

The 05th Century

Lǚ Jāu-gūng had died in exile in 0510. His brother and successor Dìng-gūng (r 0509-0495) ruled from the capital, but had to accept the dominance of the Three Clans: for ten years, no member of the loyalist Dzāng or Shú clans is mentioned in the Lǚ chronicle. In 0499 Shú Sywān was sent to make a peace treaty with Jvng. In 0498, the walls of the Jisūn and Shúsūn clan fortresses were razed, reducing their power. Still, under Aī-gūng (r 0494-0468), members of the Three Clans led most military campaigns. The growing power of coastal Wú, to the southeast of Lǚ, also had to be taken into account. In 0488, Aī-gūng invaded the small state of Jū, and brought back its ruler, in this way asserting the local territorial ambition of Lǚ. It was twice resisted. In 0487, Wú invaded Lǚ. Almost simultaneously, Chí took a Lǚ city (in the next month, Aī-gūng sent back the ruler of Jū, and Chí returned that city). Here was a dilemma. It was solved by siding with Wú. Aī-gūng twice joined Wú in attacking Chí, but as a junior partner; no additions to Lǚ territory resulted. But Wú did at least stand by Lǚ: an 0484 Chí attack on Lǚ provoked a joint attack on Chí by Lǚ and Wú.

Land Tax. This did nothing for the land area of Lǚ; it may have increased the internal prestige of Aī-gūng. And his next initiative was internal: in 0483, the key *social* change was made: the assertion of direct control of land in Lǚ. This we know from an entry, three words long, in the Chūn/Chyōu chronicle:

2:1 (CC 12/12:1, 0483). 用田賦 Implemented land tax.

Salaried Officials. Grain from the elite landholdings now went to the state, and was used as salary for the new class of civil officials, including those who were not of the old warrior elite class, and thus had no permanent support of their own. Desire for wealth was the one foundation of the new civil service. In advising members of his client circle, Kǔng Chyōu 孔丘 of Lǚ (0549-0479), known to us as Confucius, added this important qualification:

Analects; Lún Yǔ 論語 (LY). The house text of the Confucian school, compiled over the span 0479-0249. It continually adjusts the image of Confucius to agree with his increasing fame; it also invents sayings by him on issues arising long after his death. It is perilous as a source unless earlier and later layers are distinguished; see Brooks **Analects**.

2:2 (LY 4:5, excerpt, 0479). The Master said, Wealth and honor: these are what men desire, but if [the gentleman] cannot do so in accord with his principles, he will not abide in them . . .

The point here is not wealth, nor the social position which came with state employment (these are perfectly valid desires), but integrity. There are things the gentleman will not do; there are aspects of himself that are not for sale. The new civil servant has freed himself from the old personal loyalty to the ruler, and is now being coached in loyalty to a more general principle.

We can see Confucius' followers, not long after his death, struggling to define the proprieties of the new salary system and its expense accounts:

2:3 (LY 6:4, c0460). Dž-hwá went on a mission to Chí. Master Rǎn requested a grain allowance for his mother. The Master said, Give her a fū.⁵ He said, I request more. He said, Give her a yǔ.⁶ Master Rǎn gave her five *loads*.⁷ The Master said, When Chè went to Chí, he drove sleek horses and wore light furs. I have heard that the gentleman relieves the needy, but does not enrich the wealthy.

The gentleman has an obligation of charity, but he does not abet profiteering. He fits into the old society, but is less at ease in the new salary-based society.

The Analects sayings are grouped in pairs. Often the second saying of a pair is a corrective to the first. As a corrective to LY 6:4, we have this passage about a salary which was *not* needed by the already well-off recipient:

2:4 (LY 6:5, c0460). Ywǎn Sè was the Steward [of the Jì clan]. They were going to give him nine hundred measures of grain, but he declined. The Master said, Was there no way you could have given it to the neighboring village 鄰里 or the county association 鄉黨?

We might expect that unneeded salary would be declined. This Ywǎn Sè does, *but he is wrong to do so*. He should have donated it to someone who needed it. The point is not whether one needs the salary, it is that the poor need support.⁸ Consideration for others, and a focus on public rather than personal welfare, was to remain a central element in Confucian thinking.

Industry. Weaving had always been a specialty of rural women. It was now more efficient, and shifted focus from utilitarian hemp to more marketable silk. The wider availability of silk produced changes even in ceremonial usages:

2:5 (LY 9:3, c0405). The Master said, The hemp cap was customary, but now silk is cheaper. I follow the majority. To bow below [before ascending the ruler's platform] was customary, but now they bow above. It is presumptuous. Though I differ from the majority, I follow "below."

Silk production involved higher technology and greater initial investment than anything before it. Making silk thread implied ownership of a mulberry grove, to feed the silkworms, and the kind of weaving done at this time required a loom which was a very advanced piece of machinery.

⁵An allowance for one person for 16 days (the duration of the mission to Chí).

⁶An allowance sufficient to support *the whole household* for that period.

⁷Six times greater than the whole-household allowance; no longer a compensation for the expenses of the trip, but a profit level approaching that of a commercial venture.

⁸This is the "noblesse oblige" form of elite charity to the less fortunate, familiar in many feudal and postfeudal cultures. Note that part of this aid is given through an existing local association. For its later takeover by the government, see #6:14.