

## SOME WORKING NOTES ON THE WESTERN CHOU GOVERNMENT

CHO-YUN HSU

This paper is designated to discuss a few characteristics of the government organization of the Chou kings and their vassals in the Western Chou period, which spans from the end of the twelfth century B.C. to the last quarter of the eighth century B.C., a period little known to us both in historical documents as well as in archaeological discoveries.

Moreover, many accounts written later than the Ch'un Ch'iu period should be carefully scrutinized if they are to be used. Thus we are basing most of our discussion on the reliable chapters in the *Shang Shu* 尚書, the *Shih Ching* 詩經, and bronze inscriptions transcribed and deciphered by modern scholars. The nature of our sources, therefore, limits the scope of our discussion and the history of political events certainly is not to be considered here.

The bronze inscriptions, as well as the *Shang Shu*, always included two distinct groups of addressee or two distinct channels for transmitting the royal decree: one consisted of "many prince", another of "many officials". For illustration, "Ta Kao" 大誥 of the *Shang Shu*, reads:

"The king speaks to the following effect: Ho, I 王若曰猷  
make a great announcement to you, the princes of 大誥爾多邦  
the many states, and to you, the managers of my 越爾御事  
affairs...."

"Therefore I tell you, the princes of my friendly 肆予告我友  
states and you, the directors of departments, my 邦君，越尹氏，  
officers and managers of my affairs...."<sup>(1)</sup> 庶士御事

Such a bilateral administrative system makes us subdivide our study into two subjects: The status of the princes and the nature of the managers or directors.

(1) James Legge (trans.), *The Shoo King*, (Hongkong, Honkong University Press, 1960), Cf. pp. 381, 399, 413, 562, and bronze inscriptions: Kuo Mo-jo, *Liang Chou Chin Wen Tz'u Ta Hsi K'ao Shih* 郭沫若兩周金文辭大系考釋 (Tokyo, Bunkyo, 1936), p. 6, 35.

## I. FEUDALISM OF THE WESTERN CHOU

Rising from a minor power in the upper valley of the Yellow River, Chou expanded eastward and eventually replaced the once mighty Shang Kingdom as the master of ancient China in the last quarter of the twelfth century B. C., when Shang was exhausted by an expensive military campaign in her northeastern territory. The policy adopted by the Chou founders to guarantee their security and leadership was to station members, kinsmen and allies of the formerly small tribe at strategic locations in China, especially in the regions of the former Shang royal domain and its adjacent areas.<sup>(1)</sup>

These garrisons later on became the feudal states in the eastern plain of the Yellow River Valley. The kinship network of their commanders and, even more, their situation as strangers locating among a formerly hostile population tied them together so tightly that the Western Chou lasted for four centuries. The Chou royal house maintained its military prowess almost to the end of the dynasty. Military campaigns in all directions continued to be conducted by the royal army. Bronze inscriptions of various periods recorded repeatedly the glorious victories of Chou forces by the participants who were either feudal lords or Chou officers.<sup>(2)</sup>

Under the military prowess of Chou, which put at Lo-yang its fortified base to maintain troops ready to cope with any insubordination in the east, the non-Chou tribes were compelled to pay tributes.<sup>(3)</sup>

In addition to military prowess, the Chou royal house also assumed its leadership on the grounds of its charisma, the heavenly mandate. The heavenly mandate was commissioned to Chou because of its divine ancestry as well as the righteous conduct of its founding fathers.<sup>(4)</sup>

Thus in the bronze inscriptions both heaven and the Chou king appeared as sources of blessing. Sacrifice to ancestors became the affair of utmost importance. "Following the model of your ancestors" is one of the most

---

(1) James Legge (trans.), *The Ch'un Ts'ew with the Tso Chuen* (Hongkong, Hongkong University Press, 1960), p. 750. Legge (trans.), *The She King* (Hongkong, Hongkong University Press, 1960), p. 535, 550, 623.

(2) For instances: Kuo Mo-jo, *Liang Chou*, pp. 10, 108, 109, 120, 143, 146.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 143.

(4) Legge (trans.), *The She King*, pp. 448 ff., 465 ff.

common phrases in the bronze inscriptions. Also common is the phrase, "Your ancestors served well the former kings".<sup>(1)</sup>

It seems the citations of ancient relations were not merely a matter of rewarding on past merits, but rather of referring to the past relation so that the charisma bestowed by the ancient kings on the ancestor of a noble could be assumed to be bestowed also on the receiver of the inscribed honor.

