THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE EMPRESS WU TSE-T'IEN OF THE T'ANG DYNASTY

by

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ABSTRACT

The Life and Times of the Empress Wu Tse-t'ien of the T'ang Dynasty is an attempt to describe and place in perspective the régime of perhaps the most controversial ruler in the history of medieval China. It is an attempt also, to define an imperial vision, to show the shifting priorities and stages of policy by which the Empress Wu set out to achieve certain aims; and it offers comment on the successes and failures of her career. Within this context, the Empress herself emerges as a woman whose consistency of character and virtuosity of mind is reflected only palely in previous studies.

Emphasis is placed in several areas. The first of these is the question of her position and her power. How did she win recognition as the legitimate sovereign of a state and a culture which had never before been ruled by a woman? And why, after this unique achievement, did she fail to preserve her position until her death? What influence did her unorthodox governmental role have upon the T'ang dynasty? And did her half-century of power leave any enduring marks upon China?

Out of these considerations grows a second emphasis--the tension between Confucian state-theory and the anomoly of

a female ruler. In this clash, the tradition proved to be of greater flexibility than is generally recognized, but at the same time, proved to be so durable and so resilient that in the Chou, the Empress found herself increasingly frustrated and finally defeated by it. This study suggests that while husband or son occupied the throne, she was able to borrow their legitimacy and make great strides in the achievement of her two principal goals: the creation of a viable centralization, and of an imperial institution which would be free, secure, and supreme in its relationship with a new bureaucracy. In the Chou, however, the contemporary power structure came increasingly to resist innovation and with increasing success. As a result, the dynasty is best regarded as it was at the restoration, as a "caretaker" régime, a period of consolidation and continuity of policies initiated in the preceding quarter century. The Empress Wu seized the throne to preserve rather than to innovate.

This is not to suggest, however, that the Confucian tradition and the value system it represented survived unchanged, for certain of its components were more durable than its whole. The traditional hierarchy, for instance, was forced into a process of gradual change with the aloof and self-sufficient aristocracy whose political and societal role had shaped the character of the age of disunion, transformed by status registers and the examination system into a quite different sort of ruling class. Thus the centralizing and

absolutistic character of the Empress' régime helped to begin the modification of the customary stratification of early T'ang society, and the perception of status which it supported. Certain institutions, such as the fu-ping system, waned as it were, by accident since the Empress saw the state, its environment and priorities, in terms different from those of the first T'ang rulers. In a positive vein, other institutions were fostered. The Buddhist church, and the examination system are the most prominent of these, and their rapid development is to be seen partly in terms of the Empress' need for support, but also in terms of her inclinations and temperament and her closeness to the people of her times. The tension between orthodoxy and the rule of a usurping woman was therefore an important force for change and it is to be hoped that it has received due stress.

A final area of emphasis is historiographical. Few figures in the history of traditional China have been the subject of so much discussion, and one result of this has been the creation of durable stereotypes and recurrent misconceptions. Many of these are referred to in the following study, and largely by the introduction of such new evidence as the P'an-lung-t'ai pei, the commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra, and the Samguk Sagi accounts of the Korean War, a rather different picture of the Empress and her policies emerges from that painted in traditional historiography.

Finally, it may be well to note that the scope of the

study is a wide one, and because it seeks to portray a spectrum of change over a large area both in temporal and geographical terms, depth has sometimes been sacrificed to breadth of treatment. Balance between biographical detail and the interpretation of historical events has been difficult to achieve, and some areas, such as economic policy, have perhaps been too lightly treated. In choosing what to omit, selection has been based on the quality of other secondary literature available and wherever possible, an attempt has been made to identify it.

The effort of producing a full study of the régime of the Empress Wu has been a worthwhile one. It is to be hoped that this study will weaken the tenacity of outworn paradigms like that of the Kuanchung and Shantung political rivalry and the "lewdness" of Empress Wu while providing insight into new ones such as the force of Buddhist legitimation. And its deficiencies, perhaps, will identify those many areas in which additional research would be fruitful.

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TERMINOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Usage in text and notes conforms in general to that of the MLA Style Sheet, with modifications based upon the Journal of Asian Studies Style Sheet. The romanization of terms in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean follows the recommendations of the latter, while Sanskrit transcriptions are based upon A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms by W. E. Soothill and L. Hodus. T'ang provinces are hyphenated, while the familiar, unhyphenated form appears occasionally as a convenient regional description. Dates, where they contain the name of a month, have been converted to the Western calendar on the basis of Tōdai no Koyomi by Hiraoka Takeo. A distinction is made between the "régime" and the "reign" of the Empress Wu, the latter used only to refer to the period 690-705 a.d.

Standard and frequently-encountered works of reference are referred to as follows:

BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
CTS	Chiu T'ang-shu
CTShih	Ch'uan T'ang-shih
CTW	Ch'üan T'ang-wen
CYYY	Kuo-li chung-yang yen-chiu yüan li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu so chi-k'an
HTS	Hsin T'ang-shu
JAS	Journal of Asian Studies

SKSC	Sung kao-seng-chuan
SPPY	Ssu-pu pei-yao
TCTC	Tzu-chih t'ung-chien
TD	Taishō Daizō kyō
TFYK	Ts'e-fu yüan-kuei
THY	T'ang hui-yao
TLSI	T'ang lü shu-i
TT	T'ung-tien
TTLT	Ta T'ang liu-tien
WHTK	Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao
WYYH	Wen-yüan ying-hua

In an attempt to standardize references, editions with Western pagination are used wherever possible in the notes.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATIONS

In the history of imperial China, the T'ang empress Wu Tse-t'ien occupies a unique place. For almost half a century she enjoyed supreme power: first in partnership with T'ang Kao-tsung, a ruler usually considered weak and ineffectual, later as de facto regent for her youngest son, and finally, from 690 to 705 a.d., as China's sole female emperor.[1] Her rise from the obscurity of T'ai-tsung's harem was dramatic, and her pursuit of power ruthless. Her political policies were controversial and her life-style flamboyant. For these reasons, novelists and playwrights have found in her career a frequent source of inspiration.[2]

For historians too, she has been a popular subject and few figures of her era have been so often or so passionately discussed. Judgments of her place in history, both by traditional and modern historians, have been diverse and to the present day scholars in China continue to debate her merits.[3] It is somewhat surprising, in view of their volume, that traditional studies of the Empress represent a debate of rather narrow parameters, and reduced to their basics, restrict themselves generally to two questions. Was the Empress Wu a legitimate emperor, and in personal terms, was she a good or a bad ruler? The controversy is framed in this manner, of course, because of the moralistic and didactic bias of Confucian historiography,[4] and before

turning to our own examination of her career, we might offer a short survey of the earlier views to isolate the grounds of controversy and identify some of the problems with which we shall later deal.

Turning first to the question of the Empress' legitimacy, we might begin by noticing that theoretical analyses of the nature of legitimate authority are of relatively recent vintage, and that while social scientists like David Easton have made useful contributions to our conceptual understanding, the original formulations of Max Weber have stood up remarkably well.[5] Weber's suggestion that there exist three pure types of legitimate authority--the traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic,[6] is one we shall discuss later in some detail, and shall here remark only that it was the first type which constituted the great barrier to the legitimation of the Empress. Secondly, we must bear in mind the distinction between claims to legitimacy and their acceptance--the belief of subjects that a particular individual or social order is legitimate.[7] For the historian, this distinction is never an easy one, since sources are seldom of such psychological depth that he can pass judgment on something so elusive as the reality of belief, and in the seventh century where the vast majority of the Empress Wu's constituency is wholly inarticulate, definitive statements are best avoided. What we can say with some certainty, however, is that in her lifetime, the articulate among her subjects acted as if her legitimation were valid and that after her death, attempts made to deprive her of that status in official

historiography met only with limited success.

