DEVELOPMENT OF STATEHOOD: FROM EASTERN CHOU TO HAN

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In this paper I intend to discuss the development of the state in China during the Eastern Chou to the Ch'in-Han period and related changes in socio-economic and ideological aspects. The focus is on the influence of the state power upon socio-economic changes. I do not intend to touch on the issue of the origins of the state, however. The State as a polity can be approached by relating it to the society, economy, and culture separately. By examining the point at which the states interacts with social groups, we can study the meaning of political life for members of the group. Studying the contemporary states, one can look into the State as an organization through which official collectives may pursue distinctive goals. On the other hand, the State may be studied microscopically as a configuration of organizations and actions that influence the meanings of methods of politics for all groups and classes in society (Scocpol, 1985: 27-28). Likewise, the early State can be studied at the juncture of political and social groups in order to discern the changing relationship between both, as well as the influence upon their meanings of life.

The state organization of the Shang period underwent considerable changes through its history. There had been within the domain of the Shang king a dual structure of grouping people in the name of tsu and in the division of localities of i. Meanwhile, the subordinate states around Shang and in the peripheries maintained a variety of relationships with the dominant power, Shang. The Shang governing apparatus, however, developed a certain complexity, and the royal authority was elevated. (K.C. Chang 1980: 158-165). The Shang state must have made an impact upon the neighboring people to develop into statehood. The formation of the state of Western Chou preceding its conquest of North China, nevertheless was also a response to the pressure of foes from the steppe land in the north. The epic in which Tan-fu led the Chou people

to move across Mount Liang in order to flee from the encroachment of the Ti people was the Chou's "exodus". The military organization described in the Kung-liu gradually evolved into a state of settlements in the Chou-yuan. This indeed reveals one significant dimension of the formation of statehood among the Chou people. The relationship between Shang and Chou, sometimes in war, sometimes in peace, is routinely reflected in the Shang oracle-bone inscriptions as well as the Book of Changes. The state organization of the Shang therefore influenced the formation of statehood among the Chou people too. This may be another significant dimension of the development of the Chou people toward statehood.

After the victory over the Shang, the Chou actually established a regime which controlled a vast territory. The Chou directly ruled a royal domain which consisted of the Chou-yuan home base and a good part of the Shang domain. The territories of the Chou subordinate states collectively occupied even larger areas. The Chou feudal network was more a political structure for exercising control than a network of economic exploitation. The Chou lords were basically commanding officers of a garrison that was stationed around northern China. They indeed had to develop a method to extract resources from territories of the garrison states so that they did not need to rely upon supplies shipped from the royal domain to support their garrison duties. The development of Chou feudalism therefore was closely related to the formation of a Hua-Hsia nation.

The lords and dukes who were dispatched by the Chou and established states in the vast eastern land were predecessors and ancestors of the state rulers of the Ch'un-ch'iu period. At the time of their being enfeoffed, the lords would usually have as their subordinates a combination of some units of the Chou troops, some Shang units who joined the Chou in the campaign to establish the Chou sovereign, and the natives who finally accepted the Chou superiority. The coalition of two or even three elements constituted the population of the cities that were hubs of the newly formed states of the Chou feudal network. The city was walled and thus fortified. In the ancient characters, both the city and the state were called a *kuo*, while the suburbs technically were not a part of the *kuo*. The usage of *kuo* to mean city continued to be in use during the

Ch'un-ch'iu period. Distinctions between the city people and the country folk persisted in the time of Confucius. The state lords of the Western Chou period did rule their domain; their sovereignty, however, was by no means complete, because sovereignty was shared by the Chou king who was superior to the lord as well as the lower-ranked nobles who were also delegated authority to govern their own domains with a certain independence and autonomy. Therefore, if a state is judged according to basic conditions of territory, population and sovereignty, the Chou feudal states were not independent, full-fledged territorial states at all. Li Tsung-tong and Tu Cheng-sheng, therefore preferred to call them "City-States".

The Chou city-states only nominally bear some similarities to the Mesopotamian city-states and those of ancient Greece. Historians and archeologists of these two areas often took the city-state as a stage of the state formation process. The autonomy of city-states is also an historical phenomenon that interested numerous scholars.

Oppenheim noted that the Mesopotamian city often maintained certain freedoms which the king must give up. There was at all times conflict between the king and the city. The course of development from village to city to empire was by no means a smooth one (Kraeling and Adams, 1958: 79-80). The city in Mesopotamia had been a supra-village polity long before the state was formed. The alluvial plain of Mesopotamia lacked natural resources other than soil. The Sumerians, as well as their successors, had to import raw materials such as stone and timber while exporting grain and finished products in exchange for the imported items. The city served as a collective which accumulated surplus, organized caravans for long-distance trade, and distributed the acquired resources. Such a collective was an integrated body of members who shared common interests and thus the members also shared the right and responsibility of making decisions. From village to territorial state, the city was a midway point. In the early dynastic period, Sumerian merchants set up trade colonies in distant places which served the function of trading posts. The dam-gar merchants were as powerful as a business guild or chamber of commerce in our own time (Griffeth and Thomas, 1981: 16).

