

*The Ruler and the Families: Competition*

*In this second phase, the tension between the ruler and the families took the form of intensified competition between members of the families themselves. One issue, not only between the ruler and the families but among the families, was foreign policy. Should Lǚ pursue an independent course (as the ruler preferred) or ally with some stronger state – and if so, which one? There were partisans of Chǐ, and there were partisans of Jīn. Especially in other states, when a succession dispute or partisan conflict was decided in favor of one party, the adherents of the other party either left the state for another, or remained and were killed. These were not theoretical disputes.*

*It has been asserted (by Nietzsche and others) that there is nothing in human society but the desire for power. The Spring and Autumn conflicts with the ruler (who in theory held all power in the state), and among those below him, tend to support that view. What it leaves out, and what we here emphasize, is the importance, as between one society and another, of military power. But if we confine ourselves to events within one state, a case can indeed be made. The reader, while working through one of these chronicle extracts, may like to make a list of events that do not fit that definition. (There are indeed a few).*

*This section includes the reigns of three Lǚ rulers. As digressions from the chronicle proper, we pause to consider the careers of some notable individuals, one of them already familiar, as well as rulers, or persons taking the place of rulers, of other states. It is a major virtue of the CC chronicle that it gives us that much information about the world outside of Lǚ.*

*These three Lǚ rulers all had reigns of the same length: 18 years. Those who see something sinister behind that fact are free to do so. Another point of interest is that two of the three Lǚ rulers who met the strict standard of legitimacy (as the eldest son of the previous ruler's wife) are in this group: Wǎn-gūng (the son of Syī-gūng) and Chǎng-gūng (the son of Sywǎn-gūng).*

§14. <b>Wǎn-gūng</b> 文公 (0626-0609)	000
Gūngdǔ Swèi 公子遂 of Lǚ (2), 000	
Jìsūn Hángfǔ 季孫行父 of Lǚ (1), 000	
Jào Dùn 趙盾 of Jīn, 000	
§15. <b>Sywǎn-gūng</b> 釐侯 (00608-0591)	000
Gūngdǔ Swèi 公子遂 of Lǚ (3), 000	
Jìsūn Hángfǔ 季孫行父 of Lǚ (2), 000	
§16. <b>Chǎng-gūng</b> 成公 (0590-0573)	000
Jìsūn Hángfǔ 季孫行父 of Lǚ (3), 000	
Jǐng-gūng 景公 of Jīn, 000	