For both these statements, evidence is so full that only a few examples need be raised. From the very beginning of the Chou, for instance, officials at all levels accorded the Empress the proper forms of address and homage, and in contrast to their counterparts under Wang Mang, seem to have carried out her orders without question. There was no protest, as far as we can tell, when she performed such hallowed imperial ceremonies as the feng and shan,[8] and even those anxious for a T'ang restoration seem to have recognized the present legitimacy of the Empress. In 702, for instance, we find a scholar of this persuasion memorializing: "I have heard that the Empire is the Empire of [T'ang] Kao-tsu and T'ai-tsung. Although Your Majesty (pi-hsia) occupies [the position of] rightful ruler (cheng-t'ung), certainly you depend on the old foundations of the T'ang clan. . . ."[9]

Now in view of the coercive power at the Empress' command, we might be inclined to suggest an element of dissimulation in this choice of terminology, but arguing against it is the posture of her successor, her son Chung-tsung. At the T'ang restoration in early 705, he not only accorded her the honorific "emperor" (Tse-t'ien ta-sheng huang-ti),[10] but in his edict of accession said:

> . . . The emperor Tse-t'ien ta-sheng is of real intelligence, perfect virtue and deep wisdom. In response to the needs of the time, her excellent plans of October 16, 690,[11] initiated the grand design of perfect unity. Moving the jade seal, she destroyed the avaricious and conferring the golden halberd, she killed the immoderate. She received the sign of the Lo River [on which was] written she must

[follow] the calendar of Hao Hsi.[12] She cared tenderly for those of virtue among the people and together they obtained humanity and long life. Finally, she embraced closely the search for the Tao and fixed her thoughts on wu-wei, enduring a life of toil for the sake of the imperial throne (ta-pao). Then she "restored it respectfully to the intelligent prince." . . . She made offering at the ancestral temple of Kao-tsu and respected the altars of T'ai-tsung, not disregarding the old things. . . .[13]

In this way, Chung-tsung set the "official line" on the usurpation, not only justifying his mother's legitimation but offering imperial recognition of the fact that a woman had been de facto and de jure emperor. His description of the legitimation process is a most instructive one, and we shall have occasion to refer to it in a subsequent chapter.

At the restoration, of course, an element of coercion remained in that Wu Tse-t'ien was still alive and political control was vested firmly in the hands of her nephew, San-ssu, and the Empress Wei. Similarly, the next ruler, her last son Jui-tsung, was much under the influence of his sister T'ai-p'ing, so that the attitude of Hsüan-tsung is therefore a much better indicator of how history would view the legitimation of his grandmother. While he seems to have made no statement on the matter, the fact that in 716 he accepted her Veritable Records along with those of Chung-tsung and Jui-tsung,[14] suggests that he was willing to see her as emperor even though she had herself renounced the title on her deathbed.[15] Because the Veritable Records or shih-lu formed the principal source for the national history (kuo-shih), it seemed her legitimacy was secure.

In 780, however, the first voice to raise officially the question of Tse-t'ien's usurpation appeared in Shen Chi-ch'i, an official of the History Office, who complained in a lengthy memorial that Wu Ching had accorded to her annals (pen-chi) in the national history.[16] Basing his argument on the Confucian principle of the rectification of names (cheng-ming), he contended that she was a usurper, and her position false (chia) rather than legal (cheng). Since the Mandate of Heaven had not changed (t'ien-ming wei-k'ai) with the deposition of Chung-tsung in 684, the acts of the "empress-dowager" should be placed in his annals, and even though he did not himself participate in government, his whereabouts should head each yearly entry. Te-tsung rejected his advice but according to the T'ang hui-yao, historians of the time praised it.[17]

This seems to have ended the debate in the T'ang and when the official dynastic history was completed in 945, the Empress Wu was duly given annals and in them, referred to as shang or emperor.[18] There exists a certain ambiguity, however, in that the annals are still called those of an empress (huang-hou), a phenomenon duly noted by the compilers of the New T'ang History in 1060.[19] Their attitude is one we can judge with certainty not only in the finished work, but also in a separate volume by Lü Hsia-ching, the T'ang-shu chih-pi,[20] which outlines the principles on which the revision of the old History was based. In it, we find direct criticism of the practice of according annals to empresses and even of including their actions in those of husbands or sons.[21] The Chih-pi does not

list Tse-t'ien among the twenty T'ang emperors, but in the very next passage, which lists the number of chief ministers in each reign, we find that Wu-hou had sixty-eight tsai-hsiang.[22] In this, we confront the historian's dilemma: if Tse-t'ien were not a legitimate ruler, how could the events of her period of actual power be recounted consistently in the chronicle-style of history which was the set form of official historiography? Ou-yang Hsiu in the HTS, makes the uneasy compromise of according her both annals and a biography (lieh-chuan), remarking in the latter that she "styled herself" emperor.[23] Only with Ssu-ma Kuang's Comprehensive Mirror and the several influential if less "official" works based upon it, do we find a clear position. To Kuang, Wu Tse-t'ien was empress-dowager from 683 until her death.[24]

In the general perception, it was ultimately this latter view which prevailed, and particularly as Chu Hsi's Tzu-chih t'ung-chien kang-mu became the most widely-used of historical textbooks, Wu Tse-t'ien became simply a usurping empress presiding over an illegitimate regime.[25] By this time, historians were also turning their attention to other facets of the Empress and her rule, and once again because of the didactic function of history, the central question was that of "praise-and-blame." The striking feature of the Chou usurpation, and what made it wholly unprecedented, was of course, the fact that it had been effected by a woman, and in order to understand better the common tendency of Confucian scholarship to darken the reputation of the Empress, we might survey

briefly the evolution of the traditional prohibition of female influence in government.

The origins of China's unwritten Salic principle are obscure but of great age. In spite of the impressive body of evidence which suggests that China's earliest society was matrilinear and perhaps matriarchal, and in spite of the fact that in her mythological tradition one of the Three Rulers (san-huang) was female,[26] the bias against women appears in the earliest works of what was to become the canonical tradition. "The hen does not announce the morning," says the Shu-ching, "the crowing of a hen in the morning indicates the subversion of the family."[27] The Book of Odes contains a number of songs suggestive of similar attitudes, and we might quote the following:

A clever man builds strong ramparts,
A clever woman overthrows them.
Beautiful is the clever wife,
But her heart as cruel as that of the owl.
Women with long tongues
Are harbingers of evil,
Disasters are not sent down from Heaven--
They originate in wives.
These two can neither be taught nor led,
Wives and eunuchs.
When they start slandering people,
At first the ruler does not hide them.
He even says? "They can go nowhere,
What evil could they do?"
But they are like merchants selling at triple profit.
All those wiles are known to the wise.
They do not let wives meddle in public affairs,
And keep them to their spinning and weaving.[28]

It was, of course, because these writings were associated with Confucius, who himself declined to associate with "women and inferior persons,"[29] that the bias gained increasing strength, and until the early Han informal prohibition

seemed sufficient to keep women out of politics. The virtual usurpation of the Empress Lü from about 187 B.C. therefore confronted commentators with an unprecedented situation and the Han historians had to invent the phrase "appear in Court and pronounce decrees" (lin-ch'ao ch'eng-chih) to deal with it.[30] The phrase was to be used of at least eight dowagers in the Han,[31] and so pronounced and deplorable was female influence in the period that later commentators found it a principal cause of the dynasty's fall,[32] and by 222 A.D., Wei Wen-ti issued a formal decree that women were forbidden to involve themselves in politics.[33] The subsequent period of disunion saw no repetition of formal prohibitions, but the growth rather of customary recognition that in certain closely-defined "emergency" situations, empresses or empress-dowagers might exercise a temporary regency.[34] Both in North and South, however, we find instances of women who exceeded the definition of their role, and from the Sui-T'ang re-unification can trace a determination that such breaches of Confucian tradition not recur. The T'ang attitude is well expressed by Wei Cheng and his colleagues in a Sui-shu passage which also condemns the disharmony in the family lives of the Sui rulers:

> . . . In the Chin and Sung, a great number [of women] all gained their position by [imperial] favour and their rise was not due to virtue. Soon after, [their] conduct became corrupt and none observed li and i. By [women who were like] birds which devour their parents, [dynasties] were destroyed and did not return. Later examples are numerous. . . . Thus, we record the biographies of empresses to hand down a warning to the future. . . .[35]

Even from this briefest of surveys, it should be

apparent that by the T'ang the conviction that female non-interference in politics was a desirable feature of the natural order was a well established one. The first T'ang empresses, although of "barbarian" extraction and therefore accustomed to a relatively active life,[36] were models of compliance and restraint, and in the context of Confucian historiography, Wu Tse-t'ien was bound to suffer in comparison. The CTS therefore praises the virtues of T'ai-tsung's empress while comparing the evil of Wu to that of a viper,[37] and the HTS, though admitting that Wu was far superior to her successor, the Empress Wei, still insists that both women serve as a warning to future rulers.[38]