During the Assyrian period, long-distance trade was conducted for

the sake of securing metals, timber, and other raw resources. The city was a legal personality that was represented by a city assembly that made collective decisions, while the king of the city merely spoke on behalf of the corporate entity. Even in the period of the Assyrian Empire, wealthy merchants governed the capital city. The mayor was literally an overseer of the merchants; the position was held in rotation within a rather small circle of the wealthy citizens (Kraeling and Adams, 1958 : 171-172; Larson, 1976 : 153-154, 215, 216).

In Greek cities, the acquisition and distribution of resources were held communally. The collective citizenry controlled more wealth than any individual. The city-state, until its decline, dominated economic activities which few individuals would challenge, although the city might lease businesses to private enterprises (Griffeth and Thomas, 1981: 60-61). Karl Kraeling commented upon the phenomenon of urbanization in the Near East since Alexander as a result not of chance, and rather, at least partly, of inherited establishment, as well as that of program. He thought that the colonial founders of Alexander's empire as a group outlined the pattern to establish the garrison and communication stations into cities (Kraeling and Adams, 1958 : 191).

The Greek cities, on the one hand, had exhibited certain characteristics of the Masopotamian cities; on the other hand, they genetically preceded the Near Eastern, and for the same reason, even the Mediterranean cities. In the tradition of the Western world, the city-state is one step in the process toward a traditional state. Meanwhile, it should be noted that cities have maintained their independence for a long time. Many medieval cities often kept their autonomy, and participation in local politics remained privileges of the citizens. Such a tradition can actually be traced back to the Mesopotamian and Greek cities whose lack of natural resources led to the necessity of developing trade with other places. The historical genetic relationship between the European cities and their Near East and Greek predecessors should be significant in determining the direction of development of the European cities. On the contrary, throughout the entire span of ancient Egyptian history, the large settlements certainly should be classified at the same level as cities in Mesopotamia. Nevertheless, the Egyptian cities were never collectives which were legal personalities. The Egyptian cities, as Wilson

noted, were administrative centers such as capitals of states, and ceremonial centers such as temple sites. When the Egyptian state structure collapsed, the cities might have become the center of local activities. No sooner did the state regain its strength, then cities fell back to subordinate status. The Egyptian city was never a collective body (Kraeling and Adams, 1958: 126-127).

Neither the Western Chou states nor the Ch'un-ch'iu states displayed the characteristics of the Mesopotamian-Greek city-state. Establishment of these states in the Western Chou period by a *fen-feng* system that can only be loosely translated as feudalism gives these states their basic character. A Chou city-state was not a legal personality. The kuo-jen or people of the city constituted a coalition of the ruling elements who, with the lord as a hub, were segmented, and derived from the Chou royal house. The city people as a group formed the basic body which often moved from one assigned domain to another, without being attached to a particular locality which was a city. Chou "feudalism" was an institution which assigned people instead of territory to a subgroup of the main body of the Chou nation. It is, in fact, a process of segmentation, and a continuous process of segmentation that produced even smaller suburb groups. The Chou "feudalism" is indeed not drastically different from the Shang one that too was a social unit of the Shang state (Hsu Cho-yun, 1984: 147).

Nevertheless, once a group of people led by a lord moved to a given place, and once the local natives (or at least some of them) joined the population of the coalition, the new state, with its concerns of local interest and local resources, would develop an attachment to the locality, and thus become a territoriality. After the loss of their capital in the Wei River Valley in 772 B.C., the network of Chou states collapsed. The states in the eastern plain were then transformed from segmented subgroups to localized polities. The Ch'un-ch'iu state, although dominated by a single city, still distinctively different from the Mesopotamian-Greek pattern of city-states, never acquired a legal personality. Even during the Chan-kuo period, when both commercialization and urbanization occurred, the Chinese cities were never independent from the state authority.

In ancient China, the economic function of the city could not surpass

its administrative and military functions. Such a basic attribution should make the Chinese cities more akin to the Egyptian model rather than the Mesopotamian-Greek counterpart. In the Central Plain which was the center of activities in ancient China, raw materials such as metals, timber, and other resources were readily available in a great variety of terrains and ecological conditions. A state did not need to conduct long-distance trade for the sake of securing essential resources. On the other hand, the farming villages that spread around the cities, as Tu Cheng-sheng argued, were communities which might have been there as early as Neolithic days. These communities supplied the city with food and other products. City and rural villages were mutually dependent and supplementary; their interests were probably in very little conflict. Both the city and the village were settlements known as "*i*". In the time of Confucius, an *i* could be as small as having ten households. A city was only an extension of the rural community. By expanding from a smaller area to include a larger area a city could develop into a territorial state.

The city was not an exclusive legal personality. Therefore there was nothing to prevent several cities from being included in a territorial state. The process of development toward territorial states in cities of the Mesopotamian-Greek model often involved struggles between and among competing cities (Kraeling and Adams, 1958: 79-80). These inter-city struggles, however, were not an issue in ancient China.