Military prowess gave the Chou royal house the power to control, but it was the recognition of its charisma that provided it with the legitimacy to maintain control. The obedient compliance to both by feudal lords in turn re-strengthened the maintenance of both in the Chou royal house.

So far we have touched on two attributes of the Western Chou feudalism: The original nature of the states as garrison forces and the possibility of extensive, effective control over these states by the Chou royal house.

Because of the first attribute, when a feudal state of the Western Chou was established, it was not a mere recognition of the Chou overlordship by means of a certain kind of investiture ceremony. Some population movement also was involved. When Lu, Chin and Wei were established, to each was attached some subjugated Shang people who still were organized under their former clan units.<sup>(2)</sup>

Hsing also was given three kinds of people, perhaps some tribes newly surrendered to the Chou.<sup>(3)</sup>

Hundreds of persons were bestowed on the new lord in addition to land, towns and honors. The personnel given to a new lord seems to have consisted of officers, farmers and possibly some kind of slaves. On one bronze tripod the inscription recorded a total of approximately three thousand souls. Another bronze vessel discovered in 1954 bears an inscription which mentioned more than thirteen hundred persons given to a lord who ruled a rather small area.<sup>(4)</sup>

Here a problem of great pertinence is naturally touched upon: Whether Chou feudalism ever developed sub-infeudation. Some scholars doubt its

(1) For instance, Kuo, *Liang Chou*, pp. 34, 62. Cf. Kuo Mo-jo, *Chin Wen Ts'ung K'ao* 金文叢考 (Peiping: Jen-min Chu Pan She: 1954) pp. 11-28.

(2) Legge (trans.), *Tso Chuen*, p. 750.

(3) Lo Chen-yu 羅振玉, *San Tai Chi Chin Wen Ts'un* 三代吉金文存 (Pai Chueh Tsai, 1936) 6. 54. 2.

(4) Kuo, *Liang Chou*, p. 34. *Wen Wu Ts'an K'ao Tzu Liao* 文物參考資料, 1955, 559-60. *K'ao Ku Hsueh Pao* 考古學報, 9 (1955) 165. Cf. Chen Meng-chia 陳夢家, "Hsi Chou Wen Tsung Ti Yin Jen Shen Fen" 西周文中的殷人身份, *Li Shih Yen Chiu* 歷史研究, 1954, no. 6, pp. 85 ff.

existence. Yet, there is explicit evidence in a bronze inscription that sub-infeudation was practiced when a noble enfeoffed his own new vassal.<sup>(1)</sup>

All the forementioned cases happened around the first century after the Chou's conquest, namely in the reigns of King Wu 武王, King Ch'eng 成王 and King K'ang 康王 (1122-1053 B.C.). Even in an inscription much later, in the reign of King I 懿王 (934-910 B.C.), the noble was ordered during an investiture ceremony to inherit from his ancestor the "tiger warriors" 虎臣 and several barbarous groups which probably constituted some fierce combatant units.<sup>(2)</sup>

The population brought to the new state with the feudal lord probably eventually mingled with the local people and thus disappeared. However, when the state was first established the military settlers might have constituted the basic elements of Chou leadership.

When a new state was established, the lord brought with him not only his supporters, but also instructions from the Chou king. Therefore the policy or the constitution, so to speak, of a new state was given by the royal house. Instructions of some length were issued to a feudal lord during investiture.<sup>(3)</sup>

"K'ang Kao" 康誥 of the *Shang Shu* gives us an excellent example. When K'ang Shu 康叔 was sent to establish Wei, he was told in detail the principle and course of ruling a state, such as just and prompt punishment, employing good people and so forth.<sup>(4)</sup>

The legitimacy of Chou overlordship is demonstrated by the renewal of investiture. Perhaps due to the nature of charisma, which attaches to individuals only, the feudal relationship in the Western Chou period, similarly to that of Western Europe in the medieval period, was established between individuals. Therefore, when either the lord or the vassal was deceased, the feudal relationship between the successor and the surviving party must be established by another ceremony of investiture.<sup>(5)</sup>

(1) Henri Maspero "Le regime feudal et la propriete fonciere dans la Chine Antique", *Melangers posthumes sur la religions et l'histoire de la Chine*, III, *Etudes historique*, (Paris, 1950) pp. 133, 143-4; Derk Bodde, "Feudalism in China", in *Feudalism in History* (R. Coulborn, ed., Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1956 pp. 53, 57-58. Kuo Mo-jo, *Liang Chou*, p. 85.

