

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ANCIENT CHINA

From the Origins of
Civilization to 221 B.C.

Edited by

MICHAEL LOEWE

and

EDWARD L. SHAUGHNESSY



humans could transcend class background. Confucius was a conservative with respect to current politics, severely criticizing Zang Wenzhong for his liberal policies. In this regard, he claimed to be an interpreter rather than an innovator. Yet he did innovate, universalizing the code of conduct of the feudal society so that it would apply to all of humanity in general.

CONCLUSION

The Spring and Autumn period witnessed transformations in all aspects of the Zhou world. No sooner had King Ping of Zhou established a court in the eastern portions of the Zhou kingdom than the feudal structure started to disintegrate. The former vassal states took their futures in their own hands, initiating wars with cutthroat competition. Contentious rulers expanded their territory, extinguishing neighboring states. There were power struggles within states among branches of the ruling houses. These wars eventually reduced the number of states from several hundred to less than a few tens. Likewise, even in these states, there were only a few noble houses that survived the repeated power struggles. The number of fallen nobles must have been many times that of those who thrived. Some of the former elite, however, became responsible for the dissemination of knowledge and the establishment of a code of conduct that became adopted by the courtiers.

Among the many developments that mark the Spring and Autumn period, the following are perhaps the most important: the establishment of the *ba* system of recognized leadership among the states; the assimilation of the southern state of Chu (and, later, the states of Wu and Yue) into the political order, such that an unprecedented degree of cultural pluralism was achieved; the concentration of authority in the states, both through the recruitment of capable ministers and also through new governing structures such as the *xian* county organization; the gradual emergence of private land ownership; the beginning of iron casting; far-flung commercial activities; and, perhaps most important of all, the rise of the *shi* class and, with it, the dramatic intellectual breakthrough brought about by Confucius.

In all of these aspects, the two and a half centuries of the Spring and Autumn period brought changes with profound effects both for the following Warring States period and, indeed, for all subsequent Chinese civilization.

CHAPTER NINE

WARRING STATES POLITICAL HISTORY

Mark Edward Lewis

The two and a half centuries commonly known as the age of the Warring States (481–221 B.C.) witnessed the creation of the major political institutions that defined early imperial China. The old league of cities ruled by the Zhou nobility was replaced by a system of territorial states built around unchallenged monarchs who commanded a large number of dependent officials. These in turn were employed to register and mobilize the individual peasant households, primarily for the sake of imposing universal military service. The mass peasant armies of the period entailed the emergence of military specialists who were masters of the theories and techniques of warfare. At the same time, the needs of diplomatic maneuver produced theorists of strategy and persuasion who formulated new models of interstate relations. The Zhou world was also reinvented as a geographic entity, both through expansion to the south and the southwest and through new patterns of physical mobility that marked differences of status.

However, the writings of this period present no tidy portrait of politics or institutions. Since written materials were still rare, difficult to produce, and not widely diffused, "books" tended to emerge, evolve, and survive as the legacy of groups who defined themselves through loyalty to a common master. Members of these groups sought patrons who took an interest in the wisdom or expertise that they claimed to offer. As a consequence, the writings that preserve information about the political history of the period are pragmatic and factional. They are devoted to the policies, philosophies, and actions of those who actively participated in creating the new states, and they defend these actions or philosophies as uniquely efficacious. Thus, the texts define a set of idealized roles that constitute the Warring States polity: the monarch, the reforming minister, the military commander, the persuader/diplomat, and the scholar. Each of these roles generated its own characteristic texts, and the remnants of these writings and associated archae-

ological finds provide our evidence regarding the political and social world of the Warring States.

SOURCES

Chronicles

The first type of source, produced in the emergent royal courts and centered on the ruler, was the chronicle. Chronicles dated major events – battles, institutional reforms, appointments or dismissals, and interstate meetings – and are the only sources that provide a chronological framework for the sequence of events. However, they do not allow us to reconstruct a sequential, narrative history of the period for two reasons. First, each state employed its own calendar and hence no comprehensive time scheme existed. Second, since chronicles were signs of royal power and invariably reflected badly on rival states, the destruction of any kingdom entailed the elimination of its chronicles. Thus, following its successful wars of conquest, the Qin state destroyed the historical chronicles of its defeated foes. Its own archives in turn suffered substantial losses during the burning of the capital Xianyang 咸陽 by Xiang Yu 項羽 (d. 202 B.C.). As the political records of the various Warring States had been destroyed, and following the civil war no groups had a vital interest in recovering surviving fragments, the chronicles of the period were largely lost.

What survived were some of the records of Qin that were removed from their archives by Xiao He 蕭何 (d. 193 B.C.) and thus preserved from the sacking of Xianyang. These formed the basis for the treatment of the Warring States period in Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (ca. 145–86 B.C.) *Shi ji* 史記 (Records of the historian). The “Basic Annals of Qin” (Qin ben ji 秦本紀) and the “Hereditary Household” (*Shi jia* 世家) chapters provide our sequential history of the period, and these can be supplemented by materials from biographies of Warring States officials, philosophers, and writers, as well as evidence scattered through the “monographs” (*shu* 書). Some dated events within the *Shi ji* can also be compared with those in the surviving versions of the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年 (Bamboo annals), a chronicle that ends in the year 299 B.C. that was composed in the state of Wei 魏 and discovered in a tomb in the third century A.D. The *Bian nian ji* 編年紀 (Chronicle of years) discovered in a Qin tomb at Yunmeng 雲夢 also provides dated events from the late Warring States, and the surviving fragments of the *Shi ben* 世本 (Root of the generations) offer another source for supplementing Sima Qian's chronicles. Ban Gu's 班固 (A.D. 32–92) *Han shu* 漢書 (History of [former] Han), particularly in its tables (*biao* 表) and monographs (*zhi* 志), also pro-

vides information on the period.¹ Several post-Han histories, most notably the fourth-century A.D. *Huayang guo zhi* 華陽國志 (Record of Huayang state) with its accounts of the history of the southwest, offer additional evidence. The Song dynasty *Zi zhi tong jian* 資治通鑒 (Comprehensive mirror for aid in government) of Sima Guang 司馬光 (A.D. 1019–86), the *Gu shi* 古史 (Ancient history) of Su Che 蘇轍 (A.D. 1039–1112), and the *Lu shi* 路史 (Great history) of Luo Bi 羅泌 (d. ca. A.D. 1176) also contain evidence that appears to be based on earlier texts that have since disappeared. Finally, the chronicles and anecdotes in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 (Zuo's tradition), though set in the pre-Warring States world, help us to understand the period.²

Works on Political Methods

The second new political role of the period was that played by the reforming ministers, to whom were attributed the new governmental institutions and practices. Several of these figures initiated or served as eponyms for books devoted to theories of government based on their reforms. The only book of this nature that has survived in anything other than fragments is the *Shang jun shu* 商君書 (Book of Lord Shang), compiled in the late Warring States by scholars committed to the reforms carried out in mid-fourth century B.C. Qin by Shang Yang 商鞅 (d. 338 B.C.). The *Han Feizi* 韓非子, begun in the third century B.C., attempts a synthesis of the teachings of traditions associated with such political figures as Li Kui 李悝 (fl. late fifth century B.C.), Shen Buhai 申不害 (d. 337 B.C.), Shang Yang, and Shen Dao 慎到 (fl. 310 B.C.), so it can serve as a source for such works. The *Guanzi* 管子 also contains much material on political institutions, and these essays, though attributed to an earlier figure, are of Warring States or Han origin. These diverse political reformers were grouped together in Han bibliographies under the rubric of “Legalist” (*Fajia* 法家), but there is no reference to such a school in the Warring States texts themselves.

Government Documents

These are closely linked to the above texts, because they are tied to actual government institutions. The large cache of strips found at Yunmeng in a

¹ For details on the texts, consult Michael Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide* (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1993); Edward L. Shaughnessy, ed., *New Sources of Early Chinese History: An Introduction to Reading Inscriptions and Manuscripts* (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1997); Yang Kuan, *Zhangguo shi*, 2d rev. ed. (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin, 1980), pp. 5–19.

² The chronology employed in this chapter, as in the table of Warring States rules (Table 1, pp. 28–29), follows that reconstructed by Yang Kuan in his *Zhangguo shi*.

tomb dating to 217 B.C. includes a substantial portion of the Qin code, two fragments of the Wei 魏 code, and other documents instructing officials in the application of the laws. There is also a moralizing exhortation to officials on the proper execution of their duties. Bamboo strips found in Baoshan 包山 tomb 2, dating to 316 B.C., provide some late fourth century B.C. legal documents from the southern state of Chu 楚. Whereas the deceased at Yunmeng was a local official, and the documents are prescriptive texts to guide his conduct in office, the deceased at Baoshan was the highest administrator of law in the Chu court, and the legal documents consist primarily of actual case reports and decisions. These records complement one another to provide valuable evidence on details of administrative practices at the different levels of government in the late Warring States period.

Military Treatises

A third political role that developed during the Warring States and produced associated writings was that of the military officer. The texts, named after famous commanders of antiquity, the late Spring and Autumn period, or the Warring States period, deal with aspects of warfare and their relation to statecraft. They provide information about the organization and conduct of armies, as well as the political role of combat. The major works are the *Sunzi* 孫子, the *Sun Bin* 孫臏, the *Wuzi* 吳子, the *Yu Liaozi* 尉繚子 (also called *Wei Liaozi*), the *Sima fa* 司馬法, and the *Tai Gong liu tao* 太公六韜. Archaeological finds have confirmed that all these works existed in the era of the Warring States, though not necessarily identical in form or content to the received versions.

Persuasions

A fourth new political role was that of the persuader/diplomats, the engineers of the systems of alliances that dominated politics from the middle of the fourth century B.C. Many such men rose to high ministerial rank, and their followers produced collections of fictional political "persuasions" attributed to the leading diplomats of the period. The most notable of these are the *Zhangguo ce* 戰國策 (Stratagems of the Warring States), the *Zhangguo zongheng jia shu* 戰國縱橫家書 (Documents of the Warring States strategists of alliances) discovered at Mawangdui 馬王堆, and the *Yanzi chungqiu* 晏子春秋 (Master Yan's Spring and Autumn [annals]).³ Not strictly historical in char-

³ For a brief introduction to the *Documents of the Warring States strategists of alliances*, see Yumiko F. Blanford, "A Textual Approach to 'Zhangguo Zonghengjia Shu': Method of Determining the Proximate Original Word Among Variants," *EC* 16 (1991): 187–207. This article is adapted from Blanford, "Studies of the 'Zhangguo Zonghengjia Shu' Silk Manuscript," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1989.

acter, they must be used with caution as sources for reconstructing sequences of events. However, they offer a vivid portrait of the ruthless amorality and the "byzantine" maneuverings that characterized the court life and interstate relations of the period.

Texts of the Schools

By far the most abundant documents from the period, texts of the schools offer some insights into political history. First, they contain references to institutions, practices, and events. Second, certain scholars sought office at court, and some of their texts thus dealt with political affairs. This category includes the so-called Confucian writings: the *Analekts* 論語 (begun in the Spring and Autumn period and continued into the Warring States), the *Mencius* 孟子 (fourth century), and the *Xunzi* 荀子 (third century). Although not strictly a philosophical work, the *Zuo zhuan* was completed in the Warring States period, and many of its explicit judgments and extended speeches clearly express the ideas of the Warring States "Confucians." Even some of the historical anecdotes reflect, if not actually derive from, the pedagogy of the Confucian schools. The *Mozi* 墨子 (fourth and third centuries) likewise contains many useful anecdotes, as well as discussions of Warring States institutions and practices, and the later chapters contain a detailed account of military procedures.

The Confucians and the Mohists are the only two Warring States scholarly traditions maintained through the protracted interaction of masters with groups of disciples. All other traditions were based entirely on textual transmissions grouped under the name of a single, founding master. Among these the most important are the works brought together during the Han under the name Daoism (*daojia* 道家) – *Laozi* 老子 and *Zhuangzi* 莊子. Also valuable is the great Qin syncretic work, the *Lü shi chungqiu* 呂氏春秋 (Mr. Lü's Spring and Autumn [annals]), which attempted a synthesis of various scholarly traditions at the end of the Warring States. Finally, there are several late Warring States texts now grouped under the ill-defined rubric Huang Lao 黃老. These include the *Heguanzi* 鶡冠子, *Jing fa* 經法 (Classical model), and *Shilü jing* 十六經 (Sixteen classics), the latter two texts having been discovered only recently at Mawangdui.

Ritual Texts

These can be used only with the greatest caution because of problems of dating. However, much of the *Yi li* 儀禮 (Etiquette and rites), which describes family rites for the lowest stratum of nobility, and the *Zhou li* 周禮 (Rites of

Zhou) probably date from the Warring States period, and they can be used in conjunction with other materials.

Geographic Works

The "Yu gong" chapter of the *Shang shu* 尚書 (Venerated documents) is almost certainly a Warring States composition, as is probably the "Zang shan jing" 藏山經 section of the *Shan hai jing* 山海經 (Classic of mountains and seas), an early account of magical plants and animals encountered in the wilds. These are extremely valuable for insights into contemporary understanding of geography. Li Daoyuan's 酈道元 (d. 527 A.D.) *Shui jing zhu* 水經注 (Commentary on the classic of rivers), a sixth century A.D. compendium, contains much material culled from Warring States works, as well as discussions of the various walls and canals constructed in the period. Finally, several chapters of the *Yi Zhou shu* 逸周書 (Remainder of Zhou documents) appear to be Warring States compositions that contain material on geography.

Poetry

The only poetry datable to the period appears in the earlier chapters of the *Chu ci* 楚辭 (Verses of Chu), two chapters of verse in the *Xunzi*, and rhymed passages scattered through the texts of the schools. These provide material dealing with the political and religious thought of the period.

Han Anecdotal Collections

The *Han shi wai zhuan* 韓詩外傳 (Outer tradition of Master Han [Ying's version of the Classic of] Poetry) by Han Ying 韓嬰 (fl. 150 B.C.), *Shuo yuan* 說苑 (Garden of expositions), and *Xin xu* 新序 (New preface), both by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 B.C.), contain anecdotes set in the Warring States period. Many of these can still be found in texts datable to the Warring States, so one might cautiously employ the rest as supplementary material.

The total amount of material is not inconsiderable, and texts discovered in tombs have increased it dramatically in recent decades. However, major problems exist in its use. First, as noted earlier we lack a reliable chronological frame. As a result, many events cannot be dated. Second, most of our sources are rhetorical set pieces or philosophical arguments. They often invoke supposed historical events, but their polemical character and the contradictions between accounts call into question their reliability. Finally, most of these sources are difficult to date with any precision. This reflects both the physi-

cal and the social nature of written works in the period. As collections of wooden or bamboo strips, or rolls of silk, they were liable to deliberate or accidental alteration over time. Such texts were the legacy of a tradition, rather than the work of an "author," so it was conventional to add or modify materials in order to meet the needs of each new generation. Thus, the lack of firm dates is not a result of missing evidence but is inherent in the fluidity of the works themselves. As a result, much of our data can be applied only to the broad outline of the whole period, while the details remain open to doubt.

This chapter will focus on the creation of the new political order, as defined by the political roles enunciated in our sources. The collective creation and transmission of texts means that the writings that survived represent the intellectual interests or commitments of certain groups of people, rather than isolated individuals. Consequently, one can reconstitute a composite image of the political life of the period through the programs or ideals transmitted in the surviving texts. Seen in the light of this composite image, the uneven narrative of the period may gain a certain historical value.

THE STATES

The classic Warring States world was dominated by seven major states, though several minor ones also survived throughout much of the period.⁴ In order to follow the history of the period, it is necessary to be familiar with the locations of the states and their physical characteristics. Precise borders are difficult to establish, except where walls were built, and they shifted considerably over the course of the period. Consequently, only the proximate location of the core areas of the states will be discussed.

Before describing the individual states, it is important to note two general features of the period. First, although the central and lower Yangzi regions had become important in the Spring and Autumn period, the Warring States world was still primarily defined by the drainage basin of the Yellow River. Second, the old states in what had been the geographic center (most notably the Zhou capital region, Zheng 鄭, Wey 衛, Song 宋, and Lu 魯, that is, modern northern Henan province and southern Shandong province) had no avenues for expansion and were reduced to buffer zones between the larger states that surrounded them. For the purposes of exposition, I will start in the northeast, proceed west up the drainage basin of the Yellow River, and finish in the southern regions (see Map 9.1).

⁴ Li Xueqin, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations*, trans. K. C. Chang (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985), part 1; Yang Kuan, *Zhangguo shi*, pp. 261–8.

erful states, it achieved security through its remoteness and the absence of major threats from the north and the east.

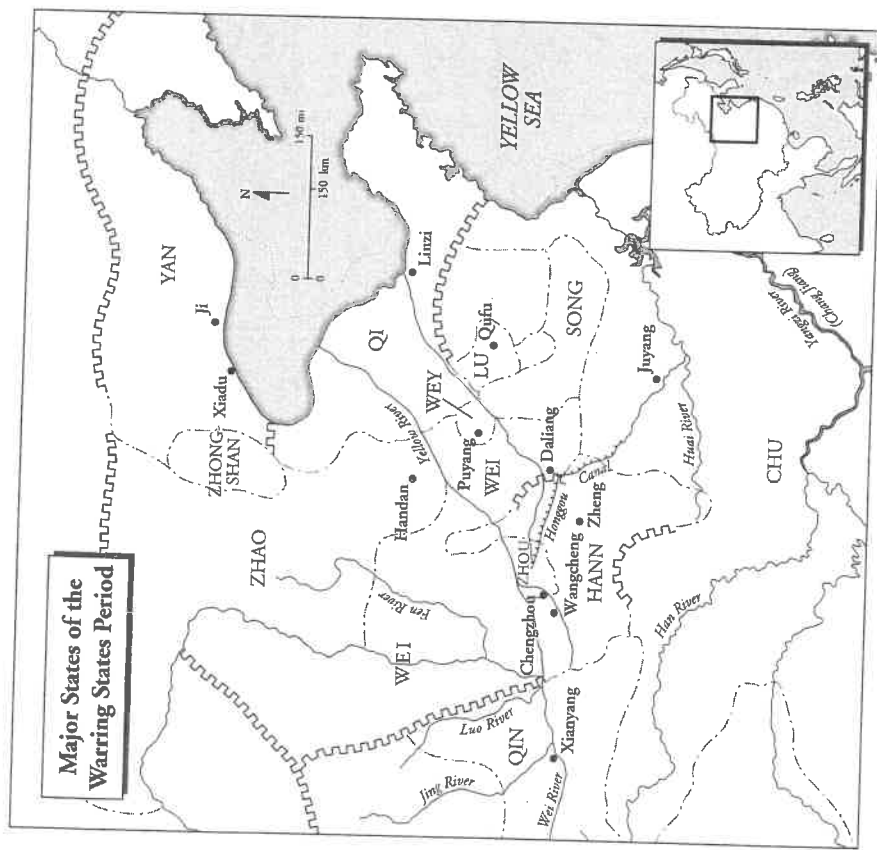
Qi 齊

Qi's territory comprised the central and northern part of modern Shandong and the southern part of modern Hebei. It occupied a large alluvial flood plain centered on the Ji 濟 River, though the main course of the Yellow River shifted it to the north. It was rich in agriculture, minerals, and the resources of the sea. Qi was the demographic and economic center of the empire in the subsequent Han period and seems to have been likewise in the Warring States period.³ At any rate, its capital Linzi 臨淄 seems to have been the largest metropolis of the era. Its eastern edge was delimited by the sea. To the south lay a cluster of small states, the most important of which were Lu 魯 and Song 宋, but also including some that were simply small cities: Zou 鄒, Xue 薛, Teng 滕, Tan 鄆, and Ju 莒. To the west it bordered on Wei 衛, Zhao 昭, and Wei 魏. It also enjoyed a good strategic position, in that it faced danger only from the west, so long as its alliance to the north with Yan endured.

Wei 魏

Throughout most of the Warring States period, Wei was the strongest of the three states created by the partition of Jin 晉, which had been the most influential state during the preceding centuries. It also initiated the most significant institutional reforms. Its core straddled two areas: the region east of the bend of the Yellow River and valley of the Fen 汾 River, that is, the southwest of modern Shanxi province and the region of modern Henan province that is now north of the Yellow River, but at that time lay south of the Yellow River and north of the Ji River. At its peak, in the first half of the fourth century B.C., Wei expanded westward to the Luo 洛 River and pushed south of the Ji River in the east. It included rich agricultural land in its river valleys, and it was a pioneer in the use of large-scale irrigation. Wei also held some of the major trade centers, which provided an additional source of wealth. It suffered, however, from two linked strategic weaknesses. First, it confronted potentially hostile states on all sides: Qi to the east, Zhao to the north, Qin 秦 to the west, and Hann 韓 and Chu 楚 to the south. Consequently it often found itself fighting wars on several fronts or being forced to abandon a campaign because it was attacked from a different direction. This problem was

³ Shi Nianhai, *He shan ji*, vol. 3 (Beijing: Renmin, 1988), pp. 117-30.



