

Sywndž Again. In 0258, the King of Chí invited Sywndž to be the senior figure at Jì-syà. Sywndž proceeded to argue against Chí cosmology (#3:79-81), but misjudged his mandate, and had to leave. He took a post at Lán-líng, in territory recently conquered from Sùng and Lǚ only months earlier by Chǔ.

The southern Mencians resented the need to argue against “Yáng” (the Dàuists)⁵² and “Mwò:”

5:102 (MC 3B9, excerpt, c0251). Gūngdūdž said, The outsiders say that you, Master, are fond of arguing. I venture to ask why. Mencius said, How should I be fond of arguing? But I cannot do otherwise . . . Sage Kings do not appear; the Lords give rein to their lusts; hermits put forth cranky theories, and the teachings of Yáng and Mwò fill the world . . .

Their northern Mencian colleagues (who, be it noted, here call themselves Rú) added this advice on how to handle an argument after you have won it:

5:103 (MC 7B26, c0251). Those who escape from Mwò go to Yáng, and those who escape from Yáng will come to the Rú. When they come, we should simply accept them. Those who in these days dispute with Yáng and Mwò are like chasing an escaped pig; once they have got it in the pen, they proceed to tie its feet.

The above remarks, which show Warring States advocacy groups opposing each other by name, go far to refute the modern superstition that there were no “schools of thought” in Warring States times.

Words. The Dàuists had denied that wisdom could be conveyed in words:

5:104 (DDJ 2, excerpt, c0315). Therefore the Sage abides in Affairs Without Action; practices the Teaching Without Words.

5:105 (DDJ 1, excerpt, c0310). The Dàu that can be spoken of is not the Constant Dàu.

The rival Legalists of Chí, on the contrary, claimed to possess the secrets by which Gwǎn Jùng had made Chí Hwán-gūng (page 27) first among 07c rulers. The Jwāngdž people attacked this claim, in a story about Hwán-gūng himself:

5:106 (JZ 13:7, c0250). Hwán-gūng was reading a book in his hall of state. Wheelwright Byěn was making a wheel in the courtyard below. He put aside his mallet and chisel, went up the steps, and asked Hwán-gūng, I venture to ask, what sort of book is it that the Prince is reading? The Prince said, The words of the Sages. He said, Are the sages living? The Prince said, They are dead. He said, Then what the Sovereign is reading is only the dregs and leavings of the men of old. Hwán-gūng said, I am reading a book; how should a mere wheelwright have an opinion about it? If you can explain yourself, very well. If you cannot, you die.

⁵²Pejoratively so called, in allusion to the hedonist philosopher Yáng Jū 楊朱.

Wheelwright Byěn said, Your servant will consider it from the point of view of your servant's own trade. When making a wheel, if I go too slow, the stroke is easy and infirm; if I go too fast, the stroke is hard and shallow. If it is neither too slow nor too fast, I get it in my hand, and respond to it with my heart. It cannot be explained in words, but there is a certain skill to it. Your servant cannot teach it to his son, and the son cannot receive it from your servant. Thus it is that now, at seventy years, I am still making wheels. The relation of the men of old to what they could transmit has likewise perished, and so what the Sovereign is reading is merely the dregs and leavings of the men of old.

Not even the Confucians could accept everything in the canonical writings. The Mencians challenged the authenticity of one current Shū text in this way:

5:107 (MC 7B3, c0255). Mencius said, If one were to believe everything in the Shū, it would be better not to have the Shū at all. Of the Wǔ Chǎng, I accept only two or three strips. A benevolent man has no enemy in the world; how could it be that “the blood spilled was enough to float staves,” when the most benevolent made war against the most cruel?⁵³

In 0254, Sywǎndž, who had been unsuccessful in Chí, gained a more potent authority when he was made Governor of Chǔ-occupied Lǔ. This area was the home base of both Mencian groups, the Analects group, and the DDJ school.