It is difficult to say, as we read the traditional commentators, whether their hostility to Wu Tse-t'ien derives more from the fact that she was a usurper or a woman, and perhaps the question is too academic to merit discussion. What we must realize is that her sins were seen as those against a tradition, an order, an entire way of life, and for that reason, her critics speak from a loyalty of their own. We see this even in the lifetime of the Empress, with the first condemnation, an eloquent indictment written as a manifesto for the rebellion of 684. In it, Lo Pin-wang[39] charges:

> The woman Wu who has falsely usurped the throne, is by nature obdurate and unyielding, by origin, truly obscure. Formerly, she was among the lower ranks of T'ai-tsung's servants and served him by changing his clothes. When she reached maturity, she brought disorder to the palace of the Crown Prince . . . she usurped the pheasant regalia of Empress and entrapped our ruler in incest.
>
> Then, with a heart like a serpent and a nature like that of a wolf, she favoured evil sycophants and destroyed

> good and loyal officials. She killed her sister, butchered her elder brothers, murdered the ruler, poisoned her mother. She is hated by gods and men alike. . . .[40]

As we shall see, a number of these allegations were to find their way into later accounts, but what we wish to notice here is the reaction of the Confucian mind against a woman who had betrayed not only such cardinal virtues as humanity and wifely submission, but in so doing had challenged an ancient tradition which guaranteed worldly harmony and gave both livelihood and self-respect to the Confucian scholar-official. This class, with its monopoly on the writing of history, was almost bound to emphasize the ruthless and unconventional aspects of the Empress' success, her "heart like a serpent and nature like a wolf," in order to defend the integrity of the state system.

This is the most basic explanation for the form taken by historical criticism, and it is consistently applicable down to the present century. In many works, of course, the "blame" is balanced by some degree of praise, and in the CTS, HTS, and TCTC,we find the historian looking favourably upon the Empress in her decisiveness and ability to accept remonstrance, her veneration of upright men, her final settlement of the succession on the Li clan, and the control she exercised over her family, her favourites, and her "evil" officials.[41] The overall judgment, however, remains negative and many scholars representative of their age--Yüan Shu and Chu Hsi, Wang Fu-chih and Fang Hsiao-ju, as well as such prolific and perceptive Ch'ing essayists like Chao I and Wang Ming-sheng, have ensured

that unfavourable opinion prevailed.[42] The rise of the Empress-dowager Tz'u Hsi in the latter part of the nineteenth century brought inevitable comparison with Wu Tse-t'ien, and her inability to arrest dynastic decline must have validated in some minds at least, the old strictures against women in power.

Prior to 1911, the Empress Wu thus found few admirers, and although we can identify among them at least one scholar of stature in most periods,[43] it was not until the new intellectual climate of the twentieth century that revisionist views began to appear. Marxist historians have been most active in her rehabilitation, but well before 1949, the notable studies of Ch'en Yin-k'o were finding new social significance in the regime of the Empress Wu, and in one article in particular, he attacked several of the old stereotypes, including that of her lewdness by suggesting that as a female emperor she was perfectly entitled to a male harem![44]

For Marxist historians, at least prior to the Cultural Revolution, the Empress Wu was a heroine, champion of the masses in the historic class struggle against the aristocracy and great landlords. Two important authors, Ts'en Chung-mien and Lü Ssu-mien are not persuaded that her achievements outweigh her brutality and other "feudal" characteristics,[45] but theirs is the minority view. The authors of three of the most important textbook surveys of Chinese history all portray her in favourable light, seeing her in advance of her time in attacking the privileged classes, elevating the position

of women, and fostering the examination system and the culture of her people.[46] Other academic and cultural leaders in China have echoed these views, and because names like Kuo Mo-jo, Yang Chih-chiu and Wu Han were found among them,[47] the rehabilitation of Wu Tse-t'ien was rapid.

At the end of the 1950s, however, a wide-ranging debate on the Empress broke out. Arising principally out of an article by Wu Tse,[48] it was to last for several years and was to develop the interpretation considered standard until the Cultural Revolution. Professor Wu's basic point at the time was that a number of previous works had failed to stress adequately the class-struggle of their period, and to show that the masses, not the ruling classes, are the motor force of history. At the same time, there was failure to recognize that the influence of an individual is not incompatible with historical materialism, and the Empress Wu is a case in point. The lü-ling system of the Sui and T'ang, he goes on to suggest, was at base a mechanism of control designed to ensure the continuing power of the aristocratic-landlord class. T'ai-tsung began to weaken their power, but it was only with the advent of the Empress Wu, whose background had made her more class-conscious than her predecessor, that an alliance was effected among merchant, small landlord and bureaucrat to challenge them. By fostering their rise and simultaneously attacking the old ruling class in other ways, she broke their power even before the declaration of the Chou at which time conflict became internalized within the ruling class. In the Chou, the Empress

remained representative of the class she had fostered, but as it became increasingly corrupt, the remnants of the T'ang family were able to ally themselves with small and middle landlords to bring about a restoration. Throughout the process, the Empress Wu carried out many policies to benefit the peasant, but did so not out of altruism, but because of the exigencies of class struggle. She was a great ruler, but nonetheless, a "feudal" emperor.

This very interesting analysis is the last detailed study of the Empress prior to the Cultural Revolution, and in the present climate of ideological uncertainty, the debate has yet to be resumed. It is interesting to note that only in the present century have historians begun to transcend the questions raised in Confucian historiography, and as the re-evaluation progresses, especially in social history, the regime of the Empress Wu is coming to be seen as a period of rather marked transition. The process of re-appraisal, however, is a lengthy one, and as three fairly recent non-Marxist book-length studies[49] of her period show, the old stereotypes of the Empress are durable, and her life is by itself so fascinating that historical change is still rather poorly documented in comparison. It is to be hoped that the following study will not neglect the old questions, but will also shed some light on the position of the Empress Wu, on how she gained it and how she used it. In addition, we hope to examine her policies, particularly those which relate to social change, politics and the examination system, Buddhism, and China's external

affairs in the seventh century. Finally, we shall attempt to show more clearly the origins of the Empress Wu's historical reputation, and in so doing, draw a more accurate picture of one of China's most controversial rulers.

NOTES

(Chapter I)

[1]According to some classifications of Chinese mythology the sister of Fu Hsi, called Nü Kua was numbered among the san-huang of antiquity and so might be considered China's first female ruler. See Ch'en Teng-yüan, Kuo-shih chiu-wen, vol. I (Taipei, 1970), pp. 44-47. The chronology of the reign of the Empress Wu is subject to some dispute, but by correlating the dates of the earliest sources given in the Tzu-chih t'ung-chien k'ao-i, we might suggest that her elevation occurred on November 24, 655, that the Chou dynasty was proclaimed on October 16, 690, and that the T'ang restoration occurred on February 23, 705.

On the titles of the Empress see THY 3, pp. 23-4, CTS 6:3077:1, HTS 76:3868:2.

[2]From a fairly extensive bibliography, one of the best-known novels is the Sui-T'ang Yen-i, attributed to Lo Kuan-chung in the fifteenth century and revised in a hundred hui by Ch'u Jen-huo, probably about 1681. The chapters pertaining to the Empress begin at seventy. An even more famous example is the Ch'ing work, Ching-hua-yüan by Li Ju-chen.

A large erotic literature concerned with the scandals of the Chou court and the so-called "lovers" of the Empress also exists, many of these works transmitted only in Japan. Prof. H. Franke of München has recently called to my attention two manuscripts found in the Harvard Yenching Library, the short novel Ju-i-chün chuan (anon.), and the Seng Huai-i chapter of the Seng-ni nieh-hai, sometimes attributed to the painter T'ang Yin. A long novel called Wu-hen-t'ien and noted by Sun K'ai-ti, Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu (Peking, 1957), p. 151, does not seem to be pornographic.

A number of modern works are rather sensationalistic. Among these are the T'ang-kung erh-shih-ch'ao yen-i by Hsü Hsiao-t'ien (Shanghai, 1928), and the Li-tai ti-wang hsing-ai mi-wen published in Taiwan in 1959 under the pseudonym Ling-yü Kuo-ch'u. Some Japanese have been similarly impressed by this aspect of the Empress' life, and a representative product is Hayashi Fusao, Chugoku senya ichiya, 2 vols. (Tokyo, no date).

