

Jwāngdǔ 33 天下篇

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Abstract. I here attempt to date JZ 33 and place it in Hàn intellectual history.

Terminus A Quo. Jwāngdǔ 莊子 (JZ) 33 is not attested in any pre-Hàn source. The Hwánánǎdǔ (completed 0139) does not seem to quote it. JZ 33 itself partly rejects Jwāng Jōu; it looks back to an older and wiser age, whose art of government was later divided and dispersed. It does not read like a *part* of the Jwāngdǔ, but like an overview of a “world [of thought]” 天下 which *included* the Jwāngdǔ. It might be a learned bibliographer’s appended comment: recommending the text, but with qualifications.

Terminus Ante Quem. JZ 33 names the Confucian classical texts in the sequence Shī, Shū, Lǐ, Ywè, Yì, Chūn/Chyōu. The same order occurs in the Gwōdyèn text Lyòu Dv 六德 (c0290), and in the Lǎudǔ/Confucius story JZ 14:7 (probably later). In the Syīn Shū of Jyǎ Yì (0201-0169), we have Shī / Shū / Yì / Chūn/Chyōu / Lǐ / Ywè, which may suggest the fading of the Ywè within the list; its inclusion in still later lists may well be merely conventional. The Ywè is lacking altogether in Shǐ Jì (SJ) 121 (written before Szmǎ Chyēn’s death in c90). No firm conclusion is possible, but the JZ 33 list would seem to be unlikely in a text written after c0100.

Szmǎ Tán 司馬談 wrote a survey of contemporary thought, which like JZ 33 was organized under six schools or organized viewpoints (六家). SJ 130 mentions it *after* Tán’s appointment as Tār-shǐ 太史 “Grand Astrologer”¹ under Wǔ-dī, but *before* describing the duties of that position; by implication, it was done very early in his tenure. The beginning of that employment cannot have been earlier than the beginning of Wǔ-dī’s reign in 0140, but might be slightly later.² The essay treats Confucianism as one of several competing views, a position which is more likely during the lifetime of Empress Dòu, the patroness of Hwáng/Lǎu court Dàuism; she died in 0135.³ The likely range for Tán’s essay is then 0140/0135. It would appear to have been an attempt to influence cultural policies under the new Emperor in favor of Dàuism as the center of an inclusive and eclectic system. As such, it would seem to be opposed to the spirit of Dǔng Jùng-shū’s memorial of 0136, which proposed making Confucian learning mandatory for candidates for court office.

¹The translation follows that of Chavannes. Tán’s duties were chiefly calendrological.

²I follow the usual view. SJ 130 6/3288 says “held office in the periods 建元 [0140-0135] and 元封 [0110-0105], and later on implies that Tán died in 0110. HS 62 6/2708 adds nothing. The year 0140 may be a hasty reading of 建元元封 as 建元元年, though as will be seen below, the date 0140 is not inconsistent with the circumstantial evidence.

³Loewe **Biographical Dictionary** 78.

Besides astrology, Szmǎ Tán had studied the Yì with Yáng Hú 楊何 and Dàuist theories 道論 with Master Hwáng 黃子.⁴ The latter represented a Dàuist viewpoint in a debate before Jǐng-dì with the Mencian-leaning Confucian Ywán Gù. The date of this debate can be fixed at 0148,⁵ and it will be remembered that Jǐng-dì's mother Empress Dòu took a strong part. All these influences are reflected in Tán's essay, which discusses the six schools in this order and with these judgements:

- (1) Yīn/Yáng [overemphasizes portents, but its calendrical expertise is useful.
- (2) Confucianism 儒 is too limited, but its ceremonial expertise is useful.
- (3) Micianism 墨 is too austere, but its emphasis on frugality is useful.
- (4) Legalism 法 is too severe, but its separation of ruler and minister is useful.
- (5) Míng 名 is overlogical, but its distinction of names and realities is useful.
- (6) Dàuism 道 brings together the partial virtues of all other schools.