Statehood in the Ch'un-ch'iu period was not based on a prototype of a territorial state; instead, the Ch'un-ch'iu states consisted of remnants of the Chou system of the segmented *fen-feng* network. These Ch'un-ch'iu states were not as complete as the Western Chou kingdom as far as functions and structures of a state were concerned. For instance, sovereignty belonged to the Western Chou king; none of the subordinate states could claim complete sovereignty until the fall of the Chou. Throughout the Ch'un-ch'iu and Chan-kuo periods, the states, step by step, gradually established their own claim of full sovereignty. By the time several state rulers proclaimed themselves monarch in the mid-Chan-kuo period, the Chou sovereignty was completely discarded. Again for instance, there was often unclaimed territory between the Ch'un-ch'iu states. The Ch'un-ch'iu state usually controlled areas along networks of roads which reached outposts assigned to their own lesser no-

bles who served as ministers. There were few border checkpoints on the road system; the domain of one state might be located beyond the land controlled by another state (Ku Tung-kao, 1888, and Yu Cheng-hsi, 1888). In theory at least, all of China was owned by the Chou crown; a lord of the fen-feng system was just one element in the whole system. The vague boundaries between states was not a serious concern to the members of the Chou system. In the Ch'un-ch'iu period, however, the de-facto independent states had to consolidate the territory then controlled by assuring clear demarcation of the borders within which every settlement and every person ought to be brought under the state administration.

By the time of the fall of the Western Chou, in the localized state whose interests were identified with the local population that formed a coalition of the Chou people and the natives, localized cultures had developed. The centrifugal tendencies of the state that were identified with such local interests and local cultures, gradually outweighed the gravitation to the former Chou royal network. On the other hand, the localized state had to confirm its sovereignty and its identity so a centripetal tendency within the state also grew strong. The interaction of both tendencies finally shaped China into a multi-state system (Walker, 1953).

The centrifugal tendency of the Chou fen-feng system during the Ch'un-ch'iu period was well documented by Ku Tung-kao in his chronological analysis of the inter-state relationship drawn from the Tso-chuan. The Chou royal house and the state exchanged hostages in 720 B.C. In a battle between Chou and Cheng, the Chou king was wounded on the shoulder in 707 B.C. The death of King Chuang was neither reported to the states, nor did the states send any condolence messages in 682 B.C. An inter-state meeting was presided over for the first time by the Duke of Ch'i, a state ruler, instead of the royal envoy in 681 B.C. The king was summoned by the powerful Ch'iu duke to attend an inter-state meeting in 632 B.C.

In less than a century the Chou royal house lost all its authority, in name as well as in reality. The institutionalization of a Pa [over-lordship] which was passed from one state to another and held for a prolonged period largely by the state of Ch'in, supplanted the Chou royal

authority. During this transition, the Chinese world was kept relatively in order, and at the same time all the major members of the Chinese multi-state system enjoyed the freedom to expand and to consolidate. The inter-state conference on limits of armaments in 545 B.C. should be regarded as an occasion of mutual recognition of full sovereignty and autonomy among peers. The overlordship [Pa] was transmitted from the states of Cheng and Kuo in the heartland of China gradually to the peripheral states of Ch'i and Ch'in, and Chin testified that the strong cenrifugal force in the periphery provided those states with a free hand to overcome the traditional influence of the Chou system and to use well their potential in human as well as natural resources for the sake of their state-building task.

The centripetal tendency within each major state followed the centrifugal tendency that pulled states away from the residue of the Chou system. The first step of the centripetal movement was the centralization of political authority. By the mid-Ch'un-ch'iu period, in the sixth century B.C., oligarchies dominated by ministerial households had been established in most of the important states—Lu, Sung, Cheng, Ch'i, etc. Further struggles among the powerful hereditary ministers finally changed these oligarchies into monarchies. A parallel phenomenon was that local administrative posts were appointed by the state court to replace and often to displace the hereditary lord of the domain. Thus, aristocracy finally gave way to some kind of bureaucracy that assisted the state ruler to govern (Cho-yun Hsu, 1965: 80-95).

Such a change took place in virtually all the important states sooner or later during the Ch'un-ch'iu and Chan-kuo period. The first appearance of the *hsien* [county] administrative unit could be either in Ch'in [688 B.C.] or in Ch'u during the reign of King Wu [740-690 B.C.]. The new *hsien* unit was governed by a magistrate appointed by and reporting to the state ruler. And in either case the creation of *hsien* was related to the annexation of a newly conquered region. Therefore, conflicts between states should have been one of the significant causes of consolidation of state authority in order to strengthen control on the local level. Both Ch'in and Ch'u located at peripheries of the old heartland where the inhibition of the old *fen-feng* system was less rigid. There were also *hsien* units in Chin, the leading state of the Central Plain. The Chin

hsien remained as hereditary domains until 514 B.C. when the domains of two major noble houses were divided into ten *hsien* units after they were defeated by rival houses. The new *hsien* thus created were directly controlled by the central state court, not only because the magistrates were appointed, but also because judicial decisions made at the local level had to be approved by the state court (*Tso-chuan*, Duke Chao, year 28 and 29). Thus, this transformation is truly an important turning point in the history of the bureaucratization of local administration.

Claessen and Skalnik analyzed twenty-one cases of state development to reach the conclusion that an early state was judged to be typical if:

[1] trade and markets were developed at the supra-local level;
[2] heredity as a principle of succession was balanced by appointment;
[3] private ownership of land was still very limited, while state ownership was gradually becoming important;
[4] salaried functionaries were found in it besides remunerated functionaries, or one and the same functionary was receiving a salary as well as remuneration;
[5] a start towards condification of laws and punishment was formed;
[6] formal judges were present, besides "general" functionaries;
[7] regular tribute, partly in kind and partly in services, was exacted, and major works, organized by government functionaries, were being undertaken with the aid of compulsory labor. (Claessen and Skalnik, 1978: 640-641).

