Abstract

The development of feudalism in Western Zhou Dynasty (1027 - 771 BC) marked a new period in Chinese history. It brought along changes in the government system. This dissertation aims to explore the core structure of the feudalism. It begins with the discussion of Fen-feng (分封) and Zong-fa (宗法) system, and the bureaucratic structure of the government to provide an overall view to the political situation of the period. Further, the relationship among the aristocratic hierarchy is examined to offer an insight into the various rules and regulations governing political behaviour. The characteristics of the feudalism are also highlighted to provide an understanding of the design and function of the system.

Feudalism places great emphasis on blood relation. The Zhou aristocrat occupied the upper echelon of the governing body. This position entitled them to a set of well-established hierarchy of privileges, providing them with a form of protection. Such a system of feudalism survived until the end of the Warring states period (475 - 221 BC).