

The City-State in Ancient China

This chapter will analyze the appropriateness of the concept of city-state in relation to early China, an attempt which has not been made by Western scholars of the Middle Kingdom, but which has been suggested by the Chinese historian Tu Cheng-sheng (1986, 1987, 1992).¹ The idea of the city-state as *polis* first appeared in history in the secondary civilization of Greece after it emerged from the Dark Age that followed the collapse of the Mycenaean civilization around the eighth century B.C. But an important symposium edited by Griffeth and Thomas (1981a) suggested that city-states had appeared earlier in Sumer in the second half of the fourth millennium B.C. and could also be found in medieval and Renaissance Italy, later in Switzerland and Germany, as well as among the Hausa of West Africa from the mid-fifteenth to the early nineteenth century. While it is quite clear that Chinese cities had in later times very different administrative and legal arrangements from those in the West (cf. Weber 1958), could the Chinese have had a city-state system before the foundation of the empire in 221 B.C.? Not according to Trigger (1993), who claims that China is one of three prime examples of territorial states, the others being ancient Egypt and Inka Peru.

Wilson (this volume) offers a theoretical critique of Trigger's models and I will not repeat his strictures here. With regard to China in the Shang and Western Zhou (mid-second millennium B.C. to 771 B.C.; Table 5.1), however, the evidence is at present too scanty to support Trigger's categorization. It is not at all clear how much of the actual territory the Shang controlled at any one time: Keightley (1983a:548) sees the state in late Shang times as a "thin network of pathways and encampments" where the "network was laid over a hinterland that rarely saw or felt the king's presence and authority." This is not to say that elements of Shang culture were not widely dispersed in the north China plain and there were centers where Shang had greater influence (Fig. 5.1). A similar situation seems to have existed for the Western Zhou: the territory actually controlled and administered or directly exploited by the state apparatus was relatively limited along the middle and lower sections of the Yellow River (Shaughnessy 1989). The question of actual political unity of the Shang and Zhou polities, therefore, remains very much open, despite the fact that later Chinese traditional scholars assumed that these two dynasties, and the one that preceded them both, the Xia, were dynasties in the same mold as the centralized imperial states that those scholars were personally familiar with.

Table 5.1
Time Line for the City-State in Early China

Date B.C.	Major Developments
7000	Beginnings of the Xianrendong culture in the Middle Yangzi Valley and of the Zengpiyan culture along the southeast coast
6500–5000	Cishan culture in Shanxi, Henan, and Hebei provinces, followed by the Laoguantai culture in Shaanxi and Shanxi and the Beixin in Shandong and Xinglongwa cultures in northern Hebei and Liaoning
5500–4000	Hemudu culture in the Lower Yangzi valley, south of Shanghai
5000–2500	Yangshao painted pottery culture in north and west China, followed slightly later by the Dawenkou culture in the east (Shandong) and the Hongshan culture in the northeast (Hebei and Liaoning); the Majiabang follows the Hemudu culture in the southeast and is succeeded by the Songze phase; in the central Yangzi, the Daxi, then the Qujialing cultures occupy the region where the Xianrendong flourished
2500–2000	Longshan interaction sphere
2000	Erlitou culture in central Henan, possibly the first of China's traditional dynasties, the Xia; beginnings of the Bronze Age
1750–1045	Shang dynasty in the Yellow River plain with its last capital at Anyang, northeast Henan
1045–770	Western Zhou dynasty with its capital located west of Xi'an in northwest China; establishment of many states subordinate to the Zhou, such as Lu at Qufu, Shandong
770	Beginning of the Eastern Zhou; the Zhou royal house forced to move its capital east to Luoyang, Henan province; Qin is enfeoffed as a full status lord; the official creation of the state of Qin
722	The beginning of the historical texts <i>Springs and Autumns Annals</i> ; the beginning of the Springs and Autumns period
685–643	Rule of Duke Huan of Qi, the first hegemon; his main advisor is Guan Zhong, after whom important collection of early philosophical treatises, the <i>Guanzi</i> , is named
655	Jin conquers the small states of Guo and Yu, although the ruling houses are related to each other; beginning of the development of regional city-state systems
551–479	Life of Confucius; approximate beginnings of the use of iron
464	Last year of the <i>Zuo Commentary</i> on the <i>Springs and Autumns Annals</i> ; beginning of the Warring States period
403	Heads of Han, Wei, and Zhao lineages invested as marquises, officially sanctioning the division of the territory of the ancient state of Jin
352	Wei Yang appointed chancellor of Qin; he institutes many legalist reforms in Qin and is later enfeoffed as Lord Shang
338	Death of Duke Xiao of Qin, and execution of Wei Yang, Lord Shang, his supporter and chancellor
256	Qin destroys Eastern Zhou
246	King Zheng, later the First Emperor, is enthroned at the age of 13 <i>sui</i> (years)
230–221	Campaigns by Qin to destroy all its rival city-states, starting with that of Han
221	Qin conquers Qi, unifies China, and establishes the empire; Zheng assumes the title of "First Emperor"
214	General Meng Tian is recorded as constructing the Great Wall
209	Huhai succeeds to the throne as the Second Emperor; rebellion against Qin oppression begins
207	Death of Second Emperor
206	January 11–February 9; the rebels attack and burn the First Emperor's mausoleum and capture Xianyang; the Qin dynasty collapses, succeeded after a bitter civil war by the Han

Source: Murowchick 1994.

Furthermore, it is impossible to estimate the percentage of the population that lived in the countryside in relation to that in the national capital or metropolitan areas, and so it is equally impossible to conclude that a two-tiered economy, urban and rural, had developed. As I show below, the bureaucracy in the Shang was minimal at best and so it cannot be asserted that the main economic link between the urban and rural sectors in early China was through the peasants paying taxes, rents, and corvée labor duties to the urban elite, or that this exploitation was moni-

tored by a large administrative staff. As it has proved difficult for Chinese archaeologists to determine precise details of housing arrangements within the precincts of walled sites, it is also not possible to state categorically that farmers did not live there next to the expert artisans and craftsmen who were catering to the needs of the elite for luxury items, such as bronzes and jades. Later on, there is no question that farmers did not live within the walls of cities and towns. Finally, while certainly some centers of ritual activity do not appear to be walled, there were many

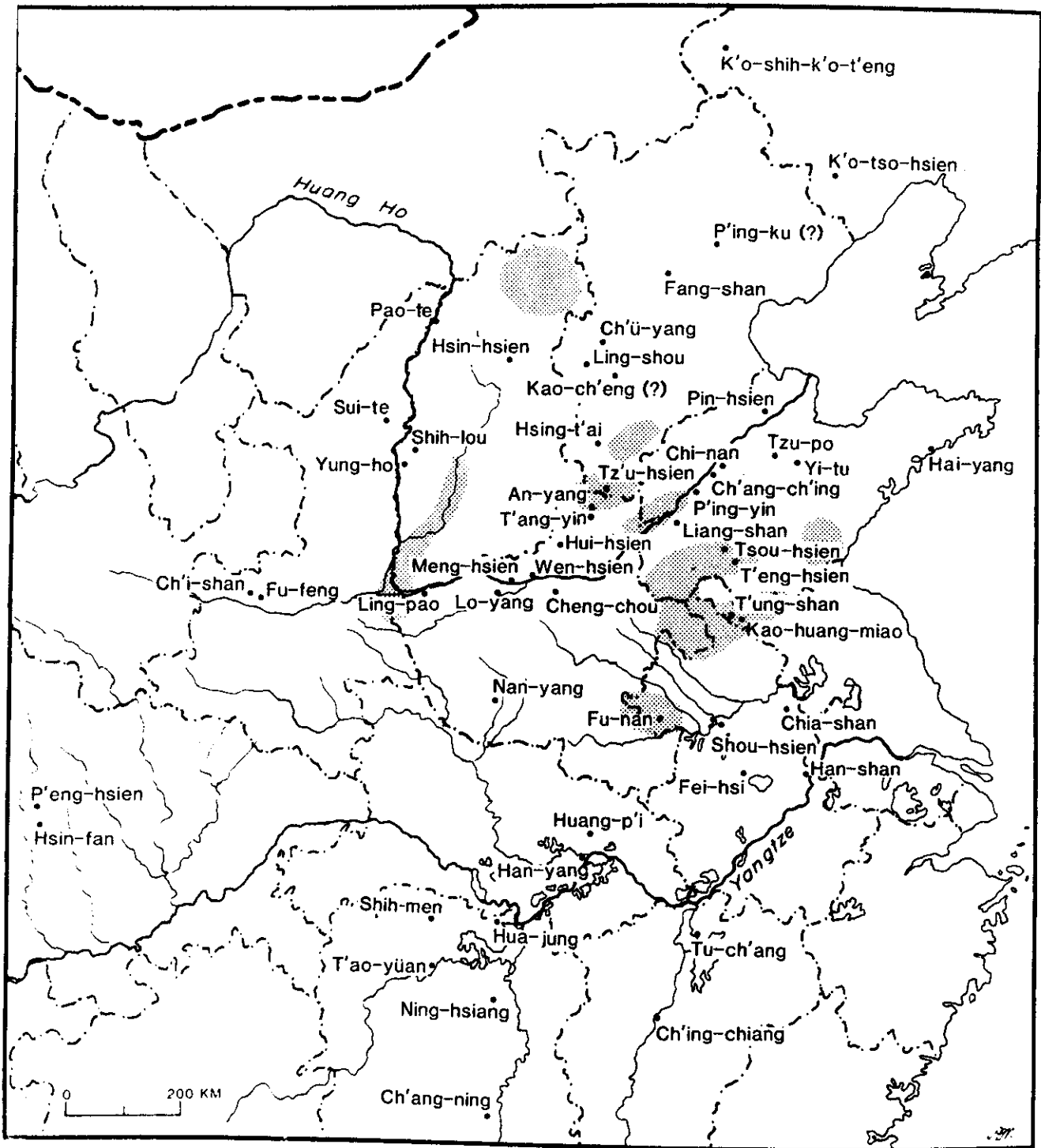


Figure 5.1. One view of the major regions (shaded) of the Late Shang state derived from oracle-bone inscriptions superimposed on a map of sites and finds of the Upper Erligang and Anyang stages. From Keightley, *The Origins of Chinese Civilization* (1983b:map 17.3). Reprinted with permission of the University of California Press.

