

Political Geography of the Shī

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Abstract. Behind the order of states in the Gwó-fv̄ng 國風 part of our Shī, I find not directional schematism,¹ but a theory of legitimate conquest; a theory relevant to the unification wars of the 05c and later, and one which changed over time. The evidence for the change is that in the Dzwǒ Jwàn (DJ), at Syāng 29:13, the Fv̄ng poems are performed *in a different order* than that of the now standard Máu text.²

Roster. Our Fv̄ng mixes tiny states (Gwèi and Tsáu), big states (Chí and Jìn, the latter called “Táng”), and cryptic titles (Jōu-nán, Shàu-nán). The absence of some big states (Wú, Chǔ, Sùng) is easily explained: they were either non-Sinitic (Wú and Chǔ) or non-Jōu (Sùng), whereas the Shī celebrates Jōu culture.³ Matching the states differently colored in Herrmann’s Spring and Autumn map (p6-7), the Fv̄ng states in DJ order (where an asterisk marks a comment by the listener), and our Shī, we get:

Herrmann	DJ Inventory		Máu Shī Contents
	Jōu-nán	周南	Shī 1-11
	Shàu-nán	召南*	Shī 12-25
Lǔ 魯			
Yēn 燕			
	Bèi	邶	Shī 26-44
	Yūng	鄘	Shī 45-54
Wèi	Wèi	衛*	Shī 55-64
Jōu	Wáng	王*	Shī 65-74
Jv̄ng	Jv̄ng	鄭*	Shī 75-95
Chí	Chí	齊*	Shī 96-106
	Bīn	邠*	Shī 154-160
Chín	Chín	秦*	Shī 126-135
	Ngwèi	魏*	Shī 107-113
Jìn	Táng	唐*	Shī 114-125
[Chv̄n] ⁴	Chv̄n	陳*	Shī 136-145
	Gwèi	檜	Shī 146-149
	[Tsáu	曹]*	Shī 150-153

¹For one theory of this type, see Dorofíéíeva-Lichtmann **Vents**.

²Presumably from Máu Hv̄ng 毛亨, an early Hàn native of Lǔ. He did not inherit Syw̄ndž’s Shī tradition, which passed via Fóuchyōu Bwó 浮邱伯 to Shv̄n Pèi 申培 of Lǔ.

³The DJ anecdote calls its Shī recital “a performance of Jōu music” 請觀於周樂. In DJ anecdotes, the Shāng Sùng are not always cited as part of the Shī. See further below.

⁴Chv̄n, which was not conquered by Chǔ until 0479, should have had a distinctive color on Herrmann’s map, whose cutoff date is said to be 0481.

The Two Nán. A major divergence is that Herrmann's Lǚ and Yēn are absent from the DJ list. The DJ labels Jōu-nán and Shàu-nán are atypical and cryptic. But these seeming anomalies solve each other if we take Jōu-nán as “the domain⁵ of [the Prince of] Jōu 周公” (Lǚ) and Shàu-nán as “the domain of [the Prince of] Shàu” (Yēn).⁶ As for Bèi and Yūng (not in Herrmann), the DJ story groups them with Wèi 衛, and hears in them “the virtue of Kāng-shú,” a third Jōu brother and the first Lord of Wèi. Next in order comes the “Royal Domain” (Wáng), the enclave of the powerless Jōu Kings. Note that the Jōu *Kings* come later in the sequence of the Shī than the Jōu *feudatories*, with Jōu-gūng heading the feudatories.

Bèi and Yūng, listed in DJ before Wèi, were early additions to Wèi. The DJ order seemingly accepts that change, and regards all three as forming one entity, said to reflect the virtue of the Jōu prince Kāng-shú. Ngwèi 魏, an early conquest of Jīn, is listed before Jīn (“Táng”). That is, *valid conquests are listed before their conquerors*. The conquerors of Gwèi (namely Chǔ) and Tsáu (Sùng) could not be listed since, as non-Jōu states, their music was irrelevant. The conquest of Jōu states by non-Jōu states was probably a sore subject at the time, hence the end placement of Gwèi and Tsáu, and the refusal of the DJ listener to comment on their music.

