

The Emergence of China

1. Antiquity

This is a story of world conquest.

The world in question was the Yellow River valley; the home of the Sinitic peoples.¹ Through war and cultural assimilation, that world gradually expanded to the Yángdǐ River, the homeland of another distinctive culture.² Both rivers flow eastward to the sea, and the coastal peoples constituted a third culture.³ The unification process would eventually include all of them.



China's classical age is a long period of political fragmentation, from the fall of Jōu in 0771 to the reunification under Chín in 0221. Before Jōu, the classical thinkers were aware of two earlier unified dynasties: Syà and Shāng.

Syà

Syà 夏 is something of a mystery. Information about it from later tradition consists chiefly of two names: (1) its virtuous first ruler Yǔ 禹, who is reported to have drained away the great floodwaters and carved out the river valleys, and (2) its monstrosly depraved last ruler Jyé 桀, who lost the approval of Heaven.

¹We regularly use "Sinitic" in preference to "Chinese." The latter word derives from the state of Chín 秦, and does not strictly apply until the Chín unification of 0221.

²The non-Sinitic languages of this area include Kadai (Thai), Myáu-Yáu (now "Hmong-Mien"), and Austro-Asiatic (Vietnamese). See Ramsey **Languages**.

³For a detailed study of this distinctive early culture, see Luo **Coastal**.

Methodological Moment. The hero who accomplishes a superhuman task, such as draining floodwaters, is a theme (topos) found in many traditions; the Bad Last Ruler is a favorite *Chinese* topos. When all we hear about a dynasty is topoi good or bad, we may reasonably suspect the historicity of that dynasty.⁴

Shāng

Shāng 商 is best known to us through the “oracle bone” inscriptions discovered in the late 19c. A bone or shell is heated, and the resulting cracks are interpreted as a short-term prediction, in answer to a question of this kind: Will that campaign prosper? Will this sacrifice be accepted? Will rain fall?⁵

The kings to whom Shāng sacrificed can be reconstructed from these texts. First come 6 predynastic rulers, then 28 kings proper, from Tāng 湯 the founder (sacrificial name Dà Yī 大乙)⁶ to Jòu 紂 (Dì Syīn 帝辛), later mythologized as a Bad Last Ruler. Shāng kings mentioned in classical-period writings include:

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Tāng 湯 | (Dà Yī 大乙) | |
| 12. | (Dzǔ Yī 祖乙) | |
| 18. | (Pán Gvng 盤庚) | |
| 21. | (Wǔ Dīng 武丁) | reigned c01200-01181 ⁷ |
| 23. | (Dzǔ Jyǎ 祖甲) | c01170-01151 |
| 27. | (Dì Yī 帝乙) | c01090-01071 |
| 28. Jòu 紂 | (Dì Syīn 帝辛) | c01070-01041 |

The remembered predynastic *rulers* imply a predynastic *period*, but what previous power Shāng at one point conquered, the bone texts do not tell us.

Several western techniques appeared via Central Eurasia. Bronze appeared early; the chariot later.⁸ Shāng chariot burials are also Indo-European in style.⁹ Writing, possibly inspired by Near Eastern models, also appears at this time.¹⁰

⁴So also, after examining the archaeological evidence, Thorp **China** 61. *Something* preceded Shāng, but that the Chinese political myths applied to it is doubtful.

⁵The answer is inscribed on the same bone. See further Keightley **Landscape**.

⁶The second elements in these names are from a cycle of ten day names. These were combined with a second series of twelve to produce a cycle of 60 days; see #1:1 below.

⁷Estimated from average reign lengths (Keightley **Sources** 171-176 and 228).

⁸Chariots appeared in India in c01600, in early Shāng (Drews **Coming** 62f), but in China in *late* Shāng (Thorp **China** 171). This was not the expansion of a winning culture, but the exit of an obsolete one: Near Eastern chariot warfare had been refuted in c01200 by a new javelin technique (Drews **End** 174f). The Western origin of the chariot is obvious: the Sinitic word for “horse” (mǎ 馬) is Indo-European (compare Old High German “marah,” English “mare.” For chariot terms, see Lubotsky **Tocharian**).

⁹Beckwith **Empires** 12f and 43-45.

¹⁰That is, not earlier than Wǔ Dīng (Keightley **Sources** 139 and 97 n23).

The inscriptions on the Shāng oracle bones are concerned with weather and the harvest, but they do not tell us about other aspects of land tenure or resource management.¹¹ There is no evidence for law codes or legal procedures.¹²

Shāng warfare used a non-chariot “mass” (jùn 衆)¹³ along with the newly introduced chariot. Campaigns could be long. Many were against enemies in the northwest (such as the Gwěi-fāng 鬼方 “Demon region”) and the southeast (such as the Rǎn-fāng 人方 “Man region”). The Shāng enemies in the north and west also possessed the war chariot; Shāng did not have a complete monopoly. Indeed, the last Shāng kings *lost* territory in the northwest;¹⁴ at the same time, they were exhausted by the effort of continuing military action in the southeast. Shāng was eventually conquered by the Jōu, one of the northwestern peoples.

Jōu

The conqueror of Shāng was Wǔ-wáng 武王 or King Wǔ. Like the Shāng, the **Jōu** 周 also recognized predynastic rulers, the most important of whom was Wǔ-wáng’s father, Wǎn-wáng 文王 or King Wǎn. The epithets Wǎn “civil” and Wǔ “military” became a standard opposition in classical political theory, which held that Wǎn-wáng by his virtue had gained the approval of Heaven, and that Wǔ-wáng had merely realized that approval by his actual conquest.¹⁵

After the conquest, in c01040, most land was assigned as fiefs to relatives of the Jōu King and others who had aided the conquest, or were willing to collaborate afterward.¹⁶ Their loyalty was doubtful, and control was a problem: the Jōu homeland lay in the west, whereas the newly conquered territory was in the east. The city of Chǎng Jōu 成周 was established on the Lwò River,¹⁷ in the middle Yellow River plain, to coordinate security operations in the east. From that center, eight “Yīn” armies could be summoned to deal with unrest in the former Yīn (or Shāng) territory.¹⁸ Six “western” armies were similarly administered from the Jōu capital in the west.¹⁹

¹¹An important early Shāng economic transition is argued in Liu **State**.

¹²David N Keightley, personal communication, 2009.

¹³Of not more than 100 men. David N Keightley, personal communication, 2010.

¹⁴Keightley **Shang** 288f.

¹⁵This is the “Mandate of Heaven” (Tyēn-mìng 天命) theory. In Jōu, the phrase meant a charge from the Jōu ancestors. Later ages conceived of a supradynastic Heaven presiding over transitions in general. The roles of Wǎn-wáng and Wǔ-wáng in the actual Jōu conquest would undergo a profound change in 04c theory; see **#3:11-12**.

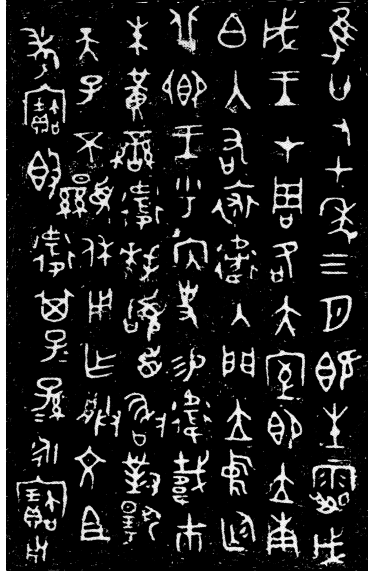
¹⁶For two enfiefment documents, see Shaughnessy **Sources** 318f.

¹⁷Near to modern Lwò-yáng 洛陽; the name probably means “City 城 of Jōu.”

¹⁸It is militarily unlikely that these were Shāng troops serving the Jōu conquerors.