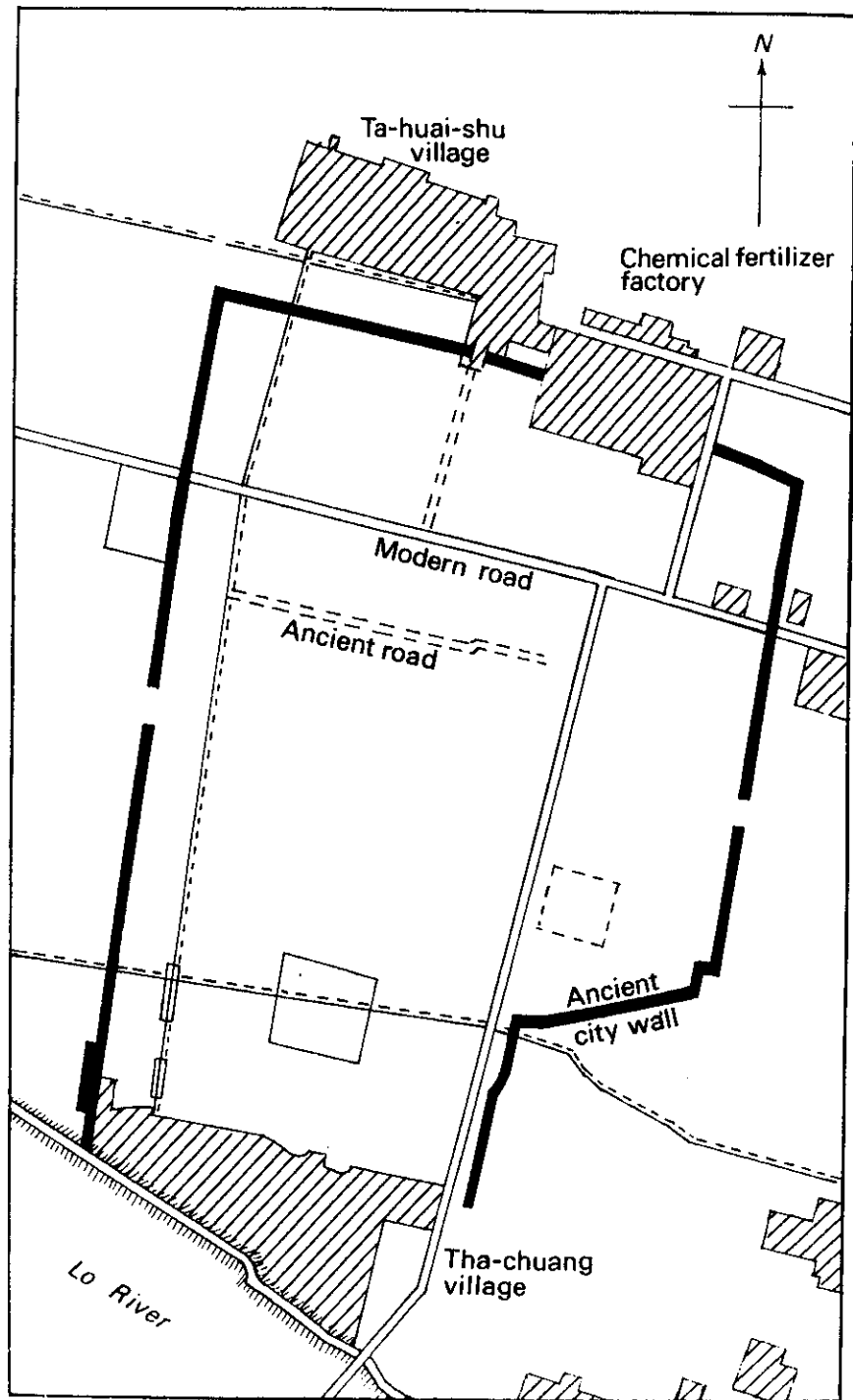


Figure 5.2. Ground plan of the Xia or Shang city at Shixianggou, Yanshi. After Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo Luoyang Han Wei gucheng gongzuodui 1984:figure 2. From Needham and Yates (1994: 296:figure 140). Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

sites that were, and some unwalled sites should be examined in relation to nearby walled encintes. For example, the twin sites in Yanshi, Henan province, where the one at Shixianggou is walled and the other, the Erlitou type site, predominantly containing palatial or ritual structures, is not, may have been the capital region of the Xia state, although this identification has been hotly contested among the specialists (Figs. 5.2–5.4; Chang 1986; Huber 1988; Needham and Yates 1994; Thorp 1991).

The Concept of the City-State

The subject of this volume, therefore, poses some difficulties for the archaeologist/historian of ancient China. The first of these difficulties is created by the nature of the theoretical positions that have been adopted over the years by scholars both inside and outside China for the study of the developmental sequence of Chinese civilization. Traditional Chinese scholars from the time of the first Chinese empire

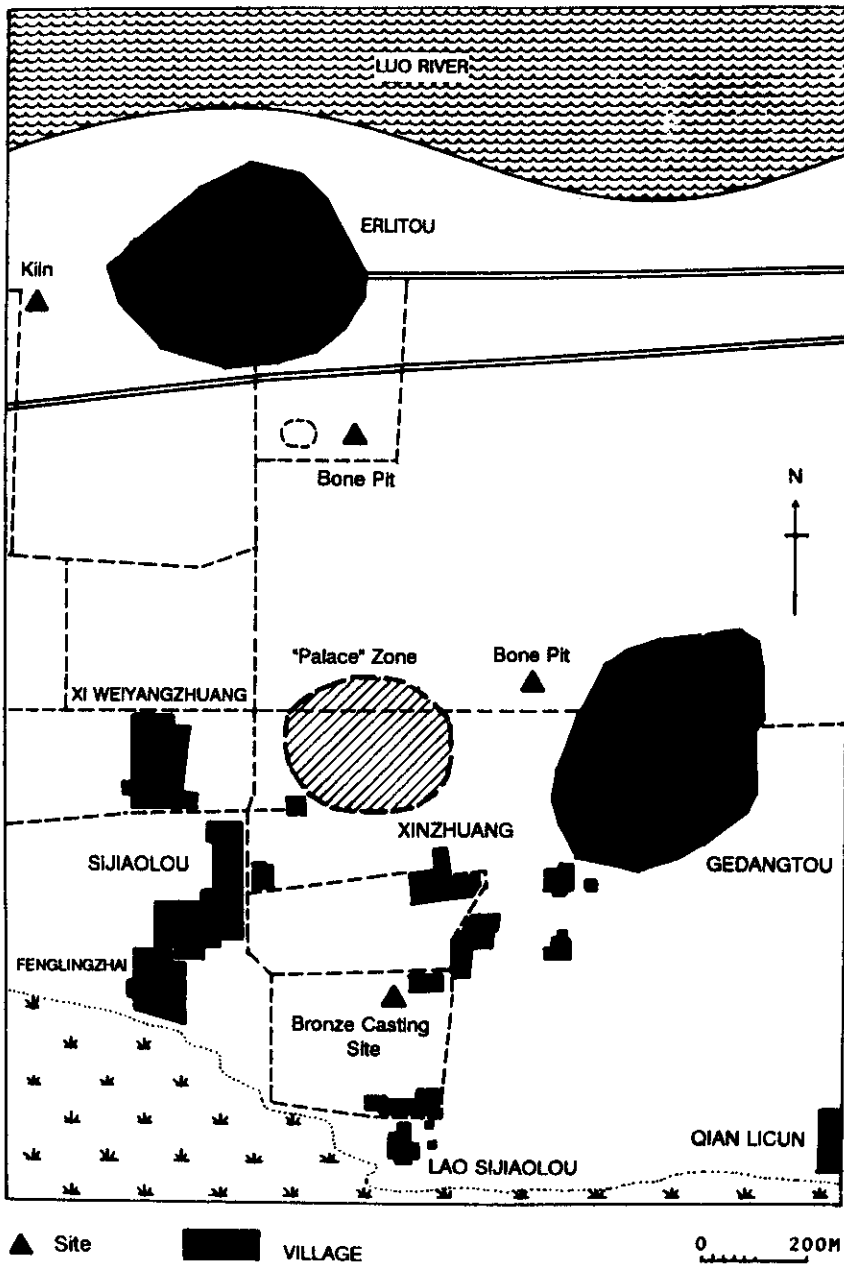


Figure 5.3. Sketch map of the Erlitou type site. Map by John A. Wysocki based on Chinese originals, from Thorp (1991:figure 1). Reprinted with permission of the author.

(third–second century B.C.) assumed that no fundamental distinction existed between the form of the political system in the three earliest dynasties, the Xia, Shang, and Zhou (the so-called Sandai or Three Dynasties, possibly late third to first millennium B.C.), and those of their own time. So they read back into the past the conditions and practices of their own day.

Marxist scholars on the mainland, on the other hand, adopted the simplistic formula of cultural evolution derived from Morgan (1877) as filtered through the work of Marx and Engels, especially Engels's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1972): namely that ancient China had passed through the stages of primitive communism

with patriarchy replacing the original matriarchy, slavery, and feudalism. Researchers in the west such as Creel (1970) and Hsu (1965) adopted a Weberian approach and were anxious to find a feudal empire as early as the eleventh century B.C. with the Zhou conquest of the Shang dynasty (ca. 1045 B.C.) which evolved into a rational-legal bureaucracy by the third century B.C. The apparent desire here was to demonstrate that China had not been as backward as nineteenth and early-twentieth-century colonialist and imperialist scholars had thought: it had actually passed through the same evolutionary sequence as the West, but even earlier: the arrest in its evolutionary development came much later. However different

