

5. Dzṽngǎ and Son

LY 7-9

Dzṽngǎ, whose acquaintance within the old disciple circle was slight, abandoned the disciple-conversation format when he came to write his own Analects chapter, and reverted to the saying-only style of LY 4, on which he drew in other ways as well. In that format, he wrote what might be called a *profile* of Confucius, ending with his last words.

Confucius' state Lǔ was the territory which had been awarded to Jōu-gǔng, who had saved the Jōu Dynasty in its early years. Dzṽngǎ linked Confucius with Jōu-gǔng, and this concept of Confucius appealed to the Prince of Lǔ. From this time on, for more than a century, the heads of the Analects school were also advisors to the Princes of Lǔ.

LY 7 (c450)

The chapter is divided into the usual four sections, the first being mostly self-descriptions, as Dzṽngǎ has Confucius re-invent himself.

[A. Confucius on Himself]

┌7:1. The Master said, In handing on and not inventing, in being faithful to and loving antiquity, I might be compared to our old Pǔng.

An initial guarantee: Confucius, in what follows, is not making up anything; he is rather “handing on what he has received.” First, some easy things:

└7:2. To be silent and understand, to study and not tire of it; to encourage others and not grow weary in so going: what problem do these present for me?

“Silent and understand” makes him a meditation adept, taking over a quality which had earlier been unique to Yén Hwéi (LY 5:9). As for difficult things:

┌7:3. The Master said, My character not being cultivated, my studies not being pursued, hearing the right and not being able to follow it, being not good and unable to change it – these are my anxieties.

Restless urgency to continually improve, a trait of the traditional warrior, whose skill can never be sufficiently perfected, is here transferred to the moral sphere.

└7:5. The Master said, Extreme has been my decline! Long has it been since last I dreamed of Jōu-gǔng!

Putting into the past what was new: Confucius' relation to Jōu tradition. And here is the end of the concluding triplet:

┌7:6. The Master said, Intent upon the Way (Dào 道), firmly based on Virtue (Dé 德), close to rǔn 仁, and relaxing with the arts (yì 藝).

This concluding summary reaches back to LY 4. Dào in LY 4:5 is one's personal way, one's code. Dé in 4:11 is “virtue,” fitness for office. The summary ends with the arts of the gentleman, including the Shī, with which Dzṽngǎ and his son will be much concerned,

[B. Early Teaching]

The above outline is now filled in gradually:

┌7:12. If wealth could be had for the seeking, though it were only as some officer who holds the whip, I too would do it. But if it cannot be so had, I will follow what I love.

The preference for what he loves over what would profit again evokes 4:5.

└7:14. When the Master was in Chí, he heard the Sháu, and for three months did not know the taste of meat. He said, I had not imagined that making music could reach to this.

Confucius had visited the Chí capital as a member of Jāu-gūng's escort, and the school remembered how impressed he had been with what he saw.

┌7:16. The Master said, Eating coarse food, drinking water, crooking one's arm and pillowing on it – happiness may be found also in these circumstances. To be unrighteous and so become wealthy and honored – to me this is like a drifting cloud.

A variant of the theme of refusing to pursue profit (for “wealth and honor” see again 4:5) at the cost of virtue.

└7:17. The Master said, Give me several more years; with fifty to study, I too might come to be without major faults.

Again the devotion to self improvement, as in 7:2; 7:3, and 7:6

└7:19. The Prince of Shv asked Dž-lù about Confucius. Dž-lù did not reply. The Master said, Why did you not say, This is the kind of man he is: in his enthusiasm he forgets to eat; in his happiness he forgets his sorrows; he is not even aware that old age will soon be at hand.

As with the first section, this one closes with an envoi, an unpaired saying that sums up the preceding two. Again, the theme is Confucius' indifference to poverty, and his absorption in virtue; here, the virtue gained from meditation

[C. Later Teaching]

Along with themes further developed from the first half of the chapter, we will also encounter some that present Confucius in an unfamiliar light.

┌7:20. The Master said, I am not one who knows things from birth. I am one who loves antiquity and seeks after it with diligence.

