

Making a Text One's Own:
Reflections on Reading Chinese Philosophy Properly

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If we are going to allow the Chinese texts to speak on their own terms, we have to begin by establishing the interpretive context for reading them—the process cosmology that is made explicit in the *Dazhuan* 大傳 (Great Tradition) commentary of the *Yijing* 易經 (Book of Changes). The argument is that, true to the premises of the text itself, the *Lunyu* 論語 (Analects of Confucius) is not only continually reconstructed and made corporate in successive readings, but is in fact reauthored and reauthorized by each reader in every generation and cultural site, including our own. I will argue that this processual understanding of the *Lunyu* highlights the centrality of situated particularity, collateral relationality, temporality, and productive indeterminacy as persistent defining features of a grounding Confucian cosmology, precisely those cultural assets that process philosophers A. N. Whitehead and John Dewey deem threatened in the commitment of the fallacies they have called “misplaced concreteness” and “*the philosophical fallacy*” respectively. I want to use the concrete and continuing “process” of reading the *Lunyu* as a heuristic to support my claim that Confucius is indeed a process philosopher.