Defeat in the Chun/Chyou

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Abstract. We here consider how victory and defeat are treated in the Chūn/Chyōu. We find that the Lù court of Spring and Autumn times viewed military operations not in a chivalric or moralizing way, like characters in Dzwō Jwān 左傳 (DJ) narratives of Spring and Autumn events, but in a cold-eyed military advantage way.

Victory. In the 500 CC entries for military operations, “victory” (shṿng 胜) never occurs. Of the ruler prowess culture which is conspicuous in the Near East, ¹ or the warrior’s honor/reward ethos which is reflected in many Jōu bronze inscriptions, there is no trace. That culture surely obtained among the warriors of Spring and Autumn, but the court viewpoint reflected in the CC evidently differs.

Defeat. The basic verb is bāi 败, which appears 16x in the CC; an alternate term, bār-jī 败績, also occurs 16x. The element jī 積, which never occurs separately in CC, can mean “spin” (Shē 133B3 不織其積 “not spinning her hemp”) or more generally “accomplishment” (Shē 244E2 織績之積 “it was the work of Yw”). How one gets from this to the negative accomplishment of bār-jī is a puzzle. A possible clue is the DJ 8/8:2 phrase gūng-jī 功積 “[then he will achieve] a meritorious result,” leaving it open for jī to be qualified in the opposite sense, as “[incur] a disgraceful result.” The next question is, What is the meaning of bār-jī, as distinct from bāi, in the CC?

Shame. All defeats are shameful for a warrior. Perhaps (as Legge’s “disgracefully defeated” suggests) the defeats labeled bār-jī were especially shameful. We note in support that some bār-jī occur in the home territory of the defeated force, where a win would be expected. But others do not, and since most bār-jī defeats do not involve Lù, it would have had no role in punishing the leaders; information about humiliation as such would thus have had no operative value for the Lù court. The term may have arisen among warriors, but that is not its content in the CC.

Individuals were undoubtedly rewarded for merit, but no such reward is recorded in the CC, which does show that those guilty of military failure were punished. The year 0632 began with a Jīn invasion of Wèi (5/28:1). Mū, an uncle of Syī-gūng, had been remiss in protecting Wèi from invasion (成猶不卒戍), and Lū, that is, Syī-gūng, put him to death (刺客; 5/28:2). A force under a Chū officer 败人 had gone to the relief of Wèi (5/28:3), but was defeated by Jīn and its allies (bār-jī; 5/28:5); Chū later killed its high officer Đv-chển 殺其大夫得臣; 5/28:6).

¹For the notably unreticent victory monuments of Near Eastern rulers, see for example Drews Bronze Age 49-50 (Egypt) or Liverani Deeds (Mesopotamia).
**Protocol.** With two exceptions,¹ the subject of bài-jī is the defeated *host* (shī 師), not its *leader*, which in the CC is a ruler or a deputized kinsman or noble. This reluctance to impute defeat to the ruler applies not only to Lǔ, but also to Chú, Sòng, Wèi, Yēn, Chín, Jīn, Ēng, and Chū. It presumably reflects a CC convention of respect for rulers as such.² This may explain why the bài-jī statements are always in the passive voice, but it does not help us with the difference between bài-jī and bài.

**Severity.** Another possibility is that bài-jī defeats are more severe than bài defeats. DJ 3/11:1 explains: 败未陳曰敗軍師，音陳曰戰，大崩曰敗績 “when the enemy is not drawn up in order it says ‘defeated the X host,’ when both are in order it is a battle (jān); a great collapse is called bài-jī.” Legge may be influenced by this note in sometimes translating bài-jī as “suffered a great defeat.” Some bài-jī are followed by a long period where that state undertakes no new military actions.³ But others are not; some states indeed are militarily active in the same year as their bài-jī defeat.⁴

**Disorder.** The disorder motif in the DJ definition is echoed by a Tánh Gūng (Lǐ Ji) gloss to bài-jī: 興黃失列 “were startled into flight, and lost cohesion.” But a fleeing army can recover its morale if it can regroup, or if it is rallied by its leader. What possible use could information about a temporary rout have had at the court of Lǔ?