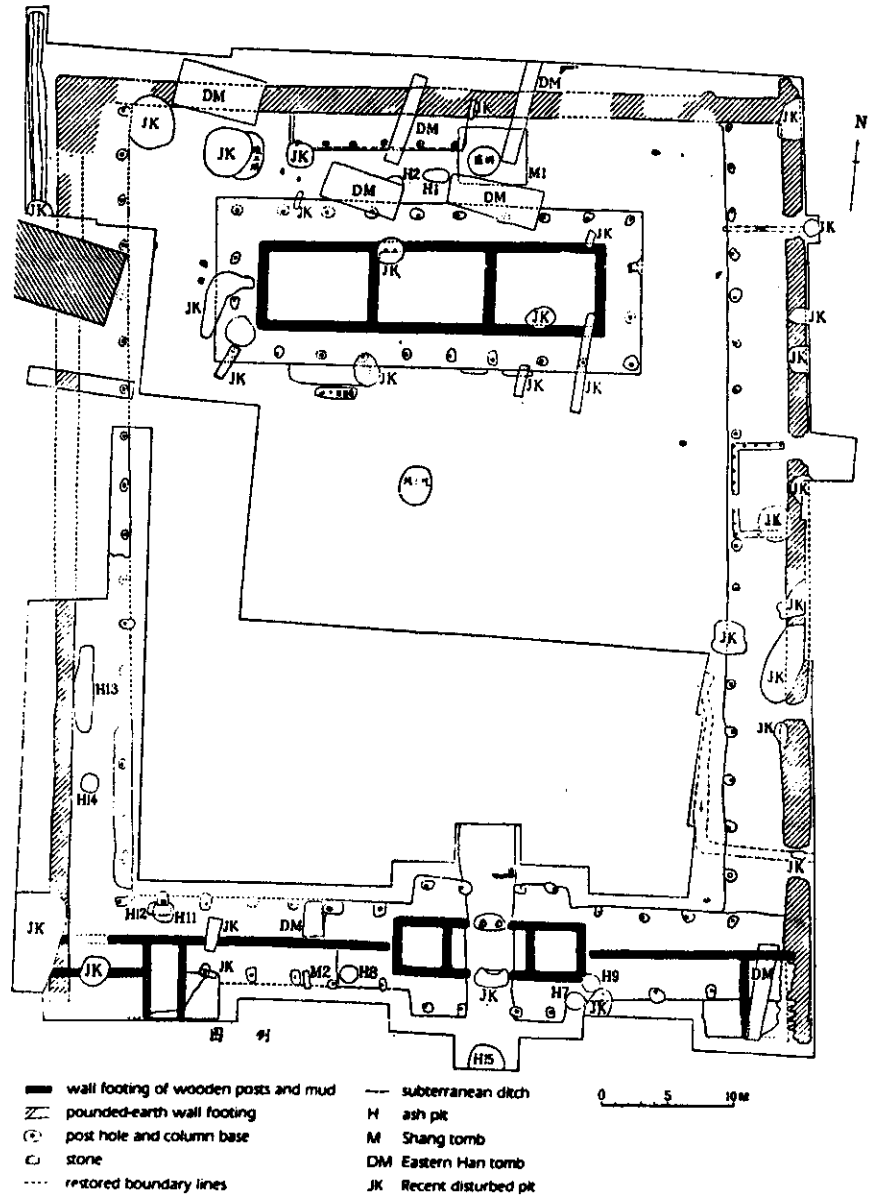


Figure 5.4. Plan of F2, Zone V, Erlitou. From Thorp (1991:figure 3). Reprinted with permission of the author.

these positions are, all of them have more or less tended to encourage the practice of finding data in the Chinese record to match whatever theory was accepted a priori, rather than to stimulate the desire to generate hypotheses which could then be tested.² More recently, the paradigm adopted by scholars such as Kwang-chih Chang (1980), David Keightley (1983a), and Anne Underhill (1991) has been that of the chiefdom/state: I will discuss its application to the Chinese data below.

The second difficulty in studying city-states in early China is in analyzing potential candidates from the archaeological point of view. As there has been no access to the field by any scholars other than the Chinese since Liberation in 1949, the type of data that has been generated there has been produced with the

sole aim of proving their accepted paradigm.³ As the concept of the city-state has not been considered relevant by archaeologists in China, no effort has been expended to discover potential city-state sites or complexes and little data is available to analyze the formation of a potential city-state system or hierarchical settlement patterns (Tu Cheng-sheng 1986).⁴

If we take the Greek model of the city-state from the ideological point of view and posit that the city-state must be based on a free citizenry who possess legal rights through the ownership of land (cf. Weisleder 1978), it could well be argued that, since the Chinese never possessed a system of *individual* legal rights and landownership, as opposed to land possession, was always claimed by the state, the Chinese never could have had a system of city-states.⁵

On the other hand, Griffeth and Thomas suggest four criteria for the identification of city-states: a well-defined core surrounded by walls and/or a moat; economic self-sufficiency provided by the exploitation of a hinterland; a sense of common linguistic and cultural habits, and historical experience, shared with other city-states in the region; and political independence and *de facto* sovereignty, even though another polity might claim ultimate legal authority (1981a: xiii). These latter features I believe we can find in the Chinese record.

The third difficulty is related to the second. If the city state is indeed a "basic unit of state-level organization" as Charlton and Nichols suggest in Chapter 1, it is also important to determine when the state first appeared and what form(s) it took in the Chinese culture sphere. Since China has been convincingly proved to be one of the areas in which primary urban generation took place (Wheatley 1971), it is profitable to evaluate the theories on state formation that have been put forward by various scholars in the light of Chinese evidence and to try to clarify the nature of the early Chinese state in the light of these theories.

I will discuss first the problem of early state formation in China and then suggest that a city-state system did indeed develop there, and finally point out a few ways in which research into that system may help us interpret important features of the later mature traditional state of imperial times (post-221 B.C.).

The Chiefdom in the Longshan Phase

Unfortunately, the Chinese case has not featured in any significant way in recent, post-1980, studies of the state, such as those of Claessen and Skalník (1981), Claessen and van de Velde (1987b, 1991), and Johnson and Earle (1987), though Pokora (1978) contributed to the original symposium in Claessen and Skalník (1978). Nor has China generally been considered as having developed chiefdoms, whether of the simple or complex variety, possessing a staple or wealth mode of financing, or containing a group-oriented or individualizing structure (Earle 1987, 1989).

Among scholars of China, Underhill (1991, 1992) is alone, except for Wheatley (1971) and Liu (1994; see below), in explicitly using the chiefdom/state paradigm. She posits that the late Neolithic Longshan interaction sphere (third millennium B.C.) was at a stage of complex chiefdoms, though she does not argue for her interpretation,⁶ and she suggests that the Xia may

have developed state organization, though she does not characterize the Xia as a city-state (1990).

Most recently, Yan Wenming has observed that nearly thirty walled sites dating from the Longshan period have been discovered (1994—not all of these have been published) and that the original black-pottery site of Chengziyai in Shandong has been reclassified as belonging to the Yueshi culture. Yan argues that the Longshan walled sites can be roughly divided into three groups. The first group is located in the middle and southern part of Inner Mongolia. Dating from early Longshan, the sites are generally small in area, from several thousands to several tens of thousands of square feet and are situated on mountains. He identifies three separate locations where groups of these enclosures have been discovered and the walls are constructed out of stone and mud. Kessler notes that the largest of these structures encloses an area of 10 hectares (1994:34). The greatest remaining height of the walls is between 2.1 and 3.5 meters and the largest width at the base is between 6 and 13 meters.

The second group is found in the middle reaches of the Yangzi River in central China. Dating from late Qujialing to early Shijiahe times in early Longshan, the walled sites here are very large. Shijiahe in Tianmenshi, Hubei, encloses nearly 100 hectares and Majiayuan in Jingmenshi, Hubei, covers almost 20 hectares. At Shijiahe, the roughly rectangular stamped-earth wall is 40–50 meters broad at the base and still stands to a height of 3 to 4 meters. It extends more than 1,000 meters north-south and more than 900 meters east-west. Outside the wall, the moat is several tens of meters wide. Inside, the foundations of several houses belonging to the elite have been discovered and to the northwest lie a cemetery and religious center. Here two pits with more than a thousand figurines of animals and humans have been excavated, including representations of pigs, dogs, oxen, sheep, chickens, monkeys, elephants, long-tailed birds, turtles, and fish; among the humans, there are figures wearing flat caps and long robes, and some are standing and some kneeling holding fish. Another three religious buildings have been identified in the southwest.

The third group is in the lower Yellow River region. The late Longshan sites here are also relatively large in area, ranging from several hectares to several tens of hectares, although Wangchenggang is an exception.⁷ Notable, too, is the guardhouse at Pingliangtai in Henan (Fig. 5.5) with pottery drainpipes under the entrance gate. Another very significant discovery at

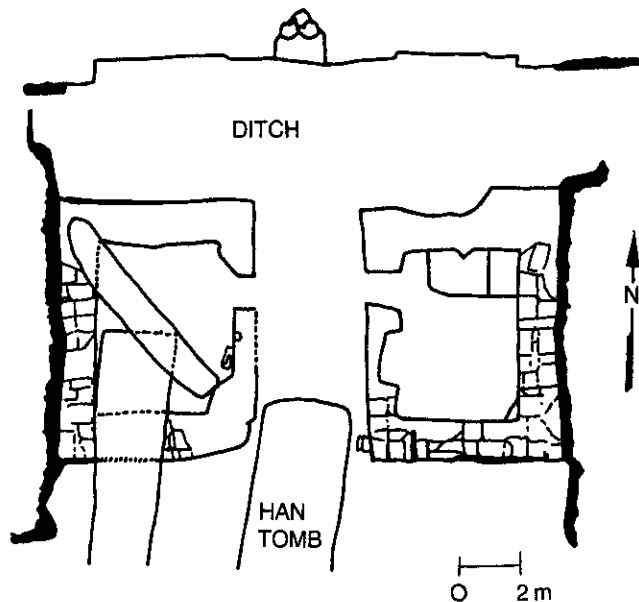


Figure 5.5. Ground plan of the Neolithic city of Pingliangtai (left); ground plan of the south gate and its flanking guard rooms (right). After Henan sheng wenwu yanjiusuo Zhoukou diqu wenhua qu wenwuke (1983 3: 27-28: figures 16 and 18). From Needham and Yates (1994: figure 138). Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

Wangchenggang was a fragment of black pottery, the flat base of a ceramic vessel which bore an inscription, carved before firing, of the single graph *gong* (Wang Zhenzhong 1992 vol. 2:234; Li Xiandeng 1984).

The exceptional size of the middle Yangzi sites suggests that the elite leaders of these communities were able to command the labor power of a considerable number of people to build the defensive fortifications, an indication that warfare had become an integral way of life for the inhabitants. Nonetheless, it seems correct to follow Underhill and conclude that these Longshan polities were still more or less comparable to the complex Mississippian chiefdoms of the southeastern United States such as Moundville discussed by Peebles and Kus (1977).⁸

The Early Bronze Age State

As mentioned above, the question of the historicity of the Xia dynasty is hotly contested and most Chinese scholars have attempted to correlate archaeological sites with the traditional historical record of there having been a dynastic state prior to the Shang (Huber 1988; Thorp 1991). Chang (1986) correlates Erlitou culture sites with traditional Xia dynastic capitals (Fig. 5.6), but Allan thinks that the Xia was an imaginary obverse of Shang existing only in the mythic thought of the Shang (1991). The area of Erli-

tu sites is quite prescribed, but it is too early yet to determine whether it is justifiable to interpret the cultural remains, which have been categorized into five subtypes based on the spatial distribution of pottery (Zou Heng 1980; Thorp 1991), as a regional system of city-states that in the course of their development learned the art of bronze making.⁹

We are better informed about the succeeding second-millennium Bronze Age culture of Shang, with which Chang and Keightley concern themselves, relying on the early discussions of the state in cross-cultural perspective. In an early formulation, Service claimed that

a true state is distinguishable from chiefdoms in particular, and all lower levels (of socio-cultural integration) in general, by the presence of that special form of control, the consistent threat of force by a body of persons legitimately constituted to use it. . . . Monopoly of force, as opposed to the power of the chief, for example, who might if necessary hold an *advantage* of force, is important; one of the simplest but most notable indices of a state's power lies in the degree to which personal (nongovernmental) use of force is outlawed and thereafter prevented. The presence of feud signifies the absence of state power at that time and place. (1971)

Wheatley (1977:544), in reviewing K. C. Chang's early studies on urbanism in China (Chang 1976), suggests that, because of the appearance of the conical clan in the Shang period (second millennium B.C.) as the basis of social and political structure, Shang was a chiefdom that "lacked a formal apparatus of forceful repression." Chang himself, however, in his illuminating study of Shang civilization (1980), quotes Flannery's characterization of the state as

a type of very strong, unusually highly centralized government with a professional ruling class, largely divorced from the bonds of kinship which characterize simpler societies. It is highly stratified and extremely diversified internally, with residential patterns often based on occupational specialization rather than blood or affinal relationship. The state attempts to maintain a monopoly of force, and is characterized by true law; almost any crime may be considered a crime against the state, in which case punishment is meted out by the state according to codified procedures rather than being the responsibility of the offended party or his kin, as in simpler societies. While individual citizens must forego violence, the state can wage war; it can also draft soldiers, levy taxes and exact tributes.