What has been discussed in the preceding paragraphs coincides with criteria #2 and #4 listed above. Comparing the other criteria with the historical events in the Ch'un-ch'iu period, we find close parallels item by item. As far as codification of law is concerned, the law was published in Cheng in 536 B.C. and the legal code was cast on bronze vessels in Ch'u in 513 B.C. Both cases testified that law had been codified and publicized.

Military services and taxation were closely related in ancient China: the former was a form of contribution of human resources, while the latter was a levy on material resources. In 645 B.C. the state of Chin demanded that regions outside the city bear military expenses which were formerly exacted only from the city dwellers. In 590 B.C. the

state of Lu also drew resources from the countryside to increase its military capability. Both Lu and Chin therefore expanded their tax-base to include the farming settlements which had no responsibility to shoulder military expenses. And both cases took place after the concerned states faced defeat or felt a shortage of arms. In 594 B.C. the state of Lu for the first time levied taxes according to the acreage of arable land. In 548 B.C. the state of Ch'u ordered a state-wide land survey to determine the total resources and thus budgeted the distributions of fiscal and military responsibilities of various regions (Cho-yun Hsu, 1965: 107-109).

The inter-state and intra-state power struggle happened in all the states during the Ch'un-ch'iu period and of course brought redistribution of resources, including land and wealth. The winners more often than not would bestow arable land on their supporters. These gifts, however, were not given as domains or fiefs. They were given as private properties. Meanwhile, the arable land which formerly might belong to farmers who were not in the fen-feng system, was to be taxed; the land newly reclaimed with iron implements would also be taxed. Therefore, ownership of land was gradually confirmed by taxation. The farming population was differentiated into some wealthy farmers who chould hire others to till the land, and some poor ones who were to be hired; inter-regional trade expanded with better and more frequent contacts and transport facilities; large populations turned non-productive due to the maintenance of armies; wealth concentrated in the hands of the upper level of the ruling classes who accumulated enormous surpluses and therefore large consuming capabilities. All these developments made the late Ch'un-ch'iu economy very active. That is reflected in the general trend of commercialization and urbanization (Cho-yun Han, 1968: 110-113, 116-117).

By the time the Ch'un-ch'iu period drew to a close in the fifth century B.C., the criteria of the typical early state as defined by Claessen and Skalnik appeared quite obviously prevalent. On the societal side, in China there was a restructuring of the society. Ever since the Shang period, the *tsu* [real or fictitious kinship group] which could be called an ascriptive group, had always been a significant political unit. The drastic social changes taking place during the Ch'un-ch'iu period brought many old *tsu* groups to their ends. The *tsu* was about to cease to be a politi-

cal unit. The tablets of oaths excavated at Hou-ma serve as evidence of such a transition from the tsu's changing function as a political unit. The six hundred pieces of stone tablets recorded the oath declared by supporters and subordinates of the powerful Chao clans who were among the winners of a bloody power struggle in the state of Chin. The people who were to be purged were the losers who belonged to twenty-one houses of nine clans. Some of the defeated people were members of the Chao while some belonged to other clans. The losers, together with "their uncles, brothers and descendants" were cursed in the tablets to never return to Chin (K'ao-ku-yen-chiu-so, 1976). This group of excavated documents is probably related to a coup d'etat in 495 B.C. although scholars have yet to settle a dispute on the date (K'ao-ku-yen-chiu-so, 1984: 280-281). What is revealed in the tablets of oath is that the solidarity within the tsu kinship group was lost. The power struggle indeed took place along tsu lines; even the penalty of curses was still directed against the tsu as a whole responsible group. Nevertheless, the Chao clan had been split—some of its own members were to be barred and cursed as defeated foes.

There were changes in ideologies, too, during the late *Ch'un-ch'iu* period. Confucius was repeatedly requested by his disciples to define politics. Among the four divisions of expertise of which Confucian disciples could make claim, one was political capability. Many of Confucius' disciples actually served in various capacities as government functionaries in several states. The entire Confucian system was developed upon a combined role-model of serving the public politically and character-building morally. Both general competence and worthiness in character are idealized criteria to enter goverment service, while breed or origin of birth is not taken into primary considerations. Such a conceptual change is again closely related to the disintegration of the *tsu* institution which were formerly political as well as social organizations. From then on, the social function of the *tsu* survived; the surname of a *tsu* remained as one's identity; but the *tsu* was no longer politically significant. The *hsin*, which can be roughly translated as nation, and the *tsu*, which can be roughly rendered as clan, were clearly distinctive in the Ch'un-ch'iu period. After the Chan-kuo period, this distinction of usage was totally blurred, and both were then regarded as surnames. The loss of meaning of *tsu* should be interpreted as a consequence of the separation of state

and society.

In summary, the Ch'un-ch'iu states gradually developed toward typical early statehood by acquiring the complete functions of a territorial state. On the other hand, the role of kinship groups within the state structure gradually faded as state authority increased. One of the dynamics that seemed to have an impact upon such transformations is the conflicts within the state and wars between states. The effects of such transformation of the state were reorganization of the society and the restructuring of the economy. The political significance of kinship groups receded while the state that consisted of bureaucrat-elites and taxpaying subjects formed a mode of state-society relationship.