A way out of this definitional impasse is to notice the distribution of bà and bài-jī. The simplest statement is that bài-jī only occurs in a military encounter which is called a jān 戰 “battle.”⁶ Then the actual information conveyed by bài-jī is not that a bài defeat was particularly severe, or that it resulted in loss of cohesion, but simply that it occurred in the course of a “battle.” It would follow that mere “bài” defeats occurred in encounters that did not qualify as “battles.” So we may next ask: What is a battle?

**Hypothesis.** We note that many participants in bài encounters are non-Sinitic states or nonstate peoples like the Dī, who did not possess the Ŝinite art of chariot fighting, or may sometimes have fought differently. Between Sinitic states, CC information sometimes implies a non-formal encounter: a skirmish or surprise attack. Here the DJ definition is suggestive. We propose this hypothesis: in a jān encounter, two chariot forces are drawn up and engage, and valor, not preparedness, determines the result. The result may be inconclusive (as in 8 jān entries). But if it is conclusive, shame attaches to the loser, as it would not if the loser had merely been taken unprepared.⁷ Defeats in less formal, non-jān, contexts are not entered in the CC as bài-jī, but as bài.

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¹An officer of Wèi in 3/28:1 (0668) and the ruler of Chū in 8/16:6 (0575). The first of these is the first time that a defeated host was led by someone other than a ruler; this presented the CC scribe with a new situation. The Gūng Yang and Gūlyáng commentaries labor over the second instance; they suggest that the reason is that the Chū ruler was personally wounded.

²For the ruler’s feelings as part of the court ethos reflected in CC, see Brooks Distancing.

³A famous instance is the battle of Chóng-pú, for which see Brooks Numbers.


⁵The only bài-jī that is not the outcome of a jān is the Jōu King’s defeat by the Mǎu Rúng in 8/1:6 (0590). The CC regularly shows deference to the Jōu King, and thus is unlikely to have used bài-jī here in an openly derogatory sense; see further n22 below.

⁶Note the implications of “en garde.” A stab in the back is not a duelist’s victory.
We now check this hypothesis against the relevant CC data. These comprise the 23 jān (including 15 bā-t’ī defeats), the one bā-t’ī not resulting from a jān, plus 16 bā-t’ī, for a total of 40 items. We note that these entries comprise only 8% of CC military events. Spring and Autumn forces largely avoided the set-piece battle, and preferred the unopposed raid or the incidental skirmish: actions perhaps conferring no great military glory upon the leaders, but achieving results that were of interest to the state.

The CC “Jān” Battles

2/10:4 (0702). Inconclusive. In summer 0714, Lù walled Láng 獨 (116°47’ E, 35°1’ N), near a bend in the Sê River. This gave Lù a protected outpost near to Sûng and to Tsâu 獨. Tsâu was also of interest to Wêi. In autumn the Lù ruler went to meet the ruler of Wêi, who did not appear; some difficulty between Lù and Wêi had passed beyond diplomatic resolution. At the end of 0702, Wêi with Chî and Jîng fought a battle with Lù at Láng. Their purpose was thwarted, since Lù maintained its position at Láng.8 In the following month, the allies covenanted at Wû-tsâu 魚鮋, probably near Tsâu, and probably to discuss action against Lù, but no such action occurred.

2/12:9 (0700). Inconclusive. After 0702, the Prince of Lù had often met with the Lord of Sûng; they covenanted in the 7th month of 0700. But further meetings followed in the 8th and 11th months, and shortly after the last of them, Lù covenanted with Jîng. In the 12th month, Lù and Jîng invaded Sûng, and a battle was fought near the Sûng capital, without any mentioned outcome, and with no described sequela.

2/13:1 (0699). Conclusive. In the 2nd month of 0699, larger forces (Lù, Jî 築, and Jîng vs Chî, Sûng, Wêi, and Yên) renewed the fight; in that battle, Wêi and its allies were defeated (bâ-t’ī). In effect, the indecisive battle of 0700 was taken up with new allies in 0699 and fought to a finish. The issue seems to have been an increased Lù presence in the Sûng and Wêi sphere of interest.9 Neither state could put together a combination that would force Lù to retreat from its advanced position at Láng.