In recent drama, Kuo Mo-jo's four-act play Wu Tse-t'ien which was first performed in 1959 is well-known, and of

even greater notoriety in China is T'ien Han's Hsieh Yao-huan, first published in Chü-pen, July-August, 1961. Like Wu Han's "Hai Jui Dismissed from Office," this latter is an attempt to use an historical figure to criticize the Maoist regime, and it was suppressed in the Cultural Revolution. In recent days, the career of the Empress has once again been widely discussed because of attempts to compare her with Chairman Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing. On this question see Chung-kuo tsa-chih, July, 1975, pp. 39-44.

In the English language, Lin Yutang has published an imaginative novel called Lady Wu and the late R. van Gulik's successful series of Judge Dee mysteries is based upon Ti Jen-chieh, the most famous of the great ministers of the Empress Wu.

[3]For a summary of the debate in the 1950's, see Feuerwerker, A. (ed.), History in Communist China (M.I.T. Press, 1968), pp. 132-135. A more detailed discussion is Tonami Mamoru, "Zui no boetsu to Tosho no shujitsuho," Toyo gakuho, 37 (March, 1966).

[4]See Gardner, C.S., Chinese Traditional Historiography, 2nd ed. (Harvard U.P., 1961), and various of the studies in Beasley, W.G. and E.G. Pulleyblank (eds.), Historians of China and Japan (Oxford U.P., 1961).

[5]On Easton's views, see A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York, 1965), particularly pp. 286-305, and for Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York, 1957).

[6]Weber, op. cit., pp. 326-7.

[7]For this and some of the following perceptions, I am indebted to an unpublished manuscript by Anne Thurston, "Authority, Legitimacy and Power: A Reformulation".

[8]In the year 696. See THY 7, p. 104, CTS 6:3076:2, HTS 4:3642:1.

[9]TCTC 207, p. 6559.

[10]CTS 6:3077:1, HTS 4:3642:4.

[11]I am uncertain here of my translation of the phrase ch'ü-chiu chih ying-mo.

[12]The reference is obscure. The phrase runs tang hao-hsi chih li-shu.

[13]TTCLC 2:3b, CTW 17:10b. At a recent ACLS conference at Asilomar, Calif. in June, 1975, Prof. A.F. Wright

suggested that it was unlikely Chung-tsung himself was responsible for this decree. While I tend to agree, I believe that its very promulgation is the important point since it portrayed Tse-t'ien as a legitimate ruler rather than as a usurper.

[14] THY 63, p. 1094.

[15] TCTC 208, p. 6596.

[16] THY 63, pp. 1095-97.

[17] Ibid.

[18] CTS 6:3075:3.

[19] HTS 4:3643:3. On the compilation of the T'ang histories see des Rotours, R., Le traité des examens (Paris, 1932), pp. 56-71.

[20] See des Rotours, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

[21] TSCP 3:6b-7a and 2:23ab respectively.

[22] TSCP 4:1ab.

[23] HTS 76:3867:3.

[24] Kuang never refers to her as anything but t'ai-hou, reporting the usurpation of 690 in the following terms: "The Empress-dowager accepted (k'o) [the title] huang-ti and the request of the ministers [to establish the Chou]." TCTC 204, p. 6467.

[25] For Chu Hsi's listing of the dynasties he considered to be legitimate, see his introduction to the Chih-yüan k'ao-ting t'ung-chien kang-mu. The kang-mu follows the suggestion of Shen Chi-ch'i, and considering Chung-tsung to be the legitimate monarch, lists his whereabouts in each year of the Chou before outlining the history of the period.

[26] See Note 1 to this chapter. Also Yang Lien-sheng Excursions in Sinology (Harvard U.P., 1969), pp. 27-44. This article, entitled "Female Rulers in Ancient China", appeared originally HJAS 23 (1960-61), pp. 47-61.

[27] From the "Speech at Mu". See Legge, The Shoo King, pp. 302-303.

[28] Kalgren, B. (trans.), The Book of Odes (Stockholm, 1950), number 264.

[29]Analects, XVII:25. Legge, in the Four Books, uses the translation "girls and servants" for nü-tzu yü hsiao-jen.

[30]On this term see Pan Ku, The History of the Former Han Dynasty (H.H. Dubs trans.), (Baltimore, 1938), vol. 1, p. 192, note 1.

[31]Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, Han Social Structure (Seattle, 1971), pp. 73-74.

[32]See for instance, Chao I, Nien-erh-shih cha-chi, 2 vols. (Taipei, 1961), pp. 40 and 57.

[33]San-kuo chih, Wei-chih 2:0924:2. The edict uses the term fu-cheng, "aid in government".

[34]Yang, op. cit., p. 50ff. The cases in which female regency seem to have been accepted followed closely the Han precedents: the extreme youth of the heir, the illness or inability of a reigning emperor to manage government, and the issue of an edict of permission from a dying emperor.

[35]SS 36:2457:3.

[36]Although most studies contrasting the northern and southern dynasties remark on the relative freedom of women in the north, a monograph on the subject would be most welcome. Teng Ssu-yu, in Family Instructions for the Yen Clan (Leiden, 1966), p. 19, translates an observation of the late sixth century: "In the city of Yeh it was the custom for women to handle all family affairs, to demand justice and straighten out legal disputes, to make calls and curry favour with the powerful. They filled the streets with their carriages . . . begged official posts for their sons and made complaints about injustice done to their husbands. Were these customs handed down from the T'o-pa Wei dynasty?" The wife of Sui Wen-ti (SS 36:2457:2), née Tu-ku, was perhaps typical of this sort of woman and was considered by contemporaries to be almost a partner in her husband's government. On the first T'ang empresses, see CTS 51:3278:4ff.

[37]CTS 52:3283:2.

[38]HTS 76:3869:2.

[39]Biography CTS 190shang:3581:1, HTS 201:4100:3.

[40]The full text is found WYYH 646:11b-12b and CTW 199: 1a-2a.

[41]See, for instance, CTS 6:3077:1 and notice the

examples from all three works cited in Appendix One. Several others are pointed out in the text.

[42]Yüan Shu entitles chüan 30 of his T'ung-chien chi-shih pen-mo "The Calamity of the Empresses Wu and Wei", and as we have earlier noted, Chu Hsi portrays her as an ambitious and unscrupulous usurper in the Kang-mu. Wang Fu-chih, in Tu t'ung-chien lun, chüan 21, details the weakness and stupidity of Kao-tsung, impugns the motives of the Empress Wu in all her acts, expresses outrage at her executions, and even refuses to credit her with such well-known innovations as the Palace Examination. Fang Hsiao-ju, in what seems to be the prevailing view in the Ming, exhibits a similar attitude in such works as his Hsun-chih chai-chi. See chüan 5.

Chao I seems to hold a fairly balanced view of the Empress both in his Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao (chüan 41), and in his Nien-erh-shih cha-chi where chüan 19 contains two essays, one condemning her excessive punishments and the other praising her ability to accept remonstrance and to use the best possible men in her administration. In chüan 3 of the latter work, however, he compares her to the Han Empress Lü and states unequivocally that from antiquity, her evil was unparalleled. Wang Ming-sheng, in the Shih-ch'i-chih shang-chiao reflects the hostile attitude of the T'ang Histories.

[43]In her own time, of course, the Empress did not lack defenders and talented literati like Li Chiao, Ch'en Tzu-ang and the poet Shen Ch'uan-ch'i turned their considerable skills to the praising of her reign. Generally, however, these were conventional, commissioned works and of little historiographical importance.

The first important defense of the Empress as a ruler came from Lu Chih, one of the most important of T'ang Te-tsung's ministers. See CTS 139:3453:4 and HTS 157:4015:3. His political writings are favourable to her, admiring her skillful use of officials and her ability to hold the support of the people. See, for instance, Lu-hsüan-kung ch'üan-chi, chüan 7 (Ch'ing hsü t'ai-sheng ch'ang-kuan chü-chien shu-li chuang). Another noted T'ang figure, Li Chiang (CTS 164: 3056:1 and HTS 152:4007:3) holds a similar view. See Li hsiang-kuo lun-shih chi, chüan 299 hsia.

In the Sung, the only figure of note who seems to have been favourably disposed was Hung Mai whose biography is to be found Sung-shih 373:5460:3. His writings are of great range and make frequent reference to the Empress Wu and developments of her reign. While he censures her for the rise of supernumerary officials (Jung-ch'i san-pi, chüan 7), his wider view as stated in the Jung-ch'i hsü-pi is that as a ruler, she was the equal of Han Wu-ti.