(2) Kuo, *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

(3) Ch'i Ssu-ho 齊思和, "Chou Tai Hsi Ming Li K'ao" 周代錫命禮考, *Yen Ching Hsueh Pao* 燕京學報, 32 (1947), 202-226. Cf. Legge (trans.), *The She King*, pp. 535 ff., 554, 623. Legge (trans.), *Tso Chuen*, p. 750.

(4) Legge (trans.), *The Shoo King*, p. 390. Cf. Ch'i, "Ch'i, "Chou Tai Hsi Ming", p. 217.

(5) Ch'i Ssu-ho, "Chou Tai Hsi Ming", pp. 221-222.

For example, in one bronze inscription the year recorded is the "first year" which implies that a new king had just started his reign. The inscription records "we, following the example of our former king, order you to succeed to the old office of your ancestor".<sup>(1)</sup>

There are more cases of appointments of persons to step into positions which their ancestors held.<sup>(2)</sup>

Of these, perhaps most are of nobles who received new investiture.

The authority of the Chou royal house was ably pointed up by Ch'i Ssu-ho when he discovered that out of one hundred and sixty two Western Chou bronze vessels listed by Kuo Mo-jo in the *Liang Chou Chin Wen Tz'u Ta Hsi*, fifty five are of investiture and that fifty two of the fifty five inscriptions tell of the sites of the ceremonies being in the Chou capital or at the Chou royal ancestral shrines. This indicates that feudal lords came to Chou to seek for approval and recognition from the king. The fact became more significant when Ch'i pointed out that most of the investitures in the Ch'un Ch'iu period, when investitures happened very seldom, were held in the feudal state capitals with the participation of royal envoys.<sup>(3)</sup>

The Western Chou royal court not only enjoyed the prestige of legal overlord by exercising the investiture and its renewal, but also factually managed to install the overseer into the garrison as nominal lieutenant of the nobles who were commissioned to stations in its areas. One officer being appointed to assist a commanding general of a garrison troop, was then assigned to be an official to a certain marquis, whose relationship to the general was not specified, however.<sup>(4)</sup>

Another instance explicitly tells us that the feudal lord was the commander of the garrison, that his lieutenant was appointed by a former king and that the appointment was renewed by the new king.<sup>(5)</sup> Throughout the Ch'un Ch'iu period there were two families in the state of Ch'i 齊, always occupying top positions. These two families, Kuo 國 and Kao 高, were often referred to as "both holding appointment from the Son of Heaven".<sup>(6)</sup>

(1) Kou, *Liang Chou*, p. 73.

(2) Chen Meng-chia, "Hsi Chou T'ung Ch'i Tuan Tai 西周銅器斷代," (6), *K'ao Ku Hsueh Pao*, 14, (1956), pp. 113-114.

(3) Ch'i Ssu-ho, "Chou Tai Hsi Ming", p. 202.

(4) Chen Meng-chia, "Hsi Chou T'ung Ch'i Tuan Tai", (6), *K'ao Ku Hsueh Pao* 13 (1956) p. 108.

(5) Kuo, *Liang Chou*, p. 65.

(6) Legge (trans.) *Tso Chuen*, p. 159.

We perhaps can assume that in many states there were such overseers who later became hereditary top officers in the state.

A feudal lord who failed to answer the call to join the royal campaign was punished because of this failure. Furthermore, the charge as well as the verdict were both publicized, evidently to warn those who might fail to observe the same obligation in the future.<sup>(1)</sup>

The factual control by the Chou royal house was felt by the feudal lords if their successors were to be picked by the King of Chou. A ruler of Lu 魯 went to the royal court to pay homage in the reign of King Hsuen 宣王 (827-782 B. C.). His younger son was selected by the king to succeed to the dukedom. When the ruler died, his elder son was enthroned by the Lu people. King Hsuen, enraged by their obvious offense, troubled himself to launch a punitive campaign against the state of Lu. The newly enthroned duke was thereafter replaced by the younger brother.<sup>(2)</sup>

In conclusion, we may say that the feudalism of the Western Chou period was quite under the Chou king's control. Because of the alien conditions among non-Chou groups, because of the charisma of the Son of Heaven, because of the military prowess of Chou, which employed both its own strength and the strength of loyal vassals, the king could have maintained his legal position and factual command as an overlord.