2/17:3 (0695). Inconclusive. In the 1st month, Lù had made a covenant with Chî and Jî 築 at Hwáng 黃, a place nearer to Chî and Jî than to Lù; Lù was thus probably the constrained party. In the 2nd month, Lù covenanted with small nearby Jî 築, perhaps as a counter to the Chî covenant. In the 5th month, Lù fought a battle with Chî in Lù; the Chî incursion was probably a reprisal for the Jî covenant. In the 8th month, with forces from Sûng and Wêi, Lù made an unopposed incursion into Jî, presumably in repudiation of its covenant with Jî. In the 1st month of 0694, the Prince of Lù covenanted with Chî, and later went to Chî with his wife, a member of the Chî ruling house. The Chî/Lù battle seems to have been a demonstration. Though militarily a standoff, it had made its point: Lù renounced Jî, and instead adhered to Chî.10

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8DJ says that the quarrel arose over Lù’s distribution of rations, and was settled by Lù appealing to the order established by Jîu, a typical piece of ritualistic/ceremonial imagining.
9DJ, Güngyang, and Gûlyang differ among themselves as to why this battle was fought.
10DJ here imagines a Lù/Chî border dispute for which there is no support in CC. One point of interest in this sequence is that it shows that a weak state (Lù) could be forced to renounce a covenant (here, one previously made with Jîu) by a strong state (Chî).
3/9:5 (0685). Conclusive. Lǔ had made cause with a Chí faction in spring. That summer, Lǔ invaded Chí, explicitly in support of Prince Jyòu as a candidate to succeed the deceased Chí Syâng-gûng. In the 8th month, Lǔ fought a battle with a Chí force and was defeated (bân-jî). The long time spent by Lǔ in Chí presumably allowed a superior force to be assembled against it. Next month, in a separate action, Chí captured and killed Prince Jyòu. This Lǔ attempt at internal interference, which is understandable in view of previous Chí behavior toward Lǔ, led to a long period of enmity between Lǔ and the successful Chí candidate, the famous Chí Hwân-gûng.

3/28:1 (0666). Conclusive. In the summer of 0667, Lǔ had covenanted with Chí, Sûng, Chûn, and Jûng, though not with Wèi, in the interest of common security against the pressure of Chí.11 At the end of 0667, the Prince of Lǔ had met with the Lord of Chí in Chûng-pû, in the territory of Wèi; again, Wèi was not present. In the 3rd month of 0666, A Chí officer led a force, invaded Wèi, and fought a battle with a Wèi force, which was defeated (bân-jî).12 The attack probably had the prior consent of Lǔ.

5/15:12 (0645). Defeat implied. Chûn and Jîn battled at Hân, and Chûn captured the Lord of Jîn, implying a damaging defeat. The general term bâi-jî seems to be replaced in this entry by specifics which sufficiently indicate who had lost.13

5/18:3 (0642). Conclusive. Chí Hwân-gûng died at the end of 0643. In the next month, a joint force from Sûng, Tsâu, Wèi, and Jû attacked Chí, hoping to influence the resulting succession dispute. That summer, a Lû force went to relieve Chí, with no stated result but perhaps reducing the number of intruders in Chí. In the 5th month, the Sûng contingent of the previous joint force (still in Chí territory after four months) fought a pitched battle with a Chí force and was defeated (bân-jî); the Dí people also came to the aid of Chí. Time had apparently redressed the disparity of numbers, and mitigated the previous confusion. In the 8th month, Chí Hwân-gûng was finally buried. As in 3/9:5, we see the neighbor states attempting to intervene in Chí politics at a time of presumptive Chí military weakness (in theory, only the ruler could lead the forces of the state; with the succession disputed, the forces might accordingly be hampered).

