construction in pre-Han literature. And few cases are as complex as this even in later Chinese.

The typical case in pre-Han literature is like this: 聞誅一夫紂矣未聞弒君也 "I have heard that the fellow Zhou was killed, but I have not heard that a ruler was assassinated."[13] Here *yi fu* 一夫 (or, as some texts have it, *du fu* 獨夫) is plainly epexegetic or non-restrictive. And this non-restrictive interpretation is forced upon us by the context. We translate "Zhou, who is an ordinary person," and not "of the Zhous the one who is an ordinary person."

We do find that proper names can be preceded by numbers, but in *sui shi Yao* 雖十堯 "even ten Yaos," Yao must be taken as a general noun, not a proper name: "ten men of Yao's calibre."

Place names commonly precede proper names in Classical Chinese. Chang Ju and Jie Ni were ploughing together yoked as a team. Confucius went past them and sent Zi Lu to ask them where the ford was. Chang Ju said, "Who is the man taking charge of the carriage?" "It is Kong Qiu." "Then he must be the Kong Qiu of Lu (魯孔丘)?"[14] Compare, however, "Francis of Assisi," i.e. "the Francis who is from Assisi" where "Francis" might conceivably be construed as a generic term, not as a proper name.

With place names we have, only very occasionally, constructions like 虎狼之秦 TIGER WOLF'S QIN, "the state of Qin which is like a tiger or a wolf."[15] This is not the Qin that is like a tiger or a wolf as opposed to some other kinds of Qin.

Let us take an example which involves a long epexegetic comment at least in D.C. Lau's translation of the *Analects*: "Is that the Kong who keeps working towards a goal the realisation of which he knows to be hopeless?"[16] One would have thought that "the Kong who keeps working towards a goal the realisation of which he knows to be hopeless" is an NP of exactly the kind which I am claiming does not exist in Chinese. Let us look at the Chinese: 是知其不可而為之者與 THIS KNOW ITS NOT BE-POSSIBLE BUT DO IT HE-WHO QUESTION MARKER, "Is this the one who knows something to be impossible but does it?" There is no non-restrictive modification in the Chinese. It is introduced by the translator to accommodate Western stylistic taste.

The range of non-restrictive modification in languages like English or Latin comes out when we consider sentences like this one with its non-restrictive possible additions: "It is said that Theophrast

Aristotle." This sentence involves four proper names. In Latin, as in English, we can add to these proper names explanatory non-restrictive clauses or nominal modifiers. Let us call these non-restrictive modifiers. In principle, we can add such non-restrictive modifiers to every one of these proper names: "It is said that Theophrast, (who was) not one of the weaker logicians in ancient Greece, argued that Bucephalus, (who is) one of the few horses to have made it into the *Random House Dictionary*, had been lent to Alexander, who according to Plutarch, (who was) the greatest biographer in the Western tradition, loved Bucephalus more than any other thing on earth, by Aristotle, (who came to be) known as 'the Philosopher' in the work of Aquinas, whose work I suppose might be regarded as the Philosophy of Catholicism."

In Latin and Greek, more systematically than in English, we can and often do freely and spontaneously add, in the heat of the communicative battle, complex non-restrictive comments to proper names in most syntactic positions in the sentence, and we add them as and when these are felt to be necessary or desirable in the process of the utterance of a sentence. The non-restrictive modifiers, like parentheses, thus create free space for unpremeditated linguistic spontaneity in the process of the utterance of a sentence.

There is an evident difference between the preferred syntactic architecture of the Chinese and the Latin sentences. The Chinese often reads rather like a plain and standard logical analysis of the complex Latin. Conversely, a Latin translation compounds simpler Chinese sentences into one longer unit if it aspires to conform to Latin stylistic preference. Indeed, I recall that in school we were even instructed to conflate German sentences into (longer) Latin ones when translating from German into Latin.

Non-Restrictive Modification of Other Nouns

Ren ren 仁人 HUMANE PERSON[17] refers to a subset of humans. Even Mencius, if he wanted to speak of "men, who by nature are humane" would have no obvious nominal construction available to make that notion explicit. One might try for him, but for example 性善之人 "Humans who by nature are good" still refers to a subset of men, namely those who by nature are good. Mencius can make his claim that all men are by nature good, but he cannot integrate this claim into a syntactically transparent and logically perspicuous non-restrictive noun phrase.