Map 9.1. Major states of the Warring States period.

Yan 燕

The smallest of the major Warring States and the last to emerge as a power, Yan was located in the far northeast. Its territory included the northern part of modern Hebei province, southwestern Liaoning province, and the northeast corner of Shanxi province. Its capital was just southwest of modern Beijing. Because the mouth of what we now call the Yellow River at this time lay inside Yan's borders, the region was probably damper and more fertile than it is today. It was certainly more forested. To the north it bordered on regions populated by nomads who were non-Hua 華 (that is, not part of Zhou civilization), to the west on Zhao 趙 and Zhongshan 中山, and to the south on Qi 齊 and the Bohai 渤海 Gulf. Although not one of the most pow-

exacerbated by the geographic structure of Wei described above. Possessing two major centers linked only by the narrow territory of Shangdang 上黨, it was pulled in two directions. This often led to difficulties in the formulation of any grand strategy.

Zhao 趙

Second of the Jin successor states, Zhao lay to the north of Wei. Its territory covered the northern half of modern Shanxi and the south of Hebei, extending down into modern Henan. Like Yan it was a northern frontier state that was less developed and populous than its southern neighbors, but it enjoyed the strategic luxury of confronting enemies in only two directions: Qi and Yan from the east, and Wei and Qin from the south or southwest. In close contact with nomadic peoples to the north, Zhao pioneered the use of cavalry.

Hann 韓

Last and smallest of the Jin successor states, Hann was located in the southeast of modern Shanxi and central Henan. In the early Warring States period it acted as a junior partner of Wei and reached its peak in the year 375, when it occupied most of the old state of Zheng and moved its capital there. Like Wei it faced potential enemies on all sides: Wei to the north, Qin to the west, and Chu to the south. Since it was weaker than these three states, Hann often played the role of a buffer zone. It survived largely by shifting its alliance from one state to another as the balance of power changed.

Qin 秦

As Qin's center lay in the valley of the Wei 渭 River, the old capital region of the Western Zhou, it was the furthest west of the Warring States. Located in a fertile valley ringed by hills, Qin enjoyed a splendid geographic situation that combined productivity and security. It was accessible from the east only through the Hangu 函谷 Pass and from the southeast through the Wu 武 Pass. Therefore, the Qin core region was known as Guanzhong 關中, the area "within-the pass." To the north the only threat was the Rong 戎 tribes. They occasionally pillaged Qin cities but posed no sustained menace and were conquered in the second half of the fifth century B.C. To the south lay Shu 蜀 and Ba 巴, in what is now Sichuan province. The conquest of this region between 441 and 316 B.C. provided Qin with a new, highly productive "grain basket" that supplied its wars of conquest in the third century.

Chu 楚

Southernmost of the major Warring States, Chu spread across the valley of the Han 漢 River, the middle of the Yangzi River (*Changjiang* 長江), and the valley of the Huai 淮 River. In 334 it conquered the state of Yue 越, thus also gaining control of the lower Yangzi. This region is much wetter than the valley of the Yellow River, but only with the development of superior techniques for drainage would the abundance of water be transformed from a problem into a blessing. In the Warring States period it was still not as productive as the irrigated zones of the north. Despite its great size, Chu suffered from a relatively weak monarchy, which led to several civil wars. This inhibited the full-scale development of the institutions that defined the Warring States polity, and consequently Chu's actual power never matched its geographic potential.

In addition to the seven great states, a number of minor states figure in Warring States history. First, the Zhou royal house lived on as a small state within the borders of Hann. Lu, birthplace of Confucius, and neighboring Zou, birthplace of Mencius, lay just to the south of Qi. To their south in turn lay Song, a state founded to preserve the Shang royal line at the time of the Zhou conquest (1045 B.C.). This state included the city of Dingtao 定陶, perhaps the greatest commercial center of the period and the target of campaigns by several great powers. Surrounded by Qi, Wei, and Zhao, the state of Wei played a role in several wars. Zheng, which had been a major power at the beginning of the Eastern Zhou and acted as a buffer state between Jin and Chu during the Spring and Autumn period, was still a focus of warfare and diplomacy in the first half of the Warring States. Finally, the state of Zhongshan 中山, which lay between Zhao and Yan in the north, also figured in the political history of the period.

THE RULER-CENTERED STATE

The new style of polity that appeared in the Warring States period was both an expansion and a contraction of the old Zhou model. It was an expansion in that it developed a full-blown territorial state in place of the city-based state of the Zhou world, but it was a contraction in that it concentrated all power in the court of the single monarch. In place of the hereditary nobility who had been scattered across the state in numerous local replicas of the king's court, the new state was centered on the unique person of the ruler and his single capital. The foundations of these changes were laid in the Spring and Autumn period, when the pressures of war had led both rulers and ministerial households to increase their armies through the recruitment

of the rural populace. These new forces were controlled by recruited officials who had played no role in the earlier kin-based polity. The peasant-based armies and retainers of personal retainers expanded the scale of warfare, and the large-scale participation of men who had no place in the old networks of ritual performance and blood ties heightened its savagery. However, whereas in the Spring and Autumn period these changes had taken place largely within the framework of the old ruling lines and their sublineages, in the Warring States many of these lineages were swept away by new men who concentrated power in their own hands. These victors of the states' internal struggles emerged as the absolute monarchs of large territorial states.⁶

The earliest case of ministerial lineages supplanting the ruler of a state was the de facto usurpation by the Three Huan 三桓 lineages in Lu 魯 in 562 B.C. At this time the ministerial lineages partitioned control of the state's armies and tax revenues among themselves. In 537 B.C. the senior Jisun 季孫 lineage took the dominant position, and the power of the ruling line was further reduced. Attempts by rulers in 517 and 468 to form military alliances, first with lesser Lu lineages and then with the southern state of Wu 吳, in order to defeat the Three Huan were both defeated. However, the continuation of a divided sovereignty due to the entente of the three lines meant that Lu did not attain the new concentration of power that characterized subsequent cases.⁷

The first state in which a single ministerial line annihilated all of its rivals and assumed power was Qi 齊. Here the Tian 田 lineage came to dominate the state, destroyed several rival lineages in 532, and expanded Qi's power against rival states. In 485 B.C. the head of the Tian clan murdered the heir chosen by the recently deceased lord of Qi and put another child in his place. Soon a civil war broke out when several rival lineages joined together to install yet another puppet ruler. In 481 the new head of the Tian clan murdered the rival puppet, placed the victim's younger brother on the throne, and then killed all his adversaries and most of the ruler's family. He took personal control of virtually all of Qi, leaving only the capital Linzi and the western plain between Mount Tai 泰山 and the Yellow River in the nominal control of the ruler.⁸ Since the *Chungkuo* 春秋 ends in 481 B.C., one could well adopt this seizure of power in Qi as the symbolic commencement of the Warring States period, though the old dual line was not formally supplanted until 386 B.C.

⁶ Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), chapters 1–2.

⁷ *Chungkuo Zuo zhuan zhu*, ed. Yang Bojun (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1981) (Xiang 11), pp. 986–8; (Zhao 3), pp. 1234–6; (Zhao 5), p. 1261; (Zhao 23), pp. 1456–7; *Shi ji*, 33, p. 1545.

⁸ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Zhao 10), pp. 1315–18; (Ai 10), p. 1656; (Ai 14), pp. 1683–6, 1689; *Shi ji*, 32, p. 1508; 46, pp. 1883–4.

The methods of usurpation employed by the Tian are also significant, for they indicate the pattern by which the new rulers ensured the centralization of power in their persons. The accounts in the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Shi ji* both emphasize that the Tian clan surrounded itself with fugitives or refugees in order to expand its immediate entourage and that it secured the support of the populace of Qi's capital through conspicuous philanthropic activities. This support from outsiders and the lower elements of society proved decisive in its victories over rival noble lines. This drawing into service of new social elements, along with new methods to secure their loyalty, defined the Warring States polity.

These new methods appear most clearly in the state of Jin 晉, which had dominated the Spring and Autumn period and pioneered many of the reforms that created territorial states. Even as the Tian clan was rising to dominance in Qi, ongoing low-level warfare took place between Jin's noble lineages. In the course of these struggles the more powerful lineages employed a variety of new methods to eliminate their rivals. One method was the trans-formation of the fiefs of defeated lineages into directly administered districts (*xian* 縣) in 550 and 514 B.C., though these *xian* were still inherited as private possessions by loyal sublineages and not yet governed by appointed officials. Another innovation was the casting of laws on a bronze vessel in 513 B.C., in order to enforce the destruction of the Qi 祁 and Yangshe 羊舌 lineages.⁹ In 497 these struggles erupted into a full-scale civil war between the Zhao 趙, Wei 魏, Hann 韓, and Zhi 智 lineages on one side and the Fan 范 and Zhonghang 中行 lineages on the other. Archaeological evidence from Houma 侯馬 and Wenxian 溫縣 has provided us with dramatic evidence of one of the major practices employed in Jin at this time to forge new states, the collective sacrificial oath.

The blood oath had an ancient pedigree, dating back at least to the late Western Zhou. It had come to the fore as the primary mechanism for establishing links between states or lineages in the age of the *ba* 霸, the seventh century B.C. However, while earlier oaths took place in interstate gatherings, the oaths discovered at Houma and Wenxian record attempts by the Zhao (Houma) and the Hann (Wenxian) lineages to impose their authority on the lesser lineages and perhaps the urban populace (*guo ren* 國人). In these oaths participants swore loyalty to the dominant lineage, and they called down a curse upon any who violated the oath. In the case of the

⁹ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Xiang 10), pp. 1073–6, 1078, 1084; (Zhao 3), pp. 1236–40; (Zhao 28), pp. 1491–2, 1493–4; (Zhao 29), p. 1504; (Ding 13), pp. 1589–1; *Shi ji*, 39, pp. 1683–6; Masubuchi Tatsuo, *Chügoku kodai no shakai to kokka* (Tokyo: Kôbundo, 1962), pp. 328–450, esp. 444–50; Gosei Tadako, “Shunji jidai no Shin no daifu Ki shi Yôetsu shi no ôzato ni suite,” *Chügoku kodai shi kenkyû* 3 (Tokyo: Chügoku kodai shi kenkyûkai, 1968), pp. 183–209.

Houma oaths, they placed a curse on named rival lineages and individuals who had been driven out of the fief, while the Wenxian texts simply anathematize unnamed "brigands." In these covenants we see how the cultic practices that had defined the Zhou state, at least in its decline, were adapted to lend religious sanction and majesty to the powers of rising territorial lords. The texts also suggest how the dispersed pattern of fiefs that had characterized the earlier state was turned into an integrated, territorial unit.¹⁰

The civil war ended in 490 with the destruction of the Fan and the Zhonghang lineages. It resumed in 458 with partition of the former fiefs of the Fan and Zhonghang lines among the four dominant lineages. These renewed hostilities lasted until 453, when the Zhi lineage was destroyed by the other three. Each being afraid to attract hostility by assuming the office of chief minister, the three surviving lines abandoned the Jin court as an arena of competition and contented themselves with developing their own states. About 424 they recognized their mutual independence, and this partition was officially recognized by the Zhou king in 403 B.C.¹¹

In addition to the aforementioned use of centralizing administration, legal codes, and collective oaths, another aspect of the new polity that emerges from accounts of the civil war in Jin was the policy of granting or recognizing the private ownership of land in exchange for taxes. This element of state formation appears in a previously lost chapter of the *Sunzi* military treatise that was discovered in a Han tomb at Yinqueshan 銀雀山. This chapter describes how each of the six Jin lineages had abolished the old unit of land (*mu* 畝) and imposed new *mu* of varying dimensions. Since the account suggests that those with the larger units of land were more generous to their people, it clearly implies some form of allocation. In addition, it states that all except the Zhao lineage had imposed a 20 percent tax on harvest. Since this passage correctly "prophesies" the destruction of the Fan and Zhonghang lines, but incorrectly predicts the ultimate triumph of Zhao, it presumably was written between 490 and 403 B.C. and hence is virtually a contemporary account.¹²

In the Yangzi River valley the centralization of power emerged not through the internecine warfare of sublineages, but rather by means of a triangular struggle between the states of Chu, Wu 吳 (located in the plains south of the lower reaches of the Yangzi) and Yue. During the sixth century, the

¹⁰ Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, pp. 43–9, 67–79; Susan Weld, "Covenant in Jin's Walled Cities: The Dis-covenants at Houma and Wenxian," Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1990.

¹¹ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Ai 2), pp. 1613–14; (Ai 5), pp. 1629–30; *Shi ji*, 39, pp. 1685–7.

¹² *Shi yi jia zhu Sunzi* (Shanghai: Guji, 1978), pp. 494–5 (Ralph Sawyer, trans., *Sun Tzu: Art of War* [Boulder: Westview, 1994], pp. 246–8).

state of Wu had developed its power through recruiting nobles and officials who fled from Jin and Chu. Using their skills to introduce military and land reforms patterned on those of Jin, Wu had steadily expanded into Chu territory. In 506 Chu had been exhausted by the numerous wars of King Ling 靈 (r. 540–529) and its court divided by a recent coup d'état. King Helü 闔閭 (r. 514–496 B.C.) of Wu took advantage of this situation to launch an invasion that destroyed the Chu armies and occupied its capital. Chu was saved only through the intervention of Qin and an insurrection in Wu. In 494 the successor of Helü, Fuchai 夫差 (r. 496–473 B.C.), crushed the armies of Yue and reduced the latter to a tributary. Wu thus established itself briefly with *ba* status in 482 B.C. at the interstate conference at Huangji 黃棘.

Following the disaster of 494, King Goujian 勾踐 (r. 496–465 B.C.) of Yue prepared for revenge with a set of policy reforms. He granted remission from taxes for those who had lost sons in battle, recruited officials and commanders from neighboring states, and enticed additional population with tax remissions in order to open up new land. In 482 he took advantage of Fuchai's attendance at the Huangji assembly to crush Wu's army, occupy its capital, and capture the heir apparent. Fuchai was forced to negotiate a peace, but the war soon resumed and in 473 B.C. Yue destroyed Wu.¹³ At this point, however, rather than resuming the rivalry with Chu to the west, the kings of Yue turned their attention northward and devoted their energies to wars of expansion against the lesser states in the south of what is now Shandong.

The consequences of these wars for Chu in terms of institutional reforms and the consolidation of royal power are not clear. It appears that under the pressure of the wars with Wu and Yue, power in the Chu court shifted from the collateral lineages to the royal line, though Kings Zhao 昭 (r. 516–489 B.C.) and Hui 惠 (r. 488–432 B.C.) were still dominated by their uncles.¹⁴ Freed from the assaults of Wu and Yue, Chu expanded gradually throughout the fifth century by annexing small states along its northern frontier and the upper Huai River. Wu Qi's 吳起 (ca. 440–361 B.C.) biography in the *Shi ji* asserts that he totally reformed the fiscal and military structure of Chu under King Dao 悼 (r. 401–381), but the account may be fictionalized, and it is likely that Wu Qi was given credit for reforms instituted over the course of the century.¹⁵ However, it remains true that Chu was characterized

¹³ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Ding 4), pp. 1542–8; (Ding 5), pp. 1550–3; (Ai 1), pp. 1604–609; (Ai 13), pp. 1676–7; *Shi ji*, 31, pp. 1465–75; 40, pp. 1714–19; 41, pp. 1739–56; *Gao yu*, "Wu yu" and "Yue yu." See also the dramatized accounts in the *Wu Yue chunqiu* 吳越春秋 (Springs and Autumns of Wu and Yue) and the *Yue jue shu* 越絕書 (Documents on the destruction of Yue).

¹⁴ Barry B. Blakeley, "King, Clan, and Courtier in Ancient Chu," *AM*, 3d series, 5, 2 (1992): 1–39.

¹⁵ *Shi ji*, 65, pp. 2167–8 (Ralph Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* [Boulder: Westview, 1993], pp. 191–202).

throughout the Warring States period by the relative weakness of the royal office.

Institutional reforms in the state of Qin came late (a land tax paid in grain was not introduced until 408 B.C.), and they emerged not from foreign or civil wars, but rather from a struggle between the rulers and their ministers for control of the state. Throughout most of the fifth century the rulers of Qin had been young, and power at court lay in the hands of the ministers. In 425 Huai Gong 懷公 (r. 428–425 B.C.), who had been established in power by the dominant ministers, was forced to commit suicide by his own officials, and for the next four decades Qin was ruled by a succession of youths. This state of affairs ended in 385 when the future Xian Gong 獻公 (r. 384–362 B.C.), who had spent his life in Wei, was able to return with the support of the Rong 戎 and Di 狄 tribes and a faction at court that murdered the infant ruler and his mother. Xian Gong ruled for twenty-two years during which he introduced many of the governmental institutions that he had observed in Wei. His reforms included the abolition of the human sacrifices that had accompanied the funerals of major nobles (384 B.C.), the registration of households in units of five (375 B.C.), and the establishment of directly administered districts (*xian*).¹⁶ These began the transformation of Qin into a classic Warring States polity, a process that would be completed under his son Xiao Gong 孝公 (r. 361–338 B.C.) in the reforms of Shang Yang.

The last major state where a single ruler gained dominion was Yan 燕. In 316 B.C. the dying King Kuai 罈 (r. 320–312 B.C.) attempted to name his chief minister as successor. The heir apparent led a coalition of noble lineages against the arriviste, but they were decisively defeated in 314 B.C. At this point King Xuan 宣 (r. 319–301 B.C.) of Qi took advantage of the civil war to invade and conquer Yan. However, the cruelty of the invaders provoked a rebellion, and the Qi forces withdrew. King Wuling 武靈 (r. 325–229 B.C.) of Zhao then established a younger son of King Kuai as king of Yan, and the latter was able to take advantage of the political vacuum left by the defeat of the noble lineages to impose a full-scale land and military reform.¹⁷ Similar struggles leading to the triumph of centralizing power also took place in several of the smaller states, but these were ultimately conquered by larger neighbors.

This concentration of power in the person of the ruler, achieved throughout the Warring States by the middle of the fourth century, found a clear expression in changing nomenclature. In 344 B.C. when Wei Hui 魏惠侯 (r. 369–335 B.C.) was at the peak of his powers and compelling several small states to attend his court, he adopted the title of “king” (*wang* 王) that

¹⁶ *Shi ji*, 5, pp. 199–205; 6, p. 289 (Burton Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*. Vol. 3: *Qin Dynasty* [Hong Kong: Columbia University Press, 1993], pp. 22–5).

¹⁷ *Shi ji*, 34, pp. 1555–8.

had previously been reserved for the Zhou Son of Heaven. He also assumed the use of royal regalia and chariots patterned on those ascribed to the Xia 夏 dynasty, whose supposed ancient capital had been his own. This act of hubris was followed by a disastrous military defeat in 341 B.C. Rather than retract the title, which corresponded to the new political realities, at a meeting of the two rulers in 334 King Hui persuaded the victorious Qi 齊 Wei Hou 齊威侯 (r. 356–320 B.C.) also to take the title of “king.” Following a series of military victories, Qin Huiwen Hou 秦惠文侯 (r. 337–325 B.C.) also adopted the title in 325 B.C. That same year, the ruler of Hann 韓 also took the royal title, and two years later Zhao, Yan, and Zhongshan 中山 all followed suit.¹⁸ Since the Chu ruler had always held the title of “king” as a sign of the rejection of Zhou suzerainty, by 323 all the rulers of the major states had assumed the royal title. This marked, in name at least, the culmination of the process of centralizing state power.

INSTITUTIONS OF THE WARRING STATES

The correlate of the concentration of power in the ruler and the central court was the extension of state control into the rural hinterlands. This extension was based on the development of a new political role, that of the dependent official who was the creature of the ruler. The ability to appoint officials, dispatch them to remote cities, maintain control over them at a distance, and remove them when necessary was essential to the creation of a territorial state. Only with such powers could the ruler impose his writ across an extended realm. The institutional history of the Warring States thus consists of the development of the practices and values which underlay these powers.

In reality, the Warring States have no histories of institutions, but rather biographies of individuals. Laws and administrative procedures are mentioned in scholarly works, and they appear as a reality in the legal documents, but in the historical sources they figure only as pendants to accounts of the officials to whom they are attributed. The propensity to attribute all reforms to individuals was such that collective or gradual developments would be assigned to a single, nameable individual, such as Wu Qi 吳起 in Chu or Sun Wu 孫武 in Yue. Consequently the institutional history of the Warring States appears as a series of heroic innovations by daring reformers — each one lionized by the tradition which carried on “his” book — who were able to gain the attention of the monarch and persuade him to introduce some

¹⁸ *Shi ji*, 5, pp. 206–207 (Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 26); 15, p. 727; 40, p. 1722; 44, p. 1844; 45, p. 1869; 46, p. 1892; 70, p. 2284; *Zhangguo ce* (Shanghai: Guji, 1978) “Qin 4,” p. 259; “Qi 5,” p. 442; “Wei 1,” pp. 804, 812; “Wei 2,” pp. 835–7; “Zhongshan,” pp. 170–4 (J. I. Crump, trans., *Chan-Kuo Tse* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1970], pp. 143, 203, 385, 381–2, 574–6).

new practice. From such evidence the modern scholar can often only deduce general tendencies and common developments. Nevertheless, the tales of the individual reformers provide a rough chronological sequence as well as a genealogy of developing institutions. Consequently a complete account of Warring States politics cannot omit them.