5/22:3 (0638). Inconclusive. In autumn 0639, the rulers of Sûng, Chí, Chûn, Tsâu, Jûng, and several other states (but not including Lǔ) had met to make a covenant. At the meeting, the others had seized the ruler of Sûng and forthwith invaded Sûng. That winter, pursuing a parallel interest of its own, Lǔ invaded small nearby Jû, without any stated result. At the same time, an envoy from Chí came to present to Lǔ some of the spoils of the Sûng invasion; Lǔ at this time was sympathetic to Chí’s attempt to expand its influence into the north. In the 12th month, the Prince of Lǔ met with Chí and its allies. At that meeting, the ruler of Sûng was released from captivity, perhaps at the suggestion of Lǔ. In the 3rd month of 0638, Lǔ again invaded Jû, and this time took its territory Syû-jyw 復句. In summer, the rulers of Sûng, Wèi, Syû 詩, and Tûng had attacked Jûng.

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11This is the meaning of the special term 無 黑; see Brooks League.
12DJ describes a Chí force led by the Lord of Chí; this conflicts with the CC record.
13On this blank canvas, DJ spins a tremendous tale of depravity and aggrieved loyalty.
Not taking part in these events, but perhaps profiting from the distraction of many nearby states, Lû in the 8th month moved into Jû territory. This time a Jû force opposed Lû, and a battle was fought in Shêng-syîng 青城; near Jû. No details are given, but later CC entries do not suggest success. It seems that a Lû attempt to take territory from Jû was met by a force sufficient to thwart it: a successful blocking action. No very large force can have been fielded by Jû, and probably the Lû invading force was also modest. This would then qualify as a “battle” not by its size, but because this time the Jû force was drawn up and ready to resist.

5/22:4 (0638). Conclusive. As the conclusion of the series of events affecting Sûng, in the 11th month Sûng fought a battle with Chû and was defeated (bài-jî)．Sûng being thus weakened, Chû invaded Sûng in spring 0637, and besieged Mîn 申.

5/28:5 (0632). Conclusive. Chû had twice invaded Lû territory in 0634. In response, a Wèi force had entered Chû. A Lû envoy had gone to Chû to ask military assistance. That winter, Chû invaded Sûng and besieged Mîn, the city Chû had attacked in 0637. Evidently with the aid of that force, Lû invaded Chû and took Gû 鼓. In the winter of 0633, a joint force from Chû, Chîn, Tsaû, Kûng, and Syî 娄 besieged Sûng. Lû had met with the besieging forces in the 12th month, when they made a covenant in Sûng. Now come the tremendous events of 0632. In spring, Jin invaded Tsâu and Wèi. Mâi, a son of Lû Jwâng-gung and an uncle of Syî-gung, had been remiss in protecting Wèi from invasion; Lû put him to death. A Chû force had gone to the relief of Wèi. In the 3rd month, Jin invaded Tsâu, seized its ruler, and handed him over to Sûng. Then in the 4th month, with contingents from Chû, Sûng, and Chûn, Jin fought a battle with Chû at Chûn-pù; Chû was defeated (bài-jî); Chû killed its high officer Dî-chûn, who had led the defeated Chû force. His error, like that of Lû in 0685, was seemingly to remain so long in enemy territory that a superior force could be assembled to oppose him. The Chû defeat was a rout. It so weakened Chû that for eight years Chû made no further military effort, and then only to attack Jyâng 郑, a small and nearby state.

6/2:1 (0625). Unknown. In the second month, Jin and Chûn battled in Pûng-yâ; Chûn was defeated (bài-jî). There is no other CC information that would permit us to form a more precise impression of this encounter. See next.

6/7:6 (0620). Unknown. A battle was fought between Chûn and Jin. No outcome is stated by the CC. As with other matters relating to Chûn, the most distant of the states mentioned in CC, the Lû chronicler in this case may have lacked information.

6/12:7 (0615). Unknown. Another battle of unspecified outcome between Chûn and Jin. A few months earlier, Chûn had sent a friendly mission to Lû, probably to dissuade it from giving assistance to Jin, as Lû would do on a later occasion (8/12:1f).

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14 DJ invents a bài-jî defeat for Lû, and then invents a cautionary tale of neglected advice to explain the defeat. Listening to advice, according to DJ, is the fundamental virtue of a ruler.

