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The Two Mencian Schools

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Abstract

The idea that the Mencius text is for the most part not the words of Mencius, but the evolution of his thought in two successor schools, goes back to a paper at the Singapore Mencius conference of 1998. It was further developed by studies in our journal *Warring States Papers*, including one by Manyul Im which showed that the ends of the two schools' output, MC 3 and MC 7, share many features not found elsewhere in Mencius, and are thus plausibly interpreted as synchronous. To those arguments, I will here add the results of recent chronological and stylistic studies, which may help to sharpen the contrast between the schools, to better define their respective agendas, and perhaps to hint at the names of at least some of the leaders of the two schools.

The handout will contain most of the substance of this presentation, and I will take only a few minutes to single out the highlights, leaving the remainder of the time for discussion and criticism.