¹⁹Creel **Origins** 305f. It is economically unlikely that these were “standing armies.”

Long after the first distribution of conquered land, a Jōu warrior might win recognition for military exploits, as we see from inscriptions like this one . . .



. . . which records a gift presented by Mù-wáng, the fifth Jōu King, to the warrior Chyóu Wèi 裘衛. The ceremony went as follows:

1:1 (Chyóu Wèi Gwěi, c0960). It was the King's 27th year, third month, after the full moon, on [the cyclical day] wù/syw 戊戌 (#35).²⁰ [The King] was at Jōu, and took his place in the great hall. Nán-bwó came in on the right. Chyóu Wèi entered the main gate and stood in the center of the court, facing north.²¹ The King called the Palace Astrologer²² to present to Wèi purple knee covers, a red jade ring, and a [harness] bell.²³ Wèi bowed and touched his head to the ground; he ventured in response to praise the Son of Heaven's²⁴ great munificence. He then made for his accomplished ancestor and his father this precious gwěi vessel. May his sons' sons and grandsons' grandsons forever treasure and use it.²⁵

That is, his service to Jōu has enriched his own ancestral observances.

²⁰We will translate future "cyclical day" dates simply by the number in the cycle.

²¹On these formal occasions, the ruler always faced south.

²²The nèi-shǐ 內史, here "palace astrologer," had charge of omens and portents, including lucky days; it thus fell to him to keep records of these presentations.

²³Gifts on these occasions are of military character; Shaughnessy **Sources** 82f.

²⁴The king is the "Son of Heaven" because his ancestors, the former kings, are now spirits in Heaven, whence they can send aid and blessings if they are fed by sacrifices.

²⁵In sacrificing to the spirit of Wèi's father.

Land. A gift to a warrior might include land, in which case the warrior joined the ranks of the older vassals or local lords. In return for land, the local lord with his own circle of warriors owed military service to Jōu.²⁶

State Structure. Another inscription records the bestowing on Chyóu Wèi of the position of s̄z-mǎ 司馬 or “marshal,” the one responsible for horses and presumably other resources of war. The existence of named offices marks Jōu as having taken some steps toward bureaucracy. Shāng, before it, had had some named offices, such as s̄z-chǎng 司城, the one responsible for fortifications.

War. About Shāng we cannot be sure, but the Jōu chariot warrior had lifelong training in the difficult arts of driving a two-horse war chariot and shooting from it with the powerful compound bow of the period. Such warriors could be assembled at need to form a campaign force. The chariot horse needed long nurture and preparation; an 014c Ancient Near Eastern manual spells out a 7-month regimen for training a war horse.²⁷ Land was needed too: 10 acres of good grain land were required to feed the basic team of two horses.²⁸ Chariots were accompanied in battle by a complement of foot soldiers, perhaps on average ten per chariot; the only Jōu inscription to specify chariot numbers mentions 100 chariots (and 1,000 foot troops) under a subcommander.²⁹ A great vassal’s whole force might have consisted of 300 chariots plus their infantry. The total force available at Chǎng Jōu would then have been eight armies of that size, which could be called together when a military emergency arose.

Economy. The basic economy was agricultural. Cowry shells served as money for certain local purposes. Long-distance acquisition of materials such as copper for bronze casting was probably in the form of tribute rendered by the King’s vassals, or by gift-exchange with the less formally dominated territories. For trade as we know it in later times, there is no firm evidence.

Law. There were no law codes or standard legal procedures in Jōu times. Inscriptions tell us that the Jōu King adjudicated land disputes among his vassals; this is unsurprising since he had bestowed the land in the first place.³⁰ In his own domain, the Jōu King punished his subjects (by death or mutilation) as he saw fit. The vassals, within *their* domains, probably did the same.

²⁶This land-for-service feature is typical of feudal situations. For the pattern, see Beckwith **Empires** 13-18, Stephenson **Feudalism** 2-8, Reynolds **Europe** 164). The troubles with the term “feudalism” come from taking mediaeval France as standard, or making “feudal” a stage in a fixed developmental sequence (see rather Strayer **Idea**).

²⁷For the 014c manual of Kikkuli, see Drews **Coming** 90f. The chariot itself, and chariot warfare, are much better documented in their homeland, the Ancient Near East.

²⁸Piggott **Horse** 27.

²⁹Creel **Origins** 276.

³⁰See Skosey **Legal**, but ignore those conclusions that are based on Shū documents.

Feudal Tenure. Conferral of land in the Jōu system was to a person, and technically lapsed at the death of that person. His son would typically inherit, but a formal renewal was customary. In Lǚ, whose ties to Jōu were close (it had been the fief of the esteemed regent Jōu-gūng), that formality was observed even after the end of Jōu power in 0771. In the court chronicle of Lǚ:

Chūn/Chyōu 春秋 “Spring and Autumn” (CC). A Lǚ court chronicle covering the span 0722-0481; the only extensive contemporary source for Lǚ and other states in that period. Translated by Legge.

there are three relevant entries. Here are two of them:

1:2 (CC 3/1:6, 0693). The King sent Rúng Shú to confer the Mandate of [the late] Hwán-gūng 桓公命.

Hwán-gūng died in 0694, and was then given the sacrificial name “Hwán.” Now, a year later, his mandate from Jōu to rule Lǚ is transferred to his son.³¹

1:3 (CC 6/1:5, 0626). The King under Heaven sent the Elder Máu to confer the princely Mandate 公命.

The eighth Lǚ Prince was also recognized by Jōu. The others were in some way (such as being the son of a concubine) not technically entitled to inherit.³²

The Jōu King was stronger than any of his local lords, and could call on one for aid against another. He could thus *dominate* an area that he was not strong enough to *conquer*. This is the key to many indirect-sovereignty arrangements. Eventually, one Jōu King (Yōu-wáng 幽王) was no longer strong enough to play that role. In 0771, his capital was attacked by a non-Sinitic tribe, and no vassal came to his aid. His successor Píng-wáng moved in 0770 to the eastern capital Chýng Jōu, where he and his powerless successors reigned in a merely ceremonial way, until the Jōu line of Kings was finally extinguished in 0249.

Spring and Autumn

This period, from 0770 to the death of Confucius in 0479,³³ is the background for the Warring States. It was a sovereignty vacuum: the Jōu feudal system without an effective head. A multi-state system, but one which, unlike the classical Greek states, had a defining memory of an earlier political unity.³⁴

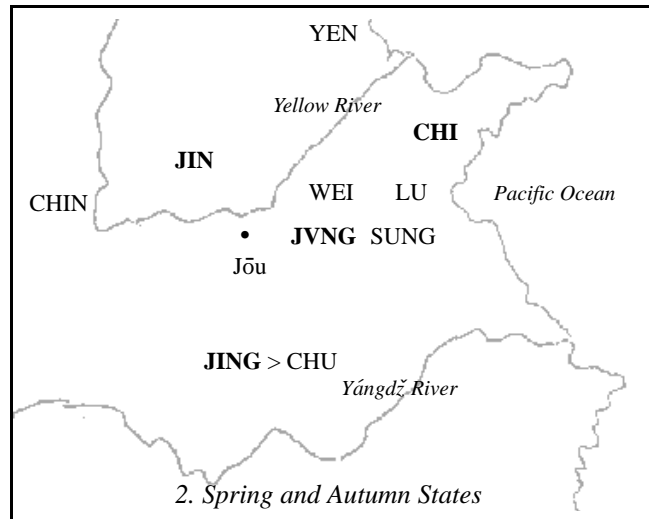
³¹We follow the convention of referring to rulers by their posthumous names, but note that these names were assigned at burial, and were not known previously.

³²For details of this process in Spring and Autumn Lǚ, see Brooks **Enfiefment**.

³³Some scholars date the end of Spring and Autumn (and the beginning of Warring States) as late as 0403, a fact which causes needless but now unavoidable confusion.