15 DJ again explains this defeat as the Sûng ruler’s failure to listen to advice. As always, DJ is unaware of the grand strategical aspect of the text on which it is commenting.

16 See Brooks Numbers. This famous battle may have led commentators to regard all bài-jî as routs or disabling defeats; other CC entries show the reality to be more nuanced. It is here that DJ sees an idealized “hegemon” system as being inaugurated; compare Brooks Hegemon.
7/2:1 (0607). Conclusive. In spring, forces of Sûng and Jûng met in battle; Sûng was defeated (bài-jî) and Hwâ Yûâen, the Sûng leader, was taken prisoner.17 A Chûn force invaded Jîn, and that summer joined with Sûng, Wêî, and Chûn to invade Jûng, perhaps to gain the release of Hwâ Yûâen. Here, in contrast to 5/15:12 above, we have both a statement of defeat and information about the capture of the defeated leader.

7/12:3 (0597). Conclusive. In spring, Chû besieged Jûng; in the 6th month, a relieving Jîn force battled with Chû, and was defeated (bài-jî).18 creating a sufficient power vacuum that Chû in the 12th month extinguished Syûn near to Sûng.

8/1:6 (0590). Anomalous. In autumn, the Royal host (王師) was defeated (bài-jî) by the Mâu-rûng. These Rûng presumably fought in a non-Sinitic way, hence the absence of jân. It remains to ask why the defeat is stated with the passive bâr-jî rather than the active bâi. Perhaps the latter option would make the Royal force the object of the verb,19 and the subject position in the sentence may have been thought by the respectful scribe to be the less undignified of the choices available to him.20

8/2:2 (0589). Conclusive. In the summer of 0590, Lû had covenanted with Jîn. In spring 0589, Chî invaded Lû’s northern border. As though in retaliation, that summer Wêî fought a battle with Chî in Chî territory; Wêî was defeated (bài-jî). See next.

8/2:3 (0589). Conclusive. Later that summer, several kinsmen of the Lû ruler led a force, and with forces from Jîn, Wêî, and Tsâu battled Chî, again in Chî territory; this time Chî was defeated (bài-jî). That autumn, Lû took lands near the Wûn River, which ran between Chî and Lû. Jîn at this period was the policeman of the north; its policy was to coordinate northern forces against incursions from Chû, and to keep the northern states themselves in balance, lest any become strong enough to challenge Jîn. Jîn is here maintaining a balance of power between strong Chî and weaker Lû.

8/16:6 (0575). Conclusive. In the 6th month, Jîn sought military aid from Lû; none was sent. Without help from Lû, Jîn battled a Jûng and Chû allied force at Yên-líng, and the joint force was defeated (bài-jî).21 Chû later killed its high officer, Prince Tsû, presumably for his responsibility for the Chû defeat (compare 5/28:5). The Lû Prince later sought to join the peace negotiations between Jîn, Wêî, Sûng, and Chû, but was refused admittance. Lû sought to redeem itself by joining Jîn, Chî, and Jû in attacking Chû’s ally Jûng. A shakeup in Lû followed, some of the Prince’s kinsmen being seized by Jîn or fleeing to Chî. In the 12th month, Lû covenanted with Jîn. On his return from the covenant, the Lû Prince executed his half-brother Yên.

17DJ explains the defeat as due to wrangling and betrayal among the Sûng leaders; that is, to propriety violation. Propriety, whether in the abstract or as embodied in the advice of wise ministers, is ultimately the DJ’s one mode of historical explanation.

18DJ explains this defeat by saying that Jîn had ignored wise advice; a warning that Chû was practicing virtuous government and was thus invulnerable: This kind of populist wishful thinking was also indulged by Mencius, whose career coincided with the late layer of the DJ.

19Compare n9 above.

20This is the only bài-jî entry in which the agent of the passive voice is expressed.

21Reversing its earlier analysis, DJ explains the defeat of Chû by its violation of every canon of populist government. Theory is triumphant, if behavior is perhaps a little inconsistent.
We here get a glimpse of factions in a small state, favoring one or another larger power. The larger powers were evidently well informed about these polarities.