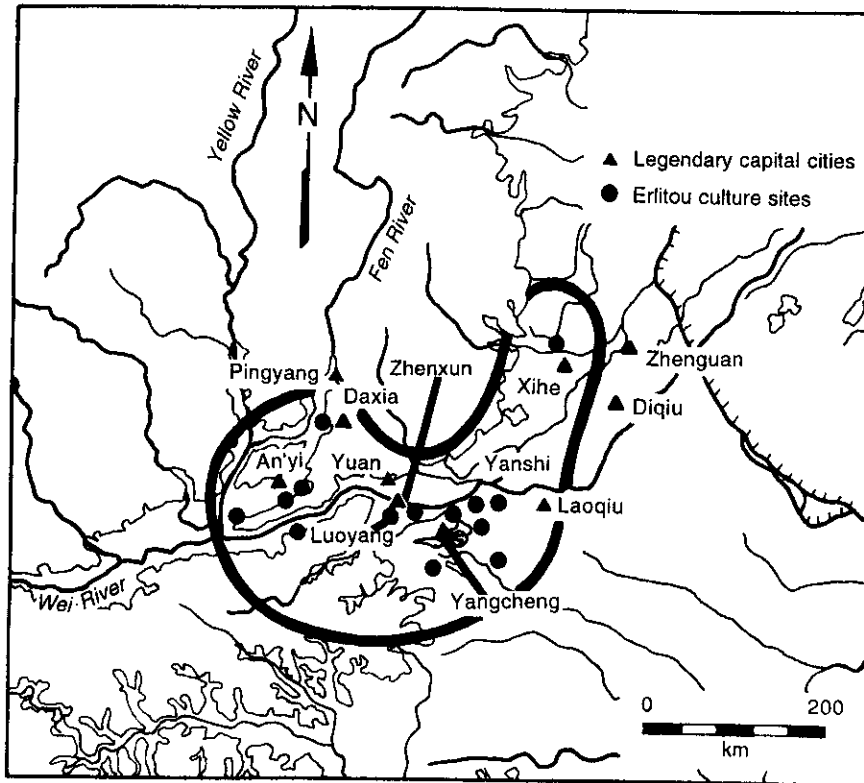


Figure 5.6. Major Erlitou culture sites and traditional Xia dynasty capitals. From Kwang-chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 4th ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), figure 272. © 1986 by Yale University. Reprinted with permission of Yale University Press.

Chang singles out the replacement of territorial bonds for kinship bonds and the monopoly of force as the criteria of state organization: Shang had a monopoly of force, but the replacement of territorial bonds did not occur. Since, however, Shang had social classes, a hierarchical ruling structure, and legitimate force, Shang must have been a state and it is necessary either to revise the criteria for statehood or consider the Chinese to be the anomalous case in the evolutionary sequence. More recent comparative work has, however, rejected the notion that lineage ceases to be an important feature in city-states (Griffeth and Thomas 1981a; Stone, this volume), and it is clear that earlier forms of association based on kinship continued to play an important integrating function throughout the life of the Greek city-states (Ferguson 1991; Small, this volume).¹⁰

Among the principal sources for the study of Shang history are the records of divinations scratched on cattle scapulae and turtle plastrons made by the Shang kings in the last 150 to 200 years of the dynasty from Wu Ding to the last king Zhou, Di Xin, who was attacked and killed by Wu Wang of the succeeding Zhou dynasty (probably mid-eleventh century B.C.). Inscriptions on bronze vessels provide supplementary information, but they are quite terse in contrast to those found on later Zhou examples. Further infor-

mation can be deduced from the archaeological record of residential sites and tomb furnishings found in excavations of sites such as the last capital of the Shang at Anyang, Henan province, and the small, fort-like, middle Shang outpost at Panlongcheng, Hubei (Chang 1980, 1986). Regrettably, Chinese archaeologists have not seen fit to expend much energy in determining settlement patterns, though I will provide some information below, so it is the oracle-bone records which have provided scholars with the richest source for the study of the question of the nature of the Shang polity.

It could be argued that it is really not very profitable to debate whether or not Shang was a complex chiefdom in Earle and others' formulation or a state in Service and Flannery's terms: what is more important is to try to see how the Shang and the Western Zhou actually operated their governments and how their societies were organized. But if we approach the data with the wrong conceptual framework, we will inevitably fall into numerous methodological mistakes as well as possible false interpretations of the often ambiguous data. This appears to be Herrlee Creel's mistake in his well-known study of the *Origins of Statecraft in China* (1970) in Western Zhou times. Creel bases his chapters on the analysis of putative institutions and titles his chapters "Finance," "Jus-

tice," and so on, even though there does not appear to be a concept of justice in Western Zhou times, and it has not yet been determined whether there was merely intermittent tribute or regular taxes sent from the subordinates of the Zhou to the center.

Exactly the same problem faces the researcher in the study of the Shang, if her concentration is focused upon institutions. What, for example, in Flannery's definition is meant by the term *true law* which he says characterizes the state? The terms *dian* and *ci* are usually adduced as evidence that the Shang had a code of laws (e.g., Chang 1980). *Dian*, however, means a document, as does *ci*, and refers rather to the records that were kept of the gifts that the king made, the original graph being a picture of bamboo or wooden slips being held by two hands.¹¹ It is only much later that *dian* came to mean what is normative by virtue of what was written down. Actual codes were only promulgated in the sixth century B.C., and the earliest extant systematic legal enactments are the Qin laws found at Yunmeng, which date possibly from the fourth century B.C. Actual regular or fixed procedures in legal proceedings only date from this time: the recent discoveries of disputes on late Western Zhou bronzes corroborate this view. Punishment of a broken obligation seems to have been a matter of bargaining between the two parties, not the imposition of a fixed penalty determined by the state.

With regard to the question of the control of force, it is clear from the oracle-bone inscriptions that the Shang could mobilize large numbers of persons for a military campaign, up to 13,000 in the case of Fu Hao, one of the principal wives of King Wu Ding, who led an expedition against the Qiang tribes.¹² The question of the Shang's *monopoly* of force, however, is in doubt: since we have only records of divinations from the Shang center, we cannot say whether segmented lineages had the right or the ability to mount campaigns on their own, without the permission or the help of the Shang king. This lack of independent documentary sources poses very serious difficulties for the student of the early Chinese state, for why should we accept at face value the claims of what are clearly ideologically biased religious records?

Nevertheless, much useful evidence can be gleaned from the oracle-bone inscriptions. Historical details of matters of daily concern to the Shang kings can be learned from them which cannot be gathered from other sources. Numerous inscriptions record questions about the harvest—whether, for example, it would be gathered in a specific place—and record the

theft by a certain *fang*, a term which appears to have designated groups on the periphery of the Shang who did not accept the Shang's claim to be the only legitimate authority and who were often the object of Shang attack. The Shang also seem to have sent groups of men called *zhongren*, who were organized in sections of one hundred men each, the largest number being three hundred, divided into an upper, middle, and lower section, to open up fields in the territory of those *fang*. There is scant evidence that the *fang* were states on the borders of the Shang, as K. C. Chang asserts, most of them could just as well have been hunting-gathering tribes with territories whose resources they exploited throughout but which lacked fixed borders. While some of these *fang* may indeed have possessed urban centers or citadels protected by stamped-earth walls, the Shang do not specify in their inscriptions the level of cultural sophistication of their opponents.¹³

In my opinion, the expeditions of *zhongren* organized along lineage and military lines were probably one of the most important means by which the Shang were able to incorporate more territory under their control.¹⁴ Some locations are called *fang* in early records where the *zhongren* were agriculturally active. Later on the appellation *fang* is dropped, implying that the Shang had more permanent control over them. These *zhongren* engaged in other hard-labor activities apart from agricultural work and military operations: they also seem to have been responsible for building settlements (*yi*) and the rammed-earth foundations of the ritually significant buildings, and seem to have been under the direct supervision of lineage heads who participated in the Shang polity and who were subordinate to the Shang kings (cf. Zhu Fenghan 1990). The *zhongren*, together with the lowest level of the Shang population, were described linguistically as an undifferentiated mass. The heads of the lesser lineages were known by their lineage name, which was also the name of their town or settlement (*yi*).

Henry Wright has proposed a dynamic conceptualization of the state that suggests that

a state can be recognized as a society with specialized decision-making organizations that are receiving messages from many different sources, recoding their messages, supplementing them with previously stored data, making the actual decision, and conveying decisions back to other organizations. Such organizations are thus internally as well as externally specialized. Such societies contrast with those

in which relations between the society's component organizations are mediated only by a generalized decision-maker and with those in which relations between component organizations are exclusively self-regulating. In contrast, a state can be *conceptualized* as a socio-cultural system in which there is a differentiated, internally specialized, decision-making sub-system that regulates varying exchanges among other sub-systems and with other systems. (1978:56)

Wright's formulation has, to be sure, received its share of criticism, especially for his somewhat arbitrary presumption that a state possesses at least three levels in its administrative hierarchy. Nevertheless, the fact that the Shang population was described as an undifferentiated mass suggests that Shang had not reached the kind of organizational level Wright proposes for a state.

David Keightley has proposed a series of thirty-nine criteria to judge whether a given group was a member of the Shang state, an ally, a dependency, or an enemy, or a nonmember of the state (1979–80).¹⁵ These criteria are grouped under the subheadings Sovereignty, Territoriality, Religion and Kinship, Alliance, Warfare, and Exchange. Each group receives a state score calculated by multiplying the number of times the group appears in the inscriptions by the number of times it meets one of the criteria. While this is an admirable preliminary attempt to assess the importance of certain groups to the Shang, Keightley makes some important assumptions that cannot be verified. What justification is there, for example, to claim that the notion of sovereignty is appropriate as an analytic category for interpreting Shang ideas? This concept implies a well-defined sense of law, which we have just seen cannot be verified with evidence currently available. In addition, in the inscriptions only two levels in the hierarchy at most can be perceived. This suggests strongly that the Shang was not particularly internally differentiated and that the Shang was either a chiefdom or, at best, a minimal state, as Keightley himself points out. The divinations take these forms: "the Shang king orders X to do something" or "calls upon X to do something," or "the king orders X to lead the men of Y."