³⁴Contrast the merely cultural “Hellenism” of the Greek states; see Finley **Greeks**. For several acephalous situations of different origin, see Reynolds **Europe** 221f.

Chín occupied the old Jōu homeland, with Jōu itself displaced to its eastern capital in the middle Yellow River area. The most powerful Spring and Autumn states were Jìn in the center, Chí in the east (Confucius' Lǚ, a second-rank state, was on the other side of the Tàì-shān mountains), and non-Sinitic Chǔ (in early Spring and Autumn, called Jīng) in the south.



Rulership was hereditary.³⁵ Sacrifices to the ruler's ancestors were thought to secure protection for the state, but only a descendant could offer them. Succession disputes thus centered around sons or brothers of the ruler. When Chí Hwán-gūng³⁶ died in 0643, two of his sons contended for the succession, one with military support from Sùng, and another backed by Lǚ. The Sùng force defeated a Chí force acting for the candidate who was supported by Lǚ. A rescue operation by Lǚ failed to dislodge the Sùng candidate, who did become the next ruler; he was posthumously known as Chí Syàu-gūng. This led to a certain diplomatic coolness between Chí under Syàu-gūng and Lǚ.

The State was personal; there was no major function that the ruler did not himself perform. Military and diplomatic tasks might be delegated, but only to a kinsman or a noble, and only for the duration of that campaign or mission. There were few named functions and no permanent delegation of responsibility, such as had existed in Shāng and Jōu. Sùng (the successor to Shāng) and the Jōu domain alone preserved such official titles, inherited from earlier times.

³⁵And in the male line. The female rulers who took their states with them when they married, thus complicating European history, have no counterpart in classical China.

³⁶Ruler titles in descending order are gūng 公 "Prince," hóu 侯 "Lord," bwó 伯 "Elder," dǎ 子 "Master," and nán 男 "Leader." A general term is jywñ 君 "ruler."

Examples are dzǎi 宰 “steward,” attested for Jōu in 0722, 0708, 0651, and 0630 (when he served as a diplomat), and in Sùng, s̄z-ch́ng 司城 (which is found in Shāng bone inscriptions) and s̄z-mǎ 司馬 (found also in Jōu bronze inscriptions). The Lǚ chronicler probably learned these titles from diplomatic contacts, and the rest of the official structures of Jōu and Sùng are hidden from us. In Lǚ, where our information is fuller, no permanently delegated functions are mentioned, though some are likely. The chronicle keeper himself, who also looked after the calendar, was probably one, though naturally his title is not given in the chronicle itself; later ages called it shǐ 史 “astrologer.”³⁷

One functional title which does appear in the second half of Spring and Autumn is diplomatic in nature: the sýng-ŕn 行人, literally “journeyman,” which we will translate as “envoy.” It first appears in the Lǚ chronicle in 0562 (an envoy from J̀ng, seized by Chǔ); then in 0555 (from Wèi, seized by Jìn), 0534 (from Ch́n, seized and killed by Chǔ), 0504 (from Sùng, seized by Jìn), and 0503 (from Wèi, seized by Ch́, which then went on to invade Wèi). Envoys from Lǚ, who are named but not called sýng-ŕn, were seized in 0575 (by Jìn) and 0529 (again by Jìn). Finally in 0519 we have the function title:

1:4 (CC 10/23:3, 0519). A man of Jìn 晉人 seized *our* envoy Shúsūn Shǜ.

It seems the term sýng-ŕn was first used in Lǚ between 0529 and 0519, or a generation after Lǚ records its use by other states. A named function need not imply that the function was permanently delegated. It seems that Sùng and the Jōu remnant (the former Jōu and Shāng dynasties) were *residually* bureaucratic, and the others were at most, and only toward the end of Spring and Autumn, *incipiently* bureaucratic, with Lǚ lagging behind the rest.

Social Structure. A son of a ruler who did not succeed that ruler could form a collateral lineage, and such lineages could become powerful. The classic case is the Three Hwán Clans, founded by sons of Lǚ Hwán-gūng, and from their birth order called J̀ngsūn 仲孫 or “Second,” Shúsūn 叔孫 “Younger,” and Jísūn 季孫 “Youngest.” They were given land in strategic locations on the borders, and later fortified them, becoming almost rival states within Lǚ. They came to exercise most military and diplomatic functions; the great drama of Lǚ politics in the 06th century was the effort to reclaim power from the Three Clans. A failed attempt of this kind probably led to Jāu-gūng’s exile in 0517. These challenges apart, the doings of the ruler and his family bulk less large in the late Lǚ chronicle than previously. The initial reluctance of the keepers of the Lǚ chronicle to record names of non-noble persons from other states (they appear in the record as 晉人 “a man [an officer] of Jìn,” as in the above entry) gradually waned, and non-noble persons were increasingly mentioned by name.

³⁷The sense “historian” arose only in the 04c. Astrologers did keep *omen* records, and the Chūn/Chyōu chronicle itself may be seen as a developed form of omen record.

The Supernatural. Much space in the Lǚ chronicle is given to things about which supernatural guidance might have been sought. As in Shāng times, these included sacrifices and intended military campaigns, but now also meetings, which might end with a covenant solemnized by an oath. As in Shāng, supernatural displeasure was thought to be indicated by uncanny occurrences, including eclipses, which are presumably recorded in the CC for that reason. Eclipses, and natural disasters such as floods, received in Lǚ what we can only call a primitive response:

1:5 (CC 3/25:3, 0669). 6th month, day #8, new moon. Sun had something eating it.³⁸ Drummed and made sacrifices at the altar of the soil.

1:6 (CC 3/25:5, 0669). Autumn. Great floods. Drummed and made sacrifices at the altar of the soil and at the gates.

1:7 (CC 3/30:5, 0664). 8th month, day #20, new moon. Sun had something eating it. Drummed and made sacrifices at the altar of the soil.

1:8 (CC 6/15:5, 0612). 6th month, day #38, new moon. Sun had something eating it. Drummed and made sacrifices at the altar of the soil.

The drumming and the sacrifices were evidently meant to ward off disasters, or further disasters, which might otherwise follow. Weird events such as birds flying backward or nesting out of season were also considered to be ominous. The omens recorded in the Chūn/Chyōu are indeed often followed by disasters: the birds flying backward (in 0644) by deaths in the Lǚ ruler's family; the birds nesting unseasonably by the exile of the Lǚ ruler Jāu-gūng (in 0517). Jāu-gūng found his "nest" not in his own capital, but far away on the border with Chí.

These state superstitions are much like those recorded by Shāng diviners; they are still recognizable in the duties of the Hàn "Grand Astrologer."³⁹ They amounted to a cult of appeasement, centering on the ruler's ancestors, and having no points of contact with the beliefs of the people (which centered on tutelary deities of the field, or the gods of the gate and house). Nor did the ancestral observances of the elite have points in common *with each other*: ancestors are specific to a lineage, and only a member of that lineage could sacrifice to them.⁴⁰ The many supernatural observances in early China were thus not a common religion. They tended to divide, and not to unite. Only in the late 04c was a more inclusive ground of belief discovered. Its basis was no supernatural entity, but Sinitic culture, and the state as embodying that culture. The religion of China, when it finally emerged, was precisely China.

³⁸ 日有食之. This conventional idiom is usually and correctly translated as "the sun was eclipsed," but in these cases, the literal sense of being "eaten" is relevant.

³⁹ The Hàn title is Tàì-shǐ 太史. For Shāng, see Keightley *Landscape* 118f.

⁴⁰ Whereas any Greek visiting the oracle at Delphi (and even some non-Greeks, such as Gyges of Lydia or Midas of Phrygia) could and did sacrifice or dedicate to Apollo, and this fact was openly acknowledged as a source of Greek cultural unity.