This is clearly syncretic, but its syncretism has two emphases. It puts in first place the calendrical skills in which Tán himself was trained, and in a more Confucianized version of which (associated with Dǔng Jùng-shū) his son may also have been trained, and it ends by advocating the Dàuist point of view which Tán had encountered in his later studies. The essay may be seen as a plea for Dàuism as an encompassing doctrine, an idea expressed even as the tides were running in favor of Confucianism. This sort of advocacy is compatible with the date which is probable for SJ 130.

JZ 33 can also be read as a plea for the survival of Dàuism. Given that general similarity, there are important points of difference with Szmǎ Tán's essay. JZ 33 begins by describing an ideal which combines the sage's understanding of Heaven and Dào, the gentleman's mastery of rǎn/yì and lǐ/ywè, and the minister's skill in management; a Dàuist/Confucian/Legalist mix which JZ 33 itself calls 內聖外王, Sage Within and King Without (Watson **Chuang** 364). There follow discussions of six specific viewpoints:

- (1) Mwò Dí and Chín Gǔ-lí (Micians): Excessively frugal.
- (2) Sùng Kēng and Yǐn Wýn (Utilitarian Pacifists): Too altruistic.
- (3) Pýng Mýng, Tyén Pyén, and Shv̀n Dào (Universalists): Confused.
- (4) Gwān Yǐn and Lǎudǔ (Recluses): True Men of old.
- (5) Jwāng Jōu (Questioner): Inexhaustibly profound.
- (6) Hwèi Shī (Paradoxical Rhetorician): A wasted talent.

A Comparison. The preference for Dàuism (#4-5) is manifest in JZ 33, as also in Szmǎ Tán's essay. Both strongly endorse Dàuism, but the argument in JZ 33 has a different profile. It concedes that Confucianized statecraft will be dominant, but argues that Dàuism nevertheless has a crucial role to play in statecraft. If in the JZ 33 essay we combine the crypto-Micians (#2) with the classic Micians (#1), and bunch Lǎu/Jwǎng together as Dàuists, and then compare the categories treated in JZ 33 with those treated by Szmǎ Tán, we find the following pattern of correspondences between the worlds of thought with which these texts are concerned:

⁴SJ 130 6/3288.

⁵Brooks **Present** 20. For the debate itself, see SJ 121.

Szmǎ Tán	JZ 33
-	Intr: Dàuist/Confucian/Legalist ideal
(1) Yīn/Yáng	(3) Píng Míng etcetera
(2) Confucians	-
(3) Micians	(1-2) Micians
(4) Legalists	-
(5) Names	(6) Rhetoricians (Hwèi/ Shī)
(6) Dàuists	(4-5) Dàuists

As compared to Szmǎ Tán, JZ 33 includes Confucians and Legalists only in its introductory synthesis, and not in its later inventory, but both lists include six major intellectual positions. JZ 33 includes Dàuists in its introduction and in its exposition. Szmǎ Tán's essay criticizes Legalists and Confucians; neither is faulted in JZ 33. The two essays thus inhabit similar ground, but JZ 33 seems to be further along toward the impending Confucian synthesis than Szmǎ Tán's essay. We might want to date JZ 33 slightly later, or else in the same year but ascribe it to a writer with a slightly different view of the possibilities still open to Dàuism in the shifting contemporary situation.

Though the two essays seem to end differently (Szmǎ Tán positively with the Dàuists, and JZ 33 negatively with Hwèi Shī), the larger rhetorical strategies are identical. Hwèi Shī in JZ 33 is an example of a wasted talent, and Szmǎ Tán ends with a brief warning about deluded persons. Following the detailed praise of Dàuism, in both pieces, the two compositions end in these ways (Watson's versions):

- Szmǎ Tán: "Therefore the Sage regards these things with gravity. From this we may see that the spirit is the basis of life, and substance is its vessel. If a man does not first put at rest his spirit and substance, but says instead, "I can govern the world," what reason can there be in his words?"
- JZ 33: "What a pity – that Hui Shih abused and dissipated his talents without ever really achieving anything. Chasing after the ten thousand things, never turning back, he was like one who tries to shout an echo into silence or to prove that form can outrun shadow. How sad!"