But just where is one to seek out the virtues of olden times?

└7:22. The Master said, When I am walking in a group of three, there will surely be a teacher for me among them. I pick out the good parts and follow them; the bad parts, and change them [in myself].

Virtue is rín 仁 “otherness,” and “otherness” one learns from other people.

┌7:23. The Master said, Heaven begat virtue in me. What does Hwán Twéi expect to do to me?

Confucius has no supernatural knowledge, but he *does* have supernatural protection; the reference is to the time when Confucius had encountered difficulty on a mission “between Chvń and Tsài,” but had gotten away safely.

┌7:28. The Master said, To be sure, there are those who can originate something of which they did not previously know. I myself have no such capacity. But to hear much and pick out the good so as to follow it; to see much and remember it, is the next-best kind of knowing.

Again the denial of innate knowledge or creative power, and the insistence on the capacity to recognize the good, and the diligence to follow the good once it has been recognized.

So far the learning of the LY 7 Confucius. How about his teaching?

└ 7:29. In Hù County it was hard to find anyone to talk with. A youth presented himself. The disciples had their doubts, but the Master said, We are involved with his coming forward, but not with his going away. Why be so fastidious? If someone purifies himself and comes to us, we accept his purification; we do not guarantee his future conduct.

The religious aspect of this (“purifies himself”) is unmistakable; so is the sense of Confucius as an itinerant teacher. Neither trait, as it turned out, found a permanent place in the eventual standard image of Confucius.

[D. Retrospection and Death]

The biographical aspect of LY 7 here reaches its conclusion.

┌LY 7:33. The Master said, As for culture, I am no worse than anybody else. But as for fulfilling the role of a gentleman, I have never had the opportunity.

His career failure: he was never accepted as the advisor to a ruler.

└7:34. The Master said, If it is a matter of a Sage or of r̄v̄n, how dare I presume? But if it be acting for others without tiring of it, or teaching others without growing weary in so doing, perhaps something might be said. Gūngsyī Hwá said, The only problem is that the disciples cannot learn.

He takes on himself and the other disciples any failure in Confucius’ teaching.

└ 7:35 . The Master was very ill. Dž-lù asked to offer a prayer. The Master said, Is this done? Dž-lù replied, It is. The Elegy says, “We prayed for you to the higher and lower divinities.” The Master said, Chyōu’s praying was done long ago.

It is very moving, is it not? the Master patiently lets Dž-lù instruct him in ritual propriety, notwithstanding the fact that he knows much more about it than Dž-lù, He then rejects the suggested intercession with the deities. Instead, he offers his whole life as the secular equivalent of a prayer: devoted to the pursuit and dissemination of virtue, fulfilling his early aspirations (7:1-2), though without temporal rewards (7:33) or conspicuous educational results (7:33).

That humility, and that confidence in his ultimate success, are his legacy.

So far “Confucius.” Now we come to the last words of Dz̄v̄ngdž himself.

LY 8 (0436)

Dzṽngdž's son Dzṽng Ywǎn presided at the funeral. During the period of mourning for Confucius, Dž-gùng had collected four groups of Confucius' sayings. During the period of mourning for Dzṽngdž, his son Dzṽng Ywǎn wrote down, not four *groups*, but four *sayings*,¹ to serve as his memorial:

¶8:3. When Dzṽngdž fell ill, he summoned the disciples at his gate, and said,
Uncover my feet; uncover my hands. The poem says,
Tremblingly and full of fear,
As at the edge of a deep abyss,
As though I trod the thinnest ice . . .

But now and hereafter, I know I have come through safely, my little ones. He need not worry about assuming a ritually improper posture in his dying moments; he has safely negotiated the perils of life. The lines quoted here are identical with three lines in Shī 195, a lament that the ruler follows bad advice. But the *sense* of the quote is closer to Shī 196 (containing three *nearly* identical lines), on measuring up to a standard of conduct. The final form of Shī 195-196 had thus not yet been attained as of this date.