The king takes a personal and religious interest in the day-to-day activities of his subordinates, very much like the big-man of the egalitarian tribe; he is not so much the administrator of administrators, presiding over a large organization with internal specialization, as Wright suggests is necessary in a state system (1978; cf. Qi Wenxin 1991–92). But the evidence

may be misleading. It is quite possible that one of the uses of the oracle-bone divinations was to create a consensus as well as to validate a decision. The reading of the cracks must have involved considerable debate among the participants of the rite, especially since the answers, whether positive or negative, were not immediately clear from the cracks themselves as they appeared when the heat was applied to the bone.¹⁶ Diviners, and possibly the shamans who assisted the king in his oracle-taking, most likely came from lineages allied to him by marriage, and so it was through the collective participation in the rite that bureaucratic and political decisions were made. Perhaps this was part of the religious heritage of the bureaucrats of imperial times, for they too were assistants to the emperor in keeping the cosmos in harmony.

I would suggest that the various policies aimed at segmenting and dividing the undifferentiated mass of the people that were proposed and implemented from Springs and Autumns times down to the Qin and Han empires (eighth to second centuries B.C.) were also attempts to reorganize and control geographical and social space. This was essentially an attempt to reorder the cosmos and the natural and human worlds (Yates 1994). Even the donation of grades of aristocratic or meritocratic rank (*jue*) to commoners for success in battle instituted by the legalist statesman Lord Shang in the fourth century B.C. in the northwestern state of Qin was an effort to draw into the ritual hierarchy all members of the community from Heaven on down through the ruler, the ministers, to the masses at the bottom of the social ladder.

In the light of the foregoing evidence, I would suggest that the definitions proposed by Western theorists of the state in the 1970s and their applications to the Chinese evidence, with their emphasis on Western-type institutions, fail to provide an adequate framework for analyzing both the early Chinese polity and the traditional Chinese state. The lineage and family structure of the Shang and Western Zhou became the basis of the social structure of traditional China (cf. Chun 1990), and this structure was pre-eminently a military one. The religion of the Shang, ancestor worship, became one of the most potent legitimizing forces for the imperial regime. The bureaucracy was always conceptualized as performing an essential religious and cosmic task (Yates 1994): of this we see the very small beginnings in the Shang (Keightley 1978), and it developed into one of the most permanent features of China's tradition of government. We must therefore make a new attempt to characterize

the nature of the polity in Shang and Western Zhou times, one in which the king is seen rather in his role as gift-giver than as administrator, where his peregrinations are given their full cultural meaning (Keightley 1983a; Thorp 1985), and where the ancient Chinese people's own views of their world are taken into consideration.

While thus far I have emphasized the chiefdom-state paradigm, I recognize that some theorists have advanced cogent arguments criticizing the concept of the chiefdom, arguing that we should be looking for the characteristics of scale, level of integration, and complexity in any given society (Blanton et al. 1981: 17; Spencer 1987:379).

The City-State in China

In the light of the preceding discussion, it seems to me that the concept of the city-state is useful for the case of China, but in a particular way: it corresponds more closely to the Chinese notion of their settlements than do other models. Chang asserts that there is a fundamental difference between the Western and what he calls the "Asian-American" experience in the evolution of civilization, namely, that the Western experience is characterized by "rupture" with respect to man's relation to nature (the environment, the cosmos), whereas the Asian-American is characterized by "continuity" (1989). Chang argues that shamans were crucial to maintaining this "continuous" politico-religious system of the Neolithic and Shang cultures for they were able to communicate between the two spheres of existence, the lower world of earth and of humans and the upper world of heaven, deities, and ghosts. They could bring down the spirits to help humans, specifically to prophesy the future, and thus provide direction in everyday affairs such that "during the Shang period shamanism and political power were closely linked" (Chang 1994a:35; cf. Chang 1994b; Fung 1994; Mathieu 1987). I perceive some problems with Chang's interpretation of the pervasiveness and importance of shamanism in early China for I see no evidence that the kings themselves were shamans, no king is called "shaman-X", for example, the kings did not engage in cosmic flights, nor were they healers, although the later tradition does contain stories of archaic kings performing shaman-like rituals.¹⁷ If shamans were so crucial to kingship in the early stages of the Bronze Age, Chang must explain how and why their position changed so radically in the later Bronze Age. From 700 B.C. on shamans

were located at the lower margins of society; they were outcasts, and subject to strict regulation and control by the political authorities.

In addition, I do not think that the archaic Chinese state was characterized by "true law" (Flannery's 1972 term). Here Chang has undercut his own argument about Asian or Chinese difference from the Western experience of evolution. This point is important, for many Western theorists stress the role of law. Max Weber is a notable example. According to Weber (1958), Chinese cities were primarily administrative centers. They had no separate legal existence as Western cities had from the later Middle Ages on, and thus their function in the Chinese political hierarchy was completely different. The structure and function of Chinese cities were not conducive for the emergence of the modern Western capitalist system in Weber's opinion; and yet, of course, from A.D. 1000 in the imperial period Chinese cities were far larger and more economically vibrant and culturally active than their counterparts in Western Europe. Donald V. Kurtz also stresses law in the development of states and his article, "The Legitimation of Early Inchoate States" (Kurtz 1981) is a classic example of orientalist thinking, with its uncritical assumption of the centrality of law in early states. One can have cities without them being separate legal entities, and one can have the legitimation of states without law.

A more appropriate approach to early Chinese chiefdom and state development is to be found through recognizing the validity of Chang's assertion that there was a profound difference between the Western and the Asian paradigms for the emergence of civilization: I leave the Americanists to debate its relevance to their data. This approach presumes that it is essential to analyze the Chinese people's own terminology and interpretation of their sociopolitical and cultural practices. In the Shang, all walled settlements were called *yi*, suggesting that they did not differentiate between settlements, no matter what their size or function. Before the construction of such settlements, divination frequently was resorted to, to ensure that the chosen site was auspicious (Peng Bang-jiong 1982). In the Zhou, however, the state was the *guo*, and it is this that Tu Cheng-sheng (1986) has interpreted as a "feudal city-state." In turn, this "city-state" can be interpreted as close to the model that Tambiah has characterized as existing in a "galactic polity" (1977, 1985). Although Tambiah explained this model as deriving out of the concept of the *mandala*, implying that it was introduced into Southeast

Asia from India after the turn of the millennium, it may in fact represent a much more archaic Asian system of cosmic thinking or mode of being. A significant element of this model is the centrality of ritual to the political process and the principle of ritual replication of the center in the creation of the hierarchy of settlements or settlement clusters.

In the Chinese case, this is represented by the way in which all space, human and divine, secular and sacred, is incorporated into a system of nested hierarchies, boxes within boxes, compartmentalized and separated, yet each one being a template of the system as a whole (cf. Granet 1968; Yates 1994). The entire universe is therefore an organic whole (Chang 1989; Needham 1959) and humans are not categorically distinct from deities, nor are the dead in a state of alterity with respect to the living. This mode of thinking encourages inclusion, not exclusion, and emphasizes relationships, not individuation. Hence Flannery's point about the loosening of blood ties, of kinship structures in the state is irrelevant to the Asian/Chinese case.

On the ground in ancient China this patterning is represented by the formation of walled settlements (*yi*), although it would appear that it was by no means *necessary* that the settlement be walled (Keightley 1982). The ancient graph for this term *yi* seems to be a human beneath an enclosure made (ideally) of stamped earth. As few as ten households could be located within the wall, or it could be the state capital, as in the term Dayi Shang (Fig. 5.7), the great settlement of Shang, probably the last capital discovered at Anyang, northern Henan province.¹⁸ Tu Cheng-sheng points out that the "area within the city wall was referred to as '*kuo (guo)*,' and the lands between the walls [*cheng*] and the borders of the fiefdom were known as '*yeh*' (*ye*) (or 'wilds'). The entire territory within the limits of the fiefdom constituted the domain of the city-state, or in a general sense, of the *kuo* (state)" (1986).

In larger settlements, sometimes there were two or more walls. Cultivated fields could be found inside the walls of the inner enclosure. According to later written sources, partially confirmed by archaeological excavation, the position of the settlement in the hierarchy was signified by the type of religious buildings that were constructed inside. The capital held the altars of soil and grain of the entire state, as well as the ancestral temple of the dominant lineage, whereas the smallest village only contained the altar of the soil of the local deity. Regular sacrifices were required to

feed both ancestors and soil-and-grain spirits. The latter enjoyed blood sacrifices provided by the slaughter of enemy in battle. Physically, the altars were mounds of earth with a tree planted on top and open to the sky. Covering over the altar would kill the spirits, because they would no longer receive the cosmic essences or ethers (*qi*), the material substance or life-force out of which the universe was created and which flowed through all things, animate and inanimate.

The outer boundary of the state was likewise marked by an earthen mound planted with trees. This was known as a *feng*. The establishment of the *feng*, with its symbolic representation of, and connection to, the altars of soil and grain at the center, expressed the creation of the state. Space was thereby ordered through the creation of relations of inner and outer spheres and thereby fitted into the cosmic whole. Virtually all, if not all, scholars claim that this *feng* system is the same as the feudal system of medieval Europe, and claim that China therefore had feudalism far earlier than the West (e.g., Creel 1970; Hsu 1965; Tu Cheng-sheng 1992). This is an error, for it completely disregards the symbolism that the Chinese were manipulating to give order to their world.¹⁹

What was the size of the average city-state (*guo*) in ancient China? Classical texts of the fifth to third centuries B.C. indicate that the largest were about 64 kilometers and the smallest about 19 kilometers per side of the outer boundaries and 32 kilometers would have been typical of the classical Chinese city-state (Tu Cheng-sheng 1986). The central enceinte may have been typically no larger than 250 meters long per side with a population of 3,000 households. This gives, according to Lin Yun (1986), on average a space of 158.7 square meters per household. He has shown that, from Neolithic times through the Bronze Age, this land-to-household ratio was approximately the same, 150–160 square meters per household, although, of course, the size of the *guo* state could vary tremendously.

