Lecture 4: From City-State to Autocratic Monarchy

Demise of Zhou Royal Authority
--771 BCE: Loss of Zhou homeland to “barbarian” invasion
--Weakness of royal power under Eastern Zhou (771-256 BCE)

Hegemonic Rule in the “Spring and Autumn” Period (eighth-fifth centuries BCE)
--Institution of “Hegemon” (ba 霸) vs. “King” (wang 王)
--Lord Huan of Qi 齊桓公: through guidance of minister Guan Zhong 管仲, recognized as first hegemon in 651 BCE

City-States of Spring and Autumn Period
--Powerful role of “citizenry” (guoren 國人) in state affairs (destabilizing force)

Civil Strife: Case of Zheng 鄭
--Factional rivalry and civil violence caused decline of once-powerful lineage
--Reforms of Zichan 子產 (c. 581-522 BCE) intended to curb power of nobility and reassert ruler’s authority over officials, revenues, and government (law code)

Technological Transformations
--Iron metallurgy: mass production of weapons changed nature of warfare
--Money: introduction of bronze currencies enabled commercial exchange and fostered rise of merchant class

Rise of the Autocratic State in the Warring States era (481-221 BCE)
--Centralization of control over economic resources
--State landownership, commerce, invention of money
--Professionalization of government services:
   (1) new class of administrators (shi 士);
   (2) origins of bureaucracy (junxian 郡縣 system)
--New technology & tactics of warfare