

Dž-sz̄ 子思

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One way to connect Dž-sz̄ with Confucius is (as the tradition deeply desires to do) is to date Confucius' death later than the usual 0479.¹ Maspero suggested a date a quarter century later, say c0454.² After considering dates applicable to Dž-sz̄ and to Confucius' son Bwó-yw̄, I find that 0479 is likelier. Dž-sz̄ belongs to the late 05c, sufficiently late to preclude direct transmission of doctrine from Confucius to Dž-sz̄.

Confucius

1. If Confucius had lived under Dàu-gūng (r 0467-0432), we would expect a trace in the record. There is none. The latest possible death date for Confucius is then 0468.

2. Analects tradition has Confucius delayed in his career by early poverty (LY 9:6), knowing Jāu-gūng (LY 7:31), conversing with Dìng-gūng (LY 13:15) and Aī-gūng (LY 6:3, 3:21, 12:9, 2:19, 14:21), and living at least to age seventy (LY 2:4). These details are mutually consistent; they imply that (1) Confucius' early career fell in the reign of Jāu-gūng (0541-0510); (2) that he reached career maturity, at perhaps fifty, under Dìng-gūng (r 0509-0495); and (3) died at seventy (LY 2:4) or a little later, but did not live beyond the reign of Aī-gūng (0494-0468). If we take his *age* at death as 70, and represent the *year* of his death by X, then a point twenty years before his death (X-20; his 50th year) should fall in the reign of Dìng-gūng, and one forty years before his death (X-40, his 30th year) in the reign of Jāu-gūng. The former condition is the more restrictive. The life span which would agree with it is 0489-0475 if Confucius died at 70, or 0489-0472 if (as other traditions imply) he died at 73. Analects evidence thus places his death within the range 0489/0472. This includes the conventional 0479, but excludes years from 0472 onward, which alone would support Maspero.

Bwó-yw̄

3. Confucius' son Bwó-yw̄ 伯魚 predeceased him (LY 11:8). Family tradition (Kǔngdž Jyā-yw̄ 39:1) is that Bwó-yw̄ died at 50. That he predeceased his father is borne out by Lǐ Jì references to Confucius' funeral, where *disciples*, not family, preside: if Confucius' son had survived him, the son would have had the leading role. If the traditional date 0479 is right, Bwó-yw̄ must have died not later than 0480. Accepting the range in #2 above, the latest possibility is that Bwó-yw̄ died in 0473.

¹The 0479 rests on a Chūn/Chyōu entry which is not original (he was not that important), and must be a Kǔng family insertion (Brooks **Analects** 263f) – but probably an accurate one.

²Maspero **China** 449f, noted approvingly by Waley **Analects** 6 n2 and Riegel 791.

Dž-sz̄

4. In Shǐ Jì 47, Confucius' descendants are given as Bwó-yw̄ and then Dž-sz̄, inviting the inference that Dž-sz̄ was the son of Bwó-yw̄. Even on the extreme assumption that Dž-sz̄ was conceived in the last year of Bwó-yw̄'s life, and born after Bwó-yw̄'s death, Dž-sz̄'s birth can be no later than 0472. The implicit view of SJ 47 is that Confucius' teachings descended in the family. The Latter Hàn text Kǔng Tsúngdž puts Dž-sz̄'s birth in 0479, overlapping for a few months with his grandfather but allowing for no very substantial intellectual contact between them; yet that text elsewhere shows Dž-sz̄ and Confucius conversing at a very high philosophical level. This is so strained as to be self-refuting.

5. Several Mencius passages (MC 2B11, 5B6, 5B7, 6B6) portray Dž-sz̄ in high office under Lǔ Mù-gūng (r 0410-0378). An anecdote found in the Gwōdyèn 1 tomb adds another such story. The date of the Gwōdyèn tomb is 0288 ±10; this story is thus a witness separate from, but contemporary with, the Mencius stories (early 03c). Sywǎndž brackets Mencius with Dž-sz̄, perhaps implying that Mencius was part of a school tradition *going back* to Dž-sz̄.³ If so, Mencius would have known the school tradition about Dž-sz̄. The Mencius and the Gwōdyèn anecdote agree that Dž-sz̄ served Lǔ Mù-gūng. On the most natural assumptions about career patterns, Dž-sz̄ reached his fiftieth year within the reign of Mù-gūng (0410-0378), and was thus born in the span 0459-0427. But those dates are *not within the range* of the possibilities available from #4 above. To reconcile them, one must make less natural assumptions, such as a very delayed public career, and/or a very long life, for Dž-sz̄. The latter is the Kǔng Tsúngdž solution, which does not provide a humanly viable scenario for Dž-sz̄. It is likely that the Kǔng Tsúngdž represents a wish to provide for a continuous Kǔng family transmission of Confucius' doctrines. If we dismiss it, as it appears we must, we need to consider what other transmission possibilities there are.