It seems that the state, in the entire process of transformation, became an independent variable by itself.

During the Chan-kuo period, the transformation of the structure and function of the state was accelerated and escalated. The early state gradually developed the characteristics of a fullfledged state with complete sovereignty over its subjects and with undifferentiated authority. In the Chan-kuo period, wars and conflicts between states were frequent and violent. Each state had to make certain to mobilize all its human and natural resources for the sake of survival. Hence, many states introduced political reforms which included streamlining the administration, reducing the size and power of the privileged group, and most important of all, enhancing ways and means to tap resources. These political reforms, such as those staged by Wu Ch'i in Ch'u, by Shang Yang in Ch'in, and by Shen Pu-hai in Han, were featured in the centralization of political power in the hands of the monarchs, elimination or curtailment of the hereditary aristocracy, and reorganization of local administrations. Not only politics always a main concern in Confucianism, there also emerged the Fa-chia theories that were developed mainly to serve the need of political reformers. The newly rising intellectuals [shih] were trained to apply their knowledge and expertise in government. There were no more hereditary ministers in the court; there was no requirement that an official had to stay in one court forever. Intellectuals traveled from one state to another; foreign-born politicians were hired to fill positions in the major states. This was the beginning of professional bureaucrats who pursued politics as a career. Correspondingly, theories

on political behaviors, especially those proposed by the Fa-chia, such as loyalty, obedience, faithful discharge of assignments, and reward—punishment according to performance, laid a foundation for further bureaucratization in China (Cho-yun Hsu, 1965: 92-100).

Adams cited two elements in the history of the state formation in Mesopotamia which are rather cumulative: one is the development from the city-state to the territorial state, and another is the expansion of the society. The former involved an expansion in the size of the administrative elite, a qualitative increase in the complexity of the administrative organization. In short, the process of bureaucratization. For the latter, Adams suggested that the concerned society established new moral and artistic goals, and that there was an expansion in self-consciousness and moral stature (Kraeling and Adams, 1957: 84). The Chinese development in the Chan-kuo period, however, shows that the further growth of the territorial state due to the increase in size of the state and the complexity involved in the administration of larger areas as well as larger populations, would create sufficient conditions to lead to the qualitative changes that are a combined process of bureaucratization and the appearance of new experts who are bureaucrats. The second element which Adams raised, of course, reflected precisely the phenomenon of the active debates and arguments among the "one hundred schools of thought" prevalent in the Ch'un-ch'iu periods.

The great fluidity of social mobility in the Chan-kuo period as I suggested should finally be interpreted as a total restructuring of the society. The old socially stratified system with an hereditary aristocracy on the top gave way to a society which was dominated by state power that ruled all the subjects (Tu Cheng-sheng, 1985; Cho-yun Hsu, 1965: 39-52, 96-105). Thus, along the spectrum of familial-contractual relationship, the new social mobility would be associated with the shift of social relationships, to a specific, temporal, and therefore toward a contractual form. A release from the bondage of ascriptive ties, would probably also release the social energy that was essential to making the Chan-kuo period a time of enormous changes.

Let us return to the issue of state development. The mode of a Chan-kuo state is well described by Han Fei who synthesized three schools of Fa-chia theories: Shang Yang's emphasis upon law, Shen Tao's stress

on structure, and Shen Pu-hai's attention to administrative function. Thus, a state was to be ruled by impersonal codified law, governed by a structure that defined the distribution of power and authority, and administered by a system based on division of functions while the performances of incumbents were regulated. Han Fei's synthesis can actually be regarded as a comprehensive one encompassing legalist, functionalist, and structuralist approaches to government theory. A state of such a mode has fully developed statehood. The hereditary aristocracy was only a small minority. Law was codified, and rather universal. Land was privately owned and a market economy was developed. Under the sovereignty of a monarch, most subjects were of equal social status. In a few states (Wei and Ch'i, for instance) a standing army was mourned by the professional soldiers; while in Ch'in, able-bodied male adults rendered universal military service. Taxes, including the land tax and market tax, were generally levied so that the state was sustained by stable revenues.

The development experienced by Chan-kuo states was a continuation of those of the Ch'un-ch'iu period. The most pertinent primary dynamics also seemed to be wars and conflicts between states. Consolidation of the state power was for the purpose of surviving the inter-state struggle, which stimulated further expansion to control more resources. Economic changes taking place in the Chan-kuo period mainly coincided with the need to survive and the warrelated conditions (Cho-yun Hsu, 1965: 111-115, 117-126).

Agriculture was an economic activity that enjoyed good advancement. Water control projects were so developed that Wittfogel and other advocates of hydraulic theories often used the Chan-kuo case of irrigation development to suggest a close causality between the need for hydraulic engineering and the appearance of rather despotic state power (K.A. Wittfogel, 1957). Adams, however, has long noted that the development of irrigation projects in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Meso-America took place after, not before, the appearance of states. The need to develop hydraulic engineering was not the primary force that initiated the organization of the ancient state (Adams, 1958: 280-289). Important water control projects, such as the Chang River project constructed by Hsi-men Pao in Wei, the Ch'i-ssu reservoir by Sun-shu Ao in Ch'u and the

Tu-chiang Dam by Li Ping in Ch'in were all constructed by local administrators after the respective states had developed strong state powers (Cho-yun Hsu, 1965: 131-133). Since the state in ancient China had its crucial headstart initiated as early as in the Ch'un-ch'iu period, the Chinese case therefore also testifies that a well-developed state appeared before the need for irrigation projects was felt, rather than the latter determining the necessity to develop the former. It is the state, especially a fully developed state, that endows its local administrators with sufficient resources to construct costly irrigation projects for the sake of increasing the per-unit agricultural product. Here, again, the state seems to be an independent variable that influenced the economy, in this case agriculture, to advance.