As royal power increased, the character of office holding changed completely. From being a hereditary element of a government in which power was distributed among the nobility, office became an extension of royal power. Since officeholders were drawn from a much wider geographic and social range than their predecessors, and since the extension of government meant a larger number of offices, an expanding group of political "cadres" was the beneficiary of the new state. The career pattern of these cadres entailed a new ideal type, the "man of service" (*shi* 士), who through powers of mind and tongue won for himself the position of guide to the ruler. We have already seen one example of this in the figure of Wu Qi, the reformer to whom was attributed the strengthening of Chu in the fifth century.

Such figures became models for aspiring courtiers. Some wrote – or gathered disciples who wrote – texts laying out the principles underlying their policies. Their achievements formed the stuff of romance and fable. At the same time or shortly afterward, men discovered model political advisers in earlier history – Guan Zhong 管仲 (fl. seventh century B.C.), Zhou Gong 周公 (eleventh century B.C.), Lü Shang 呂尚 (eleventh century B.C.), and Yi Yin 伊尹 (Shang foundation) – and texts were attributed to these archetypes of ministerial success. Much of the surviving writing from the Warring States thus emerges directly from the context of pursuing or holding office. The tendency to treat institutional history as biography derives from these social origins of "authorship."

The earliest book attributed to a politically active author is the *Sunzi*, ascribed to the general who supposedly led the victorious armies of Yue at the end of the sixth century. However, the book probably originated a century after the putative author, whose very existence is questionable, and no institutional reforms are credited to him.¹⁹ The first clear linkage of minister, reform, and book is the case of Li Kui 李悝. Appointed chief minister in Wei some time after 445 B.C., he was the eponym of a lengthy work, now lost, that appears in the *Han shu* bibliographic chapter as the first of the Legalist school. He is remembered for two achievements: the elaboration of a theory on the optimal use of land and the writing of the *Fa jing* 法經 (Classic of

¹⁹ Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, p. 68, p. 285, n. 5; Jens Østergård Petersen, "What's in a Name? On the Sources Concerning Sun Wu," *AM* 3d series, 5, 1 (1992): 1–32. For a different position, see Sawyer, trans., *Sun Tzu*, pp. 151–7.

law).²⁰ The former became the basis for discussions of the political economy of the peasantry in the Warring States and the Han empire, while the latter is the earliest known administrative law code.

Although the books written in Li Kui's name have all been lost, their theory of agriculture is cited frequently enough to describe them as the foundation of Chinese rural political economy. The key feature of his work is that he takes the small-scale peasant freehold worked by a single family to be the basic unit of production, posits a standard size of landholding, and then offers advice on how to maximize production for the purpose of generating the highest possible revenue for the state without destroying the people's livelihood. While the peasant freehold had been evolving for some centuries, it is with Li Kui that we first find articulated a theory of the state based on revenue from small-scale farming. This was the economic foundation of the Warring States polity. Li Kui's writings were later classified as Legalist, and he is recognized as the inspiration for the agricultural theories of Shang Yang, but it is worth noting that the surviving fragments of his work could also have been the source for Mencius's accounts of self-sustaining peasant households under the imaginary "well-field" (*jing tian* 井田) system.

Closely linked to this theory of a state based on the landowning peasant household is the earliest record of a large-scale, state-controlled irrigation project that opened up new land for cultivation. This is attributed to Ximen Bao 西門豹, who served as magistrate of Ye 鄴 district in Wei during the 430s and built a system of canals to provide water for irrigation. Han dynasty records note that an expanded version of this system was still in use, and various sources attribute the rise of Wei to predominance at this time to the increased yields in the Henci 河內 region (centered on modern Cixian 磁縣 in Hebei province) made possible by the introduction of water control. Stories of initial peasant resistance to this development also suggest that some loss or redistribution of land was entailed. Li Kui's model of the individual household with its 100 *mu* of land might not have been merely theoretical, but may have been adopted as a government policy in certain regions.²¹

The *Fa jing* attributed to Li Kui is another key step in the emergence of the Warring States polity. We noted above the evolving use of laws in the internecine wars of the Jin nobility, but it is in the accounts of the *Fa jing* that we find the first discussion of Warring States law in its classic form as

²⁰ *Han shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1962), 30, p. 1735; 24A, pp. 1124–5. Fragments of the work on land use are preserved in *Taiping yulan*, comp. Li Fang (925–66 A.D.) et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1960) ("Tian"), 821.3b; *Tong dian*, comp. Du You (745–812 A.D.) (Taipei: Xinxing, 1963) ("Shui li tian"), 2.16c.

²¹ *Shi ji*, 29, p. 1408; 44, p. 1839; 126, pp. 3211–13; Chen Qiyou, ed., *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* (Shanghai: Xuelin, 1984) (16 "Yue cheng"), pp. 990–1.

an extended code devoted to penal measures to control the people. These accounts, written much later than the supposed code, tell us that it was divided into six sections: bandits, brigands, prisons, arrests, miscellaneous punishments, and special circumstances.²² This use of laws to control the actions of the populace at large was carried forward in the Qin legal code fashioned by Shang Yang, who had served in Wei, and thereafter into the Han dynasty.

Another of the Jin successor states, Hann, also produced a reformer of note in the person of Shen Buhai, chief minister appointed in 355 B.C. Like Li Kui, Shen Buhai served as the eponym of a work on political principles that was classified as Legalist. It survives only in scattered quotations. This work was identified in later writings as the first to articulate techniques (*shu* 術) by which the ruler could control his ministers, keep them from growing too powerful, and maintain his absolute authority.²³

The theories of Shen Buhai highlight the pivotal role in the Warring States polity of dependent officials employed by the ruler to execute his decrees. The importance of this innovation has been sketched above, but to carry it out required a range of new practices that redefined the nature of political ties. These innovations included salaries measured, and partially paid, in grain; special payments of gold and silver to reward meritorious service; seals and tallies to bestow and withdraw authority; numerical accounting procedures to examine officials; regular methods of making appointments; and the transformation of fiefs into nonhereditary units which were bestowed by the ruler and served only to provide income.

Traditionally offices in the Zhou state had been associated with fiefs or held by nobles who drew their income from their estates rather than their offices. There are hints that already in the late Spring and Autumn period some officials were paid a salary in grain. However, it is in the Warring States that salaries became the norm, and the amount of grain supposedly paid as salary became the measure of rank. Different states employed different measures of volume, but the practice of rewarding officials with salaries graded in quantities of grain was universal.²⁴ Some of the grain received in salaries could have been converted into cash through sale, but it

²² *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1974), 30, p. 922.

²³ Chen Qiyou, ed., *Han Feizi ji shi* (Shanghai: Renmin, 1974) (43 "Ding fa"), 17, pp. 906–908 and passim (W. K. Liao, trans., *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu*, 2 vols. [London: Arthur Probsthain, 1939, 1959], vol. 2, pp. 221–26); Herdlee G. Creel, *Shen Pu-hai: A Chinese Political Philosopher of the Fourth Century B.C.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

²⁴ *Lun yu zhu shu* (Shisan jing zhu shu, ed.) ("Yong ye"), 6.2b–3a (James Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics. Vol. 1: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, and the Doctrine of the Mean* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1893], p. 186); *Mengzi zhu shu* (Shisan jing zhu shu, ed.) ("Gongsun Chou B"), 4B.6b–7a (James Legge, trans., *The Chinese Classics. Vol. 2: The Works of Mencius* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1895], pp. 226, 227); *Mozi jian gu*, ed. Sun Yirang (Zhu zi ji cheng ed.) (Taipei: Shijie, 1974), 47 "Gui yi," 12, pp. 269–70 (Vi-

is more likely that officials used it to support larger households or more numerous retainers.

While grain was the measure, and perhaps the content, of salaries, Warring States rulers also encouraged devoted service through occasional gifts in gold and silver. In the early Warring States such gifts were also made in land, for example, awards of land to Wu Qi, Ba Ning 巴寧, and Cuan Xiang 爰襄 in mid-fifth-century Wei, but these increasingly took the form of precious metals.²⁵ This shift from land, which was permanent and closely tied to political authority, toward "money," which was fluid, a mark of exchange, and easily withdrawn, was indicative of broader shifts in society. They are linked to the increased use of money in society, but it would be easy to exaggerate the role of cash in what was still primarily a barter economy. As Anna Seidel has noted, cash in the early periods was largely used within the sphere of government. Coins, which in this period took the form of miniature copies of agricultural implements and weapons, and precious metals seem to have served primarily as a store of value and a means of paying capitation taxes. They also began to figure in grave offerings, where precious metals or common metals labeled as "gold" were buried in tombs to be carried into the next world, just as gold and silver inlay became a major feature of bronze vessels.²⁶ The interplay between government, religion, and economy in defining the role of cash and metal in the Warring States has yet to be worked out. However, it seems that precious metals were more a matter of status than of disposable wealth and that rulers bestowed them to mark out those whom they favored.

Beyond the payment of salaries in grain and gifts in precious metals, the rulers of the Warring States preserved the name of the old Zhou institution of the "fief" (*feng* 封), but they transformed its character. Whereas the Zhou had awarded actual control over an area and its population, allowing the holder of the fief to act as a lesser replica of the central Zhou court, the fiefholders of the Warring States played no administrative or judicial role in their fiefs, but were simply granted the right to the tax income from a specific city or a specified number of households. Thus, Tian Wen 田文, the Lord of Mengchang 孟嘗君 (d. 279 B.C.), who served as chief minister in Qi in the late fourth century, held a fief of 10,000 households in Xue 薛, to which were

Pao Mei, trans., *The Ethical and Political Works of Mo-ssé* [London: Arthur Probsthain, 1929], p. 227); *Shi ji*, 6, p. 231 (Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 39); 44, p. 1840; 47, p. 1919; *Zhangguo ce* ("Q 4"), p. 420; ("Yan 1"), p. 1059 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 166, 599); *Han Feizi ji shi* 35 "Wai chu shuo you B"), 14, p. 776; (43 "Ding fa"), 17, p. 907 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 2, pp. 131, 215).

²⁵ *Shi ji*, 43, p. 1797; *Zhangguo ce* ("Wei 1"), pp. 784–5 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, p. 375).

²⁶ Li Xueqin, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations*, pp. 371–98; Hou Ching-lang, *Monnaies d'offrandes et la notion de tréorerie dans la religion chinoise* (Paris: Collège de France Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1975), pp. 3–4; Anna Seidel, "Buying One's Way to Heaven: The Celestial Treasury in Chinese Religions," *History of Religions* 17, 3–4 (1978): 419–31.

later added another thousand; the reforming minister Shang Yang of Qin was enfeoffed in the mid-fourth century with fifteen towns in the vicinity of Shang 商; and in mid-third-century Qin, Lü Buwei 呂不韋 (d. 235 B.C.) received the income from 15,000 households in Luoyang 洛陽 and twelve districts at Lantian 藍田. These were strictly units of income, and in most cases officials were appointed by the ruler to handle administration. There are records of certain individuals such as the Lord of Mengchang and Shang Yang appointing local officials or mobilizing troops, but the scope for such actions was clearly limited.²⁷ Fiefs were also generally small in size in order to minimize the possibility of independent action.

Another major new feature of Warring States fiefs was that, with a few exceptions, they were not hereditary. As a consequence, many holders of fiefs made efforts to convert their temporary wealth into more permanent forms. They did this through four primary methods. First, they used the income from their fiefs to buy private estates. Second, some holders of fiefs were granted special exemption from paying transit taxes on goods shipped through government customs stations. Third, there is evidence of enfeoffed individuals engaging in large-scale money lending. Finally, although there is no direct evidence, stories suggest that some men obtained the right to collect market taxes in urban fiefs.²⁸

Although not hereditary in nature, fiefs were often awarded to members of the royal houses, except in Qin. Thus, the famous Four Lords of the late fourth century were members of the ruling lineages of their respective states and also holders of large and valuable fiefs. This meant that in most of the Warring States the practice of granting fiefs was devoted to securing the power of the royal line. The exceptional character of Qin probably stems from the fourth-century reforms of Shang Yang, which stipulated that members of the royal lineage had to earn position and status through service to the state.

Along with salaries, gifts, and titles, another element of the new polity was new forms of insignia. Gifts accompanying appointments to office form a major topic of Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, and these physical insignia of nobility included chariots, bows, horses, and metals for casting vessels. In

²⁷ *Shi ji*, 6, p. 227 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 37); 43, p. 1826; 68, p. 2237 (Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*; Qin, p. 99); 75, pp. 2359, 2362; 76, p. 2365; 77, pp. 2377, 2382; 78, p. 2394; 79, pp. 2412, 2414, 2416 (Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*; Qin, pp. 142, 144, 145); 80, p. 2427; 85, p. 2509 (Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*; Qin, p. 162); *Zhangguo ce*, ("Qin 5"), p. 28; ("Qin 6"), p. 405; ("Zhao 1"), pp. 627–8 (Crump, *Chuan-Kuo T'ie*, pp. 139, 213, 315); *Zhangguo zongheng jia shu* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1976), p. 112.

²⁸ On hereditary fiefs, see *Shi ji*, 43, p. 1826; 75, pp. 1351–3; 76, p. 2370; 77, p. 2377; 79, p. 2424 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 153). On business activities and market taxes, see *Shi ji*, 75, pp. 2359–61; *Han Feizi ji shi* 4 ("Ai chen"), 1, p. 60 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, p. 30); studies of the "E Jun qi jue" 鄂君啟節 are listed in Li Xueqin, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations*, p. 167, n. 42.

the Warring States such military and religious paraphernalia were replaced by the seal of office for civil officials and the tally for military command. Seals, which were used to validate official commands, were worn at the waist as a sign of power, but it was a power that was visibly removable. Indeed the surrender of seals recurs throughout the biographies of the period. The tiger-shaped tally of military command was likewise a sign of delegated authority, for the commander retained only one-half, while the other was held by the ruler. Only if the ruler's half was obtained could the full army be called out. From excavated tallies we know that in some cases local military officials were empowered to levy small forces of up to fifty men on their own authority, but any larger mission required the ruler's half of the seal. Ceremonies for sending out the central army also included the bestowal of axes as a sign of the general's right to execute men on his own authority, but such delegation of power to commanders in the field was carefully circumscribed.²⁹

Another form of "tally" used to control local officials was the "contract" (*quan* 券) employed in annual statistical assessments. Patterned on, or offering the pattern for, contracts used in land purchase agreements, and presumably other commercial arrangements, such contracts consisted of budget projections written on a single roll of silk, which was then torn in half. One-half was kept by the ruler and one by the local official. Each year the latter was obliged to come to court in a distant echo of Zhou vassals who had shown submission by such journeys. The official presented a statistical report on stocks of grain, registered population, land opened to cultivation, tax and labor services collected, and public security. Through matching reported figures with projections, the ruler evaluated performance. Such procedures fit closely with Han Fei's account of *xing ming* 形名 (form and name), a practice which he attributes to Shen Buhai's theories of controlling officials. Like the use of cash rewards, this practice had religious overtones, for sage-kings were said to "match tallies" with spirits as a sign of world dominion.³⁰

Such statistical accounting and transfer of records between localities and

²⁹ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Xiang 29), p. 1155; *Shi ji*, 6, p. 227 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 37); 79, pp. 2412, 2416 (Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*; Qin, pp. 142, 146; 80, p. 2428; *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 3"), p. 220; ("Zhao 3"), p. 699; ("Hann 2"), p. 972 (Crump, *Chuan-Kuo T'ie*, pp. 136, 348, 487); *Han Feizi ji shi* 22 ("Shuo lin A"), 7, p. 449; 33 "Wai chu shuo zuo B", 12, p. 694, 709 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, p. 228; vol. 2, pp. 76–7, 84); *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* 17 ("Zhi yi"), p. 1133; Wang Guowei, *Guan tang ji lin*, 2d rev. ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1959) ("Qin Xinqi hu fu ba"), 18.11a; Li Xueqin, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations*, pp. 235–37; Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, pp. 23, 126.

³⁰ Liang Qixiong ed., *Xunzi jian shi* (Beijing: Guji, 1956) 11 "Wang ba" p. 154 (John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, 3 vols. [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988–94], vol. 2, p. 166); *Shang jun shu* 商君書 (Si bu cong kan ed.) ("Qu qiang"), 1.7b: 5 ("jin shi"), 5.30b: 5 ("Ding fen"), 5.32b (J. J. L. Duyvendak, trans., *The Book of Lord Shang* [London: Arthur Probsthain, 1928], pp. 205, 320, 328–9); *Zhou li zhu shu* (Shisan jing zhu shu ed.) ("Da zai"), 2.24a–b; ("Xiao zai"), 3.10a; ("Si shu"), 7.2a; *Mozai jian gu* (70 "Hao ling"), 15, p. 363; *Han Feizi ji shi* 35 "Wai chu shuo you

the central court, as well as the measuring of official salaries in kind, required the creation of fixed units of measure in each state. The importance of such policies is shown in the Qin legal documents found at Yunmeng, wherein the use of nonstandard weights, volumes, or measures by an official is to be punished by the payment of substantial fines. The various units of measure employed in different states are mentioned in several literary sources, and archaeological finds of actual standard measures have allowed modern scholars to establish the exact amounts of the units employed in several states.³¹

The Yunmeng documents also demonstrate that the legal codes themselves were intended as much to constrain the actions of officials as to regulate the common people. This can be demonstrated by a survey of their contents. The first and longest section, the "Eighteen Statutes," deals almost entirely with rules for official conduct, guidelines for keeping accounts, and procedures for the inspection of officials. The second section, the "Rules for Checking," is concerned entirely with the maintenance of official stores and the records thereof. The content of the third section, "Miscellaneous Statutes," is the same as that of the first two. The fourth section, "Answers to Questions Concerning Qin Statutes," defines terms and stipulates procedures in order to ensure that officials interpret and execute items of the code in the manner intended by the Qin royal court. The fifth section, "Models for Sealing and Investigating," instructs officials how to conduct investigations and interrogations so as to secure and transmit accurate results. Thus, the primary focus of these actual Warring States legal documents was the rigorous control of the actions of those local officials charged with overseeing the people. This emphasis is reinforced in the text "On the Way of Being an Official" that was buried in the same tomb. This proclaims the new ideal of the official as a conduit who transmits the facts of his locality to the court and the decisions of the court to the countryside without interposing his own will or ideas.

A final and crucial element in the new type of official was the introduction of set procedures for making appointments. Warring States texts provide evidence of five major forms: (1) high officials making recommendations to

the ruler; (2) wandering scholars attracting the attention of the ruler with a written policy proposal or an oral persuasion at court; (3) lower officials or commoners gaining office through meritorious service, especially in combat; (4) attendants of the ruler or a high minister gaining an administrative post; and (5) chief ministers or heads of local districts appointing a limited number of subordinates on their own authority. These last were legally liable for the malfeasance or incompetence of their appointees.³²

All the reforms and institutions discussed thus far were devoted to securing the loyalty and reducing the scope for independent action of the king's servants. Other institutions were devoted to the control and mobilization of the rural populace. The transformation of the Zhou world into a group of competing territorial states was achieved through the extension of military service and tax liability into the countryside and the linked recognition of the property held and worked by the individual peasant households. Such reforms demanded the maintaining of population registers. Keeping these records of the rural population, their taxes, and services, along with wielding the power of punishment to enforce obedience, were the primary duties of the local officials.³³

The linked institutions of universal military service, individual households as the unit of landholding and production, systematic registration and ranking of the population, and the rigorous use of punishments to secure obedience are inextricably linked to the name of the greatest of Warring States reformers, Shang Yang of Qin. While all these institutions had begun centuries prior to his reforms of 356 and 350 B.C., he put them into practice more systematically than had any of his precursors. The extent to which Shang Yang's achievements absorbed those of all his predecessors is shown in Dong Zhongshu's 董仲舒 (ca. 179–104 B.C.) attribution of the abolition of the Zhou well-field system and the appearance of private property in land to Shang Yang's reforms, as though the entire economic history of five centuries was the work of a single evil genius. Shang Yang is also the only Warring States reformer to be given a biography in the *Shi ji* and the only one whose eponymous book survived the Han.³⁴ Thus, by the middle of the Former Han dynasty his reforms already

³² On recommendations, see *Shi ji*, 79, pp. 2405, 2415, 2425 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 134–5, 145, 156); *Zhangguo ce* ("Qi 1"), p. 323; ("Qi 3"), p. 388; ("Qi 4"), p. 417. Examples of gaining posts through written or oral persuasions appear in the careers of Mencius, Shang Yang, Xun Kuang, Li Si, Zhang Yi, Su Qin, Fan Sui, and others. On gaining posts through service, see the discussion of the reforms of Shang Yang below. On attendants gaining posts, see *Shi ji*, 87, pp. 2540–1. (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 180). On ministers making appointments and being liable, see *Shi ji*, 79, p. 2417 (ibid., p. 147).