War was waged by an elite chariot force, which in the chronicle is called shī 師, “the host.” The force available to the strongest states was about 600 chariots at the beginning of the period, and about 1000 chariots by the end.⁴¹ The warriors themselves hoped to win personal honor in battle,⁴² but there were few battles: most military actions were unopposed raids. They were ordered by the ruler not for military glory, but for political advantage. This cost-accounting view of war included a concern to minimize casualties (the replacement rate for hereditary warriors was slow) and to maximize gains, whether territorial or political. Concern for tactical frugality led to an emphasis on rapid movement: striking before the other side had time to call together a defensive force.

Much that is otherwise puzzling about Spring and Autumn warfare is explained by the small size of the forces. When dispersed, the warriors on their landholdings were self-supporting, and gave some local protection. At need, they could be assembled into a strike force. That potential force honed its skills in musters and group hunts, which are recorded in the CC in 0706 and (under a different name) in 0534, 0531, 0520, 0497, and 0496. Once it was assembled, the host could move rapidly because of its small size; its forage needs were readily met by local gathering, and the force could travel light.⁴³

Even a small force entering another state’s territory had local superiority until the invaded state could assemble a counterforce. Small states in this way could sometimes make territorial gains at the expense of larger neighbors. But once a force had left on campaign, the home state was largely unprotected; there was no second army. The ways to relieve a besieged city were thus two: attack the besiegers or threaten their home state, thus forcing their withdrawal. Both these methods were used throughout the period.

Láng. Some Lǚ rulers were pretty good at their primary job of leading the host. In 0714, Lǚ had walled Láng 郎, a town within the Sùng zone of interest. In 0684, forces from Chí and Sùng camped at Láng. But before they could combine for an attack, Jwāng-gūng, commanding the Lǚ force, attacked and defeated the Chí force, the more dangerous of the two, at Shvng-chyōu, just north of Láng. There were no further challenges to the Lǚ occupation of Láng.

Enemies. The Sinitic states had each other as their primary enemies. There were also the non-Sinitic states and tribes. The smaller ones were gradually eliminated; the larger ones like Chǔ (or their ruling elites) were culturally assimilated. By the end of Spring and Autumn, it was thus possible to envision the world as a Sinitic center surrounded by a hostile non-Sinitic periphery. This is how things were seen in Warring States times, and for long afterward.

⁴¹For the argument, which is indirect, see Brooks **Numbers**.

⁴²For the warrior psychology see Brooks **Defeat**.

⁴³See further Brooks **Capacity**.

The Economy remained agricultural. There is no hint in the court chronicle of any interest in trade. The Lǚ court was concerned for the harvest and for threats to the harvest, such as locusts and droughts. Forest was steadily cleared for cultivation. Yield was increased by planting two crops a year in the same field (first implied in an entry of 0687) and by introducing new and efficient crops such as the soybean (first mentioned in 0505).

The basic wealth of the Spring and Autumn states was thus in grain, and grain was stored by the state as a hedge against famine. On two occasions, grain was transferred between states for famine relief:

1:9 (CC 3/28:5, 0666). Great lack of wheat and grain. Dzāngsūn Chǔn asked permission to buy (dí 糶) from Chí.

1:10 (CC 11/5:2, 0505). Summer. Sent (gwēi 歸) millet to Tsà.

These interstate transactions show that states had considerable storage capacity, as well as substantial transport capacity, for food supplies.

Law. There was no organization above the state, save the weak Jōu Kings. There were no law codes. No judicial functions were exercised by the states, save for a ruler's imposing the traditional punishments. Those of high rank were not exempt from punishment; rather, they were especially vulnerable. Here are two examples. In 0632, Lǚ was supporting a pro-Chǔ faction in Wè:

1:11 (CC 5/28:1-2, 0632).

- 28th year, spring: The Lord of Jìn made an incursion into Tsáu. The Lord of Jìn attacked Wèi.

- Gūngdǔ Mǎi 買 was to guard Wèi. He did not in the end succeed in guarding it 不卒戍. Executed him 刺之.

Mǎi was a son of Jwāng-gūng, and thus a brother of the current Lǚ ruler. That intimate relationship did not save him when it came to military responsibility.

Later that year, Chǔ killed the general who lost the battle of Chǔng-pú:

1:12 (CC 5/28:5-6, 0632).

- Summer, 4th month, day jǐ/sǜ (#6). The Lord of Jìn and the armies of Chí, Sùng, and Chín fought with a man of Chǔ at Chǔng-pú. The host of Chǔ was defeated.

- Chǔ killed its senior officer Dǔ-chǔn.⁴⁴

The Locus of Guilt. In the second entry, it is “Chǔ” that kills the failed army leader. Sometimes the head of state is said to act personally:

1:13 (CC 9/26:6, 0547). Autumn. The Prince of Sùng killed his heir Dzwó.

⁴⁴The “man” leading the army in the previous entry is this same Chǔ noble Dǔ-chǔn, whose noble status did not protect him.

Later lore has it that the heir was plotting to kill his father. As a mere intention, this was personal: there had been no crime *against the state*. But the damage done by the unsuccessful Chǔ military leader *was* to the state, and the state is recorded as killing him. It seems that these CC entries are reflecting a perceived difference in the nature of the offense. That difference suggests that there were moments when the ruler was not *entirely* identical with the state.⁴⁵

If death was the penalty for defeat in battle, what happened if the *ruler* led the defeated host? The answer is: Nothing. CC entries for such defeats are in the passive voice, thus, grammatically, the leader did not need to be named.⁴⁶ No ruler was ever put to death after leading an unsuccessful military campaign. But for the failures of other high persons, military tradition prescribed death.

Methodological Moment. Consider *dào* 盜 (usually “robber”) in the CC:

1:14 (CC 11/8:16, 0502). A robber 盜 stole the precious jade and the great bow.

1:15 (CC 11/9:3, 0501). Recovered the precious jade and the great bow.

The miscreant was undoubtedly known to the court. He is called a robber, which in this case seems accurate. But other CC entries using that word . . .

1:16 (CC 9/10:8, 0563). Winter. A *dào* killed Gūngdǔ Fēi, Gūngdǔ Fā, and Gūngsūn Chì of Chǔn.

1:17 (CC 10/20:3, 0522). Autumn. A *dào* killed Jí, the elder brother of the Lord of Wèi.

1:18 (CC 12/4:1, 0491). 4th Year, Spring, 2nd month, day #47. A *dào* killed Shǔn, the Lord of Tsài.

1:19 (CC 12/13:11, 0482). A *dào* killed Syà Kōu-fǔ of Chǔn.

. . . imply not robbery, but political assassination. Then probably the person who took the Lǔ state regalia in #**1:14** was also involved in a plot concerning the rulership of Lǔ. The translation “robber,” which is normal in other contexts, does not fit here. The sense of the term in CC is something nearer to “thug.”

Dào in the CC is a descriptor replacing a personal name. It occurs only in the last four reigns covered by the CC. This is also the range of the functional term *syíng-rín* 行人 “envoy” in the CC. Together, they suggest a trend toward functional terminology: names for government tasks or government problems.

In such details, the tendency of ancient thinking can sometimes be detected.

⁴⁵For other intricacies of Spring and Autumn word usage as reflected in the Lǔ chronicle, see Defoort **Words** and Brooks **Distancing**.

⁴⁶See Brooks **Defeat**.

Law Between States did not exist.⁴⁷ Obligations between rulers were in the form of covenants (mǐng 盟), solemnized by oaths and typically about joint military action. Longer term agreements were personal. They might be renewed at the death of one party, but no agreement obligated the state. And no authority *above* the state, save the gods if any, existed to punish violations of covenant.

We now take up the two most famous Spring and Autumn rulers, who had key roles in northern resistance to the threat of southern and non-Sinitic Chǔ. The beginning and the end of that threat together define the middle period of Spring and Autumn history.