Similarly, an ancient Chinese anarchist who believes that all rulers are cruel cannot make an explicit noun phrase that refers to the

rulers so conceived. *Bao jun* 暴君 CRUEL RULER[18] in written Classical Chinese is bound to be understood as "of the rulers the ruthless ones." In English, the intonation pattern can disambiguate between the unambiguously restrictive "the CRUEL rulers" versus "the CRUel RUlers" which one can pronounce in a way that makes the phrase unambiguously non-restrictive. Such distinctions will not come out in written English. For all we know, pre-Han Chinese may well have had perfectly explicit intonational patterns distinguishing the restrictive from the non-restrictive nominal modifiers. But we know nothing about this.

In *yu min* 愚民 STUPID PEOPLE there is a clear ambiguity between "consider the people stupid" and "the common people, who are stupid." *Yu ren* 愚人 STUPID MAN works quite differently as a noun phrase. It is bound to be taken restrictively as "of men those who are stupid" if it is not taken as "consider others stupid."

In order neatly to appreciate the semantic distinction between *yu min* and *yu ren* speakers of Classical Chinese must have been able to operate a clear distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive noun modification, partly triggered off, in this case, by the very different semantic and logical properties of the count noun *ren* 人 versus the mass noun *min* 民. But note that the notion "of the population those who are stupid" makes perfectly good sense. Since we have *zhuo shui* 濁水 DIRTY WATER, "water that is dirty," there is no reason why *yu min* should not have a restrictive reading. Indeed, one would not be surprised if in some special context *yu min* could come to mean "the stupid ones of the people."

In Latin, on the other hand, we have *hominum [qui sunt] stulti* "of [the] humans those who are stupid," versus *homines, [qui sunt] stulti* "the humans, who are stupid." In addition the subjunctive in Latin affects the interpretation of these kinds of constructions, but this is of no consequence for my present purpose.

Parentheses

Non-restrictive modifiers can be viewed as parenthetic insertions into a sentence. They are connected with other forms of deliberate syntactic incoherence. Such deliberate incoherence would, in Classical Chinese, run a relatively high risk of making a complex sentence incomprehensible. In Latin there is more syntactic and morphological glue to keep the sentence together even when it threatens to fall apart. In the *Zhuangzi*, for example, one may find the use of syntactic incoherence as a deliberate stylistic tool.

My remarks on the parenthesis in Classical Chinese are inspired by Eduard Schwyzer, *Die Parenthese im engeren und weitern Sinne*.[19] Eduard Schwyzer finds that parentheses are extremely common in the Indo-European languages he has studied, and he writes that

> [f]rom the point of view of general linguistics it would be important to compare the Indo-European findings with the findings from other language branches, but unfortunately I do not have the relevant information that could help us overcome the silence of our reference works.[20]

The function of parentheses in poetry has been treated extensively in Michael von Albrecht's masterly study, *Die Parenthese in Ovids Metamorphosen*.[21] For Vedic I want to mention Walter Wüst, *Der Schaltsatz im Rigveda*.[22]

Inspired by Eduard Schwyzer, whose work on classical Greek I have admired for decades, I would have loved to look in detail at the ancient Chinese evidence against the background of what is known about Indo-European languages. The problem was that there is very little to say about parentheses in Classical Chinese. There are none.

Here is an example which I happened to come across reading Cicero: *Sed in hoc me ipse castigo, quod ex aliorum et ex nostra fortasse mollitia, non ex ipsa virtute de virtutis robore existumo. Illa enim [1 si modo est ulla virtus [2 quam diubitationem, avunculus tuus [3 Brute 3] sustulit 2] 1], omnia, quae cadere in hominem possunt, subter se habet eaque despiciens casus contemnit humanos culpaque omni carens praeter se ipsam nihil censet ad se pertinere.*[23] - "But on account of this I criticise myself, that I do not judge the strength of virtue from (the point of view of) virtue itself but from the weakness of others and possibly of ourselves. For it (i.e. virtue) [1 if indeed there is any virtue [2 which doubt your uncle [3 oh Brutus 3] has relieved us of 2] 1] has everything which may befall man under itself, and despising these human vicissitudes and being devoid of all guilt, it considers that nothing beyond itself relates to itself."