We have had a memorial for Dzṽngdž; now here is one for someone else:

¶8:5. Dzṽngdž said, Able, yet inquiring of the less able; versatile, yet inquiring of the limited; having, yet seeming to lack; full, yet seeming empty; wronged, yet not retaliating – long ago, a friend of mine used to devote himself to these.

This was Yén Hwéi, here described in terms taken from earlier passages. One strand is willing ness to learn from inferiors, praised by or attributed to Confucius (4:17, 5:15, 5:28, 7:22, 7:28). Another is praise of the meditation adept (“empty” is a standard description of the meditative state). A third is humility, the suppression of anger or resentment, associated with Yén Hwéi in 6:3 and 6:11.

¶8:6. Dzṽngdž said, He can be entrusted with a six-span orphan, he can be sent on a hundred-league mission; having charge in a crisis, he cannot be overwhelmed – he a gentleman? He is a gentleman.

A fully realized gentleman, one who is capable of holding civic responsibility, can deal with matters whether small and private or large and public.

¶LY 8:7. Dzṽngdž said, An officer cannot but be broad and resolute, for his burden is heavy and his road is far. Rǎn makes up his burden; is that not indeed heavy? Only with death is he done; is that not indeed far?

This surpassingly eloquent saying both completes 8:6 and echoes, and thus concludes, 8:3. These four sayings stand as a fitting testimonial to Dzṽngdž, one of the most influential heads the Confucian school ever had.

Now we turn to Dzṽng Ywǎn. LY 7-8 are the new Confucian tradition; he will be in charge of it. What will he make of it?

¹LY 8 was much interpolated in later times, hence the strange numbering,

LY 9 (c0405)

Dz̄vngdž was an important person. Besides his headship of the Confucian school, he was also involved with the Shī tradition of Dž-syà. Dz̄vngdž himself is not listed as a transmitter of that tradition, but his younger son, Dv̄ng Shv̄n, is on that list. In Dz̄vng Ywǎn’s chapter, LY 9, we will see influences coming not only from the Shī as such, but specifically from Wèi, where his brother Dz̄vng Shv̄n had apparently gone in search of more material.²

Dz̄vngdž’s LY 7 was arranged as a biography of Confucius. Dz̄vng Ywǎn also gives us a biography of Confucius – in the first thalf of his chapter. What he does in the second half, we will presently see. Meanwhile, here is his life of Confucius, one partly based on remembered sayings.

[9A. Confucius’ Early Hardships]

ǀ9:2. A man of Dá-syàng Association said, Great indeed is Confucius! He has learned a lot, but has nothing to base a reputation on. The Master heard of it, and said to the disciples at his gate, What shall I take up? Shall I take up chariot driving? Shall I take up archery? I shall take up chariot driving!

He sneers at the basic warrior skills – in which, in fact, he was deficient.

ǀ9:3. The Master said, The hemp cap has been customary, but now silk is cheaper. I follow the majority. To bow below [before ascending the ruler’s platform] is customary but now they bow above [after ascending]. It is presumptuous, and though I differ from the majority, I follow the “below.”

Instead, he stresses protocol. In protocol, he is conservative but also practical: he accepts reasonable changes in detail. It was in his days with Jāu-gūng that he made contact with the exile court, and experienced a constantly charging situation which required adaptive thinking. Dz̄vng Ywǎn’s Confucius will not be out of place in the coming Kūng family headship.

ǀ LY 9:5. The Master was endangered in Kwáng. He said, Since King Wín passed away, does not culture survive here? If Heaven were going to destroy this culture 斯文, no one of late date could have managed to take part in it. But if Heaven will *not* destroy this culture, what can the men of Kwáng do to me?

Dz̄vngdž had linked Confucian tradition with the Jōu heritage of the Lǚ state. Here, his son goes further: Heaven will preserve that tradition, and Confucius, in whom it will be preserved, is accordingly invulnerable to any earthly threat.

As for being “endangered in Kwáng,” this is an allusion to the difficulty which the real Confucius and his party had encountered on their ill-fated mission to the south, back in the days of Dìng-gūng.³ Those who ridicule the dedication of Confucius and his group delight in retelling it.