CHI HWAN-GUNG

Chí Hwán-gūng 齊桓公 (r 0684-0643) was the first Spring and Autumn ruler to exercise leadership among the northern states, in response to the aggressions of Jīng 荆 (later called Chǔ 楚), the non-Sinitic state in the south. The chief focus of contention was Jǐng 鄭, located near the Jōu domain. South of Jǐng was Chǔ, with level land, suitable for chariots, between them.



Chǔ moved first against Tsài; it defeated Tsài in 0684 and carried the Tsài ruler back to Chǔ.⁴⁸ Chǔ again took its forces into the capital of Tsài in 0680. The right flank of Chǔ was now presumably secured for an advance on Jǐng.

⁴⁷The League of Nations was founded in part on misconceptions about the system of the Spring and Autumn states; it failed (Brooks **Hegemon**). For actual interstate relations in an ancient Near Eastern multi-state system, see Westbrook **International**.

⁴⁸CC 3/10:5. This is the first mention of Jīng (later called Chǔ) in the CC.

The Túng-Mǐng 同盟. Jǐng had invaded Sùng in the autumn of 0679. In response, Chí and Wèi joined Sùng in attacking Jǐng in summer 0678. Then:

1:20 (CC 3/16:2-4, 0678).

- Summer. A man of Sùng, a man of Chí, and a man of Wèi attacked Jǐng.
- Autumn. Jīng attacked Jǐng.
- Winter, 12th month. Met with the Lord of Chí, the Prince of Sùng, the Lord of Chǎn, the Lord of Wèi, the Elder of Jǐng, the Leader of Syǎ, the Elder of Hwá, and the Master of Tǐng. Made a joint covenant at Yōu.

The commentaries are at a loss to say how a túng-mǐng 同盟 “joint covenant” differs from a regular mǐng 盟 “covenant.” The map suggests that it was a mutual security agreement, expressing concern by the states east of Jǐng (including Chǎn, north of recently violated Tsài) about Chǔ. The túng-mǐng thus marked a new diplomatic initiative.⁴⁹ It had no immediate deterrent effect:

1:21 (CC 3/17:1, 0677). Spring. A man of Chí seized Jǎn of Jǐng.

Jǎn was presumably a pro-Chǔ officer of Jǐng. He presently escaped from Chí, and in 0676 came as a refugee to Lǔ. There is no record of any response by Chí. It turns out that Chí and Lǔ had a more important matter before them. This was:

The Extermination of the Rúng. Rúng 戎 or “Braves” is the Chūn/Chyōu term for the non-Sinitic peoples of the east. Lǔ, the fief of Jōu-gūng, had originally been close to the Jōu eastern capital, but was relocated east of Sùng to outflank any rebellions of the Shāng people who had been settled there. This was non-Sinitic territory, and resistance to Sinitic overlordship continued in Spring and Autumn. Yǐn-gūng (r 0722-0712), the first Lǔ ruler covered by the chronicle, had treated the Rúng peaceably, even ignoring the awkward incident of their capturing a Jōu envoy on his return from a visit to Lǔ.⁵⁰

1:22 (CC 1/2:1, 0721). 2nd year, spring. The Prince met with the Rúng at Chyén.

1:23 (CC 1/2:4, 0721). Autumn, 8th month, day #17. The Prince and the Rúng covenanted at Táng.

1:24 (CC 1/7:6-7, 0716).

- Winter. The Heavenly King⁵¹ sent the Lord of Fán on a friendly visit.
- The Rúng attacked the Lord of Fán at Chǔ-chyōu and took him back.

⁴⁹For the details of what is briefly summarized below, see Brooks **League**.

⁵⁰Since the envoy had completed his mission to Lǔ, the abduction may have been regarded as an offense against Jōu, rather than a breach of the peace with Lǔ.

⁵¹Tyēn-wáng 天王 “King under the authority of Heaven” is the standard CC phrase. Tyēn-dǐ 天子 “the Son of Heaven” is found on Jōu bronzes, and in the later theoretical literature, but except for what look like two later scribal slips, not in the CC.

Whether the Lord was killed or later released, the record does not tell us. Either way, the incident must have been something of an embarrassment to Lǚ.

Lǚ Hwán-gūng (r 0711-0694), who often traveled to other states to defuse tensions, went to Rúng territory in his second year to renew the covenant:

1:25 (CC 2/2:8-9, 0710).

- The Prince and the Rúng covenanted at Táng.
- Winter. The Prince returned from Táng.

Peace with the Rúng thus held during these first two reigns.

Twenty years passed quietly under Jwāng-gūng (r 0693-0654), and now we have reached the year 0676, when the Chí prisoner found refuge in Lǚ. It was in this year that Lǚ and Chí adopted an extermination policy against the Rúng:

1:26 (CC 3/18:2, 0676). Summer. The Prince pursued the Rúng as far as west of the Jì River.⁵²

1:27 (CC 3/20:4, 0674). Winter. An officer of Chí attacked the Rúng.

Unlike Chǔ, the Rúng had not adopted the Sinitic state or the Sinitic style of chariot warfare. They were thus doomed to extinction by the Sinitic states.

In spring 0671, an envoy came from Jīng (still officially so called) to Lǚ on a mission of friendly inquiry. So did envoys from several small states. All the while, Chí and Lǚ continued to exchange ceremonial visits. No further actions were taken by either against the Rúng. Then, in 0670, the ruler of Tsáu died, and the Rúng began to interfere in the resulting succession struggle:

1:28 (CC 3/24:2, 0670). [Spring]. Buried Jwāng-gūng of Tsáu.

1:29 (CC 3/24:8-10, 0670).

- Winter. The Rúng made an incursion into Tsáu.
- Jì 羈 of Tsáu left that state and fled to Chǎn.
- Chè 赤 returned to Tsáu.

It seems that the intended heir of Tsáu fled under pressure from the Rúng, and that another son, Chè, sponsored by the Rúng, became the next ruler of Tsáu.

1:30 (CC 3/26:1-3, 0668).

- 26th year, spring. The Prince attacked the Rúng.
- Summer. The Prince returned from attacking the Rúng.
- Tsáu killed one of their nobles.

So the situation in Tsáu was resolved by an internal execution, possibly under pressure from Lǚ, of the ruler who had earlier been sponsored by the Rúng.⁵³

⁵²The Jì 濟 River, part of which separated Lǚ and Chí 齊, also ran through Tsáu.

⁵³The name of the next Tsáu ruler which we know from the CC was not Jì, or Chè, but Bān 班 (CC 5/7:5, 0653). Tsáu ruler names and dates in such later lists as Shǐ Jì (SJ) 14 and 35 diverge from this CC evidence, and thus are probably defective.

In 0667, many of the previous túng-m'vng signatories, as though sensing a revival of the threat from Chǔ, renewed their mutual security covenant:

1:31 (CC 3/27:2, 0667). Summer, 6th month. The Prince met with the Lord of Chí, the Prince of Sùng, the Lord of Ch'v'n, and the ruler of J'vng. Made a joint covenant 同盟 at Y'ou.

Late that winter, the rulers of Chí and Lǔ met at Ch'vng-p'ú, a place in W'èi which 35 years later would be the site of an epochal battle. This was to put pressure on W'èi, which had joined in the previous covenant, but not in this one. Next spring, Chí applied more direct pressure by making an incursion into W'èi. A battle resulted, and the W'èi force suffered a defeat. And sure enough, Chǔ resumed its incursions into the north that autumn, at its preferred location:

1:32 (CC 3/28:3-4, 0666).

- Autumn. J'ing attacked J'vng.
- The Prince met with a man of Chí and a man of Sùng. Went to the relief of J'vng.

