

## 1. Beginning the Chronicle

Nothing about the Chūn/Chyōu 春秋 chronicle of Lǚ is more remarkable than the fact that it exists. No other state seems to have kept such a record, and there is no evidence that the Jōu Kings before them did so. In this chapter we take a look at the moment when it began, then read the first few pages, and end by noting features that are constant, plus a few that change, in later centuries.

**Jōu.** The Jōu Kings had been overlords, commanding the military loyalty of the tributary rulers of smaller states, and renewing the mandate of each such ruler when in the course of time he died and was succeeded by his son. Even in Spring and Autumn Lǚ, after the Jōu power had been broken and the former fiefs had become independent entities, the formality of enfiefment renewal was retained.<sup>1</sup> Jōu itself kept records of its deeds as an overlord, but these were in the form of ceremonial bronze vessels, whose inscriptions recorded rewards to deserving warriors<sup>2</sup> or adjudications of territorial disputes.<sup>3</sup> At the reward ceremonies, a verbal record was kept (called a tsv̄ 冊; the form of the character implies a set of bamboo strips held together with a cord), for transfer to the presentation bronze vessel, after which it was presumably destroyed.

**Post-Jōu.** In 0770, after the collapse of the Jōu and the death of King Yōu, his successor King Píng moved, or perhaps was moved, from the old Jōu northwestern home to the Jōu “eastern” capital, far down the Yellow River.<sup>4</sup> He was still ruling in 0722, when Lǚ undertook its chronicle. The probable impetus for that beginning was the death of the previous Lǚ ruler, Hwèi-gūng. To keep a chronicle where none was kept before implies that Lǚ had come to recognize itself as a state and not a fief; an entity in charge of its own affairs, and not a subordinate answering to an overlord. This change of self-concept marks the first great Spring and Autumn transition.

If this book were a translation of the Chūn/Chyōu,<sup>5</sup> as it might have been, it would open on the first Lǚ prince which it includes: Yǐn-gūng (r 0722-0711). To see what that would have felt like, here are the first three years of his reign. As we begin our acquaintance with this strange work, we may properly ask: Just what is the chronicle concerned to keep track of?

<sup>1</sup>At least in Lǚ; see the **Enfiefment** chapter.

<sup>2</sup>A typical reward ceremony is reconstructed in Shaughnessy **New** 65f.

<sup>3</sup>These inscriptions were found in a trove at Jōu-ywǎn, in the Jōu capital area; see Skosey **Legal** 95-115, but ignore her inclusion of certain 04c “received” Shū texts.

<sup>4</sup>Called Lwò Yì 洛邑 “the city on the Lwò [River],” a tributary of the Yellow River, or Chýng Jōu 成周, probably in origin “the city of Jōu” (that is, 城周).

<sup>5</sup>Such a translation, the Lǚ chronicle minus the perpetual overbearing presence of the exciting but irrelevant Dzwǒ Jwǎn, is still much to be desired.



### The First Three Years

#### *First Year (0722)*<sup>6</sup>

• 1/1:1. 元年春王正月

First year, spring, the King's first month.

A date with no entry; a formal place-holder. It does tell us that Lǚ used the Jōu (“Royal”) calendar. Yǐn-gūng (he was the oldest son, but by a secondary wife) would formally have begun his rule at the start of the year after his predecessor's death. If a chronicle then existed, it would have recorded the accession as its first entry for that year. We infer that the CC was begun *after* Yǐn-gūng's accession, and that he ordered a court record to be kept as one of his first official acts.

• 1/1:2. 三月，公及株儀父盟于蔑

Third month: The Prince and Yí-fǔ of Jū made a covenant in Myè.

In the CC, only the Lǚ and Sòng rulers are called gūng 公 *both before and after their death*; for others, gūng is only a posthumous honorific. The titles gūng 公 “Prince,” hóu 侯 “Lord,” bwó 伯 “Elder,” dǐ 子 “Master,” and nán 男 “Leader” form a descending hierarchy series, though with some flexibility in practice.

Jū (more correctly Jūlóu 株婁) was a small non-Sinitic state south of the Lǚ capital. Myè was a town in Lǚ, not the capital of either state: meeting in neutral territory was standard diplomatic courtesy. Yí-fǔ was the name of the ruler of Jū; he is here given no title at all. Meetings between rulers, early in a Lǚ reign, imply continuation of previous understanding. The connective jí 及 “with” suggests reluctance on the part of Lǚ. For the likely reason, see the note at 1/2:4, below.<sup>7</sup>

• 1/1:3. 夏五月，鄭伯克段于鄆

Summer, fifth month: The Elder of Jǜng overcame Dwàn in Yēn.