³³ Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, chapter 2; Du Zhengsheng, *Bian lu qi min: Chuansong zhengzhi shehui jiegou zhi xingcheng* (Taipei: Lianjiang, 1991).

³⁴ *Han shu*, 24a, pp. 1126, 1137; *Shi ji*, chapter 68; *Shang jun shu*.

"B"), 14, p. 784; (37 "Nan er") 15, p. 835 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 2, pp. 134, 167–8). On *xing ming*, see *Han Fei zi shi* (5 "Zhu dao"), 1, pp. 67–9; (7 "Er bing"), 2, pp. 111–12; (8 "Yang quan"), 2, pp. 121–4; (35 "An wei"), 8, p. 484; (32 "Wai chu shuo zuo A"), 11, p. 663; (37 "Nan er"), 15, p. 830; (45 "Gui shi"), 17, pp. 934–6, 939–40 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, pp. 30–5, 48–9, 53–8, 264; vol. 2, pp. 59, 164, 230–1, 232–3). On marching tallies with spirits, see *Shi ji*, 1, p. 6.

³⁵ Yang Kuan, *Zhangguo shi*, pp. 225–9; idem, *Zhongguo lidai zhi du kao* (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1955); A. F. Hulsewé, "Weights and Measures in Ch'in Law," in *State and Law in East Asia: Festschrift Karl Bitter*, ed. D. Eikemeier (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981), pp. 25–39; *Shuohu di Qin mu zhujian* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1978), pp. 44–46, 56, 60–70, 113–14, 114–15 (A. F. Hulsewé, *Remnants of Ch'in Law* [Leiden: Brill, 1985], pp. 42 (A29), 52 (A43), 57 (A52–4), 93 (B3), 94 (B4).

served as a synecdoche for the whole of Warring States institutional history.

Born in the state of Wei in a collateral line of the ruling house, Shang Yang had studied "forms and names" and obtained a position as a household official for the chief minister of Wei, home of the agricultural and legal reforms of Li Kui. Seeking advancement, he traveled to Qin and gained the support of Xiao Gong for a thoroughgoing implementation of the institutions for control and mobilization of the population that had been pioneered in the successor states of Jin. These reforms were initiated in 356 B.C.

His first policy was the introduction of a detailed legal code directing the conduct of Qin government and the behavior of the peasantry. Punishments were inflicted for a whole range of activities, ranging from violence and theft to use of nonstandard weights and measures – since Shang Yang had imposed official standards – or malfeasance in office. The code imposed severe punishments for minor crimes, in the expectation that such punishments would prevent disobedience. The entire population was divided into units of five and ten households for purposes of mutual responsibility and surveillance. Those who reported their neighbors' crimes were rewarded in the same manner as those who obtained the heads of enemy soldiers in battle, while those who failed to report crimes were punished along with the malefactor. Hiding a culprit was to be punished in the same manner as surrendering to the enemy.³⁵

Shang Yang also set up a hierarchy of titles to reward meritorious service to the state, particularly military success. Originally seventeen ranks (*jue* 爵) were established, derived ultimately from subdividing the earlier rankings of the feudal nobility. Military success measured by the number of heads of slain enemies was rewarded with promotion in rank. For individual squad members or the chiefs of a squad of five, rewards were given for heads of enemies actually killed by the individual. For the commander of a unit of a hundred men or more, rewards were given for the total number of enemy killed by his troops. Those killed in battle could have their merits transferred to their descendants. Reaching certain ranks entitled the bearer to the possession of specified quantities of land, houses, and slaves. Those of the eighth rank or above also obtained the tax income of a specified number of villages, like the nobles of other states, and the highest four ranks in Qin's hierarchy of military merit were the equivalents of the lords (*jun* 君) and *hou* 侯 found elsewhere. Lower titles matched with ranks in the army and government

³⁵ *Shi ji*, 68, pp. 2230, 2232 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 92–3, 94). Scattered references appear in *Shi ji*, 5, p. 203 (ibid., p. 24); 83, p. 2461; *Han Feizi ji shi* (43 "Ding fa"), 17, p. 907 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, p. 213); *Xunzi jian shi* (to "Yi bing"), pp. 194–5 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 2, p. 223). Certain chapters of the *Shang jun shu* and the Yunmeng legal documents ultimately derive from these reforms.

administration, with the lowest four ranks corresponding to the soldiery, and ranks five and above serving as officers in the army and officials in the administration.

The ranks likewise entailed certain legal and religious privileges. In the legal realm, the surrender of titles could be used to remit certain punishments, so they provided a degree of protection against severe penalties. In the religious realm, they entitled the holder to privileges in burial, including the right to a higher tomb mound and the planting of more trees on the tomb.³⁶

Shang Yang also initiated a series of reforms to encourage agriculture, which provisioned the army and provided the economic foundations of the state, and to discourage trade, which proved less amenable to taxation. The policy of encouraging agriculture reflected the status of Qin as a frontier state with considerable amounts of undeveloped land and a relatively sparse population. Numerous methods to attract rural population to settle in Qin and open up new land are recorded in the second chapter of the *Shang jun shu*. This chapter also records antimerchant measures, including registration of merchants' servants for corvée labor, high market taxes and taxes on goods in transit, and the registration of merchant households as "inferior people." As such they were not permitted to wear silk or ride horses, and were subject to extended terms of garrison duty at the frontier.³⁷

Another measure Shang Yang initiated to encourage agriculture and the opening of land was to impose a grid of pathways across the fields in 350 B.C. These divided the land into blocks measured according to the expanded *mu* of 240 paces. The size of a block seems to have accorded roughly with the labor capacity of a household with one adult male. Since Qin law also increased capitation taxes on families where fathers and adult sons lived together, there was considerable pressure for households to divide and for each male to take charge of a single block. In this way, Qin sought to put under cultivation the maximum amount of land that could be worked by its population. The uniform blocks of land also provided standardized units for rewarding military service, and land thus received would have been worked by the slaves – probably recruited from convicts or prisoners – that accompanied the land.³⁸

Another reform begun in 350 was the introduction of directly administered districts (*xian* 縣) throughout the state of Qin. All the towns and vil-

³⁶ Du Zhengsheng, *Bian hu qi min*, pp. 317–71; Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, pp. 61–4; Michael Loewe, "The Orders of Aristocratic Rank in Han China," *TP* 48 (1960): 97–174; Nishijima Sadao, *Chogoku kodai teikoku no keisei to kôzô* *Nijû tô shakushi no kenkyû* (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku, 1961).

³⁷ *Shang jun shu* ("Ken ling"), 1.2a–3a (Duyvendak, trans., *Lord Shang*, pp. 175–84).

³⁸ Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, pp. 63–4.

lages in Qin were administratively aggregated into forty-one *xian*, each of which had a magistrate (*ling* 令), a vice-magistrate (*cheng* 丞), a military commandant (*wei* 尉), and an unspecified number of subordinate officials, such as the "overseers" (*sefu* 嗇夫) in the villages. This new institution extended the king's writ into local communities, but it was also linked with the extension of universal military service, because the *xian* was used in military recruitment.

The *xian* had first appeared as administrative units in the Spring and Autumn period, when they were established in conquered frontier districts as administrative units directly controlled by officers of the ruler. Such units were primarily military in character, and if the area ceased to be of strategic concern the *xian* were often bestowed on noble lineages as hereditary fiefs. In the late Spring and Autumn period, Jin introduced another form of directly administered district, the *jun* 郡, in newly conquered, relatively underpopulated, frontier regions. These districts were physically larger than the *xian* but lower in rank because they were in areas of low population and little strategic value. As these *jun* were gradually filled in during the Warring States period through resettlement and the opening of new land, they were often subdivided into *xian*, thus creating a two-tiered system of administration. This first appeared in the successor states of Jin during the fourth century, but it was imitated in Qin, Chu, and Yan and then inherited by the Han dynasty.³⁹

Because the *xian* and *jun* were established by conquest and located at frontiers or in the zones between states, they were closely tied to military functions and became the basic units of recruitment. Records attributed to the sixth century in the *Zuo zhuan* identify Jin armies in terms of the *xian* from which the troops were mobilized. Fuchai's army in 483 was mobilized from nine *jun*. Many discussions in the *Zhanguo ce* of the relative military power of states describe the number of soldiers available in terms of the number of *xian* or *jun*.⁴⁰ Thus, the establishment of *xian* throughout Qin was a necessary corollary of its universal extension of military service.

This identity of the units of civil administration and military recruitment was also linked to the extension of units of mutual responsibility into the army. As was noted above, the laws of Qin systematically equated the penalties for legal violations with those for failure in battle, and rewards for upholding penal law with those for success in battle. Members of units of mutual responsibility were neighbors in times of peace and fought side by

³⁹ Du Zhengsheng, *Bian hu qi min*, chapter 3; Masubuchi, *Chūgoku kodai no shakai*, pp. 328–450; Nishijima, *Chūgoku kodai teikoku*, pp. 503–74; Yang Kuan, *Zhanguo shi*, pp. 209–13.

⁴⁰ *Zuo zhuan zhu*, (Zhao 22), p. 1438; (Cheng 6), p. 830; *Shi ji*, 15, p. 733; 43, p. 1831; 67, p. 2200; *Zhanguo ce* ("Dong Zhou"), p. 5; ("Wei 3"), p. 837 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo T'se*, pp. 39, 429).

side in combat. Their collective responsibilities operated equally in both spheres. Thus, if one member of a squad of five fled in battle, the other four members would also be punished, unless they captured their fleeing comrade or were able to offer the head of an enemy to redeem their guilt. In addition, if any squad of five killed no enemy, its chief was liable for execution. Thus, the creation of a uniform territorial administration answerable to the ruler was tied to the identification of the civil order with the army.

In 348 B.C. Shang Yang introduced another reform, the capitation tax (*fu* 賦, identified in the Qin legal documents as "household tax" or "head tax"). This institution presupposed the practice, imported from the Jin successor states, of registering the population. By law all males were required to register upon reaching maturity, and the government would keep records of the number of men in a household and their ages. Tax was calculated on a per head basis, with a higher rate per individual imposed in households with several adult males. Any household that wanted to split up or move had to report to the local officials. From the chronicle of the man buried in the tomb at Yunmeng, it appears that registration as an adult took place at the age of fifteen, though this figure varied from state to state and across time. Several Warring States texts indicate that these registers also listed the amount of land held by each household.⁴¹

The reforms attributed to Shang Yang provide a complete inventory of the basic institutions of the Warring States. Records of the period show that the promulgation of detailed legal codes, the awarding of titles for service to the state, universal military service, civil administration and military recruitment through units administered by royal appointees, registration of population, and capitation taxes existed in most, if not all, of the Warring States to a greater or lesser degree. Even as Shang Yang was reforming Qin, Wei and Qi both undertook substantial reforms involving opening up and distributing new land through improved irrigation, as well as the rigorous selection and honoring of crack troops. Other significant military reforms, associated with the increased use of cavalry, took place in Zhao under King Wuling in the late fourth century. However, we have much less detail regarding states other than Qin. Evidence indicates that other states had fewer ranks than Qin, and they do not seem to have been so widely distributed throughout the population. This, however, may be a result of destruction of records. There is evidence that Zhao had introduced universal rankings by the third century. In addition, certain states had minor variations on certain institutions. Qi, for example, had no *jun*, but instead established five *du* 都 (major

⁴¹ *Shuohudi Qin mu*, pp. 6, 129–30, 130–1, 242, 250–1, 292–3 (Hulsewé, *Remnants of Ch'in Law*, pp. 104 [C3], 104–105 [C4], 177 [D75], 181 [D85], 187 [E5], 208 [F1]); *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* (2: "ji dong"), p. 616; *Guanzi* (Si bu cong kan ed.), 53 "Jin zang," 17.104b.

cities). Each *du* had a standing force of crack troops.⁴³ These served as the core of the Qi army, though supplemented by peasant levies in the event of major campaigns. However, despite such local variations, the major elements of Shang Yang's reforms existed to a greater or lesser degree in the other states.

THE FORMATION OF A MULTISTATE WORLD

The political history of the Warring States consisted not only of the development of a new form of state, but also the emergence of new patterns of interaction. While the earlier Zhou world had been composed of a multitude of cities and hinterlands linked by kin ties, religious rites, and continuous, low-intensity warfare, the Warring States period was characterized by a small number of territorial states involved in constant diplomatic maneuvering and intermittent but frequent large-scale military conflagrations. The century and a half from 481 to the middle of the fourth century was the formative period of this pattern of interstate relations, a pattern that was forged in warfare. These wars had two major consequences: the absorption of small states and non-Hua peoples into the expanding territorial powers, and the formation of a balance of power in which each state acted independently to further its own interests through the selective application of combat and diplomacy.

The wars of the first century and a half of the Warring States period can be divided into those that preceded the official division of Jin (403 B.C.) and those that followed. Prior to its partition Jin was involved in civil wars, while the peripheral states Chu, Yue, Qi, and Qin expanded through the conquest of smaller states. The first two pressed north toward the Yellow River, swallowing several lesser states, while the third pushed into the southern Shandong Peninsula. Qin expanded primarily at the expense of non-Hua peoples. To the north it engaged in a series of wars against the Rong, whom it gradually subjugated. More significant was the beginning in 441 B.C. of Qin's southwestward expansion into Shu and Ba, in modern Sichuan. This fertile region ringed with mountains became a major source of Qin economic and military power, and it proved a crucial base for launching expeditions against

⁴³ On variants of ranks in different states, see *Shi ji*, 74, p. 2347; 76, p. 2370; 79, p. 2401 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 131); 80, p. 2427; 81, pp. 1441, 1443; *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi*, (to "Yi bao"), p. 551; (to "Xia xian"), p. 880; (22 "Wu yi"), p. 1492; (25 "Shen xiao"), p. 1681; *Han Feizi ji shi* (30 "Nei chu shuo A"), 9, p. 551 (Liao, *Han Fei Zi*, vol. 1, p. 301); *Zhangguo ce* ("Dong zhou"), p. 5; ("Qi 2"), p. 355; ("Chu 1"), pp. 507, 519; ("Chu 4"), p. 561; ("Zhao 3"), p. 721; ("Wei 4"), p. 913; ("Yan 3"), p. 1132 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 39, 167, 235, 246, 357, 447, 556); *Mengzi zhu shu* ("Gongsun Chou A"), 3A.6B (Legge, *Mencius*, p. 185); ("Gongsun Chou B") 4A.11b (ibid., p. 220); *Chu ci bu zhu* 楚辭補注 (Si bu cong kan ed.) ("Yu fu") 7.1b (David Hawkes, trans., *The Songs of the South: An Anthology of Ancient Chinese Poems by Qu Yuan and Other Poets* [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985], p. 206).

Chu.⁴³ The conquest, however, was to require most of a century, and Qin played no major role in interstate politics until the 360s.

The wars of the second period, from the division of Jin in 403 until the middle of the fourth century, can be divided into three distinct stages of two decades each: (1) that of the alliance of the Jin successor states under Wei, (2) that of the conflict between the successor states and the reemergence of Chu, and (3) that of the appearance of Qin on the international stage and the career of Wei Hui Hou from 344 B.C. In the first period, from 403 to 383, the three Jin successor states pursued a foreign policy in common and expanded in all directions: eastward against Qi, southward against Chu, and westward against Qin. They also destroyed the small state of Zhongshan to the northeast. This coalition of the successor states was dominated by Wei, under the leadership of Wen Hou 文侯 (r. 445–396) and Li Kui. Under the celebrated general Wu Qi, Wei's armies pushed Qin back to a defensive line on the Luo 洛 River and occupied the Xihe 西河 region to the west of the great bend of the Yellow River.

The facts of geography and resentment of the rising power of Wei, however, ended the decades of concerted action by the Jin successor states. Fearful of Wei's increasing power and having gained little in the years of territorial expansion, Zhao established a new walled capital at Handan 邯鄲 and launched an offensive war in 383 against Wei to its southeast. Wei sought help from Wei, which attacked Zhao's western frontier. In desperate straits, Zhao sought aid from its old enemy Chu, which in 380 took advantage of Wei's military incursion into Zhao to reoccupy its territories up to the Yellow River. Zhao used the diversion provided by Chu to counterattack and occupy much Wei territory. This conflict was a major event in Warring States history not only in its scale and the fact of its being fought on several fronts, but also because it marked the definitive break with the old pattern of wars based on the dominance of Jin and its successors. Instead there emerged the interplay of alliances in which each state sided with whatever ally proved useful and changed allies as soon as the balance of power shifted.⁴⁴

The war was also significant for the reemergence of Chu as a major power. This expansion of Chu after 400 is attributed to Wu Qi, the general administrator who had defeated Qin and occupied Xihe for Wei. Having fallen under suspicion and been expelled from Wei, he was appointed minister in Chu in 401 by the newly installed King Dao and then is said to have launched a series of reforms to strengthen the ruling house and the state along the lines pioneered in Jin. As argued in the preceding section, this account may

⁴⁴ Steven F. Sage, *Ancient Sichuan and the Unification of China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), chapter 4–5.

⁴⁵ Yang Kuan, *Zhangguo shi*, pp. 270–1.

attribute a series of incremental reforms to a single "hero," but the resurgence of Chu does indicate its adoption of Warring States institutions. Its new power also reflects expansion in the south. In various sources Wu Qi is credited with the conquest of Yangyue 楊越 and the founding of cities at Dongting 洞庭 and Cangwu 蒼梧 (in southern Jiangxi and Hunan, and northern Guangxi). These newly opened regions are cited in the *Zhangguo ce* as major bases of Chu power. A Warring States graveyard excavated in the region has a set of tombs containing numerous weapons in Chu style, several of which are inscribed with the place-names of Chu cities. This archaeological evidence confirms the literary tradition of Chu military expansion into this region.⁴⁵

The decade following 380 witnessed an increase in the pace and scale of warfare among the now hostile Jin successor states and the resurgent Chu. The international scene was significantly altered, however, only in 366, when Qin reemerged from centuries of decline with a victory over the combined armies of Hann and Wei. Up to this time Qin had been a minor factor in interstate wars, suffering repeated defeats at the hands of Wei and losing its territory along the Yellow River. It had compensated for this in part by occupying non-Hua territory, but even its frontier wars had been less than completely successful. The fighting with Shu dragged on, and various Rong coalitions were still able to make major incursions into Qin territory. However, the reforms initiated by Xian Gong in 384 had begun to bear fruit, and the victory in 366 was followed by a decisive defeat of Wei in 364 at the battle of Shimen 石門. The Qin armies were said to have collected over 60,000 heads, and Wei was saved only by the intervention of Zhao. In 362, Qin again defeated the Wei armies, captured Wei's chief minister, and returned in force to the region east of the bend of the Yellow River. These victories presaged Qin's later rise, but the scene continued for some decades to be dominated by the three successor states of Jin, under the leadership of Wei Hui Hou.⁴⁶

Wei Hui Hou was notable for four policies. First, in response to Qin expansion in the west he abandoned his capital Anyi 安邑, which was located toward the western edge of the Wei realm between the bend of the Yellow River and the valley of the Fen River. He shifted his capital in 361 B.C. to the city of Daliang 大梁, south of the Yellow River and out of reach of enemy

⁴⁵ *Shi ji*, 43, p. 1798; 65, p. 2168; *Lü shi chungkuo jiao shi* (14 "Yi shang"), p. 779; (21 "Gui zu"), p. 1473; *Han Feizi ji shi* (13 "He shi"), 4, pp. 238–9 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, pp. 114–15); *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 3"), pp. 212, 215, 216; ("Qin 5"), p. 428; ("Chu 1"), p. 500 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo T'zu*, pp. 132, 133, 135, 195–6, 230); *Hou Han shu*, 86, p. 2831; *Kaogu xuebao* 1978.2: 211–58, esp. p. 251.

⁴⁶ *Shi ji*, 5, p. 201 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 22).

forces. At this time he also temporarily adopted Liang as the name of his state.

Second, between 362 and 359 B.C. he initiated a series of exchanges in which he occupied territory from Hann and Zhao, but then traded several of his own cities and districts for others held by the rival states. These transactions created a more integrated state in the center of the Yellow River valley, with a secure capital at Daliang and control of many of the most important transit points in the Warring States world. Hann and Zhao also achieved a higher degree of territorial integrity.