This might be the cases in the new states evolved from the military garrisons. However, just what were the conditions of the old states which had been established in the east before the dominance of Chou is not clear to us from the materials we use here. Nevertheless, it could be speculated that under pressure of the Chou established new states, the old non-Chou states also had to conform and to take in Chou personnel, such as the fore-mentioned "overseer".

The Western Chou traditionally was attributed to have maintained its political excellence by means of incorporating the kinship lineage into the feudal system. Though in the Ch'un Ch'iu period such kinship consciousness was very dominant, the bronze inscriptions do not contain very explicit manifestations of the kinship lineage. The reverence to the past and emphasis on the imitation of forefathers nevertheless are enormously prevalent in bronze inscriptions. The common ending phrase of bronze inscriptions is:

(1) Kuo, *Liang Chou*, p. 26.

(2) *Kuo Yu* 國語 (Ssu-pu pei-yao ed. 四部備要本) 1/8-9. Cf. Kuo, *Liang Chou*, pp. 57, 77, 86.

"May sons and grandsons receive the blessing and treasure this vessel ever forever." This also demonstrates the strong concept of lineage.

## II. CHOU ADMINISTRATION

The study of the second group of persons who appeared often in the Western Chou documents, as mentioned in the introductory paragraphs of this paper, presents more difficulties for us in attempting some systematic discussion. The available material tells us very little other than to offer a host of titles, such as grand tutor, grand historian, etc. Many of these titles, such as *Shan-fu* 膳夫, which literally means 'cook', have their origins in the functions of household servants, yet they have become titles of high officers.<sup>(1)</sup>

Therefore, speculation on titles according to the apparent meaning would not help us to define the jurisdiction and function of a particular office. Discussion on organization and structure of Chou government based on guesswork from piecing together the officers mentioned in bronze inscriptions, the *Shang Shu* and the *Shih Ching* thus could bring us to anywhere without appropriate evidence. Therefore, we try to do in this section nothing more than to make a few notes on some characteristics of Chou administration, however fragmentary the result may be.

The first notable characteristic is that offices seem to have been hereditary. Very often a new appointment included such phrases as "succeeding to the position of your ancestors" or "being in charge of the former colleagues of your father".<sup>(2)</sup>

The positions mentioned range from minister in the royal court, musician in charge of drum and bells, military officer in charge of standards to steward of fiefs and marshal in the court of the feudal lord.<sup>(3)</sup>

However, at least in one case a noble was appointed as diviner with the phrase that he was to succeed to the old occupation of his ancestor, while on the inscription on another vessel the same person was appointed to some kind of military post of fairly high rank, and again the inscription contains the phrase "succeeding your ancestor".<sup>(4)</sup>

---

(1) Ch'i Ssu-ho, "Chou Tai Hsi Ming K'ao", p. 212.

(2) Kuo, *Liang Chou*, pp. 77, 78, 88.

(3) *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 77, 86, 88.

(4) *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 100.

Either he was promoted according to the same course as his ancestors were promoted, or the whole phrasing was nothing other than a formality. The former would be rather odd, due to the conceivable inconvenience in having each person transferred according to some particular course. The latter explanation thus is a better one. When such phrasing becomes formality without real content, it means that at one time the heredity of office was a standing rule and that later it was not strictly observed. If so, perhaps this indicates that during the reign of King Hsiao 孝王 (909-895 B.C.), when this particular appointment was made, the personnel in the royal court could be transferred more freely than before. Nevertheless, the validity of this hypothesis is subject to a great many conditions.

The second notable point is the possible existence of some kind of staff for each of many offices. One forementioned inscription on a bronze tripod contains the phrase "being in charge of the former colleagues of your father". The word 'colleague', if translated literally, is 'friend in office'.<sup>(1)</sup> The colleagues who were attached to a certain office very likely were the staff assisting the official.