Dwàn, the younger brother of the Jǜng ruler, had rebelled; the CC is here keeping tabs on the succession disputes of neighbor states. DJ appends a touching tale of the reconciliation of the Jǜng ruler with his mother, who had supported her favorite son Dwàn. This is a typical DJ filial piety story; doubtless an invention. But a successful one: it is included in the standard anthology Gǔ-wǎn Gwān-jǐ.

<sup>6</sup>The illustration above is from the first word (Yǐn 隱, all that is left of the heading “Yǐn-gūng”) in the Hàn engraved stone text of the Chūn/Chyōu.

<sup>7</sup>For this unexpectedly interesting idiom, see the **Nuances** chapter.

- 1/1:4. 秋七月，天王使宰暄來歸惠公仲子賵

Autumn, seventh month: The King under Heaven sent his Steward Sywān who came and presented burial gifts for Hwèi-gūng and [his wife] Jùng Dž.

Here we see the ongoing ceremonial relationship between Lǚ and Jōu. Hwèi-gūng is the posthumous name of the previous Lǚ ruler. The Jōu kings claimed Heaven as an ancestor; Lǚ here respects that claim. Hwèi-gūng's wife was a daughter of the Sùng ruler, with surname Dž 子; the second (jùng 仲) in her generation, hence Jùng Dž. Dzai 宰 “steward” implies permanent named offices in Jōu, such as less organized Lǚ did not then possess. Legge notes that the line can be read “presented burial gifts for Hwèi-gūng's [wife] Jùng-dž.”

- 1/1:5. 九月，及宋人盟于宿

Ninth month: With an officer of Sùng, covenanted in Sù.

The Lǚ Prince is not explicitly mentioned (compare 1/1:2, where 公 “the [Lǚ] Prince” is the subject of the sentence), perhaps signaling discomfort about the meeting; the word 及 “with” also conveys reluctance. Meetings with an envoy rather than a ruler usually imply smoothing of previous enmity. On the other hand, the meeting was in Sù, a Lǚ town far from Sùng; perhaps a compensating courtesy. The relation of Lǚ and Sùng was intimate, and based on intermarriage (see the previous entry and 1/2:8 below). In state marriages, a wife from a superior state is typically sent to the ruler of an inferior state; this would imply some degree of subordination on the part of Lǚ.

- 1/1:6. 冬十有二月，祭伯來

Winter, 12th month: The Elder of Jài came.

This is not a chāu 朝, implying political subordination, nor a pìn 聘, a goodwill mission. Jài was a Sinitic state near Jvng, apparently in close relations with Jōu. Its Prince (公, a title not normally given to living rulers other than those of Lù and Sùng, perhaps a gesture of respect due to the nature of his mission) made a visit in the 8th year of the next reign (0704), and went on to Jǐ 紀 to meet a bride for the Jōu King. The younger brother of the Jài ruler made a goodwill visit (pìn) in the 23rd year of the 3rd Lǚ reign (0671). After that, Jài vanishes from the CC.

- 1/1:7. 公子益師卒

The Prince's son Yì-shī died.

“Prince's son” identifies this person as a son of the previous Lù ruler, Hwèi-gūng (Yì-shī was a personal name, probably given in hope of future military prowess), and thus a brother, not a son, of Yǐn-gūng. The circumstances of Yì-shī's death are unknown, though one suspects the worst. It is characteristic of the early years of the CC that they give more detail about members of the ruling family than do the later years.

### *Second Year (0721)*

- 1/2:1. 二年春，公會戎于潛

Second year, spring. The Prince met with the Rúng at Chyén.

The Rúng were the principal native people in the vicinity of the Lǚ capital. For their larger history, see Chapter 2. The meeting was probably preliminary to the covenant in 1/2:4, below.

## • 1/2:2. 夏五月，莒人入向

Summer, fifth month: An officer of Jyǔ entered Syàng.

Jyǔ was a non-Sinitic state east of the Lǚ capital, astride the lowland route from the south to eastern Chí. A military penetration of Syàng was of military concern to Lǚ. Syàngm south of Jyǔ, sometimes served as a neutral meeting place for heads of other states, and was a frequent bone of contention.

## • 1/2:3. 無駭帥師入極

Wú-hài led the host and entered Jí.