Third, this movement for territorial rationalization was accompanied by a series of interstate assemblies in which rulers met face to face in an attempt to secure alliances and stabilize the relations between the states. In 361 B.C. Hui Hou met with the ruler of Hann; in 358 and again in 357 he met with the ruler of Zhao. In the same year the ruler of Zhao traveled to Qi to meet with Wei Hou. In 356 Hui Hou compelled the rulers of Hann, Song, Lu, and Wei to attend court at his new capital of Daliang, marking the peak of his power. Also in 356, the year that Shang Yang began his reforms in Qin, Zhao Cheng Hou 趙成侯 (r. 374–350 B.C.) had meetings with the rulers of Qi and Song, and later in the year with the ruler of Yan. In 355 B.C. Wei Hui Hou visited Qi Wei Hou, and in the same year met with Qin Xiao Gong. This emergence of regular meetings and diplomatic exchanges foreshadowed the preeminent role of diplomacy and alliance in the next period of Warring States history.⁴⁷

The final major change initiated by Hui Hou was the adoption of the royal title, by which he became the celebrated King Hui of Liang. This reform was discussed in the preceding section.

Thus, by the middle of the fourth century B.C., all of the leading states had carried out, or were in the midst of introducing, their most important reforms, and all but a handful of lesser states had been destroyed. This process culminated in the assumption of the royal title by the rulers of all the remaining states. Stretched along the Yellow River valley, Qi, Zhao, Hann, Wei, and Qin dominated the political scene, with Chu in the south still a threat and Yan emerging as a minor power in the northeast. Regular meetings of rulers and visits by embassies were beginning to establish a routine of diplomatic exchange between these seven leading states that divided the Zhou world between them. At what is almost exactly the midpoint of Warring States history, a system based on territorial politics in a perpetual state of regulated conflict had taken on its classic form. And the chief activity of these states was combat.

⁴⁷ Yang Kuan, *Zhangguo shi*, pp. 276–8.

THE MILITARY ARTS

The policies of this period were "states organized for warfare." Population registration, universal military service, and ranks of military merit were adapted to enable each state to expand at the expense of its neighbors. These new governmental institutions were paralleled by the transformation of warfare. However, just as the history of institutions comes to us as accounts of the careers of reformers, so changes in warfare emerge largely from the biographies of generals and in military treatises that grew up around the names of celebrated commanders. Thus, the military history of the period must be reconstructed from accounts of the lives of generals that are often little more than legends; discussions of strategy, tactics, and organization must be culled from the military treatises; and evidence about weapons and organization must be derived from archaeological finds.

The earlier armies of the Spring and Autumn period had combined chariots with infantry, the former being the primary weapon of the warrior aristocracy and the weapon of choice in pitched battles staged on flat terrain. Infantry, composed of lower members of the capital populace and peasants who accompanied their noble masters, served for skirmishes, storming cities, night battles, or battles against non-Hua peoples who often fought on foot in mountainous or watery terrain. The most important weapons were the convex bows for nobles on chariots and the lance for infantry. Armies were relatively small, no more than 30,000 men and usually much smaller. Maneuvers were simple, involving some variation of the head-on collision of two masses of men, and battles seldom lasted more than a single day, never more than two. As a consequence, there was little need for military expertise, and command was distributed among the various leading lineages. Individual nobles commanded men mobilized from their own fiefs, and these operated as independent units on campaign and even on the field of battle.⁴⁸

The defining change in the Warring States army was the shift toward reliance on massed infantry. The rise of the infantry army was a gradual change that emerged during the Spring and Autumn period in the internecine struggles for power between states and, more important, among lineages within a state. As peasants from the rural hinterland were drawn into military service, the command of these new-style warriors became the key to political power. Their large-scale use underlay the decline of the nobility and the concentration of power in the royal lineage.⁴⁹ However, the creation of

⁴⁸ Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, pp. 36–43; Raimund Theodor Kolb, *Die Infanterie im alten China: Ein Beitrag zur Militärgeschichte der Vor-Zhan-Guo-Zeit* (Mainz: Philip von Zabern, 1991), pp. 195–9, 252–8.

⁴⁹ Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, chapter 2.

infantry armies also entailed a comprehensive ensemble of changes in the conduct of war. This included modifications in composition, armaments, scale, and patterns of control.

Composition

As for the composition of armies, the infantry army marked the end of the dominance of the warrior nobility and the shift to a state based on the service of the peasant household. Indeed, the supplanting of the nobility in the army resulted in their ultimate disappearance, though it took many centuries for the process to be completed. However, the new pattern of service generated its own forms of social ranking, a hierarchy based on military service. One element of this pattern, the rankings of Qin and related systems in Zhao and Wei, has already been discussed. Another feature, however, was the distinction between the peasant levy based on the *xian* and *jun*, and the standing elite commands that developed in most states and were granted a variety of legal privileges.

The practice of selecting and training crack troops distinct from peasant conscripts emerged in the late Spring and Autumn period through the formation of bodyguards or retainers to accompany leading nobles. Thus, King Heli of Yue had a personal retinue of 500 crack soldiers and also a special corps of 3,000 runners who could continue 300 *li* without respite. Warring States texts attribute to various reformers such as Wu Qi and Shang Yang maxims on the necessity of selecting and training warriors, and a passage in the *Lü shi chungju* is interpreted as implying higher salaries for specially trained soldiers. Although we lack details for most states, the *Xunzi* describes the elite troops instituted by Wei Hui Hou. They were trained to wear heavy armor, shoulder a large crossbow and fifty arrows, strap their halberds to their backs, buckle helmets to their heads and swords at their sides, carry three days' supply of food, and quick march 100 *li* in a single day. Those who could meet these standards earned exemption from corvée labor and taxes for their entire household.⁵⁰ The aforementioned "five city" troops of Qi were also an elite standing force, as were the soldiery depicted in the terra cotta army of the First Emperor of Qin 秦始皇 (king of Qin 246–221, emperor 221–210 B.C.).

⁵⁰ *Mozzi jian gu* (16 "Jian ai C"), 4, p. 79; (18 "Fei gong B"), 5, p. 85 (Yi-Pao Mei, trans., *Ethical and Political Works of Mozi*, pp. 96, 105); *Lü shi chungju jiao shi* (8 "Jian xuan"), pp. 441–2; *Han Feizi ji shi* (3 "He shi"), 4, p. 239 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, p. 115); *Zhangguo ce* ("Qi 1"), pp. 331, 334 (Crumpp, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, p. 150); *Xunzi jian shi* (15 "Yi bing"), pp. 193–5, 96 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 2, pp. 222–3).

Armaments

The description of Wei's crack troops just cited introduces the second great change in military practice, the development of new military technology. Traditional weapons such as the lance (*mao* 矛) and dagger-axe (*ge* 戈) were lengthened, produced in greater quantities, and ultimately forged in the newly developed material of iron. The hybrid combination of lance and hook, the *ji* 戟 (halberd), also became a common weapon. Another style of long lance or grappling hook, the *gou ju* 鉤拒, was developed in Chu for combat on boats. It allowed soldiers to "hook" (*gou*) enemy boats as they tried to flee and to "block" (*ju*) them as they attacked. The use of this lance figures prominently in the scene of water combat depicted on a Warring States basin. The old-style "winged" arrowhead was replaced by the sturdier triangular form. For close combat the most crucial development was the large-scale use of the bronze sword, which is found in many tombs of the period. While excavated examples of iron swords remain relatively rare, they were widespread to the extent that texts of the period already speak of certain regions, notably those in the south, distinguished for the excellence of their iron blades.⁵¹

The single most important technological development, however, was the crossbow. It seems to have been of southern origin, as were perhaps the sword and even the large-scale infantry army. Their use is already attested in the *Sunzi*, where they also figure as a source of metaphor. This would suggest that they were in common use by the fourth century, that is, in the early Warring States period. The *Sun Bin* military treatise, probably originating in the late fourth century, treats them as the most important form of weapon and the decisive element in combat. The power and range of these bows depended on the strength of the bow string, so they were effective only if wielded by powerful and well-trained warriors. One contemporary account states that a single crack soldier of Hann with his powerful crossbow and sharp sword could match a hundred ordinary men. This text states that soldiers loaded the bows by applying both feet against the arc, probably while lying on their backs, and pulling the bowstring upward. This technique is still depicted in Han art from the second century A.D.

The technology of the crossbow, particularly the trigger mechanism, continued to develop throughout the period. The *Lü shi chungku* describes both

⁵¹ *Xunzi jian shi* (15 "Yi bing"), p. 202 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 2, p. 229); *Shi ji*, 79, p. 2418 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 147); *Lü shi chungku jiao shi* (21 "Gui zu"), p. 1473; Yang Hong, *Zhongguo gu bingqi luncong* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1980), chapters 4-5; Hayashi Minao *Chügoku In Shü jidai-no bukki* (Kyoto: Kyōto daigaku Jimbun kagaku kenkyūjo, 1972), pp. 66-96, 117-30, 230-5, 365-74.



Figure 9.1. Depictions of the "cloud ladder" for scaling walls, from the Shanbiaozhen Basin. From Li Xueqin, *Eastern Zhou and Qin Civilizations*, trans. K. C. Chang (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 70.

the extraordinary accuracy of the bows and the great precision of the trigger mechanism. Another technological development was "linked crossbows" that could be fired mechanically in unison, sometimes mounted on carriages. These are described in detail in the military chapters of the *Mohist canon*.⁵²

Other major developments took place in the realm of siege warfare. The *Mozhi* briefly describes the invention of "cloud ladders" used to scale city walls, and these are depicted in the battle scenes shown on a bronze basin (Fig. 9.1). Perhaps more important was the use of mining technology in attacks on city walls. Armies dug tunnels under the walls of besieged towns in order to enter the city or bring the walls down. Defenders used large bellows employed in iron smelting to pump smoke into these tunnels and suffocate the attackers. This increasing reliance on technology in siege warfare figures prominently in the military chapters of the *Mozhi*.⁵³ It is likely that the unusual interest in physical phenomena and technology evinced in the later chapters of the *Mozhi*

⁵² *Sunzi*, pp. 39, 104 (Sawyer, trans., *Sun Tzu* pp. 174, 187); *Sun Bin bing fa* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1975), pp. 43, 64, 65 (Ralph Sawyer, trans., *Sun Pin: Military Methods* [Boulder: Westview, 1993], pp. 92, 116, 117); *Lü shi chungku jiao shi* (16 "Cha Wei"), p. 1004; *Shi ji*, 6, p. 263 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 61-2); *Mozhi jian shi* (53 "Bei gao lin"), 14, p. 320; *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 2"), p. 165; ("Zhao 1"), p. 608; ("Hann 1"), p. 930 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 93, 324, 466); Noel Barnard and Sato Tamotsu, *Metalurgical Remains of Ancient China* (Tokyo: Nichiosha, 1975), pp. 116-17; Hayashi, *Chügoku In Shü jidai-no bukki*, pp. 301-20; Jerry Norman and Mei Tsu-lin, "The Austroasiatics in Ancient South China: Some Lexical Evidence," *MS* 32 (1976): 293-4; Gao Zhixi, "Ji Changshia Changde chutu nuji de Zhangguo mu: Jian tan youguan nuji gongshi de jige wenti," *Wenwu* 1964.6: 33-45; Yang Hong, *Zhongguo gu bingqi luncong*, pp. 135-9; Robin Yates, "Siege Engines and Late Zhou Military Technology," in *Explorations in the History of Science and Technology in China*, ed. Hu Daojing, Li Guohao, Zhang Mengwen, and Cao Tianqin (Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classics, 1982), pp. 438-40.

⁵³ Yates, "Siege Engines and Late Zhou Military Technology."

derive from the military activities of the Mohist school, rather than from the school's links to merchants and craftsmen.

Another change, in both composition and technology, was the increasing use of cavalry. It is still impossible to date the introduction of soldiers mounted on horseback. (For the earlier role of horses in chariot warfare, see p. 284 n. 115.) There is one story in the *Zuo zhuan* for the year 517 B.C. The *Han Feizi* mentions combined chariot and cavalry forces in the Jin civil wars of the late sixth century, but the text was written three centuries after the events it narrates. Certainly by the middle or late fourth century independent cavalry forces accompanied infantry armies, but whereas infantry armies may have numbered one or two hundred thousand, cavalry forces apparently numbered no more than five or six thousand. Even in the army of King Wuling of Zhao, celebrated for adopting nomadic dress and the use of mounted bowmen in the late fourth century, it seems that the cavalry played only a supporting role. This is also indicated by the lengthy discussion of the uses of cavalry in a fragment of the *Sun Bin* military treatise. This lists ten benefits of cavalry, but these consist of reaching strategic points before the enemy, attacking undefended spots, pursuing fleeing soldiers, cutting supply lines, destroying bridges or ferries, ambushing unprepared troops, taking the enemy by surprise, burning stores and pillaging markets, and disturbing agriculture or kidnapping peasants.¹⁴ In short, cavalry were employed in skirmish, reconnaissance, ambush, and pillage, but they were of no use in pitched battles against a prepared enemy force or defensive position.

A final important field of technological development lay in the manufacture of armor and helmets. Most of the armor of the period was made of rectangular leather strips tied together with cords (Fig. 9.2). This produced a flexible body armor providing some degree of security. Several late Warring States texts refer to iron armor and helmets, and some examples of these, most notably the oft-reproduced iron helmet found at Yan's secondary capital Xiadu 下都, have been excavated (Fig. 9.3). This helmet is composed of numerous plates sewn together, as are the few examples of iron armor. The armor depicted on the Qin terra cotta army is similar to the Yan examples in terms of the form of plates and the techniques of tying them together, but there are several distinct styles corresponding to different ranks and functions.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Zhao 25), p. 1466; *Han Feizi ji shi* (to "Shi guo"), 3, p. 178 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, p. 80); *Shi ji*, 43, pp. 1805-11; 110, p. 2885; *Zhangguo ce* ("Zhao 2"), pp. 653-65 (Crump, *Chen-Kao T'ie*, pp. 296-303); *Tong dian* ("Bing 2"), 149.779c.

¹⁵ Yang Hong, *Zhongguo gu bingqi luncong*, pp. 1-29, 32-6; Hayashi, *Chōgoku In Shū jidai-ron*, pp. 408-15.

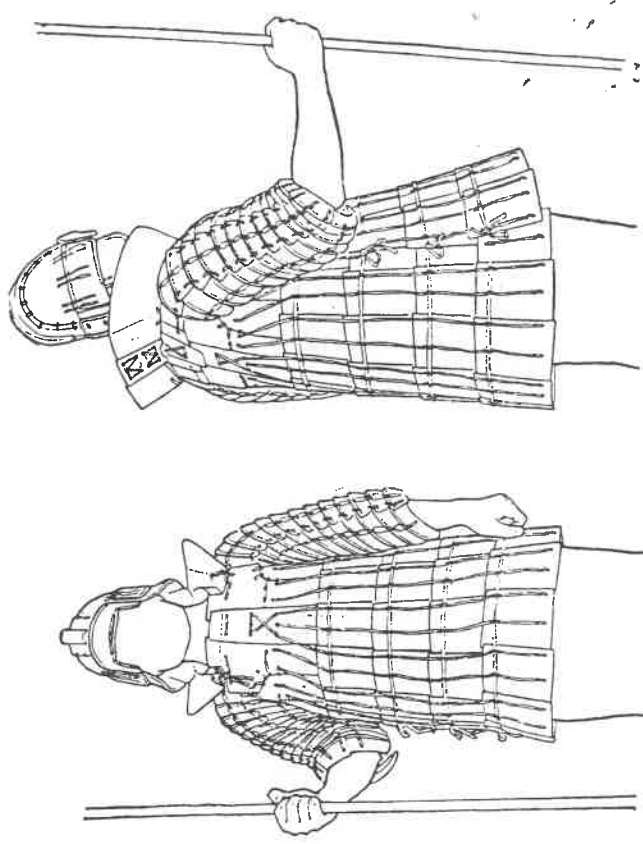


Figure 9.2. Depictions of Warring States armor. From Yang Hong, *Zhongguo gu bingqi luncong* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1980), pp. 6 and 7.

Size of Armies

Closely related to these innovations in the composition and technology of armies was the change in scale. As noted above, the largest Spring and Autumn army would have numbered no more than 30,000 men, but Warring States armies were considerably larger. This expansion was made possible by the switch from chariot armies of nobles to infantry armies composed of peasants, for the latter required far less training and expense, and they were much more numerous and expendable. Although the numbers are not reliable, there are many descriptions in Warring States texts of the size of armies, as well as the number of enemy casualties in the victories of Qin. These latter statistics were collected by Qin for the awarding of titles and may have been transmitted to the Han imperial library when Xiao He collected material from the Qin imperial library during the civil war. Since rewards were based on these figures, they were doubtless inflated by officers in the field through the collection of additional ears from Qin dead or peasants who strayed too close to the Qin army. The figures can only be treated as orders of magni-

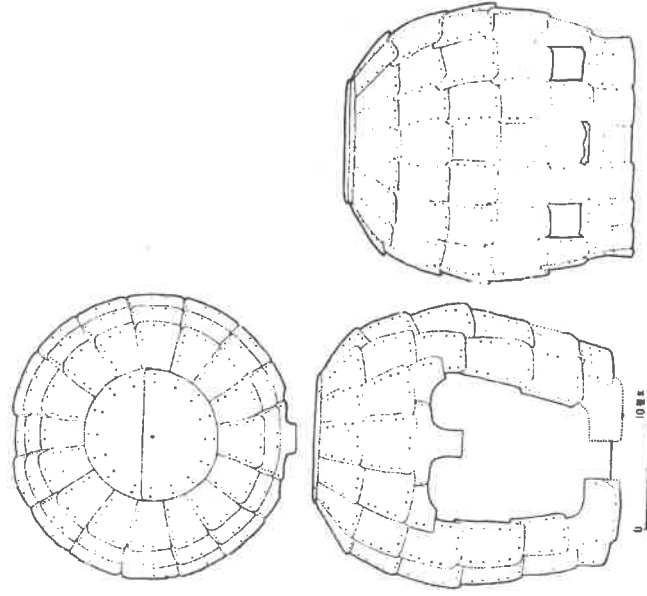


Figure 9.3. Depiction of the iron helmet from Yan Xiadu. From Yang Hong, *Zhongguo gu bingqi luncong* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1980), p. 14.

tude, but they are internally consistent and suggest general trends. Moreover, they clearly distinguish the total number of men at the disposal of the state from the actual numbers of men on individual campaigns, and the latter are not wholly out of line with what we know of the size of armies that primarily live off the land.

Thus, various accounts of Qin's total military capacity list 1,000,000 armored infantry, 1,000 chariots, and 10,000 horses. These round figures are clearly purely notional and serve only as rhetorical terms to suggest great size. For Wei one account says 360,000 infantry, while another says 200,000 crack troops, 200,000 spearmen, 100,000 menials, 600 chariots, and 5,000 cavalry. Zhao supposedly had several hundred thousand armored men, 1,000 chariots, and 10,000 cavalry. Hann had only 300,000, including menials and garrison troops. Qi had several hundred thousand or 1,000,000. Chu had 1,000,000 infantry, 1,000 chariots, and 10,000 cavalry. These figures are exactly the same as those for Qin and thus again appear to be notional figures suggesting a great power. Yan, a weaker state, is credited with only 100,000

infantry, 700 chariots, and 6,000 cavalry.¹⁶ These figures would indicate that each of the leading states might have had a few hundred thousand men available for military service, and one passage makes it clear that these figures include porters, conscript laborers, and garrison troops. The figure of 1,000,000 is probably pure exaggeration intended to suggest the greater resources of Qin, Qi, and Chu, and in one passage it is clearly used to mean only "the largest possible army." The relative figures for the other states fit with what we know of their size and military importance.

Accounts of campaigns, however, suggest smaller numbers for actual forces in the field. This is quite plausible, since no state could put its entire force into action simultaneously, and limitations on logistics would restrict the size of armies that could go out on extended campaigns. The *Sunzi* military treatise, reflecting conditions in the first centuries of the Warring States period, several times uses the round figure of an "army of 100,000" men as a typical force. The *Mozi* also suggests this as a typical figure. The *Lü shi chunqiu*, written a century and a half after the events, states that the armies of Wu Qi never exceeded 50,000. At its defeat at Maling 馬陵 in 341 B.C., the forces of Wei are also supposed to have numbered 100,000. According to one speaker, Bo Qi 白起 (d. 257 B.C.) conquered the Chu capital region in 278 with an army of only "a few tens of thousands of men."¹⁷ Clearly these are approximate figures, but it seems to have been a consensus that armies never exceeded 100,000 during the first centuries of the Warring States period and were generally much smaller.