Sequence. In the above points, the DJ and Máu sequences agree. We may now examine the points at which they differ (the downward relocation of the two states **highlighted** below):

DJ Inventory		Máu Shī Inventory		Máu Shī Contents
Jōu-nán [Lǚ 魯]	周南	Jōu-nán	周南	Shī 1-11
Shàu-nán [Yēn 燕]	召南	Shàu-nán	召南	Shī 12-25
Bèi	邶	Bèi	邶	Shī 26-44
Yūng	鄘	Yūng	鄘	Shī 45-54
Wèi	衛	Wèi	衛	Shī 55-64
Wáng [Jōu 周]	王	Wáng	王	Shī 65-74
Jǜng	鄭	Jǜng	鄭	Shī 75-95
Chí	齊	Chí	齊	Shī 96-106
Bīn	邠	Ngwèi	魏	Shī 107-113
Chín	秦	Táng	唐	Shī 114-125
Ngwèi	魏	Chín	秦	Shī 126-135
Táng [Jīn 晉]	唐	Chǐn	陳	Shī 136-145
Chǐn	陳	Gwèi	檜	Shī 146-149
Gwèi	檜	Tsáu	曹	Shī 150-153
Tsáu	曹	Bīn	邠	Shī 154-160

⁵Rulers face south. The Máu “Detailed Preface” 小序 says “南”言化自北而南也, or “Nán refers to the fact that governmental influence proceeds from north to south.” This was evidently felt by the composer of the Preface to be a sufficient clue to the meanings of these titles.

⁶Compatibly, the DJ listener identifies the Jōu-nán and Shàu-nán (performed without pause) with “the first foundations” [of Jōu culture]. This may answer two of Waley’s “Questions Awaiting Research” (*Songs* 372): “1. Origin of the names of the books into which the work is divided – Chou Nan, Shao Nan, Pin. 4. Why do the [Fvng] lack songs from such important centres as Lu and Sung?” I would say: The symbolic names Jōu-nán and Shàu-nán have taken the place of those states (to which the Jōu and Shàu domains were later relocated) in the design.

The downward displacement of Bīn (the old Jōu homeland) and Chín can be seen as two manifestations of one idea: reduced approval of Chín. In the DJ order, Bīn and Chín appear consecutively, as conquered and valid conqueror. Chín itself ranks just after J̀ng and Chí. It was Chín which had occupied the Bīn area when Jōu was forced out in 0771, and J̀ng and Chí are supposed to have aided Jōu in its move east. Their grouping in DJ is thus intelligible and positive. In our Sh̄, Chín is lower on the list, and Bīn is detached from it, being moved to the very end of the F̄ng. This vacates any implication that Chín was right to occupy the Jōu homeland. Relocating Chín after J̄n makes it last of the large states,⁷ a clear downgrading. It seems that a Sh̄ sequence which was viable for the late 04c DJ had later become unacceptable. Why?

Chín in the Chín F̄ng. We may first consider the revaluation implied in the poems in the Chín section of the F̄ng (Sh̄ 126-135). Several of these celebrate the vigorous martial culture of Chín: the ardor of its commoners in Sh̄ 133 (無衣) and the prowess of its elites in Sh̄ 128 (小戎). The tone is one of sympathetic admiration. Very different is Sh̄ 131 (黃鳥), which depicts the sacrifice of three of Chín's "best men," buried alive with Chín Mù-gūng in 0621. It is tempting to see Sh̄ 131 as a late addition to the Chín section, meant to reverse the positive estimate of Chín contained in the other nine poems. If so, that change of heart had occurred by the date of the DJ, since Sh̄ 131 is quoted in the DJ entry for Mù-gūng's death (W̄n 6:3).

Chín in the DJ. That DJ passage notes that Mù-gūng's cruelty was a bad omen: Chín "would never again march to the east" (不復東征). It was evidently felt when this was written (by c0312) that the east was safe from Chín, evil as Chín was. Chín in 0312 was absorbing Shǔ (conquered in 0316; Sage **Sichuan** 199f). The idea of eastern safety was refuted when Chín resumed its eastward pressure at the end of the 04c. By 0278, Chín had forced Chǔ out of its capital Yǐng and down the Yángdǔ, decisively altering the geopolitical balance. If not then, the thought that Chín had *legitimately* occupied the Jōu homeland in 0771 was surely shaken by Chín's extirpation of the Jōu remnant domain in 0249. At some point in this development, the mild disapproval earlier expressed by adding Sh̄ 131 (all the milder since it was seen as an omen of Chín's ultimate failure) was followed by the harsh disapproval of separating Bīn from Chín in the order of the F̄ng, and placing Chín last among the large states. In the eyes of the Sh̄ proprietors, Chín was no longer a legitimate conqueror.