By Ciceronian standards this is a moderately complex sentence, but it can be read as containing a parenthesis within a parenthesis within a parenthesis, as I have tried to indicate by way of numbered brackets.

The contrast between Latin and Classical Chinese is startling. On the one hand I cannot remember any Latin or Greek book of prose WHICH DID NOT HAVE SOME PARENTHESES IN IT. On the other hand I cannot remember coming across any punctuated pre-Han Classical Chinese book WHICH DID HAVE PARENTHESES IN IT. The introduction of parentheses not only between clauses but also within a single

the rhetorical repertory of the writers of Classical Chinese. Any attempt at comparison has to be with colloquial Chinese in which parentheses do occur. Unfortunately I know of no study of parentheses in standard or non-standard forms of Modern Chinese.

The contrast between the Classical Chinese and the Latin syntactic styles comes out clearly when we consider translations. Among the many translations from Western languages consider the case of a text notoriously poor in parentheses, the New Testament, as an illustration of the contrast between Latin and Classical Chinese. I quote from the Latin *Vulgata* juxtaposed with the Literary Chinese translation by Wu Jingxiong published in 1948:

Quoniam audivimus quia quidam ex nobis exeuntes
近聞有人由此前來
turbaverunt vos verbis,
以言擾爾
evertentes animas vestras,
搖惑爾心
quibus non mandavimus;
此輩罔未受吾儕之命
placuit nobis collectis in unum eligere viros
因此同心合意推選同人
et mittere ad vos cum charissimis nostris Barnaba et Paulo,
遣之與吾所敬愛之巴拿巴,保樂連袂訪爾
hominibus qui tradiderunt animas suas pro nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi.
二君碧血丹忱為吾主耶蘇之名,而罔顧其生者也.

King James' Version has:

Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with your beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.[24]

The Chinese version translates like this:

Recently [I] have heard that some persons went forth from here and disturbed you with words and confused your hearts. These have not received orders from us. Because of this we unanimously elect some of our kind. We send them with our beloved Banaba and Baoluo to visit you together. These two wholeheartedly work for our lord Yesu Jidu's name, and they are the sort of people who do not give a thought to their own lives.

I do not proceed to draw larger conclusions from these sorts of desultory observations. Before one can move on to these with any confidence at all a great deal of observational groundwork still needs to be done.

While it is perfectly true that parentheses are not common in Classical Chinese, we do find the following not intra-clausal but rather inter-clausal parenthesis in a seventeenth century text: 雖不曾拜我為師 - 彼知我不肯為人師 - 然已時時遣人... "Although he has never regarded me as a teacher - he knows that I refuse to be anyone's teacher - nonetheless he has frequently sent people [...]."[25]

I owe this example to Jacques Gernet who just happened to remember this passage for its exceptional parenthesis, and I wonder how many more examples of this kind one might be able to find in the vast treasury of traditional Chinese literature.

It still needs to be investigated exactly when and how the parenthesis became a part of written Chinese. There is no point in speculating about the extent to which parentheses were common in speaking practice before we have evidence of them in writing. On the other hand there is every reason to investigate the range of parentheses that are common and indeed possible in current speech today.

Final Speculations

Non-restrictive modification and parentheses create a specific form of sentence perspective. They reflect a specific frame of mind, that of the "parenthetic thinker" who allows himself the luxury of inserting additional remarks into his sentences as and when they appear relevant to him even within one sentence. There is one main focus. This main focus tends to be made grammatically manifest. (They say one *has to* read books in German through right to the bitter end, *if only to get to that main verb*).

In the typical sequence of sentences which is used in Classical Chinese to represent one complex Latin sentence there is no clearly marked single main verbal focus. There are several foci. One might think of meandering foci. Hypotactic complexity unfolds into delicately contrastive and varied paratactic parallelism. That is the genius of Classical Chinese.

Detailed comparisons are necessary with the treatment of perspectival complexity in painting, with complexity of narrative perspective in literature, with compository complexity in music and with the logical foregrounding and backgrounding through the concept of "logical priority" (Aristotle: *"to proteron"*) which creates conceptual perspective in theories. They are needed if we are to take seriously

the fact that the writer of Classical Chinese is the same person as the painter, the musician, the novelist, the thinker.