This seems to have changed in the third century. The size of armies in the field appears to have increased once again, whether because of population growth, more effective registration, higher yields in crops or taxes, or – the most likely explanation – the shift from wars seeking advantage in a balance

¹⁶ On Qin, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 1"), p. 78; ("Hann 1"), p. 934; ("Chu 1"), p. 504. On Wei, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Qi 5"), p. 442; ("Wei 1"), pp. 790, 792; ("Wei 3"), p. 857. On Zhao, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Zhao 2"), p. 638. On Hann, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Hann 1"), pp. 930, 934. On Qi, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Qi 1"), p. 337; ("Qi 6"), p. 474. On Chu, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Chu 1"), pp. 482, 500; ("Qin 3"), p. 216 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 55, 244, 466, 202, 386, 400, 429, 289, 466, 157, 221, 225, 230, 134); *Shi ji*, 40, p. 1731. On Yan, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Yan 1"), p. 1039. *Zhangguo ce* ("Qi 5"), p. 441, uses the phrase "an army of 1,000,000 men" in a context which shows that it means "the largest possible army" (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, p. 201).

Some scholars have argued that the character 萬 is used rhetorically to mean "a large number." This may be true in such figures as 1,000,000 or 100,000, but the speakers indicate something more specific when they employ such figures as 70–80,000, 200,000, 300,000, or 600,000. Moreover, in several persuasions Zhang Yi uses the figures 200,000 or 300,000 to suggest how small are the forces available to a state, so the argument that the character 萬 is a rhetorical trope for "large number" ignores its actual use in the passages in question.

¹⁷ *Sunzi*, pp. 31 (twice), 329 (Sawyer, trans., *Sun Tzu*, pp. 173, 231); *Mozi jian gu* (19 "Fei gong C"), 5, p. 91 (Mei Tsu-lin, *Ethical and Political Works of Mozi*, pp. 109–10); *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* (19 "Yong min"), p. 1270; *Shi ji*, 79, p. 2422 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 154); *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 3"), p. 216; ("Wei 2"), p. 835 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 134, 382).

of power to the campaigns of all-out conquest launched by Qin. The Qin armies supposedly killed 240,000 men in their victory over the combined forces of Hann and Wei in 293; 150,000 soldiers of Wei in 273; and 400,000 Zhao soldiers in the cataclysm of Changping 長平 in 260. Even Yan, traditionally the weakest of the states, was said to have put 600,000 men, divided into two separate armies, into the field in 251 B.C.⁵⁸ While these have little value as absolute figures, and casualties of 20,000 to 40,000 men remain more common, they suggest a story stretching across four centuries of ever greater mobilization of forces in the name of ever more deadly wars of conquest. Drawn from a variety of sources of different origins, interests, and philosophical persuasions, they present a consistent picture of an expanding scale of military actions that fits well with what we know of the evolving institutions and practices of the period.

Scale

The growth in the size of armies was matched by significant increases in the scale of combat, in terms both of time and space. Whereas a campaign in the Spring and Autumn period lasted at most a season, and a battle no more than two days, Warring States campaigns often lasted for more than a year. Thus, forces of King Hui of Wei besieged the city of Handan for three years; King Wuling of Zhao waged a five-year campaign against Zhongshan; the combined armies of Qi, Hann, and Wei carried on a five-year campaign against Chu; the same allies battled Qin at the Hangu 函谷 Pass for three years; and the Qin army that won at Changping spent three years in the field.⁵⁹ Our sources do not provide sufficient detail to know whether some rotation of troops took place during these campaigns, but at any rate the old seasonal limits to campaigns were clearly no longer constraining.

The increase in warfare, both in terms of number of participants and duration of campaigns, was matched in the geographic sphere. Whereas the Spring and Autumn armies had fought as united bodies, with the full forces of both sides assembled opposite each other on a single field of battle, Warring States armies were regularly divided into several forces that operated independently and were separated by great distances. Thus, the campaign that culminated in Qi's defeat of Wei at Guiling 桂陵 in 353 B.C. entailed maneuvers by four distinct armies moving across much of modern Shanxi. The general war of 312 between the coalition of Qin, Wei, and Hann against

⁵⁸ *Shi ji*, 5, pp. 212–13 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 29–30); 73, p. 2331 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian: Qin*, pp. 121–2).

⁵⁹ *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* (18 "Bu qu"), p. 1197; (18 "Ying yan"), p. 1212; *Zhangguo ce* ("Zhao 3"), p. 678 (twice); ("Yan 1"), p. 1056 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 330–1, 512–13).

the forces of Chu and Qi involved simultaneous offensives on four separate fronts stretching across the loess highlands and the flood plain of the Yellow River. The great battle of Changping, though more geographically concentrated than the preceding campaigns, involved two armies deadlocked across a front that stretched for hundreds of li.

Defensive Walls

This geographic redefinition of warfare was even more striking in routine defensive procedures than in campaigns. The military aspect of the formation of territorial states was marked by the building of chains of watch stations and forts at strategic points, and ultimately the creation of large defensive walls along the boundaries of the various states. Even in the late Spring and Autumn period, states had already set up barriers and forts at strategic passes or narrows, but these were not routinely garrisoned. Such essential transit points became the keys to success in the extended territorial campaigns of the Warring States period, and most of the major battles of the period took place around passes, narrow defiles, and other points whose control was crucial to the passage of armies. As a result, each state built barriers and fortifications at its own strategic points and kept permanent garrisons stationed there. In hilly terrain the regions around such forts would also have towers to keep watch and send signals. These barriers also allowed states to check those who entered and exited their borders and to collect transit taxes from merchants who carried goods from state to state.⁶⁰

More substantial than these systems of barriers, forts, and watch towers at strategic passes were the walls erected along state frontiers, as well as the boundaries between the northern nomads and the states of Qin, Zhao, and Yan. The latter are better known, for they were connected by the First Emperor to form the earliest version of the "Great Wall," but the interior walls were more significant in the Warring States period. These walls usually

⁶⁰ On the absence of permanent garrisons in the Spring and Autumn period, see Gu Donggao, *Chunqiu dashi biao*, in *Huang Qing jingjie xuebian*, ed. Wang Xianqin, 1748 (Beijing: Zhonghua, punctuated reprint ed., 1993) (8B "Chunqiu lie guo bu shou guan yi lun"), pp. 995–6. On major battles at passes and defiles, see *Shi ji*, 44, p. 1857; 65, p. 2164; 81, p. 2445; *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* (13 "You shi"), p. 658. On forts, see *Shi ji*, 73, p. 2333 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 122); *Zhan guo ce* ("Zhao 1"), p. 677, 618; ("Wei 1"), p. 792; ("Han 1"), p. 934 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo Tse*, pp. 335 (twice), 400, 466); *Han Feizi ji shi* (90 "Nei chu shuo A"), 9, p. 551 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, p. 300). On signal towers, see *Shi ji*, 77, p. 2377; 81, p. 2449; *Mozi jian gu* (70 "Hao ling"), 15, p. 361; (71 "Za shou"), 15, p. 367; Wang Guowei, *Guan tang ji lin* ("Qin Xinqi bu fu ba"), 18.11a. On border controls, see *Shi ji*, 44, p. 1862; 75, p. 2355; 79, p. 2412 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 142); *Lü shi chunqiu jiao shi* (24 "Dang shang"), p. 1611; *Han Feizi ji shi* (32 "Wai chu shuo zuo A"), 11, p. 629 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 2, pp. 37–8); *Zhou li zhu shu* ("Zhang jie"), 15.10b–13b; "E Jun qi jie ming wen."

followed rivers, being placed behind the dikes that lined the banks, and were made of stamped earth. Thus, the earliest historical record of such a wall relates that in 461 B.C. Qin "walled the banks of the Yellow River," and later accounts note that this wall was extended in 417. When this defensive line did not hold and its armies were pushed back to the Luo River, Qin also began to wall the banks of that river. The building of similar defensive walls along rivers and mountainsides was undertaken by the other six states. Wei built two separate wall systems, one along the Luo River to contain Qin and one to the west of Daliang that was begun in 358, three years after the capital was moved there.⁶¹ Although not particularly high and built largely of stamped earth, several of these walls stretched across whole modern provinces, and they were sufficiently sturdy for substantial foundations to survive to be excavated.

The Arts of War

The last great change in warfare during the Warring States period was the creation of a specialized, intellectual discipline devoted to the conduct and principles of combat. Just as the figure of the reforming minister defined an ideal type for a career in the court of a territorial lord, so the all-conquering commander became the emblematic figure for military specialists. And just as several of the leading reformers became authors or eponyms for texts on statecraft, so such celebrated commanders as Sun Wu, Wu Qi, and Sun Bin 孫臏 became the initiators or namesakes of treatises on the art of war. These texts developed along with the changes in warfare sketched above. Supplemented by discussions of the institutional bases of war in the Legalist texts, they are the chief written sources for the study of warfare in the Warring States.

In the Spring and Autumn period there was no military specialization. Those nobles who dominated the state also led its armies, and each head of a fief commanded its levies in the field. With the rise of mass infantry armies, which required elaborate administration and organization, and the development of new weapons, which had to be conjoined in order to be effective, a

specialized officer corps based on expertise and education became essential. All the military treatises of the period insist on the need for absolute discipline and coordinated action, and they routinely employ the metaphor of the army as a single body with the commander as its mind. In such a context, the emphasis in military thought was placed on the actions of the officers responsible for bringing intelligibility and order to the collective behavior of the massed soldiery. Thus, the specialist commander, an idealized figure of supernatural intelligence, became emblematic of theories of combat in the period. The combined evidence of the biographies of major commanders and the development of military treatises both suggest that some degree of specialization for military officers first appeared in the late sixth century and that by the end of the fourth century, there were both officers who were exclusively commanders of armies and technical military treatises intended for a specialist audience.⁶²

The figure of the general (*jiang* or *jiang jun* 將軍, i.e., "leader of an army") in biography appears with the legendary Sun Wu and Sima Rangu 司馬穰苴. Both these commanders are assigned to the late sixth century B.C., that is, the end of the Spring and Autumn period, and have early treatises associated with their names. However, each of their biographies consists of a single story, and in structure and message the two stories are identical. These tales are parables on the essential principles of military command — the need for fixed rules, the role of the general as master of life and death, the autonomy of the general in the field — and are totally detached from any actual careers. While there may have been historical figures at the origins of the books, they are lost beyond recovery.⁶³

Only in the late fifth century do we find commanders, most notably Wu Qi, with sufficiently detailed records of their careers to be treated as historical, but many of the events in these narratives still belong to the realm of romance or later invention. Moreover, in the fifth century and the first half of the fourth century, commanders were still not exclusively military specialists. Wu Qi also acted as an administrator, perhaps even a local potentate, in Xihe, and supposedly as a reforming minister in Chu. Shang Yang, the great reformer of the mid-fourth century, also commanded armies in the field, as did such noted diplomat/persuaders as Zhang Yi 張儀 (d. 309 B.C.) and Gan Mao 甘茂 (fl. 310–305 B.C.). In the second half of the fourth century we first find military specialists who play no role in civil government, most notably Sun Bin, who never actually commanded an army but only served as adviser, and his arch-rival Pang Juan 龐涓 (d. 341 B.C.). By the third century

⁶² Robin Yates, "New Light on Ancient Chinese Military Texts: Notes on Their Nature and Evolution, and the Development of Military Specialization in Warring States China," *TP*, 74, 4–5 (1988): 212–48.

⁶³ *Shi ji*, 64, 65, pp. 2161–2; Petersen, "What's in a Name?"

⁶¹ *Zuo zhuan zhu* (Xiang 18), p. 1037; (Zhao 13), p. 1351; *Shi ji*, 5, pp. 199, 200 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 21–22); 15, p. 731; 40, p. 1730; 41, p. 1740, n. 12; 43, pp. 1799 (twice), 1802, 1806; 69, p. 2267; 110, p. 2885; *Zhu shu ji nian* 竹書紀年, quoted in the *zheng yi* commentary of *Shi ji*, 69, p. 2268, n. 6; *Lü shi chungku jiao shi* (15 "Xia xian"), p. 880; *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 1"), p. 99; ("Yan 1"), pp. 1053, 1057; Shi Nianhai, "Huang He zhong you Zhangguo ji Qin shi zhu changcheng yi de tansuo," in *He shan ji*, vol. 2, pp. 435–70; Zhang Weihua, "Zhao changcheng kao," *Yu gong changcheng yiji*, in *Shi lin za zhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1963), pp. 77–8 (separate map included); Luo Zhenwen, "Lintao Qin Changcheng Dunhuang Yumen guan juquan kancha jian ji," *Wenwu* 1964.6: 46–57.

the historical records include many specialist military commanders, most notably the chief generals of the Qin conquest, Bo Qi and Wang Jian 王翳 (fl. 236–221 B.C.), and their rivals such as Zhao She 趙奢 (d. ca. 270 B.C.) and Lian Po 廉頗 (fl. 283–245 B.C.). Generalship became virtually a hereditary occupation, with the Meng 蒙 lineage in Qin, the Xiang 項 lineage in Chu, and – abortively – the generals Zhao *père* and *fils* all handing down the title of commander from father to son.

This specialization of careers was accompanied by a shift in military literature from discussions of the relation of the army to the state and the first principles of combat, in early texts, to detailed accounts of technology, placement of troops, and terrain. Later discussions of warfare also included elaborate accounts of waging war according to the principles of *yin-yang* 陰陽 or the Five Phases (*wu xing* 五行).

The commander also figured, along with the “persuader,” as one of the archetypal figures of the realm of stratagem and cunning. The military treatises describe the ideal commander as a potent figure who could penetrate the flux of appearance, perceive underlying order, recognize decisive moments of change, and then strike. He was able to disguise his intentions while penetrating the schemes of his adversary, and to manipulate appearances so that the enemy would march to its doom. A master of maneuver, illusion, and deception, he waged war in the realm of the mind and directly translated his stratagems into victory in the field. These arts of stratagem and manipulation, and the master of cunning wisdom who embodied them, figured prominently in Warring States literature and in later Chinese culture, and they derive from the military treatises and the handbooks of persuader/diplomats, to whom we will now turn our attention.

ALLIANCES AND PERSUADERS

By the mid-fourth century the Warring States world was dominated by seven great powers pursuing independent foreign policies and maintaining an approximate balance of power. The most powerful and ambitious state was Wei, whose King Hui had forged a unified territorial state controlling the central Yellow River valley and several of the chief transit points in the Warring States world. However, a series of military defeats soon eclipsed the power of Wei, and the political history of the next century was defined by the steady rise to dominance of the western state of Qin. Qin's ascent was opposed successively by Wei, Qi, and Zhao, each of which succumbed to military disasters. This left Qin totally dominant by the middle of the third century B.C. This century (350–250) figures in the sources as the age of the “horizontal,” that is, pro-Qin, and “vertical,” that is, anti-Qin, alliances. The

horizontal alliances were so called because they formed along an east–west axis, with Qin in the far west. The vertical alliances, in contrast, linked states from north to south. The political world appears as a chaos of ever-changing coalitions, but in which each new combination could ultimately be defined by its relation to Qin: either forced alliances of subservient states (horizontal) or hostile alliances under the leadership of whichever rival was then most powerful (vertical).

The central figures of this era were the persuader/diplomats who moved from state to state promising a ruler to secure his interests through alliances that they would obtain through their persuasive skills. Through their mastery of stratagem and language, these courtiers offered the ruler a safe path through the shifting constellations of warfare and alliance that defined the interstate order, and they proved the power of their arts through their ability to manipulate the rulers themselves. Awarded the office of minister by one ruler, they proceeded to other states to secure alliances that would be sealed by the granting of another ministerial seal. Thus, several independent states came to share a single minister, whose primary loyalty to any state remained questionable. The fluidity of loyalties was intensified as persuaders dismissed from one state sought office in another, only to return to the state that had expelled them with offers of new alliances that they would secure if restored to their former position.⁶⁴ Like reforming ministers and the military commanders, the most successful masters of persuasion became centers of a body of literature devoted to their arts and accomplishments.

The archetype of the rhetorician, though a figure whose historicity is lost in later fictionalizing narratives, was Su Qin 蘇秦. According to the biography eventually constructed for him, he came from a humble background and after early years of failure finally obtained service with the King of Yan. Through the brilliance of his persuasions he was able to dismantle a horizontal alliance formed by Qin and create a vertical alliance of opposition led by Qi. He was said to have simultaneously held the ministerial seals of six states. While actually working for Yan, he became the closest adviser of the King of Qi, the ultimate target of Yan's ambitions, and distracted Qi by leading it into war with Qin. Assassinated by a coterie of jealous nobles of Qi, with his dying breath Su Qin instructed the King of Qi in a stratagem to trap the assassins. Following the instructions, the king denounced the deceased Su Qin as a spy in the pay of Yan and offered a reward to his killers. When the nobles admitted their deed in order to claim the reward, they were executed. Thus, Su Qin, by making a true confession of his treason disguised

⁶⁴ Jean Levi, “Ma-Chine à trahir: Sophistes et délateurs dans la Chine ancienne,” *La genèse humaine* 16–17 (1989): 355–73. Reprinted in *Les fonctionnaires divins: Politique, despotisme et mystique en Chine ancienne* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), chapter 2.

as a clever lie, manipulated his mortal enemy into avenging his death.⁶⁵ Such was the world of the alliances.

Before analyzing the century of the alliances, it is important to note one essential feature. The symmetry suggested by the terms "horizontal" and "vertical" alliances is illusory. While the vertical alliances were formed between independent states, though generally with one preeminent power, the horizontal versions were relations of dominance. To be in a horizontal alliance meant to be under the sway, if only temporarily, of Qin. This asymmetry meant that while success increased the stability of a horizontal alliance, because it enhanced Qin's power, success for a vertical alliance invariably led to its breakup, because it strengthened the preeminent ally and led the others to turn against it. The logic of the practitioners of alliance sketched above made any protracted coalition against Qin impossible. The empirical result of this principle was that Wei, the first leading opponent of Qin, was broken by Qi, while Qi in turn was toppled by an alliance led by Yan. Only at the end of the age of alliances, in its confrontation with Zhao, did Qin finally have to defeat its primary adversary in battle.

The century of alliances can be divided into three stages, corresponding to the three chief adversaries of Qin: (1) the last half of the fourth century, (2) the period of Qi, 301–284 B.C., and (3) the period of Zhao, 284–260 B.C. The first period in turn witnessed two major developments: the decline of Wei, and the territorial consolidation of Qin.

The Decline of Wei, 353–322 B.C.

The primary factors in the decline of Wei were the two crushing defeats, celebrated as marvels of strategy in later Chinese literature, suffered in 353 B.C. at Guling and 341 B.C. at Maling. These were inflicted by Qi forces commanded by Tian Ji 田忌 and Sun Bin. Whereas Wei recovered from the first defeat sufficiently to allow Hui Hou to adopt the royal title, the second disaster led to a defeat at the hands of a Qin army under Shang Yang, and Wei was forced to accept a position as a subordinate ally of Qi. However, Wei's new alliance did it little good. In the next decade Qin armies led first by Gongsun Yan 公孫衍 (fl. 333–315 B.C.) and then by Zhang Yi – the first of the persuaders to appear in the historical record – inflicted virtually annual defeats on Wei. Qin not only reoccupied all the territory lost to Wei in the late fifth century, but also made major inroads into the Wei heartland. In 322 Wei accepted the first horizontal "alliance," by appointing Qin's chief minister Zhang Yi to be simultaneously minister of Wei. In response to

⁶⁵ *Shi ji*, 69, pp. 2265–6.

this, Gongsun Yan was able to form the first vertical alliance of the five remaining states against Qin. At this time the idea of horizontal and vertical alliances first came into common usage, and Zhang Yi and Gongsun Yan became the most celebrated politicians in the Warring States.⁶⁶

Qin's Territorial Consolidation

Even as Qin began to project its power into the Central Plain, it also completed its conquests of its non-Hua neighbors and thereby created the integral state ringed by mountains that gave it a major geopolitical advantage over its allies (see Map 9.2). In 316 B.C., Qin finished the conquest, begun 130 years earlier, of the southwestern states Shu and Ba. Although it recognized a series of local chieftains as feudatory lords of Shu, actual administration was taken into Qin hands. Qin law, landholding patterns, and military service were imposed. In 314 Qin also defeated the last hostile Rong tribe, and thus brought an end to the last threat to its frontiers in the west. Through these conquests and the occupation of the Hangu Pass and other key points in the Yellow River valley, Qin had made itself virtually impervious to attack. The process was completed in 312 when Qin forces defeated Chu at Danyang 丹陽 and thus secured the Hanzhong 漢中 region. This conquest linked the Qin heartland to Ba and Shu as a single territorial block. In addition, Chu was gravely weakened, and it ceased to play any significant role in the balance of power.