“Led the host” (shwài shī 帥師) is the standard idiom for someone other than the ruler taking charge of the armed forces of the state. Wú-hài is not called a gūngdǔ 公子, and thus seems not to have been a son of Hwèi-gūng and a brother of Yǐn-gūng. Whoever he was, he is obviously trusted. Jí never recurs in the CC, and Lǚ probably absorbed it at this time. It was southwest of the Lǚ capital, newr Jyǎ, and this action was a response to the Jyǔ move, above.

## • 1/2:4. 秋八月庚辰，公及戎盟于唐

Autumn, 8th month, gǔng/chǔn [day 17]: The Prince covenanted with the Rúng at Táng.

This is the first CC entry with a cyclical-day date.<sup>8</sup> Táng is in the same direction as Jí 極, and the move to absorb Jí may be seen as preparing the ground for making terms with the indigenous Rúng. The seeming distaste for this covenant (expressed by 及 “with”) was not in evidence at the earlier meeting with the Rúng, but a covenant involves an oath, an appeal to higher powers to enforce the agreement, and the native Rúng and Sinitic Lǚ in all probability did not recognize the same higher powers. Compare 1/1:2 above.

## • 1/2:5. 九月，紀裂孀來逆女

9th month: Lyè Syǔ of Jǐ came to fetch a bride.

Small Jǐ 紀,<sup>9</sup> whose ruling line, like that of nearby Chí, were Jyàngs 姜, had an army, but princess diplomacy was its chief interstate recourse. It was friendly with Lǚ, and intermarried with Lǚ and Jōu, but later fell foul of kindred Chí, and was extinguished by Chí in the third Lǚ reign.

## • 1/2:6. 冬十月，伯姬歸歟紀

Winter, 10th month: The elder Jī 姬 went as a wife to Jǐ 紀.

The Lǚ ruler’s eldest daughter (whose clan name was thus Jī 姬) is going as a bride to Jǐ 紀 (whose clan name was Jyāng, so the exogamy rule, against marriage within a clan, is respected, as it is throughout the CC).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup>The cyclical days are a combination of 10 “stems” and 12 “branches,” yielding 60 combinations which repeat independent of years or months. We translate them by the sequence equivalent. It is not clear why cyclical dates do or do not appear in a given CC entry. It may be that an astrologically favorable day was sought for this covenant. Not all covenants have such dates (see 1/1:2 and 1/1:5), so no general principle is involved.

<sup>9</sup>In modern times usually pronounced Jī, but the older reading survives as an alternate. On inscriptions from our period, the state name appears as Jǐ 己.

<sup>10</sup>For the one supposed (but not actual) exception, see Chapter 25, Mǔng-dǔ.

- 1/2:7. 紀子伯莒子孟子宓

Dǔ-bwó of Jǐ and the Master of Jyǔ covenanted in Mì

Even as seen from a distance of millennia, things begin to come together. Jǐ needs protection against large Chí. It concludes a marriage with medium Lǔ, which recently strengthened its position in the southwest; it now covenants with small but strategic Jyǔ, which controls access to the Chí eastern lowlands. A common interest of these two states against Chí is implied.

- 1/2:8. 十有二月乙卯，夫人子氏薨

12th month, day 52: Our Lady of the Dǔ clan passed away.

Sùng and Lǔ had intermarried in Hwèi-gūng's time, and now Yǐn-gūng's Sùng wife has died. Her sequence (eldest, second, etc) is not given; only the fact that she was of the Sùng ruling clan. The honorific term *húng* 薨 "passed away" is restricted in the CC to the deaths of Lǔ rulers and their wives.<sup>11</sup>

- 1/2:9. 鄭人伐衛

An officer of Jvng attacked Wèi.

For the first occurrence of the word 人 "man" in the CC, see 1/1:5. DJ sometimes interprets phrases like 鄭人 as "the people of Jvng," as though the attack were a spontaneous move of the entire Jvng population. Rvñ 人 (and in 1/1:5) implies an individual of rank and responsibility who was not a member of the ruling family. Legge translate theses 人 as "an officer of," a reasonable precedent which we here follow. This reluctance of the Lǔ court and its scribe to fully recognize the non-ruling elite was slowly abandoned in the later years of the CC (for the large picture, see the **Society** chapter in this book).

### *Third Year (0720)*

- 1/3:1. 三年春王二月己巳，日有食之

3rd year, spring, Royal 2nd month, day 6: An eclipse of the sun.