The strategies of articulation in all these areas, it seems to me, may have a profound articulatory or cultural style in common. As a student of the Chinese language one has a great deal to learn from art historians. Also, I may add, from historians of narrative technique, of music - and of Western logic. The study of grammar should not be isolated from the study of culture. Grammar is an integrated part of culture.

Notes

1 *Galgenlieder* (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1972) p. 151.
2 *Wang Li Wenji* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1984), vol. 1, p. 57.
3 My Latin examples are taken and translated from a standard handbook of Latin syntax, Hermann Menge, *Repetitorium der lateinischen Syntax und Stilistik*, 10th revised edition (Wolfenbüttel: Julius Zwißlers Verlag, 1914).
4 *Shiji*, ed. Takigawa (Peking: Zhonghua Shuju, 1956) 81.5.
5 Ed. S. Couvreur, *Li Ki* (Paris: Cathasia, 1951), p. 229.
6 *Zuo Zhuan*, Duke Zhao 9, ed. Yang Bojun (Peking: Zhonghua, 1983), vol. 3, p. 1309 et passim.
7 *Zuo Zhuan*, Duke Wen 11, ed. Yang Bojun, vol. 2, p. 584.
8 *Zuo Zhuan*, Duke Xi 4, ed. Yang Bojun, vol. 1, p. 297.
9 *Shuihudi Qinmu zhujian* (Peking: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1978), p. 206.
10 Ibid., p. 222.
11 *Zuo Zhuan*, Duke Yin 5, ed. S. Couvreur, vol. 1, p. 35, Yang Bojun, vol. 1, p. 49.
12 *Shiji* 66. 20.
13 *Mencius* 1B8.
14 *Analects* 18.6.
15 *Zhanguoce*, ed. Zhu Zugeng, p. 1154.
16 *Analects* 14.38.
17 *Analects* 15.9.
18 *Mencius* 3B9.
19 Berlin, 1939.
20 Ibid. p. 29.
21 Heidelberg 1964.
22 Dissertation, München 1923.
23 Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* 5.5.
24 *Acts of the Apostles* 15.24f.
25 Li Zhi , *Fenshu, Xufenshu* (Peking: Zhonghua Shuju, 1975) p. 183.

Jante in Polynesia

Rolf Kuschel

One of Denmark's more than 500 islands is called Mors; it measures 363 square kilometers. The island's main city is Nykøbing and in order to distinguish between the several Danish cities called Nykøbing, this specific one is called Nykøbing Mors. In Denmark the city is known for its oyster industry and iron foundry, but even more for "The Law of Jante." The city achieved its notoriousness after 1933, when the Danish-Norwegian writer Aksel Sandemose, who spent his childhood and the heyday of his youth in there, published his book *En flyktning krysser sit spor* (A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks). The novel, which has been translated into several languages, is about a murderer's childhood. The main character, Espen Arnakke, grew up under harsh circumstances in Jante. Though the writer persistently repudiates any connection between the city of Jante and Nykøbing Mors (see Væth, 1979:5) others, like Pia Sandemose (1974:166), claim that Jante "is a pseudonym for Nykøbing Mors." Whatever Sandemose's meaning has been, the talk of the town has it that these two cities are identical.

The place where Espen Arnakke grew up is regarded as one of the most beautiful in Denmark. Nevertheless, Espen Arnakke hastened away from it, because he became frightened and perturbed by the way people interacted socially. In a small place like Jante, there was no individual freedom. Everybody had to conform to the ever present group pressure exerted by the majority. Any attempt to challenge or change as much as a comma in the unwritten rules of behaviour would immediately be rebuked. Not to obey the social demands for "correct" behaviour would result in ostracism, social suicide. The psychological situation has been described as a "mental torture chamber, where everybody savagely fought in order to suppress each other" (Anonymous, 1984:165). When Espen Arnakke finally came of age, he formulated his feelings of uneasiness and constraint in the Law of Jante (Janteloven). Like the Law of Moses, the Law of Jante has ten commandments, whose basic psychological message is: Don't confront us with your courage, boldness or knowledge. The ten commandments are (Sandemose 1936, 77-78):

1. Thou shalt not believe thou **art** something.
2. Thou shalt not believe thou art as good as **we**.
3. Thou shalt not believe thou art wiser than **we**.