The Ming scholar, Li [illegible] whose career is outlined Ming-shih 221:7622:3, suggested that no recent ruler had measured up to

her standard in the ability either to know men or to value talent. He praised the internal peace of her reign and considered her generally a model for subsequent ages. See Li Chih ts'ung-shu, chüan 48.

[44]Ch'en Yin-k'o, "Chi T'ang-tai chih Li, Wu, Wei, Yang hun-yin chi-t'uan", Li-shih yen-chiu, 1 (1954), pp. 33-51.

[45]See Ts'en Chung-mien, Sui T'ang shih, 2 vols. (Peking, 1957), Chap. 13, and Lü Ssu-mien, Sui T'ang Wu-tai shih, 2 vols. (Shanghai, 1959), vol. I, pp. 126-49.

[46]These works are: Lü Chen-yü, Chien-ming Chung-kuo t'ung-shih (Peking, 1959), Ch'ien Po-tsan et al., Chung-kuo li-shih kai-yao (Peking, 1956), and Shang Yüeh et al., Chung-kuo li-shih kang-yao (Peking, 1954), especially pp. 128-132. Both Professors Lü and Ch'ien have written separate articles on the Empress.

[47]See the fifty-page Appendix to Kuo Mo-jo's Wu Tse-t'ien in the second edition of 1963 which introduces a good deal of new information and concludes that the Empress' reign was perhaps the high-point of the T'ang and the keystone of the dynasty's greatness. Yang Chih-chiu, Sui T'ang Wu-tai shih kang-yao (Peking, 1957), resumes favourable comment on the Empress from Chao I onwards and portrays the Chou as an era of great prosperity and rapid development in agriculture, handicrafts, textiles and water control. Wu Han, a central figure early in the Cultural Revolution, wrote about the Empress in 1959. His paper, reproduced in his Teng-hsia chi, p. 140ff. is a well-argued if poorly-documented apology dismissing the standard charges against her as little more than the bias of traditional historiography, and praising the use of her reign by influential scholars like Fan Wen-lan to discredit the Kuomintang. The reference here is to Fan's pioneering survey, Chung-kuo t'ung-shih chien-pien, published in Yenan in 1941.

[48]Wu Tse, "Kuan-yü Wu Tse-t'ien tsai li-shih chung ti tso-yung wen-t'i", Wen-ying pao, Dec. 26, 1959, and "Lun T'ang-tai ch'ien-ch'i t'ung-chih chieh-chi nei-pu tou-cheng yü chieh-chi tou-cheng chi", ["A discussion of class struggle and class struggle within the ruling class in the early T'ang"], Hsin chien she, Jan., 1962.

[49]These are: The Empress Wu by C.P. Fitzgerald (London, 1956); Wu Tse-t'ien by Li T'ang (Hong Kong, 1961); Sokuten Bukō by Toyama Gunji (Tokyo, 1966).

CHAPTER TWO

SOURCES FOR THE LIFE AND THE CAREER OF WU TSE-T'IEN

The chief primary sources for the life of the Empress Wu are her annals in the two dynastic histories of the T'ang, her HTS biography, and the numerous references to her in Ssu-ma Kuang's Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government.[1] In several of the large official compilations of later ages, like the Ts'e-fu yüan-kuei,[2] there are to be found several allusions and fragments of documents not elsewhere preserved, and material of this sort is also to be found in some of the private essays and anecdotes of the T'ang.[3] The sizable corpus of writings attributed to the Empress herself consists mainly of edicts and other official documents, but some of her poetry and ceremonial verses are extant, and even though commentators are reluctant to acknowledge her direct authorship, some seem fairly personal in tone.[4] In addition, the biographical sections of the dynastic histories record many incidents concerning her and conversations with her, so that we are able to assemble a fuller sketch of her character and her life than is possible in the case of most of her contemporaries.

If the sources are relatively extensive, there are compensating drawbacks. Wu did not become empress until she reached her late twenties and records of her life to that time are extremely scarce. More importantly in the present context, the sources which tell of her rise and outline her subsequent

career are "official" in nature, and thus their reliability is open to question. This problem arises from two causes, one of which we have mentioned earlier. The Confucian literatus, even in his role as objective historian, was bound by his duty to provide lessons for the future, and his treatment of a woman ruler who was also a usurper inevitably reflected a certain disapproval. A second cause is the fact that the Empress Wu shared with other rulers like her predecessor, T'ai-tsung, a concern with historical reputation, and like him, was not above deliberate falsification of the record.[5] In her case, we might point to the dubious assertions of the edict which raised her to the rank of Kao-tsung's empress,[6] and later, to the appointment of "tame" historians to oversee the writing of history in her own time.[7]

In order to understand the degree to which these influences occur in our major sources, the dynastic histories and the Mirror, we might begin by trying to discover the origin of their information. Appendix One, which follows a methodology developed by E. G. Pulleyblank,[8] compares their accounts of five incidents and reveals not only their consistent, if small, difference of attitude toward the Empress, but also establishes that the few incidents recorded about her early life can be traced in most cases to the veritable records (shih-lu) of herself and her husband.

The question of the composition of these records in the early T'ang is a complicated one because of the disagreements in bibliographic sources,[9] and although we are certain that

Ssu-ma Kuang used the thirty-chüan version of the Tse-t'ien shih-lu presented to the throne by Liu Chih-chi and Wu Ching in 716,[10] we find two earlier versions mentioned in other sources. The first of these was by Tsung Ch'in-k'o, who, as a relative of the Empress and a supporter of her usurpation,[13] might be expected to produce a work favourable to her. Of course, we know nothing of the scope and content of Tsung's work and whether or not it treated the controversial events of 684-690, but we might reasonably assume it formed the basis of the slightly-expanded version presented to the throne in 706.[14] The supervisor of this compilation was Wu San-ssu, cadet nephew of the Empress, and although the position of supervisor was often a nominal one, he seems to have taken an active part in the work since Liu Chih-chi and Wu Ching, who worked under him on an earlier national history, both had occasion to complain of his interference.[15] In the production of his aunt's records, he may well have exercised a good deal of editorial discretion and it was perhaps for this reason that Hsüan-tsung had them revised. Neither Liu Chih-chi nor Wu Ching were admirers of the Empress, but judging from the fragments of their shih-lu preserved in Ssu-ma Kuang's K'ao-i, they treated her with objectivity.[16]

In 716, the Tse-t'ien shih-lu were presented together with those of Jui-tsung and Chung-tsung and it is clear, therefore, that Liu and Wu were responsible for the final version of the veritable records for the period 684 to 713. The role of Empress Wu in government at this time was, of course, an overt

one, but prior to 684, contemporaries were less certain of her role and the degree of actual influence she had over her husband. Moreover, as we shall see, there were certain aspects of her background and rise that she might logically wish to conceal, among them her relatively obscure lineage, her concubinage to T'ai-tsung, the beginnings of her liaison with Kao-tsung, and the machinations by which she helped ruin her rival, the Empress Wang. Information on these matters would be found in the shih-lu of T'ai-tsung and Kao-tsung, and it is natural that she would attempt to exercise some control over their content, just as she tried to influence the historiography of the later period. Indications are that she was successful.

There is some disagreement about the compilation of T'ai-tsung's shih-lu, but an impressive body of evidence suggests that Hsü Ching-tsung[17] was a major, if not the principal contributor to them,[18] and Ssu-ma Kuang, for instance, refers to the version he used as the Hsü Ching-tsung T'ai-tsung shih-lu.[19] Hsü's name appears again in 659, as the compiler of a twenty-chüan shih-lu covering the period from T'ai-tsung's death to 658, and he may have supplemented this prior to his death in 672 since the CTS mentions a shih-lu in thirty chüan.[20] It seems unusual that a young emperor like Kao-tsung would have his shih-lu begun so early in his reign without some special reason, and the conjecture that the Empress Wu was the instigator is strengthened by two facts. In the first place, her open concern with how history would treat her rise and her role in her husband's reign was shown in the fact that the

final version of Kao-tsung's shih-lu, in a hundred chüan, was issued under her name.[21] Secondly, Hsü Ching-tsung was the most important of her close supporters.