10/17:6 (0525). Unknown. A Chū force did battle with Wū at Cháng-ăn 長安. This is far into Chū territory, and that penetration alone counts as a considerable Wū achievement. Distance may have been a factor in the lack of further CC information. Later CC entries implicitly credit Chū with a successful blocking action.

11/4:14 (0506). Conclusive. In the 3rd month, Jīn, Sūng, Tsài, Wèi, Chữn, Jīng, Chī, and several smaller states had met and then invaded Chū. In the 4th month, the ruler of Tsài had extinguished Shvn 蘇, taken its ruler back with him, and killed him. In the 5th month, the previous allies had made a covenant. Not deterred, Chū besieged Tsài in the 7th month. Wū, already a major enemy of Chū, joined Tsài in a battle with Chū, and Chū was defeated (bàr-jī). Rather than face the inevitable, Nǎng Wā of Chū fled to Jīng. Wū evidently continued to press the defeated Chū forces, and presently entered Yīng, the capital of Chū. By this additional information, not by the term bàr-jī (compare 7/12:3), we may infer that the defeat of Chū was a serious one.

12/2:5 (0490). Conclusive. In summer, Jiā Yāng led a Jīn force in battle with Jīng; the Jīng force was defeated (bàr-jī). There is no other CC information that would permit us to form a more precise impression of this encounter.

12/11:3 (0484). Conclusive. In spring, Gwó Shū had led a Chī force and invaded Lū. In the 5th month, in retaliation, Lū and Wū joined in invading Chī. Gwó Shū, again commanding the Chī force, sought to attack the invaders separately, and fought a battle with Wū; he was defeated (bàr-jī) and captured. Again we have both the fact of the defeat and the fact of the capture (see 7/2:1). There was a meeting between Lū and Wū in the following autumn, 0483, but nothing came of it (compare 2/10:4).

The battles above surveyed, whether or not with a stated bàr-jī outcome, are final in the sense that whatever might have been the original goal, neither force undertakes further action immediately after the battle (the only exception is 2/17:3, which was probably fought to make a statement rather than to secure a victory in the usual sense). For both leaders, the opposing force was, or had become, the “objective point.”

How were these encounters viewed by the respective courts? Was the Jū force in 5/22:3 told to smash the Lū army and faulted for its failure? Was it told to hold the position and praised for its success? We suggest the latter. In May 1942, a Japanese naval force moved to attack Port Moresby in New Guinea; an Australian/American force opposed. The latter lost the more valuable shipping; both withdrew afterward. Was Japan the victor because its losses were less? Was the battle drawn because neither side remained in possession of the field? Informed opinion sees a strategic victory for the allied opposing force, because Japan’s invasion attempt was thwarted.

The CC in 5/22:3, and in several other instances seemingly of the same type, does not say “successful blocking action.” Perhaps it had no terms with which to do so, and relied on its informed readership, the Prince and court of Lū, to supply that inference.

22Thus was Lee deflected from his nimble Pennsylvania raid into a losing set-piece battle with Meade at Gettysburg. Battle can redefine a campaign which had been otherwise conceived.
Non-Jàn Military Encounters

We next survey the other group of military encounters which are identified by CC as ending in defeat (bâr) for one side or the other, to see if our suggestion of jàn as a formal, prepared battle will hold for these events as well.

1/10:3 (0713). Incident of invasion. In the 1st month, the Lû Prince had made an agreement with the rulers of Chí and Jvŋ at Jâng-chyôû 同丘. That summer, Hwèî (a brother of the Lû Prince; back in 0719 he had led a Lû force which together with Sûng, Chí, and Tsû forces had invaded Jvŋ) led a force which with Chí and Jvŋ forces invaded Sûng. No outcome is specified. In the 6th month, some weeks later, the Lû Prince, apparently in charge of a Lû force acting on its own, defeated a Sûng force at Gwân 耕, and quickly went on to take (chyw 取) Gâu 郡 and then Fâng 獴. These places are not far inside Sûng, in the area for which the town of Lâng 郎, which had been fortified in the previous year (2/10:4, above) was the strongpoint. One imagines that the Lû force brushed aside a scratch Sûng blocking attempt, and proceeded, unopposed, to take several Sûng towns. Sûng was not much weakened: that autumn, a presumably organized joint force from Sûng and Wèî entered Jvŋ, and with a force from Tsû, attacked Dài. The ruler of Jvŋ attacked the allies and took Dài. None of this shows the organized Sûng force as very effective; one also gets the impression that the Lû ruler was a better commander than his brother. But this is not the point at issue.