Chan-kuo states were such well-developed territorial states that China had a multi-state system which resembled the early modern European multi-state system. It should be noted that such territorial states, unlike the pattern of the European states, did not completely break away to become a number of totally independent polities, even though for some centuries the Chan-kuo states did have complete sovereignty until the Ch'in unification. The Chinese always regarded China as a single entity and any disunion, including the disunion of the Chan-kuo period, was only temporary. Such a mentality should be partly attributed to the general acknowledgement of the Chou royal authority which historically had been recognized as a form of unification that was related to the formation of a Chinese Hua-Hsia nation. Respect of the common leadership of the Chou royal authority was transformed into a concept of a culturally unified Chinese world. Meanwhile, the frequent contacts among the Ch'un-ch'iu and the Chan-kuo states finally created a common heritage that put every state under the process of assimilation. The state of Ch'u, a long-time challenger of the northern China coalition, by the end of the Ch'un-ch'iu period, had eventually absorbed so much of the Chinese cultural elements through frequent contacts, that it was accepted as a member of the Chinese inter-state community. Archeologically speaking, the Ch'u burial sites at Chiang-ling and Chang-sha yielded findings quits similar to those excavated from the Eastern Chou tombs in North China. The morphology and composition of the bronze vessels were generally akin to their northern counterparts; although the pottery was quite distinctively different from the northern tradition (K'ao-ku Yen-

chiu-so, 1984: 306-307).

Another case of cultural assimilation is the state of Chung-shan in present-day Hopei. Chung-shan was probably a state of the Hsien-yu or White Ti, who were non-Chinese tribal people in the North. Nevertheless, the excavated burials of Chung-shan Kings in the Chan-Kuo period displayed a heavily sinicized local culture (K'ao-kuYen-chiu-so, 1986: 295-297). The state of Chung-shan had never been a member of the Western Chou fen-feng network. Neither necessity nor tradition dictated that the Chung-shan people should follow the rituals of the Chou hierarchy. But the excavated royal tomb adopted the ritualistic regulations of the Chou system in every detail (Ibid: 297-298). The states of Tseng and Ts'ai had for a long time been drawn into the Ch'u orbit. The tombs of the Tseng and Ts'ai rulers, however, were still built according to the Chou way; the rituals reflected in buried objects also faithfully reflected the customs of the Chou state rulers (Ibid: 298-303). It seems, therefore, that the upper echelon of the Chan-kuo states were virtually a homogeneous group who shared some cultural heritage as a consequence of cultural assimilation.

The Chinese writing system, had been unified ever since the Shang period. Therefore, literate people throughout China generally used the same script to read and to write. In the Tso-chuan and other classics, the diplomats of the Chun-ch'iu states cited verses and anecdotes from the same literary sources. These aristocrats were educated in the same literary tradition. The Chan-kuo intellectuals traveled rather freely from one state to another. There were local dialects in different states, but the Chan-kun intellectuals were able to communicate in the court as well as with each other. There is no doubt that a common culture was shared by the upper classes. This cultural homogeneity and a memory that once upon a time there was a Chou king who ruled a universal kingdom of China, or at least a good part of China, enabled the Chan-kuo people to readily develop a sense of cultural unity and thus also a desire for political unification. Mencius commented on the issue of unification as if it were an assumption to be taken for granted. Probably the notion that China ought to be unified was commonly held by all the Chan-kuo ruling classes, including the intellectuals. They agreed on Chinese unification, yet they could not agree upon the issue: who was to unify China? Ironically, because every state aspired to achieve unification under her leader-

ship, wars becames more frequent and more violent. Therefore the term warring states was given to this period. For the sake of survival and victory, the authority of the state as well as its functions was increased steadily until the whole of China was unified by the most authoritarian state. It may not be off the mark to relate cultural homogeneity to the urge to achieve political unification, and therefore wars were so perpetuated that the state power was expanded accordingly.

Chinese culture, ever since the Neolithic period, was centered in the Central Plain which some years ago was called the nuclear area by archeologists. The concept of a nuclear area is now being revised to recognize the existance of several local traditions. It nevertheless is a historical reality that the Hsia-Shang-Chou continuity made the Central Plain the core of cultural development in China. The Western Chou, by its fen-feng system, on the one hand radiated cultural influences from the core. On the other hand, the tentacles of the same fen-feng system also facilitated the blending of native cultures in various local areas into the dominating culture of the Chou heartland. The two-way acculturation was a prolonged continuous process. In the late Western Chou and the Ch'un-ch'iu periods, the tendency toward localization was so strong that centrifugal forces probably inspired the Ch'un-ch'iu states to establish de-facto independence. The late Ch'un-ch'iu and the Chan-kuo periods, in turn, probably witnessed a reversed tendency that centripetal forces, due to frequent contacts, facilitated the formation of cultural homogeneity.