Hsü, born in 592, was of southern origins, the son of a high Sui official killed by Yü-wen Hua-chi. He was a precocious scholar, one of the handful of men who passed the difficult hsiu-tsai examination in the Sui, where he first held office. After serving the rebel Li Mi, he switched his allegiance to the T'ang and joined the staff of T'ai-tsung who seems to have heard of his literary abilities. His career henceforth was a distinguished one, as he reached the presidency of the Board of Rites, and from 634 began to work on the national history and then on the composition of shih-lu. He twice suffered mild disgrace, once for a breach of propriety and once for his avarice when he married his daughter to a "barbarian" chieftain. It was just as he emerged from the second demotion that the issue arose of Wu's elevation to empress and by immediately espousing her cause, he won the gratitude of Kao-tsung and assured himself of a successful future. His relationship to the new empress was a close one, and it was he who undertook for her such delicate tasks as persuading Kao-tsung to elevate her son to Crown Prince and to exile or execute the chief ministers who had opposed her rise. From their fall, he became the paramount civil official of the realm, a status he did not relinquish until his retirement, and at his death in 672, Kao-tsung paid him the great honour of himself donning mourning clothes. Needless to say, his reputation in Confucian

historiography is an infamous one.

As an historian, he was an entrepreneur, and the opportunism and lack of scruple suggested by other aspects of his career, are confirmed by reliable sources which accuse him of falsifying the record on more than one occasion.[22] In 673, Kao-tsung found several blatant falsehoods in his account of T'ai-tsung and ordered them corrected,[23] but how far these corrections went, we can only guess. It is interesting to note that Ssu-ma Kuang is unable to date Wu's entrance into T'ai-tsung's harem since the event goes unrecorded in any source he considers reliable,[24] and for the same reason, confusion has long existed in such matters as the date of her birth, her supposed entry into a convent on T'ai-tsung's death, and the birthdates of her two eldest sons, one of whom may have been born to her elder sister. The existence of rumours about these things even in her own lifetime suggests how carefully they were obscured.

Later historians, from Liu Chih-chi onwards, have expressed scorn or puzzlement in regard to the historiography of the early T'ang,[25] and there is little doubt their attitude is justified. Particularly in the case of the Empress Wu, and because of her relationship with Hsü Ching-tsung, the dynastic historians have found it necessary to make compensation, and thus the authors of the CTS openly reject certain details of her father's career because of their conviction that Hsü exaggerated or falsified his achievements.[26]

The task of the modern historian is therefore not an

easy one, and he must attempt to distinguish the truth which lies between the operation of two opposing principles. The following chapter, which deals with the most controversial period of the Empress' life, seeks to identify the specific areas of historical uncertainty and to offer some conjecture at least on what the truth might have been.

NOTES

(Chapter II)

[1]CTS 6:3075:3, HTS 76:3871:1 and 4:3640:3. A good deal of information is also to be found in the annals of Kao-tsung, CTS 4:3070:4, and HTS 3:3638:3. Citations are to the K'ai-ming edition of 1935, and references take the form of chüan:page:page section, as above. References to the Mirror are from the Ku-chi ch'u-pan she edition (Peking, 1957) which intersperses the K'ao-i and the Hu San-hsing commentary in the text. Other editions noted in the bibliography have been used occasionally for textual verification.

[2]The principal compilations of the sort in addition to the Ts'e-fu yüan-kuei are the T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi and the T'ai-p'ing yü-lan. All date from the Sung and their composition is outlined by Kuo Pai-hung, in Sung ssu-ta-shu k'ao (Shanghai, 1940).

[3]The chief anecdotal sources used are:
(a) Ch'ao-yeh ch'ien-tsai by Chang Cho dating from the early eighth century.
(b) Feng-shih wen-chien chi by Feng Yen dating from about 800.
(c) Ta T'ang hsin-yü by Liu Su, composed 807.
(d) Liu pin-k'o hsi-huà lu by Wei Hsüan, composed 856.
(e) T'ang chih-yen by Wang Ting-pao, ca. 955.
(f) Nan-pu hsin-shu by Ch'ien I, composed between 1008-16.
(g) T'ang yü-lin by Wang Tang, ca. 1100.

Details on several of these works may be found in des Rotours, R. Le traité des examens (Paris, 1932).

[4]The writings of the Empress extant today constitute only a small proportion of those attributed to her in the various bibliographies. Her official writings are found in such works as the WYYH and TTCLC and are conveniently collected in CTW 95:4aff., T'ang-wen shih-i 8:19aff. and T'ang-wen hsü-shih 1:3bff. A number of her surviving poems are found in Ch'üan T'ang-shih 5:51bff.

The bibliographical sections of the HTS (chüan 57-60) list no fewer than twenty-three works issued under her name, and comprising in all almost 700 chüan. Among these were such large-scale compilations as the Veritable Records of Kao-tsung (Kao-tsung shih-lu), Collected Writings of the

ch'ui-kung Period (Ch'ui-kung chi) and Biographies of Eminent Women (Lieh-nü chüan) all of them a hundred chüan in length. Most commentators acknowledge that the majority of the works ascribed to the Empress were in fact composed by the so-called Northgate Scholars, but their scope and range is indicative of her demonstrated literary interests and also of her use of Confucianism for legitimizing purposes.

[5]On T'ai-tsung's attempts to manipulate the record, see Wechsler, H.J. Mirror to the Son of Heaven (Yale U.P., 1975), p. 19ff.

Empress Wu on several occasions revealed a concern with her place in history, for instance when she told Ti Jen-chieh that she wanted her own dynasty to enjoy a reputation equal to that of the Han. See CTS 89:3357:2. Conspicuous examples of her overt influence upon the historical process are cited throughout the text and both Wu Ching and Liu Chih-chi had occasion to complain of the low standard of historiography in her period of power. During the Chou, in 702 and 703, memorials from Liu Yün-chi and Chu Ching-tse emphasized the great importance of true records, obliquely criticizing the bias of contemporary compilations. On these cricisms, see CTS 190:3582:1, HTS 202:4101:1, and CTS 90:3353:3, HTS 115:3942:3 respectively. The memorials are abstracted THY 63, pp. 1100-1.

[6]CTW 11:25b. The edict comments on the prominence of the Wu clan and the "talent and conduct" of the Empress which led to her selection for the harem. Her behaviour in the palace is said to have won her renown, and contrary to all other evidence, she is said to have gotten along well with the other palace women. The edict further implies, by the use of the term hsien-tz'u (先意) that Wu served Kao-tsung's mother rather than his father and was bestowed upon him by his father (聖情). This was equivalent to making her empress (母政君). Needless to say, much of this was untrue.

[7]See text. E.G. Pulleyblank, in "The Tzyjyh Tongjiann Kaoyih and the Sources for the History of the Period 730-763", BSOAS 13 (1950), 448-73, outlines the compilation of the Veritable Records and National History of seventh and early eighth century, and identifies some of the figures involved.

[8]In The Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan (Oxford U.P., 1955), pp. 3-5 and Appendix I.

[9]See Wechsler, Mirror, pp. 24-27, and THY 63, p. 1094, and TFYK 554:11a.

[10]See, for instance, Appendix I (a) where the shih-lu identified is attributed to Wu Ching.

[11]Omitted in text.

[12]Omitted in text.

[13]On Tsung, see CTS 92:3365:4. He is said to be the inventor of the new characters the Empress promulgated shortly before her usurpation. His work was in eighteen chüan.

[14]THY 63, p. 1094, TFYK 554:17a. The HTS, the Shih-t'ung 12:30a, and the Ch'ung-wen tsung-mu chi-shih-lu all mention this work. It was in twenty chüan and a decade later was revised in thirty chüan by Wu Ching and Liu Chih-chi. According to the K'ao-i 8:16a, ta-ye 9, it was this revised version used by Ssu-ma Kuang.

[15]See THY 63, p. 1098, TFYK 556:17a. Liu, in his well-known letter of resignation (Shih-t'ung 20:10a-15b), complained that an official historian was for the most part compelled to follow the directions of his supervisor in what he wrote.

[16]On the historiographical standards of Liu Chih-chi see Beasley and Pulleyblank, Historians, pp. 135-36, and note, for instance, the k'ao-i notice for t'ien-shou, second month, TCTC 204, p. 6463, where the shih-lu posits a natural death for a minister said elsewhere to have been executed on the Empress' order.