One of the best-excavated Zhou city-state capitals is that of Lu, the home of Confucius, the famous philosopher, the present site of Qufu, Shandong province in eastern China (Fig. 5.8). Here an outer, roughly rectangular, defensive wall with a perimeter 11,771 meters in circumference protected large residential areas and many areas of workshops, including bronze, iron, bone, and pottery. The roads were constructed to cross at approximate right angles and the palace precincts were situated as a compound in the center of the entire enceinte. This latter form is what

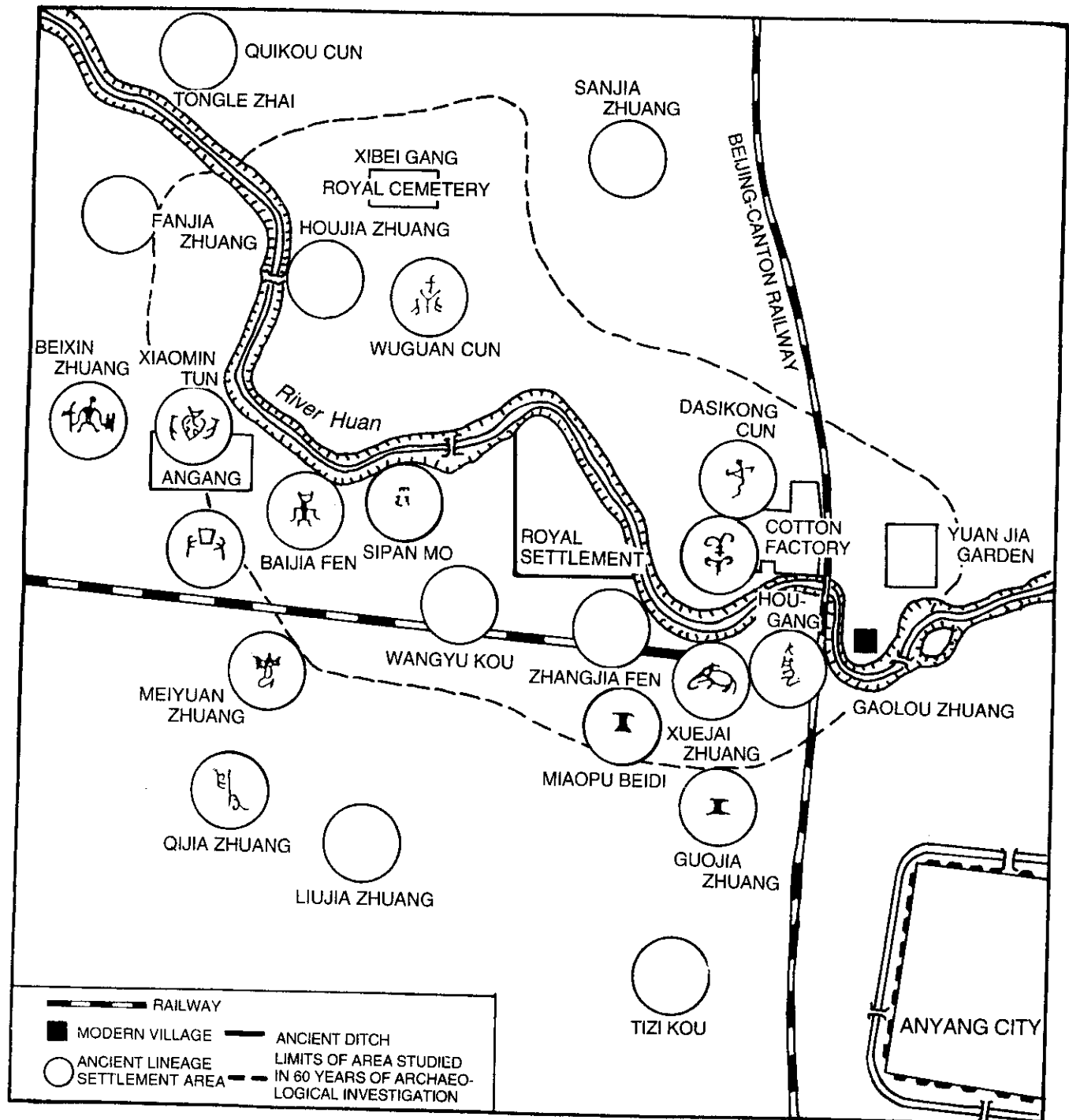


Figure 5.7. Ground plan of the late Shang capital, Dayi Shang, at Anyang. From Zheng Ruokui (1995:figure 2).

is recorded in the ancient texts, such as the *Zhou Li* (*Rites of Zhou*) as being the norm, although in fact there was considerable variation, depending on region and the physical environment (Ma Shizhi 1981, 1984, 1987; Needham and Yates 1994; Tu Cheng-sheng 1992). Much effort was expended by the excavators of Lu in determining the structure and layering of the city walls and obviously the defenses were repaired and improved many times over many centuries (Fig.

5.9). Presently, although there has been enormous damage inflicted upon them, the stamped-earth walls still stand to a considerable height. For example, the eastern side of the Eastern Gate on the southern wall is 7 meters high. The gate was 36 meters long and 10 meters wide (Tian An 1988), and probably originally topped with wooden towers (details in Needham and Yates 1994), the road running through it providing access to the important ritual structure, the Rain

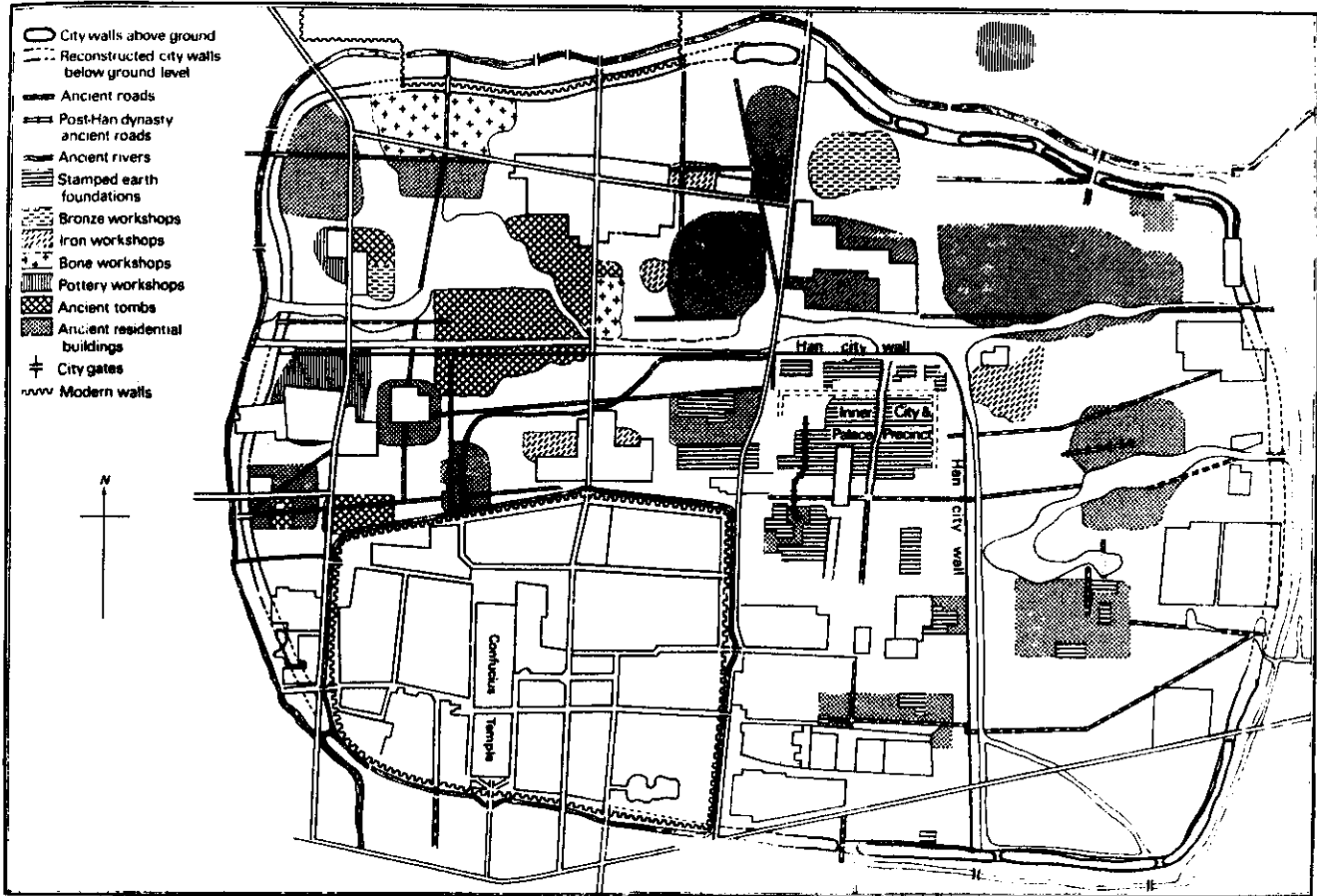


Figure 5.8. Plan of the capital of the state of Lu, Qufu, Shandong province. After Shandong sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo (1982:figure 3). From Needham and Yates (1994:figure 141). Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

Dance Platform 1.7 kilometers to the south. Unfortunately, as in virtually all excavations in the Chinese heartland, the archaeologists were not able to determine precise details of the residential areas, and so the relative size of individual family compounds in this site is unknown.

Two other sites have been especially well excavated, the first at Jinan is the former capital of the very large state of Chu based in the middle Yangzi valley (Fig. 5.10) and another is the group of cities which formed the capital of the north-central state of Jin which was broken up into three smaller regional city-state systems at the beginning of the Warring States period (mid-fifth century B.C.). Given that the Jin cities are composed of walled encintes in very close proximity to each other and given that it is known that Jin possessed very strong lineages, three of whom ultimately disposed of their rivals and divided the state, it is tempting to see this cluster of cities (Fig. 5.11) as similar to the "citadel" mounds at Mohenjo-daro discussed by Kenoyer (this volume): the headquarters at the state capital of powerful elite lineages.