Known Disciples

6. Orthodoxy requires that Dž-sz̄ have reached years of discretion in Confucius' lifetime (implying an early 05c birthdate), *and* served Mù-gūng (implying personal vigor near the end of the 05c or later). These are chronologically incompatible. Given early testimony about the Mù-gūng connection (03c portions of the Mencius), and *lack* of early testimony that Dž-sz̄ was born within Confucius' lifetime and studied with him (the Analects; accounts of Confucius' funeral in the ritual texts; absence of Dž-sz̄ from the KZJY 38 disciple list,⁴ though Bwó-yw̄ is present), what must be abandoned is the claim that Dž-sz̄ learned directly from Confucius (Shǐ Jì 47 by implication; Kǔng Tsúngdž by direct statement). The tradition that Dž-sz̄ served Mù-gūng, which is present in the early evidence and persists in the later evidence (point #5), may stand.

³SZ 6:7. For Sywǎndž, not himself a student of the Analects school, as Mencius was, the opposition makes sense. It is also possible that Sywǎndž saw a link between them in the Jūng Yūng (if then identified with Dž-sz̄) and the Mencians (Jūng Yūng 14 is quoted in MC 4A12). Note also the obviously anachronistic reference to the Jūng Yūng in the interpolated LY 6:29.

⁴For the evolution of that list, see Brooks **Analects** 277-283.

7. The previous argument requires a transmission stage, and thus a Confucian school leadership stage, between Confucius and Dž-sž. A disciple stage is implied by the ritual texts, which know *only disciples* as involved with Confucius' funeral, and by LY 8:3, which portrays the disciple Dzŵngdž, at the time of his death in 0436, as head of the Confucian school. The tendency of all this evidence leads us to reject the Kǔng family claim of unbroken Kǔng family stewardship, and posit instead a period of disciple stewardship, between Confucius (who died not later than 0472) and Dž-sž (born not earlier than 0459, and reaching career maturity about the end of the 05c).

Review

The question of Confucius' death date thus comes down to one of continuity between Confucius and Dž-sž. Maspero, following Shř Jì 47 and the Kǔng Tsúngdž, rejects point #1 (the traditional death date of Confucius). This creates problems with other evidence. The best evidence indicates that point #4 (the direct successor role of Dž-sž) is the unsound position. We thus reject #4 (the Kǔng continuity scenario) and accept #7: there *was* a period of disciple headship in Confucius' successor school.

Verification. If so, then at some point the Confucian school must have undergone a rectification of its own historical memory, in which its disciple heritage would have been replaced or discredited. Just such a rectification may be seen in the LY 11:3 disciple pantheon, whose valuations of disciples are often at variance with those in earlier Analects chapters (LY 5-6, 8). This restructuring of tradition seems to parallel the different values expressed in those portions of the Analects, with *rŵn* ("otherness") being often mentioned in LY 4-9, despite denial of this fact in the interpolated LY 9:1 (see Brooks **Word**), but absent from the chapters near to LY 11, where it is replaced by a focus on *lǐ* ("behavioral propriety").

The Chŵn/Chyōu entry for Confucius' death in 0479 (Aī-gŵng 16) is manifestly spurious (Confucius was not of sufficiently high rank to have been so noticed in the court chronicle). The interpolated eclipses in that text (Brooks **Analects** 264f), which agree with that date, can only have been made by the Kǔng family in the early 04c. Between this *early* Kǔng tradition and the *later* one represented by the Kǔng Tsúngdž, followed by Maspero, we must choose. In historical study, earlier evidence is better. The *later* Kǔng family tradition, that Dž-sž was the link between Confucius and the Confucian posterity, may have been advantageous to the position of the Kǔng family, but it would seem to have no claim on scholarly acceptance.

Works Cited

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