

THE EMPEROR OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD

The king of Zhou is assisted by the Three Dukes (*Sangong* 三公: Grand Preceptor *Taishi* 太師, Grand Mentor *Taifu* 太傅, Grand Guardian *Taibao* 太保) and the Three Solitaries (*Sangu* 三孤).

The rule over the outstretched area of Zhou China makes it necessary to give a large part of the territory as feudal holdings (*guo* 國; the rest was the royal domain) into the hands of trustworthy people (called feudal lords *zhuhou* 諸侯).

The territories of Lu 魯, Jin 晉, Cai 蔡, Cao 曹 and Wei 衛 have been entrusted to relatives, the far territories of Qi 齊, Chen 陳, and Yan 燕 have come into the hands of generals. The domains to the west and south (Qin 秦 and Chu 楚) are ruled by peoples more distant to the Chinese of the Yellow River Basin. All of them are bestowed with different grades of nobility, called the five ranks (*wujue* 五爵: "duke" *gong* 公, "marquis" *hou* 侯, "baron" *bo* 伯, "count" *zi* 子, "viscount" *nan* 男), all with an appending territory.

The feudal system established by the first Zhou rulers has begun to disintegrate. The feudal lords are becoming rulers themselves. Among the multitude of big and small fiefdoms, a few have gained hegemony over the smaller ones, including territory of the Zhou king. The permanent warfare makes it necessary to build up standing armies.

Becoming independent from their former lord, the king of Zhou, the dukes (*gong* 公) of the great states ennobled their own followers and granted them new territories. Several of these families gained independence from their lord, like the families Zhao 趙, Wei 魏 and Han 韓 in the state of Jin. The feudal system with the king of Zhou at the top is gradually dissolving.

THE IMPERIAL BUREAUCRACY

The vast area makes it necessary to have a bureaucracy to manage the government. The general administration was in the hands of six ministers (*qing* 卿), surveying the six ministries (*Liubu* 六部):

Ministry of State (*Tianguan* 天官, headed by the Chancellor *Zhongzai* 冢宰)

Ministry of Civil Administration and Social Welfare (*Diguan* 地官, headed by the Minister of Education *Situ* 司徒)

Ministry of Rites (*Chunguan* 春官, headed by the Minister of Rites *Zongbo* 宗伯)

Ministry of War (*Xiaguan* 夏官, headed by the Minister of War *Sima* 司馬)

Ministry of Justice (*Qiuguan* 秋官, headed by the Minister of Justice *Sikou* 司寇)

Ministry of Works (*Dongguan* 冬官, headed by the Minister of Works *Sikong* 司空).

The officialdom is divided into three ranks (ministers *qing* 卿, grand masters *dafu* 大夫, and servicemen *shi* 士) and nine honors (*jiuming* 九命 or *jiupin* 九品, each of the ranks divided into upper, ordinary and lower *shang zhong xia* 上中下). The office of the scribe (*shi* 史) has become more and more important. From the personal rule of the shaman king of Shang times, the rule changed to a king that was simply the head of many officers among whom the ministers, intendants and provisioners became more and more important. Even military affairs had to be handed to the authority of generals. With the younger generations, the relatives became more distant and had to be given their territories. These territories have become more and more independent from their king. Sometimes, like during the reign of King Xuan 周宣王, succession struggles in the small states have to be solved by the king himself.