Sywǎndž described his policy toward the rival thinkers in this way:

5:108 (SZ 5:10b, excerpt, c0254) . . . If one attends to their words, they are mere rhetoric with no guiding principle; if one employs them, they are deceitful or achieve nothing. Above, they cannot follow the lead of a Wise King; below, they cannot bring order to the masses . . . If a Sage King should arise, these would be the first people he would put to death, only afterward proceeding to the mere robbers and thieves. Robbers and thieves can reform, but people like these cannot reform.

The last Mician ethical chapter takes up the danger of remonstrance, but also stresses the need of contrary opinion to the health of the state:

5:109 (MZ 1, excerpt, c0250). Rulers need contrary ministers; superiors need candid inferiors. If those who publicly dispute persist, and if those who privately advise carry on, [a ruler] can prolong his life and protect his state. If ministers and inferiors, fearing for their position, do not speak; if nearby ministers fall silent and distant ministers hum, if resentment knots up in the hearts of the people, if groveling and flattery are at one's side and good advice is kept away, then the state is in danger.

This could have been a Confucian statement: Protest is not at all irregular; *it is what keeps things working*. This sentiment shows how far the Micians had come toward merging with their rivals in office, the Confucians.

⁵³So effective was this complaint that the Wǔ Chǎng was later suppressed.

All very well. But true to his earlier threat, in 0249 Sywǎndž shut down all these text-producing operations, not excluding the Mencians, the “Small Rú.” It was his way of winning the human nature argument of twenty years before.

After 0249. Together with the more or less simultaneous Chín conquest of the Jōu King’s small domain, the end of Lǚ brought about a major redrawing of the map. The prestige centers had vanished: Jōu, the survival of the once powerful Jōu Dynasty of old, and Lǚ, descended from the first minister of Jōu. But neither Jōu tradition nor Lǚ literature was now going to count for anything. In their stead, there loomed Chín and Chǔ.

It is perhaps not to be wondered at if, at about this time, groups of Micians established themselves in both Chín and Chǔ. Those Mician branches were still remembered in Hàn.⁵⁴ There was not much they or anyone else could achieve in the real world by way of further text production, and except for some Chí continuations of the Analects and the Mencius, text production now languished. But there was still ample scope for the display of courage in lost causes.

Conspicuous rigor like that of the desperado Ywè Ràng (#4:58-59) was now forthcoming from the Micians. These stories are from the Lǚ-shì Chūn/Chyōu, a late Warring States and Chín work. Each stage of that text has its agenda, but all drew on a doctrinally diverse group of contributors, some of whom did have Mician affinities. The stories may not be true, but they are probably Mician.

Here is a story from the time when the Micians among the followers of Lǚ Bù-wéi were hoping to recommend themselves in their new Chín home:

5:110 (LSCC 1/5:5, c0241). Among the Micians was Grandmaster Fù Tūn. He dwelt in Chín. His son killed a man, but Chín Hwèi-wáng said, Your Excellency’s years are advanced, and he will not have another son. This Solitary One has already ordered the officials not to execute him. Let Your Excellency heed the Solitary One.

Fù Tūn replied, The law of the Micians says, He who kills shall die, he who injures shall be punished.⁵⁵ This is in order to forbid the killing and injuring of others. Now, to forbid the killing and injuring of others is the most righteous thing in the world. Though the King has made me this gift, and ordered the officials not to execute him, Fù Tūn cannot but follow the law of the Micians. So he declined Hwèi-wáng’s [generosity], and subsequently did kill him.

No Legalist state could ask for greater rigor. But we may notice that Fù Tūn follows not Chín law, but Mician law – he inhabits a state within a state.

⁵⁴For the Hàn evidence, which is from c0140, see HFZ 50 (Liao **Han** 2/298).

⁵⁵This is reminiscent of the three-article lawcode proclaimed by the Hàn founder Lyóu Bāng on abolishing the harsh Chín laws. “He who kills shall die, he who injures or steals, according to the gravity of the offense” (**SJ 8**, 1/362; Watson **Records** 1/62).