That is, those who think they can govern without Dàuism (Szmǎ Tán) or Dàuist insights (JZ 33) are foolishly deluded. I suggest that this concluding judgement is most readily intelligible as a protest against an incipiently institutionalized Confucianism.

Kinds of Dàuism. It has been said that Hwáng/Lǎu Dàuism, the mix of longevity naturalism and statecraft found in the Mǎwángdwēi texts, typifies early Hàn, and that the more literary Lǎu/Jwāng Dàuism emerged later.⁶ Szmǎ Tán's Dàuism includes cosmic aspects which are present also in Hwáng/Lǎu, whereas JZ 33 is centered on Lǎu and Jwāng. Might JZ 33 then be substantially later than Szmǎ Tán?

⁶For the immortalism aspect of Hwáng/Lǎu, see Peerenboom **Law** 265f; for the connection with the Shǐ Jì and the fǎng and shàn sacrifices, see Lewis **Feng** 65f; for the waning of Hwáng/Lǎu between the sacrifices of Wǔ-dì (0110) and Gwǎng-wǔ-dì (056), see Loewe **Crisis** 184-185; for the later flourishing of Lǎu/Jwāng, see Roth **Redaction** 4 and Loewe **Crisis** 3; the latter offers a date of c070 for the new ideology. I would suggest that the more literary Lǎu/Jwāng Dàuism was present among the elite throughout the period, and ready to expand when the court decline of Hwáng/Lǎu gave it cultural room to do so.

I would suggest that the idea of a Hwáng/Lǎu > Lǎu/Jwāng sequence is overly schematic. It is true that the MWD texts neglect the Jwāngdǔ, and that the Hán Fēidǔ's contacts with Dàoism, like those of the Gwǎndǔ,⁷ feature Lǎu and not Jwāng. But it should also be noted that the Jwāngdǔ, with its Lǎudǔ anecdotes and its quotations from the Dào/Dǔ Jīng, is itself a Lǎu/Jwāng text. Sywǎndǔ criticizes both Lǎu and Jwāng by name. The Lǔ-shì Chūn/Chyōu gives scope to Lǎu and (especially) Jwāng, but covertly criticizes the longevity cult, and builds its statecraft synthesis in part out of Confucian materials. The Hwánánǔ gives scope to both the Dào/Dǔ Jīng and the Jwāngdǔ; the Hán Shī Wài-jwàn (core 0144-0141), though *politically* hostile to Dàoism, which was still dominant at court in the last days of Jīng-dì, quotes Lǎu and Jwāng along with Confucius as *cultural* authorities. From this continuous literary evidence, reaching from the composition of the Jwāngdǔ to the time of Szmǎ Tán, and embodied in texts and persons acknowledged in the Shǐ Jì, it seems that there was adequate basis, both in earlier times and in the years just preceding Szmǎ Tán's essay, for the kind of Lǎu/Jwāng-based appeal that I see JZ 33 as making.

In confirmation, I note one detail that is more intelligible if JZ 33 is from about the year 0137 than if it is put almost a century later (as the theory of a later Lǎu/Jwāng might require), or if the Hán Fēidǔ is assigned (as many assign it) to the time of the historical Hán Fēi, a century earlier. This is the question of the three Mician schools. JZ 33 says in passing (Watson):

The disciples of Hsiang-li Ch'in, the followers of Wu Hou, and the Mo-ists of the south such as K'u Huo, Chi Ch'ih, Teng Ling-tzu, and their like all recite the Mo-ist canon, and yet they quarrel and disagree in their interpretations, calling each other "Mo-ist factionalists" . . . down to the present the dispute remains unresolved.