More literally, "the sun had something eating it." This was no dead metaphor; in 3/25:3 and 5, in 3/30:5, and finally in 6/15:5, the chronicle records a beating of drums evidently meant to drive away whatever was eating the sun. The CC eclipses were accurately observed,<sup>12</sup> but not all eclipses are recorded, and some conspicuous ones are omitted. Apparently, eclipses were regarded by the Lǔ court as bad omens, and an entry was not made for eclipses not followed by a bad event. This means that entries were not made at once, but only after a certain lapse of time. Presumably a preliminary record was kept.

- 1/3:2. 三月庚戌，天王崩

3rd month, day 37: The King Under Heaven passed away.

And here is the fulfilment of the preceding evil omen, 31 days later.

<sup>11</sup>The term *bvng* 崩 is similarly reserved, in CC, for the death of the Jōu King.

<sup>12</sup>Except for four that were inserted by the Kǔng family to honor the birthdates of the Kǔng ancestors (Brooks **Analects** 264f); they evidently regarded them as good omens. For the CC eclipses in general, see Chapter 7, **Eclipses**.

- 1/3:3. 夏四月辛卯，尹氏卒

Summer, 4th month, day 28: [The head?] of the Yǐn clan died.

This person is entirely unknown. If the clan was named for an office (yǐn 尹 “intendant”) held by its ancestor, a state more organized than Lǚ is suggested. From the next entry, this might have been Jōu. Posterity’s best guess seems to be that an envoy from Jōu had died while in Lǚ.

- 1/3:4. 秋，武氏子來求賻

Autumn: A son of the Wǔ clan came, requesting burial gifts.

Here a *member* of a clan, leading to the suspicion that the previous entry had been the *head* of the clan, a higher ranking person. The gifts were sought for the burial of the recently deceased Jōu King Píng, the first of the post-Jōu rulers of what was left of Jōu. We remember that Jōu had sent burial gifts to Lǚ in 1/1:4. The commentators infer that Lǚ had failed to send burial gifts on receiving notice of the King’s death, and was being rebuked by a reminder. The 04c ritualists who wrote the DJ often misconstrue 08c ritual practices, and we enter their idea merely as a possibility, albeit a not unlikely one.

- 1/3:5. 八月庚辰，宋公和卒

8th month, day 17: Hǜ, the Prince of Sùng, died.

On terms for death, compare 1/2:8 above. Given those conventions, no disrespect is intended by the use here of the common term dzú 卒 “died.”

- 1/3:6. 冬十有二月，齊侯鄭伯盟于石門

Winter, 12th month: The Lord of Chí and the Elder of Jǜng covenanted in Shí-mǐn.

The lines of conflict are beginning to be drawn in the north, with Chí coming to terms with Jǜng. Though not present, and probably not formally notified, the Lǚ court knows about the meeting and its location.

- 1/3:7. 癸未，葬宋穆公

Day 20: Buried Sùng Mù-gūng.

Chinese sentences do not require a subject; we could have supplied “They.” Between his death (in 1/3:5) and his burial here, the Sùng ruler received the epithet (Mù, “Majestic”) by which his descendants would sacrifice to him. Note that the CC (at 1/3:2) records the death, but does not later notice the burial or posthumous epithet of King Píng 平 (“The Peacemaker”) of Jōu.

### Lǚ as of 0720

What does this brief look at the CC tell us, about Lǚ and its chronicle?

**Range.** Lǚ awareness at this time did not reach beyond the Jōu enclave, on the south side of the Yellow River. Great Jìn, located north of the River, never appears, neither in this reign nor the next. Its appearance early in Syī-gūng’s reign is one thing that marks that reign as a watershed in the history of Lǚ.

**Ritual.** No Lǚ sacrifices are recorded in this sample. Not that there were no sacrifices in this period, but CC tends not to record routine events. Only when a sacrifice fails is it noted – as an ill omen. It also appears that, over time, Lǚ added to its sacrificial repertoire by adopting the practices of neighbor states. In all probability, the Lǚ sacrifices in 0720 were still few and simple.

Some of the events noted in these three years would probably have required the presence of a ritual specialist; for example, to supervise oaths at covenants. The eclipse in 1/3:1 shows natural events being treated as possibly meaningful omens (whether for Lǚ or, as in that case, for Jōu), and suggests that the keeper of the chronicle was also the interpreter of the omens. He probably had charge of astral matters in general, including the calendar.<sup>13</sup>

**Protocol.** Closely allied to ritual in the strict sense (the human management of the supernatural, or of human affairs that are thought to make contact with the supernatural) is protocol: the sense of what is due to persons of rank. We see that from the beginning the Lǚ ruler is not only uncomfortable in situations that take him out of his accustomed supernatural orbit (as in the mixed-religion covenants of 1/1:2 and 1/2:4), but is also prickly toward any lack of mundane respect paid him by the people with whom he has to deal diplomatically. It was the CC writer who included these nuances of annoyance (the coverb 及 among them); he was probably, himself, an arbiter of civil as well as ritual propriety. We might think of him as the court astrologer, doubling as its protocol chief.