Bīn in the Gwó F̄ng. So much for the demotion of Chín. The removal of Bīn to the *end* of the F̄ng was probably intended to balance the survival of Jōu tradition which is implicitly claimed for Lǔ ("Jōu-nán"), at the *beginning* of the F̄ng section.

Lǔ in the Sùng. This presumably later bookending of Lǔ virtue in the F̄ng division of the Sh̄ has a larger-scale parallel in the later arrangement of the entire Sh̄. In DJ Syāng 29, the final Sùng 頌 or "Hymns" division of the Sh̄ is performed as a unit, and the DJ listener evaluates it solely in Jōu terms. From the Jōu-nán to the Sùng, as far as the DJ anecdote is concerned, the Sh̄ has an overall Jōu symmetry.

⁷Last of *all* unconquered states, if we are right in suggesting (Brooks **Analects** at LY 6:13) that the first beginning of the F̄ng section was under Dž-syà, in c0460. Ch̄n, as earlier noted, had been conquered by Chǔ in 0479, and became the Chǔ capital in 0278.

At present, the *Sùng* ends with hymns representing *Lǚ* (the *Lǚ Sùng*, *Shī* 297-300) and *Sùng* or “*Shāng*” (the *Shāng Sùng*, *Shī* 301-305). These poems are sometimes quoted in the DJ as from the *Shī*, but also as from the *Lǚ Sùng* or *Shāng Sùng*.⁸ Then in at least some of the viewpoints reflected in the DJ, these groups may have been regarded as separate repertoires.

The 04c *Analects* (LY 2:2, c0317) cites *Shī* 297, a *Lǚ Sùng* poem, as a summary of the entire *Shī*. It was probably felt to balance *Shī* 1 (the *Gwān-jyŵ* 關雎, often cited in the *Analects*) as the first poems in what were then, at least in *Lǚ*, the first and last sections of the *Shī*. This attests the *Lǚ Sùng* as present in the 04c *Lǚ* text of the *Shī*, and indeed as structurally dominant in that version, but the manner of citation in the DJ implies that the *Lǚ* text was not universally accepted. This *Lǚ* cultural assertion had a counterpart *Lǚ* political agenda, which is very candidly stated in LY 17:4 (c0270): “[If I were employed,] I could make a *Jōu* in the East.”

The addition of the *Shāng Sùng* took the *Shī* poems past the round number “300;” it also made it emblematic of a more inclusive political domain: not the historically limited *Jōu* realm, but the whole world: the “*tyēn-syà* 天下.”⁹

What we seem to see here is a struggle to control the political meaning of the *Shī*,¹⁰ and in particular to define which states or traditions could legitimately occupy the place once held by *Jōu*. The DJ writers gave their vote to martial *Chí*, which in the *Syāng* 29 story was said to have a national future that was “measureless” 未可量也. *Lǚ*, by adding itself to the sacrificial part of the *Shī*, claimed succession to *Jōu* in its most sacred function. *Sùng*, with another addition to the same sacred area, invoked its past as a former imperial power, reaching back even further into a shared antiquity. Not taking part in this literary dispute, but exerting itself instead on the field of battle, *Chín* came to the attention of the *Shī* proprietors, who downranked it structurally, branding it for all time as an illegitimate occupier of other people’s territory.

It was not enough. There are times when the sword is mightier than the red pencil.

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⁸The same vacillation is seen in quotations of *Shī* 300 in MC 3A5 (as from the “*Lǚ Sùng*”) and MC 3B10 (as from the “*Shī*”), both from the early middle 03c.

⁹For the violent reinterpretations which this doctrinal shift required, see Reifler **Ever**. It may be noted that in absorbing symbolic *Lǚ* in 0249, *Chǔ* also acquired the former territory of *Sùng*.

¹⁰Not that the political meaning of the *Shī* is its only meaning; for the moralizers, who wanted to shape the *Shī* into a handbook of positive ethical examples, see Brooks **Template**.