There follow examples of disputes including "hard and white" and other logical puzzles; the commentators note that the canons 經 in question are the logical portions of the Mician writings.⁸ HFZ 50 describes the situation thus (Liao):

Since the death of Mo Tzu . . . have appeared the Mohists of the Hsiang-li Clan, the Mohists of the Hsiang-fu Clan,⁹ and the Mohists of Teng Ling's School. Thus, after Confucius and Mo Tzu, the Literati have divided into eight schools and the Mohists into three . . . who [now] can determine the orthodoxy of learned men?

Two of the groups mentioned in HFZ 50 can be recognized among the JZ 33 three. It would seem that the situation described is generally comparable. This is more likely if the two works are of similar date, rather than centuries apart. It follows that this Hàn evidence is not directly relevant to the pre-Imperial history of the Mician schools.

⁷I find HFZ to be largely of Hàn date (Brooks **Present** 17-26), and of diverse authorship. Sarkissian has established that even HFZ 20 and 21 are of different authorship.

⁸It follows that Graham (**Differences** 18f) is wrong to transfer this dispute so as to explain differences in the *ethical* writings; for a different view of the latter, see Brooks **Ethical**.

⁹Original: 相里 and 相夫. The second is perhaps a dittographic corruption from the first. Early quotes give, for the second, the variants 伯夫 and 祖夫. This does not quite close the gap with JZ 33's 五侯, but it perhaps suggests that the gap might once have been closable.

Timetable. The vogue for Hwáng/Lǎu Dàuism goes back to the time of Wǎn-dì's wife, Empress Dòu. It was she who in her son Jǐng-dì's reign patronized Szmǎ Tán's teacher Master Hwáng. In the early years of Wǔ-dì, her power at court was still strong. These essays may have had their place in the final waning of that power. Thus:

- 0140. Wǔ-dì year 1. Jàu Wǎn and Wáng Dzàng propose Confucian measures: a new calendar and fǎng 封 and shàn 禪 sacrifices. Szmǎ Tán, who supports these measures, and who is also known as a Dàuist to Empress Dòu, is appointed Tà-shǐ.
- 0139. Jàu and Wáng demoted due to Empress Dòu; they commit suicide. Lyóu Ān presents the Hwánándǔ (a syncretic Dàuist treatise on government) to the throne.
- 0138. Possible date for Szmǎ Tán's essay, actively seeking a *core* role for Dàuism.
- 0137. Possible date for JZ 33, modestly seeking a *coordinate* role for Dàuism.
- 0136. Court positions are established for expounders of major Confucian texts.
- 0135. Empress Dòu dies, removing last court opposition to Confucianism.

Conclusion. It may have seemed to Wǔ-dì that the tough statecraft of Chín, though basic to Hàn administration, was already *procedurally* enshrined, and thus needed no *theoretical* support; that Confucianism had been gathering strength among the literati, and would be useful as an ideology for the serving elite (for one thing, it had its own teaching system already in place); and that Palace Dàuism, however strong at court, was losing outer support. The signs were that a major ideological shift was coming. I suggest that Szmǎ Tán's "Six Schools" and the JZ 33 colophon are two attempts to preserve a position for literati Dàuism in the shifting intellectual politics of the time. It seems that HFZ 50 dates from that period,¹⁰ and attacks the intellectual coherence of the groups which it sees as *its* major opponents: the Confucians and Micians.

It may be noted that some Hàn advocacy texts, like several of the texts of an earlier period (such as the Jwāngdǔ and the Mencius) found it useful to discuss the thought of their time in terms of general labels: 儒, 墨, 法, 道, as well as more specific ones. Despite recent strictures from certain quarters, and with the normal procedural caution that applies to any general term, modern scholars may perhaps validly do likewise.

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¹⁰For a preliminary study of the HFZ chapter dates, see Brooks **Present** 17-26