When high officers were appointed, such as in the cases of appointment of *Mao-kung* 毛公 and *Pan-shen* 番生, member (or office) of the executive department and of the archives department, *Ch'ing-shih-liao* 卿事僚 and *T'ai-shih-liao* 大史僚 respectively, were named to be under the newly appointed officers together with many other named jurisdictions.<sup>(2)</sup>

One son of the Duke of Chou was commissioned to manage "three departments, four directions (of the empire), and to receive the *Ch'ing-shih-liao*", the last named being mentioned again as present when the appointment was announced in the residence of the duke. Then this minister himself issued orders which were transmitted down through "Ch'ing-shih-liao, and many officers, and minor officers, and hundred of workers". Two persons were picked to assist the minister on affairs of "your *Liao* and your friends".<sup>(3)</sup>

In the "Chiu Kao" 酒誥 chapter of *Shang Shu*, "friends of *Tai-shih* 大史" and "friends of *Nei-shih* 內史" both were addressed after the feudal lords' being addressed and before the naming of the "hundred workers".<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) *Ibid.*, p. 78.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 133, 135.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 5.

(4) Legge (trans.), *Shoo King*, p. 419. His translation is revised.

From the above given cases, one might assume that these “*Liao*” and friends were in fact referring to staff members of particular divisions in the Chou government.

The hypothesis on the existence of a government staff could perhaps help to cast some new interpretation on a few lines in the *Shih Ching*. They read:

1. I go out at the North Gate 出自北門  
With my heart full of sorrow 憂心殷殷  
Strained am I and poor, 終窶且貧  
And no one takes knowledge of my distress. 莫知我艱  
So it is! 已焉哉  
Heaven has done it; 天實爲之  
What then shall I say? 謂之何哉
2. The king's business comes on me 王事適我, 政事一埤益我  
And the affairs of our government in increasing measure.  
When I come home from outside, 我入自外  
People in my house all scold and reproach me. 室人交徧譴我
3. The king's business is thrown on me, 王事敦我  
And the affairs of our government are left to me more  
and more.<sup>(1)</sup> 政事一埤遺我

The one who composed these lines did not resemble a gay courter with the financial status of high nobility. He was poor, yet he bore the burden of increasing government affairs. The portrait of such a person probably shows the counterpart of the “white collar worker” today, crushed by the file keeping, memo writing and many trivialities, whose life in the home is unpleasant because of financial pressure and due to the complaining of a poverty stricken wife.<sup>(2)</sup>

The third point for discussion is whether in the Western Chou each office had attached to it some clearly defined jurisdiction and whether the jurisdiction, if any, was permanent or temporary. According to the bronze inscriptions, very often an officer was appointed with a list of tasks assigned

(1) Legge (trans.) *The She King*, pp. 65-66. Translation revised.

(2) The existence of file keeping may not be entirely speculative, considering the transmission to us of many ancient documents. The fact, *per se*, reveals the possible validity of such archives. Moreover, at the end of one of the bronze inscriptions, which was a treaty between two states, there is the phrase: “The left side of the treaty is kept by Chief Historian Chung Nung 仲農.” Kuo, *Liang Chou*, p. 129.

to him. Such assignment varies from the all embracing power of a high minister to the specified work of an agricultural supervisor.<sup>(1)</sup> Temporary tasks also were assigned such as supervising new construction in a certain area or commanding the newly dispatched troops to guard one place.<sup>(2)</sup>

The spelling out of works when appointments were made, however, does not automatically clarify the problem. The works or tasks assigned to a particular individual in a particular moment were clearly defined. Yet, if the jurisdiction of any office had been always so defined, the appointment of any person to fill that post would have imparted to him all the power for that office. A re-defining then would not be necessary. Meanwhile the possible existence of a staff to some offices may imply that, to some extent, jurisdiction of an office could have been understood; otherwise the staff could not survive the transfer of its chief. Therefore, though it is far from being very explicitly known, we venture to assume that as long as an office was attached to a title and as long as officers were appointed to an office instead of being assigned only some particular tasks, there could have been a tendency toward the notion of covering certain jurisdictions with one office having an appropriate title. This tendency might not have led yet to institutionalization, because new appointees were still told their particular work.

The fourth point we are pondering is succession in an office. As seen in one preceding paragraph, the office was hereditary, and in the reign of King Hsiao there was one case showing the possibility that the phrase heredity of office might have turned into a kind of formality.