In this first non-jàn encounter, it is conspicuous that the invading force defeated an enemy and then continued with what was evidently its intended goal. The aim of the campaign was not to bring on a battle with Sûng, but to take two towns from Sûng.

3/10:1 (0684). Resisted incursion. In spring the Lû Prince defeated a Chí force at an uncertain location in Lû, presumably resisting an incursion. Next month, the Lû Prince made an incursion into Sûng. A month later, Sûng relocated a town which may have been too far from the Sûng capital to be defended successfully against Lû.

3/10:4 (0684). Resisted incursion. In the 6th month, forces of Chí and Sûng camped at Lâng; and the Lû Prince defeated the Sûng force at Shâng-chyôû 莊丘, north of Lâng. Lû seems to have attacked the Sûng contingent separately, weakening the joint force and eliminating the threat to Lâng; it was this maneuver which Gwô Shû tried and failed to execute in 12/11:3. If the attack was a surprise one, then the lack of jàn need not puzzle us: there was no “battle,” rather, a less formal encounter.

3/10:5 (0684). Successful incursion. In the 9th month, Jîng 鄉 (later “Chû 楊”) defeated the Tsû host at Syîn 督 and carried off the Lord of Tsû. We may suppose that here Chí overcame (bâr) any Tsû resistance, and went on with its decapitation strike against Tsû.

23DJ here agrees in imagining a Lû attack on an unprepared Sûng force.
24DJ here tells the famous story of Tsû Gwèî, a commoner who on being assured of the Lû Prince’s assiduousness in meting out justice, symbolically joins him in his chariot and guides him to victory over Chí. This is merely more DJ populism, a special version of DJ moralism.
25To its credit (and following its own theory), DJ also visualizes the encounter this way.
26DJ complicates this scenario with a propriety-violation subplot of insult and revenge.
3/11:2 (0683). Unknown. In the 5th month, the Lü Prince defeated a Sung host at Jin 邑, probably in territory recently disputed between Sung and Lü, and near Láng.27

5/1:8 (0659). Unknown. In the 8th month, Lü had covenanted with Ch'i, Sung, Yung, Ts'ao, and Ju. In the 9th month, Lü alone defeated a Ju host at Yen 玦.

5/1:9 (0659). Failed blocking action. In the 10th month, the Lü Prince's kinsman Yoo 友 led the Lü host, defeated a Jyö 容 host at Lü 邑, and went on to capture Jyö's Na 納. This is reminiscent of Lü Yín-güng's exploit in Sung (1/10:3), where a minor encounter on the way did not deflect the invader from his purpose.

5/15:11 (0645). Successful incursion. In spring, a Ch'i force attacked Syw 美. In the 3rd month, a Lü contingent with forces from Ch'i, Sung, Wei, Yung, Syw 許, and Ts'ao went to relieve Syw. Actions later that year are recorded for Ch'i, Sung, and Ts'ao; that winter, Sung attacked its previous ally Ts'ao; that month a Ch'i force defeated Syw 美 at Loo-lin 睦林. The allies having dispersed, that second Ch'i effort succeeded. Note that the defeated Syw force is not called a "host" 魚, the standard Sinitic term; indeed, no Syw 魚 host is ever mentioned in the CC. In 10/4:2 (0538) Syw met with others, most of non-Sinitic origin, among them a non-Sinitic and non-state people, the Yi 窮 tribes of the Hwā River area. A "non-Sinitic" explanation suffices.