The attention of Chí and Lǔ now turned again to the R'ung. The only R'ung left in the east lived either in the T'ài-sh'ān, the mountains between Chí and Lǔ, or at a location further north. The northern R'ung were exclusively a Chí concern, but Lǔ cared about the T'ài-sh'ān, and a prior understanding was needed. It was reached at a meeting on neutral territory: a river lying between Chí and Lǔ:

1:33 (CC 3/30:6-7, 0664).

- Winter. The Prince and the Lord of Chí met on the Lǔ side of the Jì.
- An officer of Chí attacked the mountain R'ung.

1:34 (CC 3/31:4, 0663). 6th month. The Lord of Chí came to present spoils from the R'ung.

Lǔ Jw'āng-g'ung died in 0662. Chí covenanted with his successor, M'ín-g'ung, who came to the throne aged eight, and died in his second year of reign, 0660. The first year of the new Prince, Sy'ī-g'ung, was marked by another Chǔ attack on J'vng.⁵⁴ Sy'ī-g'ung met with Chí, Sùng, J'vng, Ts'áu, and Jū the next month, but no covenant resulted; it seems that interest in this form of security measure had lapsed. In fact, there would be no túng-m'vng covenants during the rest of Chí Hw'án-g'ung's reign. Chǔ aggression continued, but other methods were used to counter it. The first one to be tried was a joint military demonstration.

The Incursion Into Chǔ was Chí Hw'án-g'ung's masterpiece. In the autumn of 0657, Chí and Sùng met with representatives from two states on the Chǔ border, Jy'āng 江 and Hw'áng 黃, which had complained of Chǔ aggression. Nothing was done. That winter, Chǔ again attacked J'vng, penetrating yet again into what the northern states considered to be their territory.

⁵⁴It is from this point on that the CC chronicle uses the name Chǔ.

This brought things to a head, and produced the following response:

1:35 (CC 5/4:1-3, 0656).

- 4th year, spring, the Royal 1st month. The Prince met with the Lord of Chí, the Prince of Sùng, the Lord of Chín, the Lord of Wèi, the Elder of Jvng, the Leader of Syw, and the Elder of Tsáu, and made an incursion into Tsài. The Tsài [forces] having dispersed, they proceeded to attack Chũ, halting at Syíng.
- Summer. Syīn-chín, the Leader of Syw, died.
- Chyw Wán of Chũ came to make a covenant amid the host; a covenant was made at Shàu-ling.

Chũ had perhaps the largest army of the period, and with that army it had attacked Jvng without a need for allies. No one northern state was strong enough to retaliate. What Chí Hwán-gūng had done, on this one occasion, was to assemble a large enough force to confront Chũ in its homeland.

The covenant made in 0656 did not hold for long. In 0655, Chũ conquered and absorbed Syén 莜, a tiny Chũ border state; its ruler fled to the larger border state Hwáng 黃. Syw 許, one of the 0656 allies, was besieged by Chũ in 0654. Chí and several other states abandoned an attack on Jvng to raise that siege.

Chí and others now tried a new approach to the problem of Chũ and Jvng:

1:36 (CC 5/9:2, 0651). Summer. The Prince met with the [Royal] Steward Prince of Jōu, the Lord of Chí, the Master of Sùng, the Lord of Wèi, the Elder of Jvng, the Leader of Syw, and the Elder of Tsáu at Kwéi-chyōu.

1:37 (CC 5/9:4, 0651). Ninth month, day #5. The several Lords made a covenant at Kwéi-chyōu.

These comprised the major eastern states, in the presence of a delegate from the King. For the rest of Chí Hwán-gūng's life, Chũ confined its attacks to states adjoining it. Those which had taken part in the 0651 covenant were left alone.

In that relative lull, the matter of the Rúng was once again taken in hand:

1:38 (CC 5/10:4, 0650). Summer. The Lord of Chí and the Leader of Syw attacked the Northern Rúng.

Thus vanished from history the Rúng peoples of the eastern Sinitic world.⁵⁵

Hwán-gūng died in 0643. He was a strong leader. His "joint covenant" idea, though soon dropped, had articulated the concept of a larger northern unity. His intimidation campaign into Chũ, made possible by putting together a sufficient multi-state force, did not have lasting consequences, but it showed the value of collaboration. His inclusion of royal authority in the covenant of 0651 showed what might be done with militarily weak but still ceremonially powerful Jōu. All this was good. It was presently to be done better by Jìn Wvng-gūng.

⁵⁵For the fate of other branches of the Rúng peoples, see below, #1:43-46.

Methodological Moment. It was later thought that Gwǎn Jùng 管仲, a supposed merchant, had reorganized Chí to support a mass infantry army, making it stronger than other states, and that Jōu had recognized Hwán-gūng as a Hegemon: the enforcer of order among the states. Can we test this claim?

We might reflect: If Chí had such military superiority, it could act alone in some military matters, and dominate weaker states. But the facts do not match. In Hwán-gūng's reign, Chí used allies in 18 out of 27 military actions (67%). And its 9 independent actions were trifling: 3 statelets extinguished; 3 attacks on the Rúng; 1 relief of Syíng when attacked by the Dí 狄 people; 1 incident where Chí officers in occupied Swèi were killed by the populace; 1 victory in battle against middling Wèi. This is not the record of a great military power.

And if Hwán-gūng *had* made Chí a great power, the effect should have survived him, giving Chí a permanent edge over its neighbors. So again we ask: Was Chí after Hwán-gūng consistently superior to those neighbors? Again, no. Chí 6 times unsuccessfully attacked small Jyǔ, and 18 times unsuccessfully attacked middling Lǔ. If this is strength, what would weakness look like?

Here is one year's Lǔ record, from ten years after Chí Hwán-gūng's death:

1:39 (CC 5/26:1-8, 0634).

- 26th year, spring, the Royal first month, day #56. The Prince met with the Master of Jyǔ and Níng Sù of Wèi. Covenanted at Syàng.
- A man of Chí made an incursion into our western border. The Prince pursued the Chí host as far as Syī, but could not overtake it.
- Summer. A man of Chí attacked our northern border.
- A man of Wèi attacked Chí.
- Gūngdǔ Swèi went to Chǔ to beg a host.
- Autumn. A man of Chǔ extinguished Kwéi and took the Master of Kwéi back with him.
- Winter. A man of Chǔ attacked Sùng and besieged Mín.
- The Prince, in command of a Chǔ host, attacked Chí and took Gǔ.
- The Prince returned from the attack on Chí.

Whether with his own host or one borrowed from an ally, the Prince of Lǔ here proves to be more than a match for Chí. This is the long answer to our original question. The short answer is to ask: If Chí *had* carried out a comprehensive restructuring, giving it a strong state and an infantry army in the mid 07c, why did the Chí statecraft and military experts of the 05c and 04c (as we shall see) go to the trouble of inventing these things all over again?

Conclusion: We have here a clear example of the Warring States tendency to project new developments back into earlier times, and, still more important, to give a new interpretation to what was still remembered of earlier events.



JIN WVN-GUNG

Jìn Wǎn-gūng 晉文公 (r 0635-0628) was the other great hero of Spring and Autumn. His years of wandering in exile before finally gaining the throne of Jìn would later generate legends. As with Chí Hwán-gūng, his great exploit was achieved against Chǔ, but this time on northern ground, when a Chǔ incursion set up a battle which the north, by sufficient exertions, could actually win.

We have already read several CC entries from 0632. Here are several more. It seems that the conflict centered around rival ruling factions in Wèi:

1:40 (CC 5/28:1-6, 0632).

- 28th year, spring. The Lord of Jìn invaded Tsáu. The Lord of Jìn invaded Wèi. Gūngdǐ Mǎi was to guard Wèi. He did not in the end succeed in guarding it. Executed him.
- A man of Chǔ came to the rescue of Wèi.
- 3rd month, day #43. The Lord of Jìn entered Tsáu, seized the Elder of Tsáu, and gave him to a man of Sùng.
- Summer, 4th month, day #6. The Lord of Jìn, the host of Chí, the host of Sùng, and the host of Chín fought with a man of Chǔ at Chǎng-pú. The Chǔ host was disgracefully defeated.
- Chǔ killed its noble Dǐ-chǎn.
- The Lord of Wèi left and fled to Chǔ.