**Politics.** Manifest from the beginning is an interest in power relations, both within and between states. The most revealing entries in this regard are those for events in which Lǚ itself did not take part, but of which it somehow knew, and about which it was clearly concerned. Alliances between other states, or political instability in any one state, were evidently of high interest to Lǚ, and it fell to our Astrologer to keep track of them. Politics at this period consists in part of marriages between states, and in part of succession disputes within one state – in which, as we shall see in later chapters, wives and concubines, as partisans of different sons of the previous ruler, might take a vigorous part.

### The Later Chronicle

The chronicle continued for at least three centuries after this point, though only the part down to the death of Confucius was preserved by the Kǔng family when they gained access to it at the beginning of the 04c.<sup>14</sup> The Lǚ chronicle, by which we mean the series of people in charge of it, retained its terse style, and its range of interests, essentially unchanged through that time.

<sup>13</sup>The calendar of the time was a hybrid of lunar and solar years, and to keep them in touch with each other, an extra (intercalary) month sometimes had to be inserted. Whether done right or not (and both occur), this too was the Astrologer's responsibility.

<sup>14</sup>The CC, in all versions, now ends with the capture of the lín in 0481 (Aī 14), but the DJ provides additional CC entries (rendered by Legge in fine print) down to the death of Confucius in 0479 (Aī 16); the DJ itself continues to the end of Aī-gūng, plus an isolated entry of 0464 (Dàu-gūng 4); for the reason, see p51. The figures below respect the conventional end of the CC *text* in 0481, but for a more useful historical fit, we recommend ending the Spring and Autumn *period* in 0479.

The length of an average entry, for example, stayed remarkably constant. Here are the twelve Lǚ reigns, with their length, the number of entries per year, and the number of words per entry (high and low values **emphasized**):

Ruler		Reign <sup>15</sup>	Years	Entries/Year	Words/Entry
Yǐn	隱	0722-0712	11	7·00	8·05
Hwán	桓	0711-0694	18	6·44	8·70
Jwāng	莊	0693-0662	32	<b>5·04</b>	8·31
Mǐn	閔	0661-0660	2	7·00	<b>7·07</b>
Syī	僖	0659-0627	33	6·90	9·29
Wǎn	文	0626-0609	18	8·16	9·22
Sywān	宣	0608-0591	18	8·11	7·95
Chǎng	成	0590-0573	18	<b>9·77</b>	9·59
Syāng	襄	0572-0542	31	8·87	<b>10·23</b>
Jāu	昭	0541-0510	32	7·37	8·88
Dìng	定	0509-0495	15	9·33	8·29
Aī	哀	0494-0481	14	7·57	8·16
Average:				7·66	8·64

The texture thus persists, but the content of the entries shows a groundswell of slow social and institutional change. As time goes on, the doings of the Lǚ ruling family get less space, and the doings of the non-ruling elite are more fully recognized. Records of the deaths of foreign rulers grow more complete, as contacts with other states improve.<sup>16</sup> Covenants also decrease in frequency, as states prefer to embark on campaigns with fewer allies than before.<sup>17</sup>

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Meanwhile, we see Lǚ in 0720 taking systematic responsibility for being aware of possible omens (some of which were duds) and of the intentions of rival states (and most states were, or might at any moment become, rival states). Lǚ's own maneuvering among the resulting possibilities and limitations comes out clearly, if implicitly, in the final record.

The Lǚ chronicle is not a history in the sense of an interpretation of the past. It is a profile of the moving present, as an alert Lǚ leadership was aware of it, and sought to be successfully engaged with it: a competent manager's reference in a fluid world, under a fickle sky.

<sup>15</sup>Those following the commentary of Legge are warned that, due to bad advice from the then Astronomer Royal, Legge used "astronomical" years, which differ by 1 from the year count used by historians. His 480 is our 0479, and so on. Unlike algebraic years, historical years pass directly from +1 to -1, with no intervening Year 0.

<sup>16</sup>To have seen this was how Kennedy made a revolutionary new beginning in our subject. For his data, see **Interpretation** 92-99. That he still regarded Confucius as the author of the Chūn/Chyōu merely reminds us that revolutions are not made in one day.

<sup>17</sup>For this group of changes, see the **Diplomacy** chapter.