[17]On Hsü, see CTS 82:3342:4 and HTS 223:4163:1.

[18]Wechsler, Mirror, p. 25n. See also Pulleyblank, "Kaoyih" for some brief remarks on the composition of T'ai-tsung's shih-lu. The CTS mentions shih-lu both of Kao-tsu and T'ai-tsung in 20 chüan authored by Fang Hsüan-ling, and a second shih-lu in 40 chüan for T'ai-tsung, authored by his brother-in-law Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi. For Kao-tsung, there are two listings; one in 30 chüan by Hsü Ching-tsung and one in 100 chüan under the name of Empress Wu.

The HTS notice offers more information, listing a Kao-tsu shih-lu by Ching Po (CTS 189:3576:2, HTS 198:4091:4) under Fang's supervision, and suggests that it was revised by Hsü Ching-tsung. Another work by Ching and supervised by Fang is the Chin-shang shih-lu which clearly refers to T'ai-tsung (THY 63, p. 1092). This seems to have been supplemented in 650 by Wu-chi's additional 20 chüan, becoming the Chen-kuan shih-lu in 40 chüan (THY, loc. cit. and TFYK 554:30a and 556:12a). The HTS is the only source to mention a 30-chüan Huang-ti shih-lu by Hsü Ching-tsung. This work seems to have been used by Ssu-ma Kuang (see next) and if so, it must have been used by the dynastic historians as well.

[19] K'ao-i 8:10b, ta-ye 12/12.

[20] See note 18.

[21] Note 18.

[22] See, in addition to his biographies mentioned in note 17, THY 64, pp. 1103-4, and Wechsler, Mirror, p. 25.

[23] THY 63, pp. 1092-3. Interestingly, Kao-tsung refers specifically to incidents in the National History prior to 649, strengthening our conjecture that Hsü Ching-tsung was largely responsible for our knowledge of the history of this period.

[24] See Appendix I.

[25] See, for instance, the remarks of Shen Chi-ch'i, a compiler of the National History in 780, THY 63, p. 1095ff.

[26] CTS 58:3296:1.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ORIGINS AND THE RISE OF WU TSE-T'IEN

The first problem to confront a biographer of the Empress Wu is the difficulty of determining the details of her family background and her early life. We have earlier alluded to the unreliability of the shih-lu for the reigns of T'ai-tsung and Kao-tsung, and have suggested that the national historians of the T'ang as well as the later dynastic historians, were suspicious of their sources and so tended to omit from their accounts any detail they regarded as flattering to the Empress and her family. As a result, primary source references are fewer than might otherwise be the case.

We have admitted, secondly, the justice of the historians' scepticism in view of the likelihood of falsification, but we should be aware at the same time, of the possibility of over-compensation on their part. For example, it is generally acknowledged that in order to bolster her legitimacy in the aristocratic climate of the early T'ang, Tse-t'ien took the not unusual step of falsifying her genealogy.[1] Several of her contemporaries succeeded in having their dubious lineages incorporated into the dynastic histories, but in her case, the biography of her father, Shih-huo, mentions not a single one of his ancestors even though, as we shall see, his father's official career in the Sui is attested by reliable sources.

The biography of Wu Shih-huo is, of course, our

standard account of the Empress Wu's background and is additionally, an instructive example of the historiographical processes we have been discussing. This is particularly clear when we compare it with a little-known source called the P'an-lung-t'ai pei, a commemorative inscription the Empress commissioned for her father in 699 A.D.[2]

The biography reads:

Wu Shih-huo was a man from Wen-shui in Ping-chou.[3] His household was a wealthy one and he was rather fond of social intercourse. When Kao-tsu first brought troops to Fen-chin, he stopped at his home and [Shih-huo] was thus privileged to make his acquaintance.[4] When Kao-tsu became T'ai-yüan liu-shou, he recruited [Shih-huo] as hsing-chun ssu-chi.[5] At the time, bandits and rebels rose as [numerous as] hornets and Shih-huo would secretly urge Kao-tsu to raise troops [and rebel against the Sui]. He [also] presented him with a book [of his own composition?] on military matters, together with a fu-jui.[6] Kao-tsu said to him, "Please say no more. Military books are forbidden articles, yet you still give one to me, [so] I well understand your meaning. Together we must certainly prosper."

When he was about to raise his righteous rebellion, Kao-tsu levied troops and sent Liu Hung-chi and Ch'ang-sun Hsun-te[7] to share the leadership [in this task]. Wang Wei and Kao Chun-ya[8] spoke secretly to Shih-huo saying, "Hung-chi and his men are all traitors to the Imperial Guard. This is a capital crime, [so] how can they lead troops? We want to imprison and investigate them." Shih-huo replied, "They are all representatives (k'o) of the Duke of T'ang. If you do so, great confusion will follow." Wei and his group therefore hesitated and did not act. The liu-shou ssu-ping, T'ien Te-p'ing[9] also wanted to encourage Wei and the others to make a judicial enquiry into the situation of the levy. Shih-huo said to him, "The troops they are recruiting will all be attached to the Duke of T'ang. Wang Wei, Kao Chun-ya and their group have no power of their own, [so] how can they do this?" Thus Te-p'ing desisted.

When the [T'ang] uprising began, Shih-huo was made ta-chiang-chün fu-chi-tsao.[10] He participated in taking the capital and for his merit [was rewarded with the titles] kuang-lu ta-fu and T'ai-yüan chün-kung.[11] Previously, when the rebellion was about to begin, Shih-huo was unable to predict the outcome. When the capital was taken, he claimed he had dreamed that Kao-tsu had entered the Western capital and [then] risen to be emperor. Kao-tsu [on hearing this] smiled at him saying, "You were connected with Wang Wei and

[still] were able to remonstrate and prevent [him from seizing] Hung-chi and the others. Your sincerity is worthy of record and so I rewarded your devotion. Now you see that the matter is concluded and so say this absurd thing to flatter me."

In the Wu-te period, [Shih-huo] was promoted successively to the post of kung-pu shang-shu and his enfeoffment was raised to Ying-kuo kung.[12] He also served as tu-tu of Li-chou and Ching-chou.[13] In the ninth year of chen-kuan [635], he died in office and was posthumously entitled li-pu shang-shu[14] with the temple-name of "Ting," "Constant.". . .[15]

To the casual reader, this account appears straightforward and relatively unbiased. The Empress Wu came from a wealthy clan, and was the daughter of a man who rose to prominence by early supporting Kao-tsu in his rebellion against the Sui. Seen within the context of T'ang biographical writing, however, the narrative is characterized by a certain implicit deprecation. Not a single one of Shih-huo's ancestors is mentioned, so that his lineage, it is implied, was undistinguished. He was wealthy. Was the source of his wealth the despised profession of commerce or is mention of the fact made because his clan had no other claim to renown? He participated at the fall of the Sui capital. Did he play no more substantial part than this in the T'ang foundation? He held posts up to the level of president of the Board of Works (kung-pu shang-shu), but did he do nothing worthy of record in them? Was he really the rather timid opportunist who seems to emerge from the anecdotes chosen to give flesh to the details of his career progress?

These are but some of the questions which might occur to one familiar with the official biographies of the period, and if their answers indicate an implied hostility, the reasons are not hard to understand. T'ang beliefs about

heredity were such that by distorting the origins and minimizing the achievements of Shih-huo, the historian could indirectly cast aspersions on the character and career of his daughter, the Empress Wu.[16]

This seems indeed to have been the case when we compare the above account with that given in the P'an-lung-t'ai pei. We must bear in mind in making the comparison that the inscription, too, is not a wholly reliable source for it is typical of its genre in the hagiography of its tone and in the dubious nature of some details. Its author, Li Chiao, was a noted official and litterateur of the Chou, and though not strictly speaking a sycophant, he was closely identified with the Wu interests.[17] The pei is clearly tendentious, if only because the Empress commissioned it, but by using it carefully and referring frequently to other sources for verification, we can find in it the most comprehensive account of the Empress' immediate background. At over six hundred lines, it is too lengthy for complete citation, but in the following discussion, we hope to cover the salient details.