The actual placement of smaller settlements in relation to the larger is not known at present because, as mentioned above, Chinese archaeologists have not invested much time in the study of settlement patterns.²⁰ Lin Yun (1986), however, has observed that clusters of *yi* settlements were differentiated into central capitals (*du*) and "appanages" (*bi*). The graph *bi* in the Shang oracle bones appears to depict a granary, which might suggest that the smaller settlements provided grain for the central capital that housed, in addition to farmers, specialized artisans, overseers of sacrifices, administrators, and merchants. Later on, in the time of the flowering of philosophical theorizing in the Warring States period (fifth to third centuries B.C.) when the states gradually came to be consolidated under new, more centralized regimes (Hsu 1965), the organization of the settlement hierarchy and the naming of the different parts exercised the minds of philosophers and statesmen alike. Many different proposals were made. The form of government also became the most intensely debated intellectual problem of the day as good order in the cosmos was

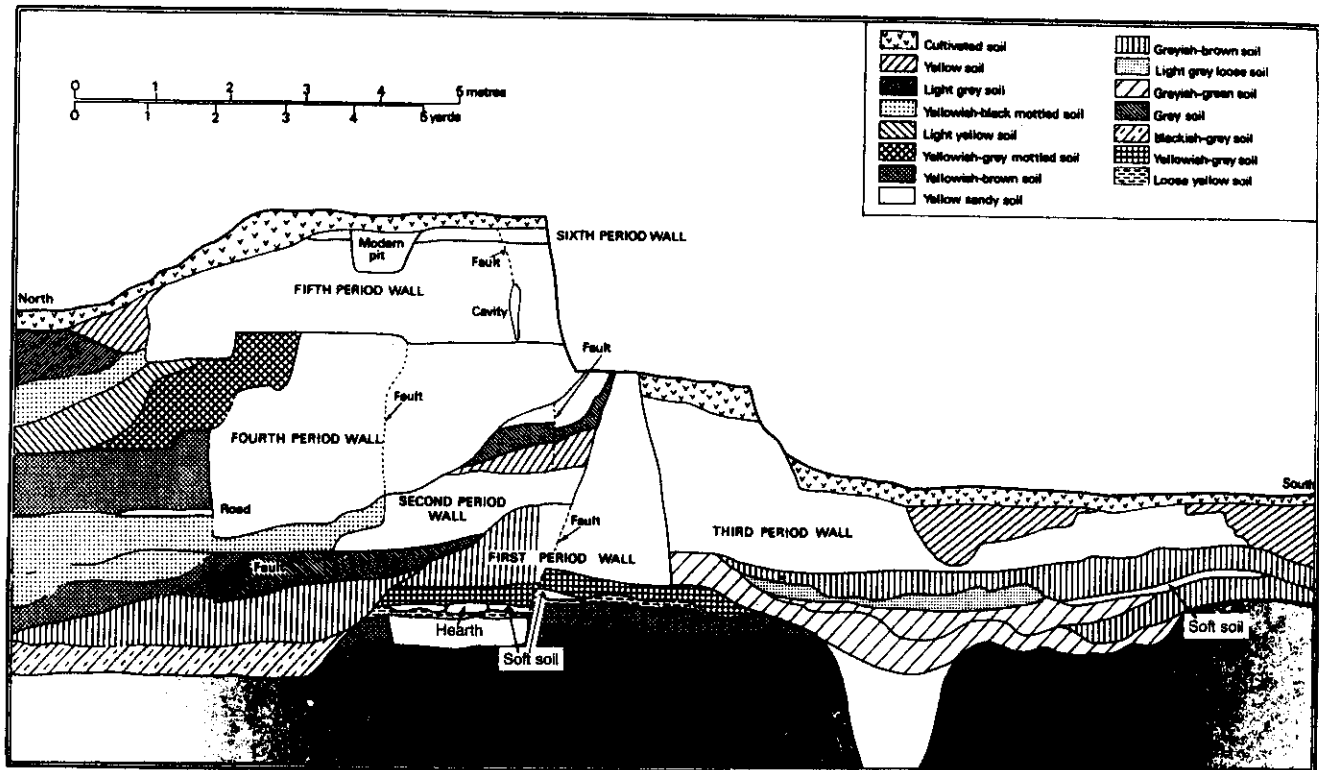


Figure 5.9. Cross-section of east wall, Qufu, site of the capital of the state of Lu at excavation site T505. After Shandong sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo (1982:figure 18a). From Needham and Yates (1994:figure 143). Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

seen as dependent on good order in the human realm. A typical example is the section “Military Taxes” of the *Guanzi* translated by Rickett (1985:116, 119–120), which probably derives from the eastern state of Qi:

ON SITUATING THE CAPITAL (*Li Guo*)

Always situate the capital and urban centers (*du*) either at the foot of a great mountain or above [the bank of] a broad river. To insure sufficient water, avoid placing them so high as to approach the drought [level]. To conserve on [the need for] canals and embankments, avoid placing them so low as to approach the flood [level]. Take advantage of the resources of Heaven and adapt yourself to the strategic features of Earth. Hence city and suburban walls need not [rigidly] accord with the compass and square [i.e., need not be precisely square or rectangular and aligned to the cardinal points], nor roads with the level and marking line. . . .

ON THE GENTLEMEN, PEASANTS, ARTISANS, AND MERCHANTS

. . . An area six *li* [a *li* was approximately a third of a mile] square is called a village (*bao*). Five villages are called a section (*bu*), and five sections are called a subdistrict (*ju*). Each subdistrict should have a marketplace. If it does not, the people will suffer shortages. Five subdistricts are called

such and such a district (*xiang*). Four districts are called an area [*fang*, the same term that appears in the Shang oracle-bone inscriptions, see above]. This is the organization for administrations under direct rule (*guan*).

When [the organization of] administrations under direct rule has been completed, set up the areas administered through rural towns (*yi*). Five households (*jia*) form a group of five (*wu*), and ten households a group (*lian*). Five groups form a village (*bao*), and five villages a headquarters unit (*zhang*) known as such and such a district (*xian*). Four districts are called a region (*du*). This is the organization of areas administered through rural towns.

When [the organization of] these areas has been completed, organize production. Four strips (*ju*) constitute a plot (*li*), and five plots a lot (*zhi*). Five lots constitute a field (*tian*), and two fields an individual tract (*fu*). Three such tracts constitute [the land] of a household. This is the organization for production.

With regard to the dating of the appearance of these “city-states,” and to their termination, it seems as though the general patterning of the settlements began as early as the Yangshao (ca. 5000–3000 B.C.) Neolithic, with stamped-earth walls emerging in the Longshan interaction period (3000–2000 B.C.). From about 700 B.C., settlements were incorporated into

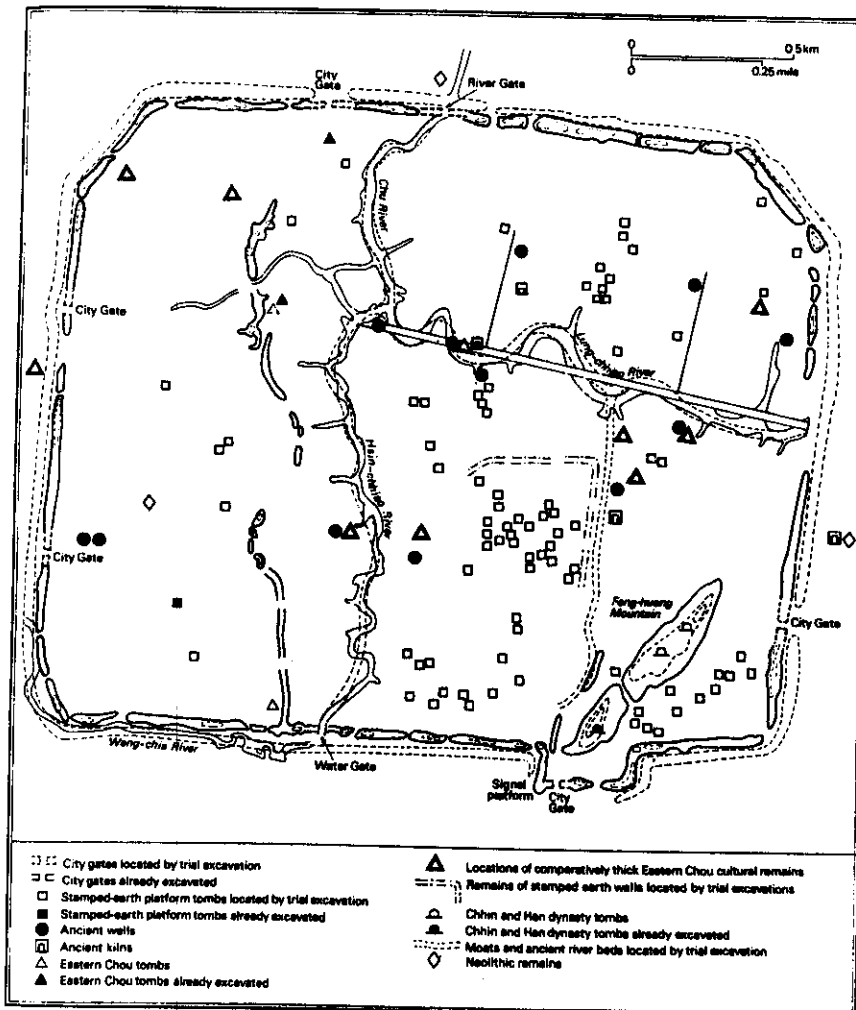


Figure 5.10. Ground plan of Jinan city, site of the capital of Chu. After Hubei sheng bowuguan (1982:figure 2). From Needham and Yates (1994:figure 146). Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

larger and larger systems through incessant warfare until in 221 B.C. a single empire was formed. While it is probably fair to posit that there was a “regional city-state system” in the later stages of this period, with each city ritually replicating the center in a galactic polity (cf. Tambiah 1977), the precise political, economic, and religious relationships between the central place and its surrounding hinterland cannot be determined in our present state of knowledge. The *pattern of settlement* I have described, however, remained intact. When central administrative control collapsed at the end of the second century A.D., the units of the galactic polity of the Han fragmented, some to be abandoned completely, others once again to be recombined into smaller polities until the Sui reunified the entire country in A.D. 589.

A few more comments on the economy of the Chinese city-states are in order. First of all, the states were based on self-sufficient agriculture. In the early period, control of long-distance trade does not seem to have played a significant role in their development,

although, of course, there was some circulation of, and trade in, prestige goods, such as cowry shells, jade, and turtle plastrons. As Chang has observed (1980), it was control over the labor force that provided state functionaries with the means to extract grain resources for their support and the means to create the stamped-earth constructions, such as walls and temple foundations, and large subterranean tombs, which displayed the power of the elite and their ritual preeminence. Trade, the regional specialization in products, metal currency, and an independent merchant class only appeared very late, after 700 B.C. (Hsu 1965), when the conquest of smaller states by the larger and the weaker by the stronger created larger and larger hierarchies, together with an increasing complexity of nested systems—in other words regional city-state or peer-polity systems, rather like the networks developed by Sparta and Athens. Nor does there appear to be very much evidence of redistribution of resources from the center in the early period, although perhaps it occurred. Resources cer-