Two sets of bronze inscriptions bear interesting significance on this problem. One set consists of two vessels, both made by a person named Mien 免, who might have been serving in the court of King I (934-910 B. C.), father of King Hsiao. In the inscription on one vessel Mien was appointed to assist another gentleman who was in charge of forestry. In the inscription on the other vessel, it is recorded that Mien was appointed to be in charge of field, forestry and pasture.<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) For illustration, Kuo, *Liang Chou*, pp. 34, 134-135, 150.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 72.

(3) *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90. Cf. Chen Meng-chia, "Hsi Chou T'ung Ch'i Tuan Tai", *K'ao Ku Hsueh Pao*, 14 (1956) p. 96. T'ang Lan 唐蘭 dates the vessel to be in the reign of King Mu (穆王) cf. his "Hsi Chou T'ung Ch'i Tuan Tai Chung Ti K'ang Kung Wen Ti" 西周銅器斷代中的康宮問題 *K'ooku Hsueh Pas*, 1962, no. 1, p. 48.

The second set of bronze vessels is attributed to the reign of King Yu 幽王 (781-771 B. C.), the last king of the Western Chou. A person named Shih-tui 師兌 was ordered by King Yu, as recorded in the inscription on one vessel, to aid a certain Shih-ho-fu 師穌父, who was then in charge of "left and right running horse and running horse of five cities". It is not very clear just what kind of office this was. Anyway, according to the inscription on another vessel, he was called again to court and ordered: "We have appointed you to assist Shih-ho-fu in charge of running horse—, now we appoint you to be in charge of running horse".<sup>(1)</sup>

The case of Shih-tui certainly serves as better evidence than that of Mien to demonstrate that an assistant to an officer was likely to be appointed to succeed him. If so, there might have been developing during the last stages of Western Chou a system of succession by assistant. This would be a great step toward the government techniques, such as emphasis on knowledge in one particular field, abolition of inheritance of offices and sequence of succession, which were to become dominant features in Chinese government in later dynasties.

The fifth point for discussion is the separation of the royal household and government. Though many Western Chou offices retain etymologically the relics of past status as household servants, such as cook, their functions had developed very distinctly separated from those of their predecessors. On one vessel attributed to the first year of King I 夷王 (894-879 B. C.) a person named Ts'ai 蔡 was appointed as *Tsai* 宰 or steward. What interests us is that the appointment was conducted by, and the king was assisted by, another *Tsai* named Hsien, and that Ts'ai was ordered: "The former king has appointed you to be the *Tsai* of our royal household. Now we, following that appointment, appoint you and Hsien each to be in charge of the internal and external affairs of our royal house.—Receiving and issuing the orders from Lady Chiang, 姜—no action without the consent of you, Ts'ai,—you should follow the example of personnel of Lady Chiang—."<sup>(2)</sup>

It seems, evidently, that Hsien was the one who was responsible for the ritual of this appointment and that Ts'ai was the one who was responsible to the orders of Lady Chiang and at her disposal. Therefore, one of them was the steward of internal affairs, dealing with what happened in the royal

(1) Kuo, *Liang Chou*, pp. 154, 155.

(2) Kuo, *Lang Chou*, p. 102.

household, while the other was steward of external affairs, which were the affairs of the royal court—in other words, the government.

Supposing that this is a correct interpretation, we may be touching upon one of the earliest documents indicating the concept of separation between the private life of a king and the public affairs. This could be one of the first steps leading toward the institutionalization of state government.

These five points, though appearing somewhat unrelated, indicate one common tendency—the development toward some rational administration. When inheritance of office was no longer the only method of transmitting offices from one individual to another, when jurisdiction of a certain office tended to be definite, when staff members were employed to aid an official, when experience and knowledge of an assistant could be appreciated to the point that, because of it, he was assigned to fill that office in the future, when household and government, private and state affairs, were separated by employing two separate officials, the beginnings of a rational bureaucratic organization possibly can be seen to be emerging.

### III. SUAMMRY

We find that the Western Chou central government held firm control over the feudal lords by means of its own military prowess, charismatic claim, and compliance of the feudal vassals to aid the royal court, which was in fact, the best guarantee the vassals, who were stationed among non-Chou people, could expect. We also find that in the last two centuries of the Western Chou there exist some clues, though very vague, which suggest a tendency toward rational administration. Owing to the extreme insufficiency of first hand material, our conclusion perhaps may remain a speculation which, even though logical, must forever await verification.