

Confucius

Confucius was not prominent enough to be mentioned in the Lǚ court chronicle, the Chūn/Chyōu, but that chronicle does give us the background for his lifetime and that of his father. With additions from Kǔng family tradition and from the Analects, the following picture can be put together.

(1) **Ancestry.** The Kǔngs were military refugees from Sùng, who eventually became ritual advisors to the Lǚ court. Only Confucius' father, Kǔng Hý, had a military career. Through his mother, the daughter of a trading family with court connections, Confucius was also acquainted in the commercial sphere, which was growing in social importance at that time.

(2) **Life.** Confucius grew up as a warrior, though due to his father's early death, not a very effective one. He was a member of Lǚ Jāu-gūng's retinue during Jāu-gūng's exile in Chí. In those years he gained a familiarity with the ruler and his circle that would not otherwise have been possible. This earned him the trust of Jāu-gūng's brother and successor Dìng-gūng, under whom he would make his unique contribution to the new civil service. His dual social membership, not only with the Kǔngs and the larger exile community, but also with the newly important commercial sector, gave him an advantage in the practical task of recruiting promising civil servants.

(3) **An Ethic of Service.** That unique contribution was summed up by his leading disciple Dž-gùng in sixteen remembered sayings of Confucius, arranged as a sort of teaching manual. It is now the core of Analects 4.

Confucius became not merely one of many finders of scribal talent, but the leader of a devoted group. Those formed the Confucian school, and we may observe the later development of their ideas in their school text, the Analects. The next chapter will follow the Analects for its first century.