Chǎng-pú. The northern states were individually inferior to Chǔ, whose force probably numbered about 600 chariots. But between the arrival of Chǔ (2nd month) and the battle (4th month), Jìn had brought a force from Chín to join with Chí and Sùng, making perhaps 700 chariots. (Lǚ was on the other side; an ally of Chǔ). Chǔ's defeat was decisive.⁵⁶ The Chǔ leader, Dǐ-chǎn, was executed on his return. Chǔ made no further military effort for eight years, and then only against the small border state Hwáng. It took time to rebuild a shattered army from the resources available under the elite-warrior system.

Jìn, as the coordinator of victory, was now the major power in the north, and Wǎn-gūng moved at once to secure general assent to that situation:

1:41 (CC 5/28:8-10, 0632).

- 5th month, day #50. The Prince met with the Lord of Jìn, the Lord of Chí, the Prince of Sùng, the Lord of Tsài, the Elder of Jǐng, the Master of Wèi, and the Master of Jyǔ. Covenanted at Jyèn-tǔ.
- The Lord of Chǎn went to the meeting.
- The Prince paid court at the place where the King was.
- 6th month. Jǐng, the Lord of Wèi, returned to his state from Chǔ. Ywǎn Sywǎn of Wèi left and fled to Jìn.

⁵⁶The graves of many Chǔ soldiers have been found; see Brooks **Numbers**.

The King is in the vicinity. The Prince of Lǚ visits him separately. At the big meeting, Wǎn-gūng is the chief figure; one senses that the King's presence has been compelled by Jìn, to validate Wǎn-gūng as Hegemon of the North. Meanwhile, the Chǔ candidate for the Wèi rulership had returned to Wèi.

1:42 (CC 5/28:15-18, 0632).

- Winter. The Prince met with the Lord of Jìn, the Lord of Chí, the Prince of Sùng, the Lord of Tsài, the Elder of Jǐng, the Master of Chǐn, the Master of Jyǔ, the Master of Jū, and a man of Chín, at Wǎn.
- The Heavenly King held a hunt at Hǔ-yáng.
- Day #9. The Prince paid court at where the King was.
- A man of Jìn seized the Lord of Wèi, and took him to the capital. Ywǎn Sywǎn of Wèi returned from Jìn to Wèi.

The last charade. A meeting is held without the King. The King holds a public occasion, but the Prince of Lǚ visits him separately, on a different day. The Lord of Jìn proceeds to act as the enforcer of order by taking the Chǔ candidate from Wèi and delivering him to the King, as though for punishment. The Jìn candidate is installed in Wèi.⁵⁷ Behind the phony stage manipulations, the domination of Jìn is clear. It marked a new era in Spring and Autumn history.

Yáu. Wǎn-gūng's last years saw several attacks by northern tribes on Wèi, which moved its capital in 0629. Wǎn-gūng died in 0627. His death changed the strategic picture, and Chín promptly crossed Jìn territory to attack Jǐng. With the aid of Rúng allies, Jìn defeated the Chín army on its way back home:

1:43 (CC 5/33:1, 3-4, 0627).

- 33rd year, spring, the Royal 2nd month. A Chín force entered Hwá.
- Summer, 4th month, day #18. A man of Jìn with the Jyāng Rúng defeated Chín at Yáu.
- Day #30. Buried Wǎn-gūng of Jìn.

Jìn had always been on good terms with the Rúng. During his wanderings, Wǎn-gūng had been sheltered by the Rúng,⁵⁸ who gave wives to him and his chief follower, and the Rúng had remained allies of Jìn during his reign.⁵⁹

The next two rulers of Jìn were Syāng-gūng (r 0627-0621) and Líng-gūng (r 0620-0607), who came to the throne as a minor. Líng-gūng's reign began violently. In 0618, Chǔ attacked Jǐng. In 0617, Chín entered Jìn territory. There were further attacks by Chǔ, and in 0615, a battle between Chín and Jìn forces. The situation was perilous for Jìn, powerful though it still was.

⁵⁷We will take up the orthodox interpretation of this "hegemony" in Chapter 4.

⁵⁸In the Dzwǒ Jwǎn called the Dí 狄, just as all eastern peoples are called Yí 夷. This "Four Direction" ethnographic schematism belongs to a later time.

⁵⁹For an imagined episode from this Jìn/Rúng military relationship, see #6:20.

Again the Túng-Mǐng. At this time, Chí Hwán-gūng's idea of a security agreement, the túng-mǐng 同盟, was revived, but at first for narrow purposes. An officer of Jìn, Jàu Dùn, acting for the Jìn ruler (who was still a minor), presided over a covenant in 0613 which included neither Chín nor Chí, and had in view a Jìn interest in interfering with the succession in Jū 邾. The next two túng-mǐng were similarly local in scope; any implied "solidarity" was simply an acceptance of Jìn interest by the small states near it. Only in 0586, as a response to Chǔ pressure on Jǐng, did the túng-mǐng covenants resume a collective security function. Nine such covenants were made in the next two decades. Attacks were not made on Chǔ itself, but on states like Jǐng or Chǔn, which had been compelled by Chǔ pressure to *switch allegiance* to Chǔ.⁶⁰

The End of the Rúng. The central and western Rúng came under attack at the end of the 07th century. The last mentions of the Rúng in the CC are:

1:44 (CC 7/3:3, 0606). The Master of Chǔ attacked the Lù-hún Rúng.

1:45 (CC 8/1:6, 0590). Autumn. The Royal host was disgracefully defeated by the Máu Rúng.

1:46 (CC 10/17:4, 0525). 8th month. Sywǎn Wú of Jìn led a host and exterminated the Lù-hún Rúng.

And with their extermination, Sinicization moved forward one more step.

Wú 吳. The end of Chǔ aggression came not from any northern action (a túng-mǐng covenant in 0548 was not followed up militarily), but from the east. The non-Sinitic coastal power Wú, which had first appeared in the CC in 0584, was attacked by Chǔ as early as 0570. The ruler of Chǔ led another attack on Wú in 0549. In 0548, the ruler of Wú died in attacking the gate of Cháu, a town on the Wú/Chǔ border. This required a response from Chǔ, and in 0546 Chǔ met with northern Jìn, Chí, Lǚ, Jǐng, Wèi, and Tsáu, plus border states Sywǎ, Chǔn, and Tsài. A covenant, in effect a peace treaty, followed. This event marks another great division in Spring and Autumn history. The axis of conflict had shifted from north/south to east/west.⁶¹

Such was the large geostrategy of the times. But there are other dimensions. What was life like for a typical aspiring late Spring and Autumn warrior?

Confucius' Father, whose name was Hǐ 紇, was born in the 6th month of 0592.⁶² His grandfather, Kǔng Fáng-shú of Sùng, had offended the Sùng noble Hwà Ywǎn and fled to Lǚ in 0607. But Hwà Ywǎn remained influential in Sùng, and perhaps for that reason, the Kǔngs did not greatly prosper in Lǚ.

⁶⁰For details on this series of covenants, see Brooks **League**.

⁶¹Chǔ was right to recognize a serious new antagonist. In 0506, Wú defeated a Chǔ land force, and went on to enter Yǐng, the capital of Chǔ.

⁶²For the reconstruction of this and associated dates, see Brooks **Analects** 263-268.

Hý, the grandson, took the drastic step of abandoning the surname Kǔng,⁶³ moving to Dzōu 鄒, south of the capital, and seeking his separate fortune as a nonlanded warrior in the service of Lǔ. His chance came in 0563, in this way:

1:47 (CC 9/10:1-2, 0563).