²In Wèi he added much to Dž-syà’s efforts in Jv̄ng. In our present Shī, there are not one, not two, but three Wèi sections, labeled Bèi. Yūng, and Wèi. All 33 of these poems were probably collected by Dz̄vng Ywǎn. For a sample, see below

³For the original event, see p31.

[9B. Confucius' Life and Teaching]

What did Dz̄ng Yw̄en know of Confucius? In part, what Dz̄ngdž and other old-timers had told him. Here are those two sources in conflict:

┐9:6. The Grand Steward asked Dž-gùng, Your master is a Sage, is he not? Why then does he have these many skills? Dž-gùng said, Surely Heaven will grant him to be a Sage; he also has these many skills. The Master heard of it, and said, Does the Grand Steward perhaps know me? When I was young, I was poor, so I became skilled in many mean matters. Does a gentleman have so many of them? He does not.

└9:7. Láu 牢 says that the Master said, I was not given a chance 不試, therefore I have all these accomplishments.

Only here in the Analects are alternate versions of a saying brought together. Of the two, Láu's version does not mention Confucius's *poverty*; it suggests rather that a *lack of opportunity* was the problem. It was kinder to Confucius. Then the one in 9:6, which perhaps came from Dz̄ngdž, is the original.

Dz̄ngdž had held Yén Hwéi in awe. Dz̄ng Yw̄en now *reverses* that:

9:11. Yén Yw̄en sighed deeply and said, I look up at it and find it lofty; I bore into it and find it hard. I see it in front of me, and suddenly it is behind. Our Master in his solicitude is good at guiding people. He broadens me with culture; limits me with propriety. I want to desist, but I cannot, and when I have utterly exhausted my capacity, it seems there is still something there, towering up majestically. Though I would go toward it, there is no path to follow.

Here, the truth to be reached by meditation is possessed not by Yén Hwéi, but by Confucius. In the Analects, Confucius increasingly occupies center stage. Now, at the end of the biographical section, comes the death of Confucius:

└LY 9:12. The Master was very ill. Dž-lù had the disciples act as attendants. When the illness abated, he said, Longstanding indeed are Yóu's dissemblings. I have no attendants, but you act as though I had attendants. Who will I deceive? Will I deceive Heaven? Besides, for my own part, than die in the arms of attendants, would I not rather die in the arms of you disciples? Even if I cannot have a grand funeral, will I be dying by the roadside?

The affection, and the rebuke of Dž-lù, are retained from Dz̄ngdž's 7:35, with a clearer allusion to the story of Buddha in the Mahā-Parinibbana Sutta. In that story, the disciples had lamented that Buddha was dying in a little no-account town. Buddha replied that it had once been a great city. Dz̄ng Yw̄en instead makes not the city's past, but the present love of the disciples, his explanation.

[9C. The Cultural Context]

With all this Indian background, it is natural to ask, Are our values valid in more than one cultural setting? Dz̄ng Yw̄en answers:

┐9:14. The Master wanted to dwell among the Nine Yí. Someone said, They are crude; how will you mange? The Master said, if a gentleman dwelt among them, what crudity would there be?

There is after all breadth to "this culture" 斯文 in 9:5, it is more than just ours.

Another geographical remark makes the same point:

↳9:15. The Master said, When I returned from Wèi to Lǔ, only then did the music get put right, and the Yǎ and Sùng find their proper places.

At this time, the Shī repertoire was not fixed; it was under construction by Dz̄vng Ywǎn's younger brother Dz̄vng Shǎn. To the older elite poems (one of which Dz̄vngdž had quoted) he had added dignified poems from other states. Here is the beginning of one court poem of Wèi. A wife has been wrongly sent home by her husband, and is accompanied partway by her maids:

Shī 28 (Bèi) Swallow, swallow, in your flight,
 Winging high, winging low;
 Our lady is returning home,
 Far o'er the fields with her we go.
 We gaze and gaze, but see her not –
 And like the rain our tears do flow . . .