The Ch'in unification signaled the last step toward completion of the evolution of the state in China. The early state had developed into a gigantic complicated empire. Because there had been a considerable degree of cultural homogeneity, at least among the elite, the empire built upon such a foundation was consequently a universal empire. The national states, which appeared in early-modern Europe, could not find their counterparts in ancient China.

In China after the Ch'in empire there was always a very strong cultural gravity which pulled the neighboring peripheral cultures into its own orbit because the Chinese core was both so large and homogeneous that the peripheral ones could hardly match its strength. The heterogeneous neighboring cultures were continuously absorbed and integrated

into the core; the Chinese core would continuously expand and become even larger, even more massive, and therefore even more homogeneous and universalized. The process of regeneration could proceed until the system itself collapsed internally, or was suddenly confronted with another universalized powerful system. The entire process, again, evolved around a powerful state, that of a universal empire.

The structure of the Ch'in-Han empire's governing apparatus was essentially the realization of Fa-chia ideology. The monarchy held supreme authority. The provincial and county governments were held responsible for local administration. Division of labor and function was found in departments at all levels of government. Written rules and codified law served as a base of regulations. Periodically reports were submitted by functionaries to their superiors who checked the subordinates performance according to assigned missions and jurisdictions. Special offices of inspectors and overseers at various levels of government kept the functionaries under accountable surveillance. All these practices had actually been initiated or developed in the governments of the Chan-kuo states. The Ch'in system which Han inherited was an end product evolved from the Chan-kuo initiations. Han Fei's synthesis ought to be regarded as a synthesis that provided theoretical justification for existing institutions.

The state in the *Chou-li* [the Rites of Chou] was probably also an idealized one in which bureaucracy had fully blossomed. The *Chou-li* was possibly compiled in the late Chan-kuo period, at a time when the state was just about to be bureaucratized. I venture to suggest that the *Chou-li* was a utopia proposed by scholars who anticipated the full development of bureaucracy which was a relatively rational mechanism of governance that least could be a counter weight to the unchecked authority of the ruler. Those who proposed this, of course, might not be able to foresee the shortcomings of a gigantic bureaucracy such as reduced efficiency, conservative tendencies, etc. The state in the *Chou-li* seemed to be universalized so that it reflected the universality of the Chinese culture. Because of such universality and the related homogeneity of Chinese culture, another large encyclopedic work, the *Lü-shih-ch'un-ch'iu* presented a vast all-embracing cosmic system in which the cosmos, just like a state, was a universalized cosmological order of rational struc-

tures and functions. The same mentality can also be seen in many Han works, including the *Huai-nan-tzu*, the *Ch'un-ch'iu-fan-lu*, and the metaphysics of Yang Hsiung, most of whom viewed the cosmos as a mirror image of the universal state in this world.

The completion of the Ch'in-Han imperial state system was achieved by having the system of politics and the order of knowledge interwoven and then almost totally overlapped. Those encyclopedic works mentioned above represented intellectual efforts to organize knowledge and ideology into metaphysical orders which were systemic and schematic. The total overlapping of knowledge and politics took place after intellectuals becoming bereaucrats. Ch'in's government was overthrown probably because of Ch'in's failure to secure the support of the intellectuals. The Ch'in anti-intellectualism induced the state to restricted educational roles only within the bureaucracy while clerks were teachers who trained youth to work as clerks. No knowledge beyond pragmatic skills and the three "R"s was allowed to be taught. The suppression of the intellectuals reflected the monopoly of the political system in every sphere of the society. A totalitarian Ch'in state thus prevailed, and existed only briefly.

The Han empire almost repeated the Ch'in's failure to secure the support of intellectuals during its early reigns when the Han government was manned by the descendants of a small exclusive group of the founders of the dynasty. The establishment of a system of bureaucratic recruitment by means of recommendation and examination created a mechanism that brought intellectuals into government service. Meanwhile, Confucianism, which was originally attached to the Fa-chia ideology, became virtually the mainstream of Han political thought, recommendation and examination for government service, and these were turned into channels of indoctrination that helped spread Confucianism. The system of recruitment therefore became a catalyst that welded a Confucian ideological system into a bureaucratic system of the empire. The Fa-chia theories indeed stressed the method and the functions of governance; the goal and the purpose of the governance, however, were not their concern. On the contrary, in Confucianism the purpose and meaning of the state were the central concerns in politics, while pragmatic skills and methods of governance were hardly touched. A combination of both Confucianism and the Fa-chia theories thus provided the Han imperial bureaucracy with

an intellectual rationalization (Cho-yun Hsu, 1986).

In the early reigns of the Han period, the intellectuals were still divided into contending schools. As soon as the bureaucracy and Confucianism were welded into overlapped systems, the heterogeneous intellectual circles gave way to a highly homogeneous community of intellectuals. The learning of Motzu and Yang Chu, for instance, were among the major schools during the Chan-kuo period. They were completely ignored in Han, however. The Han intellectual homogeneity therefore was very exclusion.