- 10th year, spring. The Prince joined the Lord of Jìn, the Prince of Sùng, the Lord of Wèi, the Elder of Tsáu, the Master of Jyǔ, the Master of Jū, the Master of Tǔng, the Elder of Sywē, the Elder of Chǐ 杞, the Master of Little Jū, and Gwāng, the Heir Apparent of Chí, in meeting with Wú at Jā.

- Summer, 5th month, day #31. Went on to extinguish Bī-yáng.⁶⁴

Between these two entries, much has obviously taken place, which it is not the purpose of the CC to record. A later text . . .

Dzwo Jwàn 左傳 (DJ). A commentary on the Chūn/Chyōu, written during the 04c (see Brooks **Heaven**). At first it focused on ritual; later layers propose several different theories of morality and government. Attributing DJ stories not to the 04c, but to the period they purport to describe, is a major source of modern confusion. Translated by Legge.

. . . fills in the story with what, in this case, is probably Kǔng family tradition.

One contingent of the allied forces was led by a noble of the Mǔngsūn clan. Serving under him were Chín Jǐn-fǔ, probably of exile stock as the clan name “Chín” implies, and “Hý of Dzōu,” who as we know was also of exile stock.

The direct attack on the city walls having failed, a ruse was attempted:

1:48 (DJ 9/10:2, excerpts, c0355). Chín Jǐn-fǔ, in the service of the Mǔng family, hauled up a heavy cart as though he were a servant. The men of Bī-yáng opened the gate, and the officers of the allies stormed it. The hanging gate was released, but Hý of Dzōu lifted it up again, allowing the attacking party to escape . . .

Chín Jǐn-fǔ then distinguished himself by an *almost* successful exploit:

The inhabitants let down a strip of cloth, and Jǐn-fǔ climbed up it. When he was almost at the top, they cut it. After he had fallen, they let down another. In all, he made the ascent three times, after which the inhabitants desisted. He withdrew, and wearing the cut-off pieces of cloth as a sash, he showed them around the army for the next three days . . .

These were remarkable feats, but of different kinds. The solitary prowess of Chín Jǐn-fǔ led to no military result; Dzōu Hý’s exploit saved his companions in the assault party from certain death. This was of advantage to the attackers.

⁶³His son would later resume the Kǔng surname, by which he is known to posterity.

⁶⁴Bī-yáng was south of Lǔ, in the zone of possible Chǔ influence.

Bī-yáng was finally taken in an assault by the whole force. H́v's exploit came to the notice of the Sh́u clan,⁶⁵ and with that sponsorship, H́v gained a place among the landed warriors of Lǔ. Here is the old Jōu pattern: rewarding prowess with land, and expecting further prowess in return for the land.

His opportunity to display that prowess came soon. In an attempt to break the military stalemate that was setting in by the mid 06c, Chí tried a novel double attack. In autumn 0556, Chí assembled *two* forces. One, led by the Chí ruler, besieged Táu, northwest of the Lǔ capital, while a second, led by a Chí noble, besieged Fáng, *east* of the capital. This was a serious threat. It failed due to the repulse of the attack on Fáng, and this owed something to the enterprise of H́v, plus two members of the Dzāng clan, whose seat was at Fáng:

1:49 (DJ 9/17:3, excerpt, c0370). In autumn, The Lord of Chí attacked our northern border, and surrounded Táu; Gāu Hòu surrounded Dzāng H́v in Fáng. A force from Yáng-gwān went to meet the head of the Dzāng clan at Lǔ-sūng. Sh́u H́v of Dzōu, Dzāng Chóu, and Dzāng Jyǎ in command of 300 armored men attacked the Chí force at night, escorted him thither, and returned. The Chí host left the place.

The confidence of the Sh́u clan and the Lǔ ruler had been well bestowed. Such was the landed warrior system. Up to this point, it was working well.

Lull and Resumption. Spring and Autumn warfare was indecisive. Tiny states vanished, but no large state destroyed another. An equilibrium obtained. If military unification was to be achieved, a new effort would be required.

That effort was a revolutionary reshaping of states and armies. At first there was a lull. After the peace of 0546, in the time of Lǔ Jāu-gūng (r 0541-0510), the tempo of CC military events dropped from 0.28 to 0.17 per year. The states were thinking.⁶⁶ The Chí double attack of 0556 was not the answer; something else was needed. When the rate rose again to 0.28 per year, under Dìng-gūng (r 0509-0495), war had changed: there were fewer allies in a typical campaign, and many actions were internal: sieges of clan strongholds and wallings of strategic points. Sieges were quicker: 3 months in 0654 versus 1 month in 0498. These imply more infantry, and thus the beginning of the new military system. Text evidence⁶⁷ implies an established bureaucracy in early 05c Lǔ, and thus an earlier beginning for the civil system. The first hint of the military revolution should thus be put, not at the beginning of Warring States as defined by the end of the CC chronicle, but earlier, at the beginning of Dìng-gūng's reign, c0510.

⁶⁵The Sh́u clan was of recent origin; it derived from a brother of Sywān-gūng, a later Lǔ Prince. The Three Clans competed with the Lǔ ruler, but the Sh́u were loyal.

⁶⁶For a European lull, when an old form of state had reached maximum efficiency and a new form of state had not yet emerged, see Strayer **Medieval** 89-111.

⁶⁷For a brief review, see Brooks **Lore**.

Innovation. The Three Clans of Lǚ are deplored in orthodox commentaries. They had their bases at strategically located cities on the borders of Lǚ. By the time of Syāng-gūng (r 0572-0542), they were dominant at court: most military and diplomatic assignments went to them. This is usually considered to be bad. But clan domains may have been the periphery of innovation that was needed to show the path forward. Lǚ, as its chronicle entries, show, had been inching toward more rational procedures: a shift of interest away from the small doings of the ruling family, the appearance of functional terminology. But in making changes, Lǚ was hampered by existing structures, including the clan structures. The clans themselves, who governed directly, were less constrained, and the art of a more efficient management of resources may have been worked out first, or may have developed more rapidly, at the clan level.

Renewal. Another factor inhibiting systematic change in state management was the system of hereditary rule. Usurpation has a bad name, but there may be something to be said for it administratively. Lacking any formal procedure for rulership renewal, and no Spring and Autumn state had such a procedure, usurpation is one way to avoid the decline of hereditary houses, and to resist the inertia of the familiar. There were many incidents of the assassination of rulers in the Spring and Autumn. All of them eventuated in replacement from within the ruling lineage, but even that degree of renewal may be significant. It is thus noteworthy that the two greatest Spring and Autumn rulers, Hwán and W'ín, came to power after murderous succession disputes. Later on, 05c clan strife did not destroy Jin; it produced three strong successor states. The great age of Chí came in the 04c, when the Tyén clan, who long had ruled from behind the throne, finally usurped the throne and ruled in their own name. In Lǚ, where there was no usurpation, evidence points to Jāu-gūng's reign as the time when modernization begins to be visible. May it be that Jāu-gūng's exile (0517-0510) gave the clans an opportunity to rearrange some aspects of Lǚ state structure along new lines; lines which they had adopted in their own territories?

Classical China was a time when innovation was urgently relevant: when the states most successful in innovating were the ones most likely to survive. A need for change is opposed by every institutional tendency known to science. But equally, it produces some of the most interesting times known to history.⁶⁸ For better or worse, that kind of interest abounds in the Warring States period, and to that period we may now turn.

⁶⁸Despite its name, the European Renaissance is most usefully viewed not as a rebirth (since it began, in science, by moving *beyond* Aristotle and Ptolemy) but as a textbook instance of competitive innovation among members of a multi-state system. Classical China is merely an earlier instance of such a situation. It is not the possibility of advantage, as such, but rather the danger *that another will exploit the advantage first*, that typically drives states to innovate.