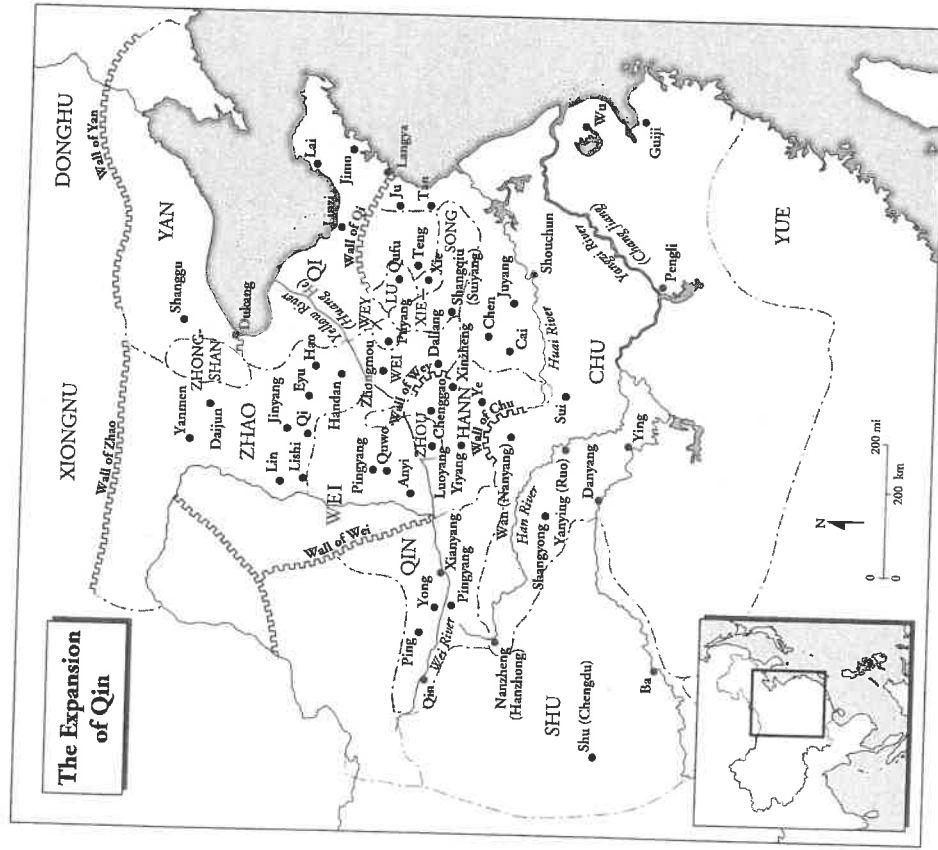
Qin's expansion to the southwest was important not only from a strategic point of view, but also as a new source of economic wealth that gradually made Qin predominant among the Warring States. In 310, Zhang Yi initiated the construction of a new local capital for Shu at Chengdu 成都, where he built a city modeled on the Qin capital Xianyang. From this base Qin proceeded to develop the Sichuan Basin as a major agricultural center, most notably through Li Bing's 李冰 (fl. 300 B.C.) famous irrigation project at the modern Dujiangyan 都江堰.⁶⁷

The Period of Qi, 301–284 B.C.

The second period of the age of alliances centered on the rise and fall of Qi. Politics during this period was dominated by the figure of Tian Wen 田文, the Lord of Mengchang 孟嘗君. A notorious figure in the period, Tian Wen accumulated considerable wealth from his fief and related business activities,

⁶⁶ Yang Kuan, *Zhangguo shi*, pp. 315–23.

⁶⁷ Sage, *Ancient Sichuan*, chapters 4–5; Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*. Vol. 4.3: *Civil Engineering and Navitics* (Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 288–96.



Map 9.2. The expansion of Qin ca. 350-249 B.C.

and he used his money to surround himself with thousands of retainers. In doing so he set the pattern for the competition among the leading enfeoffed ministers of his day, the so-called Four Lords, to assemble large personal followings of persuaders, assassins, and others of diverse talents. He was also emblematic of the tendency for enfeoffed relatives of the royal line to dominate most courts during this period.

With the accession of King Min 閔 (r. 300-284 B.C.), Tian Wen secured effective control of the government of Qi, which established a revived alliance with Hann and Wei. Since Qin had been seriously weakened by a succession

struggle in 307, it temporarily yielded to this new coalition by appointing Tian Wen as chief minister. No sooner was this general peace secured, however, than a jealous Zhao offered Qin an allegiance against Qi. Tian Wen was dismissed as minister, and the struggle between the two great powers resumed. In 298 the Qi-led alliance attacked Qin, and their combined armies reached the Hangu Pass. After three years of warfare, the allied armies forced their way into the pass and compelled Qin to sue for peace. Substantial territories that had been lost were thus returned to Hann and Wei. The three allies then inflicted a crushing defeat on Yan. During the five years of its alliance with Hann and Wei, Qi had inflicted major defeats on Chu, Qin, and Yan, and thus secured a temporary dominance among the Warring States.

In 294, Tian Wen fled to Wei after being implicated in a coup d'état, and his carefully constructed alliance collapsed. Qin and Qi then agreed on a temporary truce in order to pursue their own interests. Qin's armies, now under their great general Bo Qi, resumed their eastward expansion against Hann and Wei. It is in these campaigns between 294 and 290 that we find the sudden rise in casualty figures that signals the escalation of warfare as Qin began its drive for absolute power. Qi, for its part, set out to conquer Song. This minor state was particularly desirable for its city Dingtao, perhaps the wealthiest commercial center in the Warring States.⁶⁸ The alliance of Qin and Qi culminated in 288, when the two rulers declared themselves to be the western and eastern *di* 帝, the first application of this divine title to human rulers. They swore a covenant cast in bronze and agreed to begin an attack on Zhao.

At this point a radical transformation of the political scene was supposedly engineered by the newly prominent Su Qin. If we accept the evidence of the newly discovered *Zongheng jia shu* from Mawangdui, Su Qin, acting in the service of the King of Yan, persuaded the king of Qi that his state's interests lay in the occupation of Song and the weakening of Qin, and that the proposed war with Zhao would benefit Qin at Qi's expense.⁶⁹ The king of Qi accepted the argument, and he formed an alliance with the other states in the name of compelling Qin to abandon the presumptuous title of *di*. A chastened Qin abandoned the contested title and restored recently conquered territory to Wei and Zhao. In the next year Qi completed the second element of its scheme by finally occupying Song.

Qi's success, however, immediately made it the target of collective fear and suspicion — all according to the scheme of Su Qin, if we trust our sources —

⁶⁸ Shi Nianhai, *He shan ji*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Sanlian, 1963), pp. 110-30.

⁶⁹ *Zongheng jia shu* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1976), pp. 1-2, 3, 5-6, 9-11, 35; Levi, *Lei Fonctionnaires divins*, pp. 73-80.

and a hostile coalition of all the states rapidly formed under the leadership of the exiled Tian Wen in Wei, Wei Ran 魏冉 (fl. 307–266 B.C.) in Qin, and King Zhao 昭 (r. 311–279 B.C.) of Yan. Yan had traditionally been a steadfast ally of Qi, so that the latter's northern defenses were relatively weak. In 284, the Yan armies, which had been intensively developed for three decades, were led by general Yue Yi 樂毅 (fl. 300–279 B.C.) in a massed onslaught from the north that caught Qi completely by surprise. At the same time the armies of Qi, Zhao, Hann, and Wei attacked from the west. Chu declared itself an ally of Qi and marched north, but it contented itself with reoccupying land it had lost north of the Huai River. In the following campaign Qi's armies were annihilated, its king slain, and the entire state occupied with the exception of the cities of Ju 莒 and Jimo 即墨. Although a relative of Qi's royal line, Tian Dan 田單, who had risen to command in Ju and Jimo, succeeded in recovering Qi's territory in 279, the state never again attained the level of its former influence and power. Like Wei it could no longer challenge Qin, which in 278 captured Chu's capital and expelled Chu from the Han River valley and the central Yangzi.⁷⁰

The Period of Zhao, 284–260 B.C.

These developments mark the beginning of the third stage of the century of alliances. It was the transitional period between the age of diplomatic maneuver in a multistate world based on a balance of power to the time of "total war" aimed at conquest of all the other states. This shift was prefigured by the increasing scale of combat noted earlier, and it was encouraged by the weakening of Qin's major rivals. The disasters that had befallen Qi and Chu left Zhao alone in opposition to Qin, so the importance of diplomatic maneuvers was eclipsed by that of military prowess. As will be discussed below, this new age found its theoretician in the last of the persuaders, Fan Sui 范雎 (d. 255 B.C.).⁷¹

Zhao, strengthened by King Wuling's military reforms and the conquest of Zhongshan in 300, had flourished by alternately supporting Qin and Qi. It had been further strengthened through the policies of King Huiwen 惠文 (r. 298–266 B.C.), who had surrounded himself with able generals and ministers, such as Yue Yi, Lin Xiangru 蔺相如, Lian Po, and Zhao She. In the decade between 285 and 275, Zhao expanded its territories at the expense of the declining Wei and Qi, and texts make generalized statements about the prosperity of his state in this period. The rise of Zhao reached its

⁷⁰ Yang Kuan, *Zhengguo shi*, pp. 340–51.

⁷¹ There is disagreement as to the character for his personal name. Some scholars, such as Crump in his translation of the *Zhangguo ce* and Watson in his translation of the *Shi ji*, read the character as 雎 *ju*.

climax in 269 B.C., when forces under Lian Po decisively defeated two Qin armies.⁷²

This defeat led to the rise of Fan Sui and a shift in Qin policy. One reason for Qin's defeat was that even while part of the Qin forces fought against Zhao, other armies had been dispatched to Qi, where Qin's chief minister Wei Ran was seeking to expand the enclave around his recently acquired fief of Dingtao. Fan Sui, who had previously served in Wei, traveled to the Qin court, where he attacked the failings of Wei Ran and propounded the doctrine of "allying oneself with those who are distant [i.e., Qi] in order to attack those nearby [originally Hann, ultimately Zhao]." King Zhao 昭 (r. 306–251 B.C.) of Qin accepted these arguments and gave Fan Sui a ministerial appointment. From this position Fan Sui persuaded King Zhao of the virtues of direct royal rule, indirectly attacking the Queen Dowager and Wei Ran who had controlled the court since 307. In 266 the king dismissed the Dowager and banished Wei Ran. Fan Sui was appointed chief minister.

Fan Sui's appointment marked a significant moment in Warring States history, for he was the first politician to articulate a goal of irrevocable expansion for Qin. Abandoning the old policy of making and unmaking alliances to suit the needs of the moment and seizing territories scattered across the Warring States (e.g., Dingtao), he asserted "alliance with the distant and war with neighbors" as a basic principle allowing for the irreversible expansion of the state as an integrated territorial unit. To reinforce this policy of a unitary state, he insisted that "each inch or foot gained was the king's inch or foot."⁷³ This denounced not only Wei Ran, who had used the conquests of Qin's armies to expand his personal fiefs and those of his followers, but also the general trend of the late fourth and early third centuries for leading courtiers to receive noble titles and ever larger fiefs. In addition to Wei Ran and four of his allies who had been enfeoffed as lords, the other figures attacked included Tian Wen, Lord of Mengchang; Zhao Sheng 趙勝, Lord of Pingyuan 平原君 (d. 251 B.C.); Gongzi Wuji 公子無忌 of Wei, Lord of Xinling 信陵君 (d. 242 B.C.); Huang Xie 黃歇 of Chu, Lord of Chunshen 春申君 (d. 237 B.C.); and Qin's great commander Bo Qi, Lord of Wuan 武安君, a rival to Fan Sui's ascent. These men dominated the governments of their states, accumulated large fortunes, assembled armies of personal followers, and rivaled the monarch's authority. Fan Sui strengthened Qin by bringing this to a temporary halt.

A final maxim of Fan Sui that articulated recent political developments and defined the new ambitions of Qin was "attack not only their territory but also their people." This meant to aim not only at territorial expansion,

⁷² *Shi ji*, 43, pp. 1818–22; 81, pp. 2439–45.

⁷³ *Shi ji*, 79, p. 2409 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, p. 139).

but also at the destruction of armies on such a scale that rival states would lose the capacity to fight.⁷⁴ Here we find enunciated as policy the mass slaughters of the third century.

The first tangible expression of these policies was the abandonment of the war with Qi and the concentration of Qin's power on the destruction of Hann, the weakest surviving state and one that bordered directly on Qin. In 265 Qin began an offensive that cut off the seventeen districts of Shangdang 上黨 from the rest of Hann. The king of Hann agreed to cede these, but the local governor refused to comply and instead presented the territory to Zhao. Lian Po, the hero of Zhao's victories over Qin, took responsibility for the defense of the territory and based his army at Changping. Qin sent out its armies under Bo Qi, and thus began the greatest campaign of the Warring States period.

The two armies remained locked in a standoff for three years. Finally King Xiaocheng 孝成 (r. 265–245 B.C.) was persuaded that Lian Po was avoiding combat and that he should entrust the command to Zhao Kuo 趙括 (d. 260 B.C.), son of the successful general Zhao She. The new commander threw his troops into the decisive battle that he had promised the king. Bo Qi allowed Zhao's forces to advance in the center, encircled them on the flanks, cut their supply lines, and seized the fortifications they had left behind. When their advance in the center was finally blocked by Qin's fortifications, the Zhao army found itself entirely surrounded. Failing to break through, they dug in and awaited relief. Both states mobilized all the troops at their disposal, with the king of Qin making a special visit to Henei, mobilizing all males over fifteen years of age, and granting them all one rank in the state hierarchy. After forty-six days Zhao had failed to relieve the encircled troops, who were now on the brink of starvation. Zhao Kuo launched a last, desperate attempt to break out, but he himself was killed in the final assault. The starving army surrendered. According to the sources all of its soldiers were buried alive by Bo Qi. Zhao's losses supposedly totaled more than 400,000, and though this figure is certainly exaggerated, Zhao never entirely recovered from the defeat.⁷⁵ Like Wei and Qi, it was no longer able to match Qin in the field.

Due to the exhaustion of its own forces and the growing rivalry between Fan Sui and Bo Qi, Qin was unable to follow up the victory immediately. When the policy he advocated was rejected, Bo Qi retired to his fief and was forced to commit suicide. The general who replaced him lost his entire command when attacked from the rear while besieging the Zhao capital, and

⁷⁴ *Shi ji* 79, pp. 2409–12 (*ibid.*, pp. 138–42); *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 3"), p. 200 (Crump, *Chan-Kuo T'ie*, p. 112).

⁷⁵ *Shi ji* 73, pp. 2333–5 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 122–4); 81, pp. 2446–7.

Fan Sui was stripped of office for his role in the debacle. Two years later he was executed for involvement in a case of colluding with foreign monarchs. The catastrophe of Changping, followed shortly by the deaths of Bo Qi and Fan Sui, marked the end of another period of Warring States history. Qin now dominated the world of the Warring States. No single state could match it, and there was no mechanism to hold together a multistate alliance against it for any period of time. Although the Warring States period would last three more decades, the issue was no longer in doubt. All that remained was a chronicle of steady Qin expansion and the sequential destruction between 230 and 221 B.C. of the remaining states.⁷⁶

SCHOLARS AND THE STATE

Unlike kings, reforming ministers, commanders, and persuader/diplomats, the scholars were neither an indispensable element of the new state structure nor active participants in the political world, but they evolved in close relation with the states of the period. The teacher-disciple relationship as a social form first appears in the careers of Confucius and his followers, as reflected in the *Analeks*. While this text and later traditions tell of Confucius's attempts to find a ruler who would employ him, he held only low office and played no role in the politics of the period. However, several of his disciples attained high office in minor states, and others found patrons who supported their cultural activities as teachers and masters of ritual. These men in turn attracted students, so the "school" (*jia* 家), defined by links between successive teachers and disciples and the texts that they transmitted and reworked, became a distinctive social form.

Apart from those that emerged from Confucius's disciples, the only full-blown school attested to in the records is the Mohist tradition. Otherwise, each intellectual tradition is identified by the name of its putative founder and is defined entirely by a book or books that bore his name.⁷⁷ The sociology of these intellectual traditions remains obscure, for we cannot be certain in many cases of their composition or of their economic bases. Clearly the holding of office was one means of turning scholarship into wealth, but those few scholars whose names and careers are preserved seem not to have had successful political careers. Whereas successful officials such as Li Kui, Shen

⁷⁶ Hann fell in 230 B.C., Zhao in 228, Wei in 225, Chu in 223, Yan in 222, and Qi in 221. See Chapter 14, this volume.

⁷⁷ *Xunzi jian shi* (6 "Fei shier zi"): (21 "jie bi"), pp. 290–2 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 1, pp. 222–9; vol. 3, pp. 102–103); *Zhuangzi ji shi* (*Zhuazi jicheng* ed.) (33 "Tian xia"), pp. 461–81 (Burton Watson, trans., *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1968], pp. 361–77); *Han Feizi ji shi* (50 "Xian xue"), 19, pp. 1080–104 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 2, pp. 298–310).

Buhai, Shang Yang, several generals, and leading persuaders attracted disciples and formed textual traditions, the process does not seem to have gone in the opposite direction. Rarely were the proponents of scholarly textual traditions able to obtain high office. This asymmetry could explain why the Confucians and Mohists were the only known "schools" of the Warring States. By contrast the traditions of the actual politicians – institutional reformers, military men, or adepts of persuasion and alliance – were transformed into categories such as the "Legalists," "School of names," and "Military schools" only by Han bibliographers, who, from the time of Liu Xiang (79–8 B.C.), reinvented the past in the image of a triumphant state scholasticism defined by the Confucian inheritance.⁷⁸

If scholarship was not the road to high office, then we must seek its economic bases elsewhere. Confucius was known to charge his disciples a fee, if only a token one from the poorest, so teaching may in some cases have been a source of income.⁷⁹ Those trained in the schools could sell their services as clerks and ritual specialists, occasionally to royal courts but more often to great families, the courts of lesser states, or the households of newly enfeoffed nobles. Funerals were central to religious cult, and the *Xunzi* speaks contemptuously of "petty antiquarians" who hired themselves out as funeral experts, and the *Mozzi* contains similar denunciations of Ru 儒 (used here to indicate followers of the Confucian tradition) who made money through selling their ritual expertise.⁸⁰ The later Mohists offered their talents to various towns and courts as experts in siege warfare. In addition, the theory of *yin-yang* and the Five Phases may have emerged from meteorological and divinatory traditions that lay outside literary circles but still perpetuated themselves through master-disciple transmission and patronage from both court and noncourt levels.⁸¹ Thus, some types of scholarship could provide a means of earning a living in various spheres of society. While the expertise of politicians in government, warfare, or diplomacy was only of value in the royal courts, textual scholars could maintain themselves apart from the world of politics. This "bipolar" social character of scholarship, whereby scholars were able to move between the courts and local society, between public

⁷⁸ *Han shu*, 30.

⁷⁹ *Lun yu zhu shu* ("Shu er"), 7.2b (Legge, *Analects*, p. 197). *Zhuangzi ji shi* (28 "Rang wang"), p. 420, describes the elaborate clothing, the ornate chariots, and the fine horses that Zi Gong earned through teaching (Watson, trans., *Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 316). Another account of gaining wealth and honor through teaching appears in *Han Feizi ji shi* (49 "Wu du"), 19, p. 1058 (Liao, *Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 2, p. 287).

⁸⁰ *Xunzi jian shi* (8 "Ru xiao"), pp. 92–3. See also (1 "Quan xue"), pp. 10–11; (6 "Fei shier zi"), p. 70 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 1, pp. 140–1, 229; vol. 2, pp. 79–80); *Mozzi jian gu* (15 "Fei ru xia"), 9, pp. 180–1 (Yi-Pao Mei, *The Ethical and Political Works of Mozi*, pp. 202–3).

⁸¹ A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao. Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1989), pp. 313–70.

service and private retirement, is one reason why, unlike the intellectual products of the courts, it was able to survive and flourish after the unification under Qin rendered the skills of the Warring States courtiers and generals obsolete.

Although organized scholarship originated outside the courts of the new territorial states and preserved its bases in social and geographic hinterlands, elements of it were gradually drawn into the state sphere. Both the state and the scholarly traditions were thereby altered. From the late Spring and Autumn period, masters of religious and historical traditions occasionally found service as functionaries or policy advisers. However, the first signs of scholarly traditions becoming a significant element in the territorial states appear in the mid-fourth century. From that time the rulers of Wei and above all Qi began to gather scholars who were granted stipends and sometimes titles solely so that they might pursue their intellectual labors. In Qi, chosen scholars carried out their activities outside the Ji 稷 gate of the capital Linzi and hence came to be called "the scholars [or 'men of broad learning' *boshi* 博士] beneath the Ji [gate] 稷下."⁸² The exact nature of this "institution" is not clear, its scale should not be exaggerated, and it is only one element of the broader social practice of collecting a large number of clients. Nevertheless, it marks a significant development. For the first time on record a state began to act as patron of scholarship out of the apparent conviction that this was a proper function of the state or a means of increasing its prestige.