But the elegant material Dz̄vng Shǎn had collected in Wèi only emphasized the indecency of some of Dž-syà's ten Jvng poems. And so, alongside those ten poems, there were now added ten more acceptable poems. The *promiscuous* girl of Shī 87, who will find another if her lover hesitates, is now preceded by this *faithful* girl, who is distressed because her lover is slow to come:

Shr 86 (Jvng). Yonder madcap boy, ah,
 Won't consent with me to meet, ah –
 It is all because of you
 That my food I cannot even eat, ah!
 Yonder madcap boy, ah,
 Won't consent with me to share a bite, ah –
 It is all because of you
 That my rest I cannot get at night, ah!

We next come to a pair of sayings on the acquisition of virtue:

┌ 9:16. The Master said, [Away from home] he serves the prince and nobles; [at home] he serves father and elders. In funeral services he does not dare to be remiss; he does not get in trouble over wine. What problem is this for me?

All ritual duty reduces to respect for others. This and other ritual provisions will recur in the protocol rules of LY 10 (§6). All that Confucius already has. But:

↳ 9:17. The Master, standing by a stream, said, Its passing by is like this: it does not cease by day or night.

The *unceasingness* of the stream evokes the effort needed to acquire virtue. That unceasing effort had also figured in Dz̄vngdž's last words in LY 8:3.

The next pair of sayings shows us Confucius in his role as a teacher:

┌ 9:18. The Master said, I have never seen anyone who loves virtue the way he loves beauty.

↳ 9:19. The Master said, I compare it to making a mound: though he is only one basketful short of completion, if he stops, I stop. I compare it to leveling land: though he has only dumped one basketful, if he has started, I join him.

To the *stern* Confucius of 7:8, Dz̄vng Ywǎn has added a *helpful* Confucius.

This section ends with a triplet – a lament – in praise of Yén Hwéi.

┌LY 9:20. The Master said, One to whom I could talk without his growing weary; that would be Hwéi, would it not?

└LY 9:21. The Master said of Yén Hwéi, Alas! I saw him start, but I did not see him finish.

└LY 9:22. Those who sprout but do not flower; truly, there are such! Those who flower but do not fruit; truly, there are such!

And now Dzṽng Ywǎn turns to consider those who even now are making a beginning: his own students. They are the future of the Confucian Way.

[9D. The Future Itself]

┌9:23. The Master said, The young are to be held in awe. How do we know that what is to come will not surpass the present? If someone is forty or fifty, and nothing has been heard from him, *he indeed* is unworthy to be held in awe.

In the preceding group, the virtues attributed to Confucius were the old virtues of respect. But for Dzṽng Ywǎn, the future was new, and it would surpass what the ancients had done.

└9:24. The Master said, The words of the Model Maxims (Fǎ Yǔ 法語: can one not assent to them? But the point is to *change*. The words of the Select Advices (Sywǎn Jyǔ 選舉): can one not delight in them? But the point is to *progress*. Those who delight but do not progress, who assent but do not change – I don't know what is to be done with them!

Again we hear of the urgent need to get somewhere, to go beyond the present.

Dzṽngdž had reached back to the Jōu past. Now his son is reaching ahead to the future. What advice does he give to those who will make that future?

9:25. The Master said, Emphasize loyalty and fidelity, do not befriend those who are not your equal, and if you make a mistake, don't hesitate to change it.

Keep to the basics, learn from others, fix mistakes. *But the point is to progress.*

There are one's comrades in policy matters. Here is Dzṽng Ywǎn's advice.

┌LY 9:28. The Master said, When the year grows cold, only then do we discover that the pine and cypress are the last to fade.

Not all your allies will stick by you, but those who do will be reliable.

└LY 9:29. The Master said, The wise have no doubts, the rǎn have no anxieties, the brave have no fears.

The best ones will be with you. Just remember to distinguish the other kind:

└9:30a. The Master said, One who can be studied with cannot [necessarily] be journeyed with; one who can be journeyed with cannot be taken stand with; one who can be taken stand with cannot be conferred with.

If they cease to be useful, you simply dump them.

And so we end with practicalities. Theory is fine; that is where the future is. But there are many small details to be dealt with, before we get there.