Eisenstadt noted that, in the bureaucratic society, the political system had a tendency to develop political autonomy and generalized power. On the other hand, there were also limitations on the tendency of generalization of power in the political system. The participating social groups often had their own claims and expectations to be translated into their political goals. Thus, the rulers' tendency toward generalization of power would be confronted with the problem accruing from the development of a similar or parallel tendency among the ruled (Eisenstadt, 1963: 363-368). The Han case is one of the cardinal examples that such a limitation occurred. The intellectual system and the bureaucracy joined to serve the state; nevertheless, the joint force also checked and balanced the imperial authority. The claims and expectations of these intellectual-bureaucrats needed to be translated into political actions. Thus, the moral code which Confucians internalized in their thinking and their behavior, became guiding principles of government policies. With their indispensable service to bureaucracy as a spearhead, the Confucians had the resources to turn government policy to their claims and expectations, i.e. their ideology, and made such ideology into reality.

The Han state possessed enormous power which was hardly matched by other sectors either social or economic. The interference of state power in the Han economic development created a sharp turn of direction in the Chinese economy. During the early decades of the Han dynasty, the economy was a continuation of free marketing under the Chan-kuo multi-states environment. A laissez-faire policy during the early reigns generally created favorable conditions for the Han economy to grow. An urban-based highly commercialized economy was noticeable at both the national and local levels. During the reign of Emperor Wu (140-87 B.C.),

financial difficulties due to foreign war and extravagance provoked the government policy to increase revenues by levying heavy taxes and adopting various profit-making enterprises. The result was that private sectors of the economy withered drastically due to government competitors backed by politically coercive powers, including judicial pressures. The destruction of the private economy took place during the initial merger of the intellectuals and bureaucrats. Although some intellectuals stood on the side of the despotic regime some Confucian scholars spoke on behalf of the private sector of the economy. The general trend was to favor agricultural development at the expense of the commercial and manufacturing enterprises. The Han economy after the reigns of Emperors Wu and Chao lost much of its dynamic. The vacuum created by the withering of the urban-based private commercial and manufacturing enterprises was filled by an agrarian economy which featured intensive farming on small farmsteads and a rural marketing network that depended upon cottage industry and fairground trade (Cho-yun Hsu, 1980, 38-56, 134-136). Such an agrarian economy remained typical of China for a long time. If the Han intellectual-bureaucratic system had not curtailed the development of an active urban-based economy at the crucial moment of its growth, such a shift toward an economy of small farmsteads might not have tipped the balance so much that the Chinese economy was forever trapped in a high-level equilibrium that Elvin found typically Chinese (Elvin, 1973).

The state system of the Ch'in-Han period was a completed structure. As has been illustrated in preceding paragraphs, the state could be a powerful independent variable that interacted with various social forces. When intellectuals who represented knowledge cooperated with the political system, i.e. the bureaucracy and the imperial authority, intellectuals as a social force facilitated the expansion of political power. Yet meanwhile, intellectuals could never match the strength of the state. The intellectuals found that they faced insurmountable resistance from the imperial authority as soon as they started to seriously implement their claims and expectations. The imperial authority would strike as soon as limitations on the generalization of despotic power were imposed by intellectuals. The latter who represented social conscience and idealized goals for a better society would then be suppressed and even crushed.

The massive purge against intellectuals in the Eastern Han period was exactly the tragedy that the Han intellectuals were doomed to experience after the social forces they represented were suppressed. On the other hand, some intellectuals chose to collaborate with the political authority and thus shared its dividends of power. The aristocratization of the establishment among intellectuals testified to such a process of symbiotic monopoly of power as political authority and power of knowledge merged. The end product, however, was a crystallization of the knowledge system and the creation of a politically approved orthodoxy which could not escape the loss of flexibility and its final death (Cho-yun Hsu, 1986).

The state in Chinese history was probably first developed during the Hsia-Shang periods and advanced to a large system of early states in the Western Chou period. Collapse of the Western Chou system brought into existence a number of localized entities which had to review the process of developing toward completed statehood because such remnants of the Chou system were not fully completed states. The Ch'un-ch'iu states, which could be conveniently called city-states, were not the same as the Mesopotamian-Greek model. The Chinese model of city-states was closely associated with ascriptive groups such as kinship groups and even nations while the Mesopotamian-Greek model was organized as spatial units. The conflicts between city-states produced the momentum to consolidate their internal structures. A multi-state system that evolved in the Ch'un-ch'iu and the Chan-kuo periods created the foundations for inter-state conflict, while the cultural uniformity provided a justification for all the states to further their own ambitions. Such conflicts in turn reinforced the consolidation of state power. The complete destruction of the Chou system led to a bureaucratic state that was built upon tax-paying subjects who were of rather equal status. The newly-rising intellectuals (*shih*) used their knowledge and expertise to serve the bureaucratic state and also helped the state to increase its political power. Cultural homogeneity coincided with the desire to achieve political unification to form a universal empire. The imperial authority, with the cooperation of the intellectuals, was served by a unusually large and powerful bureaucracy. Thus the imperial state became a monolithic power that was strong enough to destroy other social forces including members of the intellectual community. Some intellectuals opted to collaborate; a long-lived symbi-

otic relationship between the political power and the intellectuals deprived both of vitality and the ability to adjust: the corruption of power therefore led to the death of the entire system.

The whole process of evolution and devolution reflected adjustments and accommodations between state and society. It was the state that gained power at every stage and often it was the state that became an independent variable which changed society.

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