The history of state patronage of scholastics elsewhere in the Warring States could charitably be described as sketchy. The *Shi ji* states that when Lü Buwei, chief minister of Qin from 250 to 238 B.C., began to assemble the retainers who composed the *Lü shi chungiu*, he was inspired by his jealousy of the Four Lords. He felt that the dominant state, Qin, should not be surpassed in any field. This suggests that the practice of attracting scholars that began in Qi had since spread to the other states, though the royal courts were often surpassed as patrons of scholars by the great officers in their fiefs. It is significant that having previously been a Jixia scholar, Xun Kuang 荀况 (ca. 310–213 B.C.) was given an official post through the patronage of one of the Four Lords, Huang Xie in Chu.⁸³ This suggests that the "collecting" of scholars was part of the broader phenomenon of building extensive personal retinues of dependents with a wide variety of skills. In this way the scholars assembled in the courts of kings and their officers were the literary equivalents of the assassins and bravos (*you xia* 游侠) who attached themselves to leading politicians, while the schools that held themselves apart from state

⁸² *Shi ji*, 74, pp. 2346, 2347–8.

⁸³ *Shi ji*, 74, p. 2348; 85, p. 2510 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 162–3).

service in the lower reaches of society were the counterparts of the independent *you xia* syndicates. This linkage is directly articulated in the work attributed to Han Fei in its lists of those who challenge the legal order imposed by the ruler.⁸⁴

While in some cases these official scholars might have acted as adornments to the life and prestige of a ruler or minister, or proofs of his power and prestige, they also played a distinctive role in the governments of the period. Specifically, they acted as experts on ritual performances in the court, the ancestral temple, and the sacred sites of the realm. In the sphere of religion and received practices, the ritual expertise preserved in certain scholarly traditions such as those derived from Confucius or the arts of "masters of techniques" (*fangshi* 方士) gave men of letters a claim to a role in the state. Religious cults, both ancestral and those devoted to nature deities, had been central to political power in the Shang 商, Western Zhou, and Spring and Autumn periods, and there is much evidence that this continued into the Warring States period. Finds in Warring States tombs increasingly reveal that members of the Warring States elite held elaborate beliefs about and a deep concern for the world of the spirits and the afterlife.⁸⁵ Received texts such as the *Chu ci* and the *Shan hai jing*, as well as anecdotes scattered throughout other works, point in the same direction.

However, due to the destruction of state records we lack detailed evidence about state cults and what could be called political religion. Our only literary evidence comes from accounts of the Qin state cult and the career of Qin Shihuang 秦始皇 (the First Emperor) preserved in the *Shi ji*, but this record is sufficient to confirm both the extent of state cults in the period and the role of scholars in their performance. The *Monograph on the Feng and Shan Sacrifices* (*Feng shan shu* 封禪書) describes the establishment of the cults of the Lord on High (*Shang Di* 上帝) and those of the four directional gods (*di* 帝) in Qin during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., but its discussion of Qin deals primarily with the reign of the First Emperor.⁸⁶

The adoption of the theory of the Five Phases as a model of history and guide for colors and numbers in court ritual by the First Emperor was a major modification of policy brought about by the influence of one scholarly tradition. The importance of state ritual at the end of the Warring States is also indicated by the First Emperor's program of progresses through his newly conquered realm during which he made repeated sacrifices at sacred moun-

⁸⁴ Han Feizi ji shi (49 "Wu du"), 19, pp. 1057, 1058; (50 "Xian xue"), 19, pp. 1091, 1095 (twice) (Liao, *Han Fei Tan*, vol. 2, pp. 285, 287, 302, 305); *Shi ji*, 124, pp. 3181, 3184 (Burton Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, vol. 2, pp. 452, 455).

⁸⁵ On this, see Chapter 12, this volume.

⁸⁶ *Shi ji*, 28, pp. 1358-77 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 2, pp. 17-30).

tains and commemorated these acts with inscriptions in praise of his own achievements. The First Emperor also adopted the cults of conquered states. The monograph narrates his performance of sacrifices to the Eight Spirits, sacrifices instituted by the first lord of Qi, Tai Gong 太公, shortly after the Zhou conquest. His ritual program culminated in the performance of the *feng* 封 and *shan* 禪 rites. In preparation for these he consulted numerous scholars from Qi and Lu, both followers of Confucius and adepts of immortality, though he seems to have ultimately designed much of the ritual himself. Apart from these ritual performances, the First Emperor kept a large number of "broadly learned" official scholars (*boshi*) at his court, and from accounts of their later careers we know that many of them were devoted to the Zhou classics and the Confucian tradition.⁸⁷ Thus, by the end of the Warring States period the prestige of scholarship and state-sponsored ritual had become so great that the supposed arch-enemy of the Confucian scholars still employed them at his court, along with exponents of other scholastic traditions, and consulted them on ritual matters. Even the infamous burning of the books was not an attempt to destroy the scholarly traditions, since copies were to be preserved in the imperial collection. Instead, it sought only to bring these scholars under state control and thereby create the identity of political and intellectual authority that was a shared postulate or ambition of most scholars in the third century.⁸⁸

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

The preceding typology of texts and political roles omits one element of the new polity: the people. Producing no texts themselves, they appear in the writings of institutional reformers, military men, persuaders, and scholars as objects of control or manipulation. Sometimes threatening, sometimes docile, sometimes savages to be tamed, sometimes children to be protected, they appear only through the eyes of others who demonstrate their right to rule through inscribing commoners in their political theories and on population registers. It was through registration and mapping that the ordinary people were written into the political order, so population registers and the maps routinely associated with them became metonyms for authority and the hallmark of a ruler.⁸⁹ However, neither maps nor registers from the period

⁸⁷ Kanaya Osamu, *Shin Kan shiso shi kenkyu*, 2d rev. ed. (Kyoto: Heiraku, 1981), pp. 230-57.

⁸⁸ *Xunzi jian shi* (21 "Jie bi"), pp. 304-305 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 3, p. 110); *Zhuangzi ji shi* (33 "Tian xia"), *Shi ji*, 6, pp. 254-5; 87, pp. 2546-7 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 54-5, 185).

⁸⁹ On maps and population registers as metonyms of authority, see *Zhangguo ce* ("Qin 1"), p. 115; ("Qin 2"), pp. 350, 351; ("Yan 3"), pp. 1134, 1138 (Crump, *Chan-Kao Tse*, pp. 66, 176, 177, 557, 559); *Shi ji*, 53, p. 2044; 86, pp. 2332, 2334; *Han Feizi ji shi* (49 "Wu du"), 19, p. 1067 (Liao, *Han Fei Tan*, p. 292);

have come down to us, and we can see them only secondhand in the legal documents from Yunmeng and Baoshan.

The common people are inscribed in these texts as objects of registration, surveillance, and punishment. As was noted earlier, the Yunmeng documents are primarily guides to official action, so registration figures as an invariable element in identifying individuals brought within the ambit of the legal system. Presenting a detailed hierarchy of punishments according to the type of crime and the status of the convicted party, the texts also suggest the realities underlying the linked institutions of extracting service from the population and then ranking them by their achievements. These same fundamental concerns appear in the Baoshan materials as actual cases, in which the Chu officials tracked down attempts to avoid registration, examined the conduct of criminal investigations, and reviewed punishments imposed.⁹⁰ Population registers even became attributes of divine power, for a text excavated from a tomb shows that by the third century B.C., some Chinese believed in a spirit bureaucracy that used written registers to control human life spans.⁹¹

In addition to these indications in the legal documents, references scattered throughout the sources permit us to situate the people within the spatial reworking of the state. This geographic redefinition had two basic aspects, which correspond to the "expansion" and "contraction" metaphors discussed earlier. As a process of expansion, the Warring States polity was created through the extension of administration into significant elements of the countryside by the increased use of irrigation, land allocation, and registration of population. The states actively reshaped the countryside by introducing large-scale water-control projects, building roads, constructing forts and towers, and erecting walls. They also changed the relation of the population to the countryside through encouraging the ownership of land by individual households, furthering grain production through systems of rewards and penalties, and legally binding people to their places of residence through registration.

As a process of contraction, the Warring States tended to reduce the number of politically significant central places through the destruction first of noble sublineages, then of lesser states, and finally of all states save Qin. This contraction forced politically active elements of the population to pursue careers within a geographically narrowed ambit, for anyone aspiring

Xunzi jian shi (4 "Rong ru"), p. 38; (8 "Ru xiao"), pp. 78 (twice), 79; (9 "Wang zhi"), p. 117; (18 "Zheng lun"), p. 234 (Knoblock, *Xunzi*, vol. 1, p. 189; vol. 2, pp. 68, 69; vol. 3, p. 34).

⁹⁰ *Hubei sheng jingsha tielu kaogudui*, ed., *Baoshan Chu jian* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1991), pp. 9–12.

⁹¹ Li Xueqin, "Fangmatan jianzhong de zhigui gushi," *Wenwu* 1990.4: 43–7; Donald Harper, "Resurrection in Warring States Popular Religion," *Taiwan Resources* 5, 2 (1994): 13–28. See also Jeffrey K. Riegel, "Kou-mang and Ju-shou," *Cahiers d'extrême-Asie: Special Issue, Taiwan Studies II* 5 (1989–90): 57–66.

to political eminence had to seek his fortune in a shrinking number of capitals. It also potentially reduced the number of sacred sites that dotted the landscape, though local cults could be absorbed by a conqueror or preserved by elements of the population that did not seek their fortunes in a distant court.

The extent of physical reconstruction of the countryside cannot be established from the records, which give only samplings of the relevant activities. In the course of this chapter we have noted such celebrated achievements of water control as the "twelve canals" of Ye built by Ximen Bao, Shang Yang's grid of pathways in the Wei River valley, and Li Bing's opening of the Sichuan Basin through the construction at Dujiangyan. Another major project undertaken in the third century B.C. was the canal constructed by Zheng Guo 鄭國 that linked the Jing 涇 and Luo 洛 Rivers to the north of the Wei 渭 River and thereby dramatically increased the usable acreage in the Guanzhong region.⁹² The extent of these projects in the Wei River valley and the loess highlands along the Yellow River is suggested by the grid patterns of roads and canals that have survived to the present day in these regions.⁹³ Dikes were also built by Wei, Zhao, and Qi along the lower course of the Yellow River, though the diking of the river was not completed until Han times. As walls between states tended to follow river valleys and often were built on top of dikes, this other great form of rebuilding the landscape appeared in the same regions as the water control projects.

However, in spite of the appreciable scale of some of these water-control projects and their importance to the rise of states like Wei and Qin, the majority of the peasantry lived in regions where agriculture had developed prior to irrigation or where no large-scale water control was necessary. These regions included mountain valleys in the upper reaches of tributaries and the hills of the loess highlands, as well as such regions as the oasis towns of the Gansu corridor or the settled parts of the middle Yangzi valley. In still other regions, notably the Huai and the Han River valleys, the recorded cases of dikes and irrigation systems are usually attributed to wealthy local families. In such places the state did not play a crucial role in developing agricultural production, but simply acted as administrator and regulator, usually in alliance with powerful local families.⁹⁴

As regulator and registrar, the state paid no heed to "natural" units of geography, such as the village, in order to establish a direct administration

⁹² Shi Ji, 29, p. 1408 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 2, pp. 71–2).

⁹³ Frank Leeming, "Official Landscapes in Traditional China," *JESHO* 23 (1980): 153–204. For suggested modifications of Leeming's conclusions, see Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence*, pp. 63, 273, n. 40.

⁹⁴ Kimura Masao, *Chigoku kodai teikoku no keiei: Toki ni sono seiritsu no kiso jōken* (Tokyo: Fumitō, 1967).

of the individual household. In addition to population registers, which have not survived, this attempt to create a state-based social order is reflected in the systems of hierarchical rankings based on military service and in a variety of theoretical systems based on hierarchies of ever more encompassing administrative units that ascend in diverse mathematical ratios. These theoretical systems found a real-life expression in the patterns of military organization that were extended into civil society, as was discussed above. They also figured in the ward organization of some capital cities.⁹⁵

Conceiving the landscape in the image of the army also developed into the Warring States geographic models of the world, the "nine provinces" of the "Yu gong" 禹貢 chapter of the *Shang shu* and beyond that the multiple continents theory of Zou Yan 驩衍 (ca. 305–240 B.C.). The number "nine" had from ancient times been used to suggest an undefined large number, and in this sense the world was divided into nine "provinces" (*zhou* 州) according to an eastern Zhou bronze from the state of Qi and into nine units with various names in poems in the *Shi jing* 詩經. However, it is in the "Yu gong" that for the first time the number "nine" is taken at face value and the regions are geographically delimited.⁹⁶ This transformation of the old "nine" in the sense of "many" into a literal "nine" may have been tied to the rise of interest in magic squares.⁹⁷ We see hints of this in the *Mencius*'s "well-field" system, a grid derived from contemporary practice, but one with precisely nine squares, and it is interesting that the *Mencius* also speaks of nine large states that make up the area within the seas. Many scholars have suggested a Warring States date of composition for the "Yu gong," and it is possible that the nine provinces in the book can be identified with specific states.⁹⁸ The two changes in the listing of the nine provinces in the *Lü shi chungju* (239 B.C.) might then reflect changes in the political map by the end of the Warring States period. Whatever the case, in the theories of Zou Yan the number "nine" had come to have only an arithmetic sense, with nine provinces forming a small continent, nine small continents forming a great

⁹⁵ Koga Noboru, *Kan Chōanji to senpaku kenpōtōri seido* (Tokyo: Yūsankaku, 1980).
⁹⁶ *Mao shi zheng ji* (Shisan jing zhu shu ed.), (203 "Xuan niao"), p. 152; (204 "Chang fa"), 4b; Guo Moruo, ed., *Liang Zhou jinnwenji daci tulu kaoshi* (Tokyo: Bunkyōdo, 1935) "(Qi) Shu Yi zhong," p. 245; *Yi Zhou shu* (Sibu beiyao ed.), 6.26b, 27a; *Shang shu zhu shu*, 6 "Yu gong."

⁹⁷ On magic squares and their significance in the thought of the period, see John S. Major, "The Five Phases, Magic Squares, and Schematic Cosmography," in *Explorations in Early Chinese Cosmology*, ed. Henry Rosemont, Jr. (JAAR Thematic Issue 50/2, Chico, Calif.: Scholar's Press, 1984), pp. 133–66; Schuyler Cammann, "The Evolution of Magic Squares in China," *JASO* 80 (1960): 116–24; idem, "The Magic Square of Three in Old Chinese Philosophy and Religion," *History of Religions* 1 (1961): 37–80; idem, "Old Chinese Magic Squares," *Sinologica* 7 (1963): 14–53; Marcel Granet, *La pensée chinoise*, 1934 (Paris: Albin Michel, 1968), pp. 145–74.

⁹⁸ Shi Nianhai, *He shan ji*, vol. 2, pp. 400–404.

continent, and so on.⁹⁹ Here the mathematical modeling of administrative hierarchies and the grids of irrigation networks combined to form a geometric schema for the entire earth.

If the Warring States world was to be defined through grids, with the common people fixed in their individual squares, then the ability to move marked political power. Most of the peasantry was to be granted land and then legally rooted in place, even if the texts of the period are full of advice on how to lure away the peasants of alien states. With peasants defined by immobility, the elite was distinguished by constantly moving. Since political success could only be found at the capital, aspiring ministers, persuaders, and generals moved to the center of their states. If advancement was blocked in one state they would shift to a second, just as Wu Qi moved to Chu or Shang Yang to Qin. In the case of the persuader/diplomats who dominated the political scene between 350 and 250 B.C., these movements became a perpetual round of journeys between courts. They moved to seek employment, then went on missions for their new masters, and if they succeeded in forming an alliance they would move between the allied states as ministers of both.

Just as moving toward the center was the hallmark of those participating in the new state order, to draw men in was the hallmark of the ruler. The courts were in competition to employ the most skillful ministers or generals, so a successful ruler would be known by the quality and number of the men he brought into his service. Thus, Wei Wen Hou was noted for employing Li Kui, Wu Qi, Ximen Bao, Tian Zifang 田子方, Duan Ganmu 段干木, and other outstanding figures. This pattern was echoed in the courts of the great enfeoffed ministers who dominated the late fourth and early third centuries and competed with one another to attract talented followers. It is also the organizing principle of the "Yu gong," where the regions are defined not only through their topographic features, but more importantly through the goods that they send into the center and the riverine routes along which these goods pass. The finest goods, like the finest men, must flow to the center, and the ability to attract them is proof of the ruler's potent virtue. Thus, *de* 德 (virtue) was glossed as *de* 得 (obtain).

A final geographic transformation of the period was a new sacred geography. As lordship of territory became the hallmark of political authority, territorial cults supplanted the ancestral cult as the most important religious performances. The most important sacrifices were offered on open altars, either in the outskirts of the capital, at some spot sacred to the state such as

⁹⁹ *Mengzi zhu shu* ("Liang Huiwang A") 1B.6a; ("Liang Huiwang B") 2A.14a; ("Ten Wengong A") 5A.8b, 9a–b (Legge, *Mencius*, pp. 146, 162, 244, 245 (twice); *Shi ji*, 74, p. 2344; *Lü shi chungju jiao shi* (13 "Yu shi"), p. 685; Shi Nianhai, *He shan ji*, vol. 2, pp. 391–434.

Qin's cultic center at Yong 雍, or at the major mountains. Lordship over the earth was marked by the making of sacrifice at the numinous sites of the realm, and the conquest of a state was ritualized through the conquering ruler's performance of sacrifice at the spiritual centers of his new territory.¹⁰⁰

Such mountain sacrifices entailed royal progresses to various spots of the realm, and these too formed part of the new sacred geography. Ancient traditions of royal processions, probably based on the frequent hunts and expeditions of Shang and Zhou kings, were presented as models of sage kingship within certain scholarly traditions. In the same period the spirit flights of mediums and holy men were imaginatively transformed into a sacred mandala of the four directions traced by the conquering ruler who thereby claimed possession of the world.¹⁰¹

These various elements of spatial redefinition were drawn together in the rituals and policies by which the First Emperor marked the completion of his conquest. By establishing *jun* and *xian* throughout his realm, he declared the uniform regulation of the people in the countryside. By building models of the palaces of the conquered states in his own capital, he completed the process of drawing all power into the capital. By casting statues from the metal of captured weapons and setting them up in the pattern of the Dipper, he declared the cosmic bases of the centrality of the capital. By forcibly moving the great families and nobility of the conquered states to the capital region, he reenacted the centripetal flow of talent and tribute. Finally, in his processions through his new provinces in the east, his sacrifices at their sacred peaks and places of cult, his repeated inscriptions to commemorate these deeds, and his performance of the Feng and Shan sacrifices he instituted the sacred geography of the newly united empire. In his inscriptions, the *res gestae* of his reign, he repeatedly insisted on the geographic character of his accomplishments. He asserted that all men came to his court, that the common people were at peace in their places, that he himself had inspected his new realm and marched to the edges of the earth, that he had reached the eastern edge and gazed across the sea to the place where the sun rose.¹⁰² Thus, in proclaiming the end of the Warring States period, he summarized the processes by which the men of that time had redefined their world, and he claimed their achievements as his own.

¹⁰⁰ Lester K. Bilsley, *The State Religion of Ancient China* (Taipei: Chinese Association for Folklore, 1975), vol. 2.

¹⁰¹ Ogura Yoshitoku, *Chūgoku kodai seiji shisō kenkyū* (Tokyo: Aoki, 1970), pp. 62–73; David Hawkes, "The Quest of the Goddess," in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. Cyril Birch (Berkeley: University of California, 1974), pp. 42–68.

¹⁰² *Shi ji* 6, pp. 242–6, 249–50, 261–2 (Watson, trans., *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 3, pp. 46–48, 50–2, 60–1).

CHAPTER TEN

THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE WARRING STATES PERIOD

Wu Hung

The Warring States period was an era of magnificent artistic creation and renewal in Chinese history. By the end of the Spring and Autumn period, changes within traditional ritual art and architecture had reached a critical point. Many new artistic and architectural forms, styles, and genres appeared during the following centuries and redefined the whole visual vista. In architecture, the city was reshaped and its internal structure reconfigured. Tall platforms and terrace pavilions won great favor from political patrons, replacing the deep, enclosed compound of a traditional temple or palace to determine the center of a city or palace town. With their monumental appearance and dazzling ornamentation, these architectural forms supplied powerful visual symbols much needed by the new elite. In art also, the reaction against ritual bronzes – the dominant artistic genre during the Shang and Western Zhou – continued. Although vessels and other equipment made for ceremonial usage never disappeared, the ritual occasions that they served had gone through fundamental transformations, becoming increasingly mundane. The commemorative inscription declined further. Ornate interlacing patterns or depictions of human events transformed a bronze vessel into a carrier of geometric decoration or pictorial representation. Monochrome vessels had gone out of fashion; lacquers and inlaid objects, both reflecting a fascination with fluent imagery and coloristic effects, enjoyed great popularity. Beautifully decorated mirrors, belt hooks, and other types of personal belongings became major showpieces. Lamps, screens, tables, and other objects of daily use were created as serious works of art; combining expensive materials, exquisite workmanship, and exotic images, these objects best documented the desire for material possession and the taste for extravagance. The interest in images also stimulated the development of sculpture and painting, two art forms that had languished with the dominance of ritual vessels.