5/33:3 (0627). Uncertain. At the end of 0628, the legendary Wán-güng of Jin had died. In the 1st month of 0627, a Ch'in force entered Jin at Hwa. Ch'i sent an inquiry to Lü, and in the 4th month, aided not by Lü but by the Jyö Rüng 姜戎, defeated Ch'n at Syâu 勝, on the Ch'in/Jin border. The Ch'in force had presumably gone further into Jin meanwhile, and was here in retreat from Ch'i and its allies; a rear attack is possible. So too, given Ch'i's Rüng allies, is a non-Sinitic mode of warfare.

5/33:8 (0627). Uncertain. In summer, a body of Dî invaded Ch'i, and evidently also Jin. CC later tells us that Jin defeated the Dî at Ji 竭, in Jin territory. The Jin leader is not said to be in charge of a 狀 host, and may have been fighting in a way adapted to the warfare practiced by the Dî. Details of this and other ba 謂 are not now knowable, but the prominence of non-Sinitic states and peoples in the ba 謂 list is very suggestive.

6/11:6 (0616). Uncertain. In the autumn of 0616, the Dî had made an incursion into Ch'i. In the 10th month, Shússún Dî-chvén defeated the Dî at Syên 蘇, apparently a place within Lü, which we must assume had also been attacked. See preceding.

8/12:3 (0579). Uncertain. In the autumn of 0579, a Jin leader defeated the Dî at Jyâu-güng 交鬪, probably in Jin territory. See preceding.


10/5:6 (0537). Uncertain. Shù Güng led the Lü host and defeated a Jyö host at Fên-chywên 勻椏 in Lü. We suggest that the Jyö force was not prepared for the Lü force, so that a set-piece battle, with both sides ready for battle, did not occur.

27Thus Shwō-wên. It is here that DJ (3/11:1) defines CC military terms, and gives a "disorganization" meaning to ba 謙 "敗鬪". This does not apply in all cases, though we find the DJ definition of battle as a two-sided formal encounter (者鬪鬪鬪) to be correct.
10/23:7 (0519). Uncertain. In the 7th month, early autumn, Wǔ defeated the hosts of Dünn, Hū, Shvnn, Tsǎn, Chvnn, and Syv." at Ji-fū. Hū and Shvnn were extinguished, and Syà Nyè of Chvnn was captured. This implies a rout for the opposing forces. Non-Sinitic Wǔ made its first CC appearance by attacking Tán in spring 0584; it here continues to expand into the territory adjacent to it. The rout, and the capture of an opposing leader, remind us of similar jän outcomes (5/15:12, 7/2:1); it is thus not for lack of severity or finality that this encounter is not called a jän. A non-Sinitic way of war remains a plausible explanation. Slightly earlier, in 10/17:6, Wǔ had apparently been fighting in Sinitic style, and we must thus posit Wu’s capacity to fight either way.

11/14:4 (0496). Uncertain. In the 5th month, the state of Ywywe defeated Wǔ at Dzwel-li. Both states belonged to the non-Sinitic coastal culture; neither entered the conflict as a "host." The fighting must have been on a large scale, but it may have been conducted in non-Sinitic style. So may all but two of the last nine events on the bà list. That frequent possibility becomes our explanation for those failures of the CC to call the event a jän battle.

Conclusion

We submit that our hypothesis is confirmed. There are two reasons why a military encounter is not called jän in the CC. Either it was of Sinitic type but not formal, or it was of non-Sinitic type altogether. The term bà-jī may preserve the warrior’s shame at being bested in a contest of valor, a contest which was culturally familiar and thus evoked his code of valor. So “disgracefully defeated” is a valid translation of the term, but that is not any longer what the CC scribes sought to convey by using the term. In the CC, bà-jī is simply the standard term for defeat in a formal jän battle. It tells us nothing specific about shame, severity, or disorganization following from the battle. Any such information must be gleaned from other CC entries.

CC warfare, as viewed from the top (and what the CC gives us is precisely the view from the top), did not seek occasions for the display of valor. On the contrary, it seems to have sought to avoid such occasions, and to achieve its ends as far as possible by unopposed military force. To the Spring and Autumn ruler, victory in a set-piece jän battle may well have been second best to securing, without battle, the state’s objective: new territory gained by easy conquest, policy change induced by cheap intimidation, or successful interference in the succession crisis of some neighboring state.

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