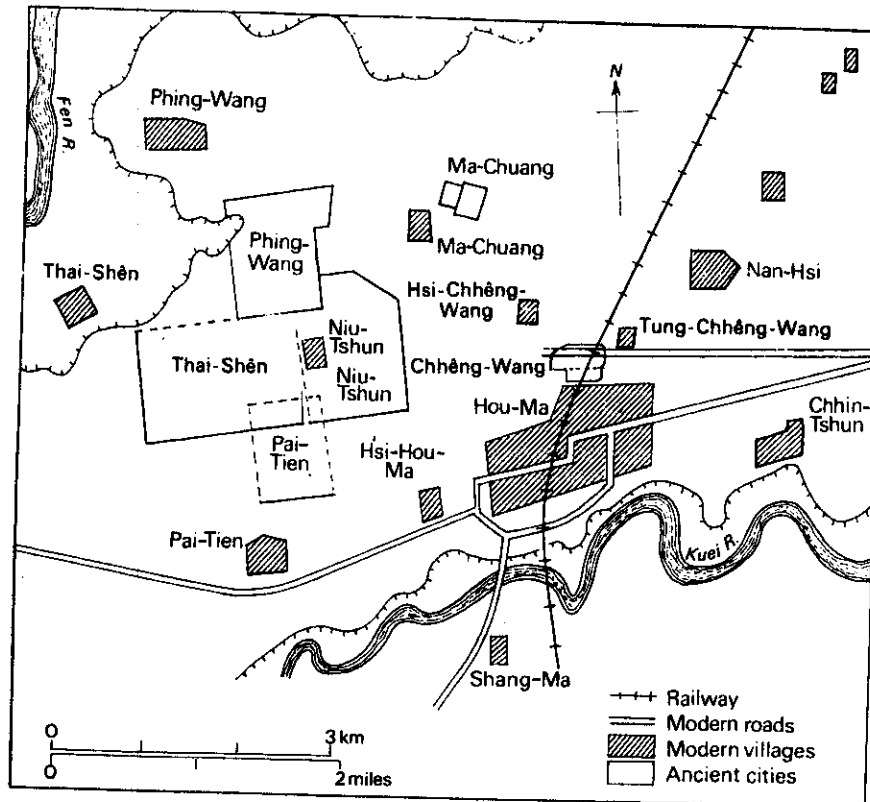


Figure 5.11. The ancient cities that made up Xintian, capital of the state of Jin. After Shansi sheng kaogu yanjiuso Houma gongzuo zhan (1988:figure 1). From Needham and Yates (1994:figure 89). Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

tainly were consumed by the elite, most notably in the form of the sacrifices made through the medium of the ritual bronzes so characteristic of the period 2000–200 B.C. As is well-known, these bronzes were used in the sacrifices to the ancestors, and it was in the sacrificial process that specialization of bureaucratic function first appeared (Keightley 1978). But though resources were consumed, they were not lost, for they provided the means by which the elite recreated and strengthened the bonds between the living and the dead and reaffirmed the continuity of being (Tu Wei-ming 1985:35–50).

Conclusion

Let me conclude briefly by saying that I find the concept of the city-state illuminating for the case of ancient China, not only because of the inadequacy of the feudal and imperial models that have been previously used to characterize the early Chinese political system, but also because the city-state corresponds far more closely to what the ancient Chinese understood as their model. However, the city-state in China was integrated into a model characterized by Tambiah (1985) as that of the galactic polity. Law was not essential, or significant, for the creation of the state,

but ritual and ritual replication was: each unit in the system was a representation of the ultimate unity of the cosmos, and over the centuries the units were combined and recombined into different configurations, but always based upon the same model. Thus when archaeologists study ancient city-states, it is essential for them also to take into consideration the “native’s point of view” or the emic system to understand how the city-states were actually perceived to function in living reality.

When did the city-state emerge in China? Possibly with the Xia at Erlitou or the Shang at Zhengzhou. When were the last city-states incorporated into larger regional polities? Really only in the middle of the Warring States period when the various dominant states began to force all settlements into a state-controlled political hierarchy: when they were no longer politically independent and when they were forced to pay taxes into the central administration.²¹ In other words, it is possible that the city-state period in China lasted longer, altogether approximately 1500 years, than in other parts of the world, although the individual city-states may have existed close to the five-hundred year maximum observed by Griffeth and Thomas (1981a).

Acknowledgment

I am most grateful to David N. Keightley who read the draft of this chapter with great care and made a number of suggestions for its improvement and for bibliographical additions.

Notes

1. Chang raises the suggestion that Shang was a city-state, but he does not develop or explore this possibility in his later research (1976:190). Peters intimates that if a Chinese state (*guo*) possessed only a single walled settlement, it might be considered a city-state. She does not push her suggestion further (1983:67). The nature of the *guo* will be examined below.
2. I realize I am being a little harsh here. Enormous strides have been made especially since 1949 in understanding Neolithic and Bronze Age China and undreamed-of discoveries have been made. Nevertheless, China has not been a source of models for cross-cultural theorizing and Chang has correctly observed that there was and is a strong tendency among Chinese scholars towards "dataism"; in other words, for scholars merely to report data without any conscious theoretical or conceptual models (1980). In the past five years or so, however, Chinese scholars have adopted a new approach and are now interested in developing theoretical models and applying them to data.
3. There is a strong possibility that this will change in the near future. K. C. Chang of Harvard University is engaged in a collaborative project to determine the location of the site of the earliest capital of the Shang dynasty, and scholars in China, such as Lin Yun of Jilin University and others, are adopting new theoretical models.
4. Tu Cheng-sheng points out that it was Hou Wailu who first suggested in 1941 that the concept of the "city-state" was valuable in reference to early China, and his initial formulation was taken up by two Japanese scholars. With the communist Liberation of China in 1949, however, the issue was dropped until Tu resurrected it.
5. Vitaly Rubín argues that there was a brief moment in the middle of the first millennium B.C. when at least one or two states in China moved towards the *polis* version of the city-state model, but this movement was quickly suppressed (1965, 1976).
6. Perhaps she would accept the following definition: the chiefdom or chieftaincy is characterized by the conical clan, and the units are ranked by the distance from the major lineage. People are therefore installed in societal positions and their authority comes from the organization rather than from their own efforts. Generally speaking, there are few or no classes in a chiefdom, for all members of the society are ultimately related to the common ancestor and so are related to each other. The paramount chief is the titular owner of his group's property, but it should be emphasized that he is rather the administrator of the property than the individual owner. He can, by appealing to his sacred power, direct the community's economic activities and thus intensify local production to support his own retinue. The paramount chief and his immediate relatives therefore consume far more than their needs for subsistence. Not only do they have the authority to command contribution from the lower-ranked members of their societies, but they have the means and the power to extract it. The resource flow therefore is characteristically centripetal. But it is not only centripetal, for the continuing obedience of the lesser lineages is largely dependent on the chief's activities as a redistributor of the resources (preciosities and/or staples) which flow to the center. A chiefdom, therefore, is a hierarchically organized society based on the conical clan which shows increasing economic specialization and division of labor.
7. The settlement seems to have consisted of two walled enclosures next to each other, but their exact dimensions remain unclear because erosion has heavily damaged the walls, especially those of the eastern enceinte. The western enceinte is roughly square, the western wall is 92 meters north-south slanting 5 degrees to the west, while the southern wall is 82.4 meters long (Chang 1986:273; Needham and Yates 1994:292, note C).
8. Liu Li has identified three different types of chiefdom systems in the middle and lower Yellow River valley in late Neolithic times; unified, competing, and underdeveloped (1994).
9. The most recent contribution to the debate is Dong Qi's (1995) essay, where Dong divides the historical development of Pre-Qin Chinese cities into three stages: (1) the period of castles (*chengbao*), from the beginnings in the Miaodigou culture phase to the end of the Longshan; (2) the period of capital settlements (*duyi*) from the Xia through the Western Zhou; and (3) the period of cities (*chengshi*), the Springs and Autumns and Warring States periods of the Eastern Zhou.
10. For much additional information on social and political organization in the Shang and Zhou, see Zhu Fenghan (1990).
11. Allan notes that sometimes a box or an altar is added to the graph (1991:16).
12. This indicates that the function and status of women in Bronze Age China was quite different from what they became under the influence of Confucian ideology.

13. A major discovery has been made in Guanghan, Sichuan, of a Bronze Age culture contemporaneous with the Shang. The capital was based on a walled city of considerable dimensions, but the surviving artifacts indicate that it possessed quite different traditions from those of the Shang. Whether this was the *fang* called Shu in the oracle-bone inscriptions has not been determined (cf. Bagley 1988).
14. Researchers generally agree that the lineage was a military organization in the Shang (cf. Wang Guimin 1983).
15. His essay was originally prepared as an appendix to Keightley (1982).
16. Allan points out that most of the inscriptions include only a charge or a proposition (followed frequently by a verification) and were not questions put to the ancestors or deities (1991:113–114; cf. “Forum” in *Early China* [1989:77–172]; Nivison 1989; Qiu Xigui 1989).
17. King Mu certainly is said to have engaged in cosmic flights later on in the tradition in Zhou times (cf. the *Mu tianzi zhuan*), but this text has no bearing on earlier beliefs. Chang provides a number of examples of kings performing shaman-like rituals (1994a; cf. Allan 1984; Yates 1990).
18. Chang observes that Shang remains have been retrieved from seventeen sites in the Anyang region within an area of approximately 24 square kilometers, but no walls have been confirmed in this region (1986:318). Zheng Ruokui has proposed that when Anyang was the last capital of the Shang, it was basically divided into two main units, the first comprising the royal palaces and tombs of the ruling Shang lineage and the second consisting of the twenty-two other sites occupied by lesser lineages closely allied to the Shang (Fig. 5.8; 1995). The middle Shang city at Zhengzhou, Henan, was discovered to have stamped-earth walls in a rough square, 1,690–1,870 meters per side (Chang 1980:263–288), and recently another wall adjacent to this enceinte has been found (Pei Mingxiang 1991; Henan sheng wenwu yanjiusuo 1993). Chang is leading an excavation team to locate the Dayi Shang that was the first capital of the Shang; he thinks the modern city of Shangqiu sits directly on top of the Shang capital that was later the capital of the Zhou state of Song (Chang, personal communication, 1996).
19. For a fascinating analysis of the symbolism of vassalage in the west with some very pertinent remarks on the Chinese ceremonies of so-called “enfeoffment,” see Le Goff (1980).
20. Zhang Xuehai of the Cultural Relics Bureau, Shandong Province, told me in the summer of 1992 that he and his co-workers have been able to determine the settlement pattern in the late Neolithic period around the type site of the Longshan city at Chengziyai, first excavated in the 1930s (Li Chi, Liang Su-yung, et al. 1956). Zhang’s report has just been published (1996), but the information contained in it arrived too late to be included in the body of the present chapter. Zhang concludes that there were two classes of cities in Neolithic Shandong, the first, although small in size, were capitals at the center of groups of settlements, the second were regional cities. He posits that there were at least three state systems, clustered round the sites of Chengziyai, Jiaochangpu, and Jingyanggang. But he concludes that these were not city-states, but rather “tribal ancient states” (*buluo guguo*). Anne Underhill is also preparing a settlement survey of Shandong (cf. Liu Li 1994).
21. It is interesting to observe that, in the internecine wars accompanying the consolidation of the city-states into larger and larger territories and the consequent decrease in the number of regional city-state systems, quite a few states were forced to move their capitals from one location to another. The relative ease with which the political elite were able to do this may well have been because they were able to move from one local city-state system to another, where each possessed its own local hinterland that provided its own basic economic means.