The pei begins with an outline of the Wu clan's genealogy, a subject to which we shall later return, but in speaking of Shih-huo's parentage it differs from the official accounts by omitting all reference to the wealth of his family. The omission may well be an attempt to dispel the persistent rumour that Shih-huo's background was mercantile, a response to the frequent charge by contemporary enemies

that Wu Tse-t'ien was of low or "unsuitable" birth.[18] The truth of this matter is difficult to ascertain, but most relatively recent scholarship reproduces the view that Shih-huo's family dealt in timber, a detail recorded in a ninth-century local history and repeated in the T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi.[19] The relevant passage, "in his youth, [Shih-huo] dealt in timber together with a man called Hsü Wen-pao of the [same] city," is not conclusive, and seems rather to suggest that Shih-huo's business was personal not familial. It would not be unusual for a younger son, even of a land-holding or official family, to engage in a pursuit of this sort, and Lo Pin-wang's charge that the origins of the Empress were "truly obscure" might thus be greatly exaggerated. The point is raised here to illustrate the manner in which the pei diverges from the official accounts and encourages an alternate explanation. We will pass on now to the concrete facts it relates.

According to the pei, Shih-huo was born in 577, the fourth son of Wu Huà who held the position of cheng of Lo-yang in the reign of Sui Wen-ti.[20] The distinguished lineage provided for him goes back to the Chou, and while the earliest ancestors mentioned are probably spurious, there is good reason to believe that the genealogy from the T'o-pa Wei onward is genuine.[21] If so, the Wu clan was closely connected with the T'ai-yüan area for several generations, and if it was not numbered in the national aristocracy as the Empress

tried to pretend,[22] it was almost certainly a clan of local prominence with some renown based upon past nobility and upon present membership in the minor official and, perhaps, military class.[23]

The next point in the pei, that it was Shih-huo who raised his clan to Empire-wide prominence, is in agreement with official accounts. The manner in which this was achieved, however, is described differently. According to the pei, Shih-huo was no mere opportunist who rose through a fortuitous connection with Kao-tsu, but rather was a man who gained fame for his filial actions on his parents' death and so received several p'i-chao summons to office from Sui Wen-ti.[24] On the advice of a yin-yang diviner, and because he had no confidence in the Sui, Shih-huo initially refused, accepting only on the intervention of the governor of T'ai-yüan.[25] There is, however, no confirmation in Sui records that Shih-huo ever held office in the period, much less that he aroused the jealousy of the powerful Yang Su whom the pei has remarking, "I have noticed that Wu's talents and appearance (feng-ku) are certainly of heroic degree. Now we enjoy an era of peace, so why use this man?"[26]

Whatever the truth of the matter, the pei goes on to relate that when Wen-ti died, Shih-huo feared this jealousy and so retired to private life. He then devoted himself to a study of military matters, and was able to predict to his brothers the failure of Yang-ti's Korean expedition of 611,

and also to produce a thirty-chapter work on strategy and tactics, called the Ku-chin ping-yao.[27] This is probably the work he is said later to have presented to Kao-tsu. In 613, he had an opportunity to test his knowledge, for he happened to be in Lo-yang when the city was besieged by the rebel Yang Hsüan-kan. According to the pei, it was his advice which prevented surrender.[28] Again we find no confirmation of the incident, but the pei offers an explanation, saying that Shih-huo feared the envy of Yang-ti and so insisted that his participation go unreported![29]

When Yang-ti fled to the south in 616, Shih-huo is reported to have told his brothers, "This is a journey from which he will not return!" but when they encouraged him to rebel himself, he refused.[30] Similarly, he realized that the prominent rebel, Li Mi, would not succeed and he declined an invitation to join him.[31] Only when Kao-tsu came to T'ai-yüan did he recognize greatness: "How brave and heroic, yet how plain and easy [of manner?]: how intelligent and marvellously courageous! This is a man with whom one can devote oneself [to founding a dynasty]!"[32] Shih-huo soon paid a courtesy call with the result that "Kao-tsu . . . took his hand and placed his confidence in him. [It was like the way] Duke Wen of Chou obtained [the services of] Chiang ya . . ."[33] The partnership was strengthened when he accompanied the emperor-to-be in the suppression of brigands in Kao-yang[34] and when, afterwards, Kao-tsu became a guest at his home.

The pei inserts in the narrative here, the dream referred to in the CTS account, and, as if in anticipation of its criticism, claims that Shih-huo revealed immediately not only the dream but also some mysterious voices he had heard predicting Kao-tsu's success.[35] In addition, the pei account of the dream differs from that of the CTS in relating that Shih-huo also ascended to the heavens and touched sun and moon--an interpolation clearly designed to show that his offspring would also found a dynasty.

With the exception of conventional references to dreams and portents, the pei to this point need not strain credulity, and, indeed, the notion that Shih-huo took the initiative in meeting Kao-tsu, seems most reasonable. After this section, however, exaggerations about his achievements and honours become more pronounced. The reason lies perhaps in the general confusion of the T'ang foundation: falsification here would not easily be detected.

The pei tells, for instance, of how Kao-tsu was "greatly pleased" about the dream and the military textbook, and how Shih-huo advanced rapidly to the reception both of high honorific rank and of a ducal title.[36] On more than one occasion, his military expertise is supposed to have "saved the day" in the course of the T'ang conquest, and when the capital fell, he is said to have been rewarded with a mansion, promotions, 5000 tuan of silk and 3,000,000 ch'ien in cash.[37] This seems dubious since there is no official record that men

even more prominent than he in the campaign received rewards of such magnitude. The subsequent honours mentioned in the pei go similarly unrecorded elsewhere, and we might well be suspicious of such claims, for instance, that Shih-huo declined the two highest posts in the administration during the first year of the new dynasty.[38] Instead, says the pei, he accepted a position without fixed duties but with rank equal to the chief ministers (t'ung chung-shu men-hsia san-p'in),[39] a designation, according to the HTS treatise on officials, which was not created until late 634![40] Details of this sort we must reject.

The next major incident recounted, Shih-huo's appointment as president of the Board of Works (kung-pu) in 620, is well-documented in other sources; and we can find confirmation in the TFYK that at about the same time, Kao-tsu praised his integrity and honoured his brothers with appointments as a sign of his regard for Shih-huo.[41] Even more striking is the allegation in the pei, that Kao-tsu himself served as broker (k'un-chu) in arranging Shih-huo's second marriage into the eminent Yang clan, to a cousin of the last Sui emperor.[42] Because of the inequality in clan status, historians have long been puzzled about how this marriage was effected, but here again, the pei is confirmed by a TFYK notice which differs in detail, but which shows that the emperor himself suggested both the marriage and the bride.[43] This union, concluded probably in 620, produced three daughters of whom

the second was to become the Empress Wu.

It is interesting to note here the skill with which Li Chiao intersperses these verifiable facts with assertions of a more dubious nature. We find no confirmation, for instance, that Shih-huo's brothers were awarded the rank of chün-kung, nor indeed, for the statement that "Afterwards, when Kao-tsu made a trip, he often ordered Shih-huo to manage the affairs of the tribunal [of censors?], to be at the same time in charge of the troops and horses of the [Palace] Guard of North and South, and to judge (p'an) the presidents of the Six Boards."[44] Although unlikely to be true, these notices gain an air of verisimilitude by their placement among otherwise documented facts.

In 624, Shih-huo received a temporary assignment to pacify the Yang-chou area following the rebellion of Fu Kung-shih;[45] and after an administration so successful that he received imperial commendation,[46] returned to the capital in late 626 at the accession of T'ai-tsung. The following year saw the abortive rising of Li Hsiao-cháng in Shan-nan,[47] and the pei reports that when T'ai-tsung asked his ministers for a suitable candidate to quell the remnants, "all considered that unless Shih-huo [were put in charge], it could not be done."[48] He was duly appointed governor-general of Li-chou and seems to have remained here until 631 when he was transferred to an equivalent post in Ching-chou.[49] Some evidence recently come to light suggests that the Empress Wu may have

been born during her father's posting in Li-chou, and if so, she is three years younger than has traditionally been believed.[50]

The pei relates little else of interest to us here, giving few details of Shih-huo's administration in Ching-chou, but mentioning how his prayers before a statue of Aśoka at the Ch'ang-sha temple miraculously ended a long drought in the area.[51] It is also the only source to offer details on his death in 635 at age 59, attributing his final illness to sorrow at Kao-tsu's death. T'ai-tsung is said to have sent him capital physicians, and his funeral arrangements were charged to Li Chi, the governor-general of his home prefecture where he was buried.[52] The last detail is significant since it was Li Chi's voice, two decades later, which was decisive in the establishment of Shih-huo's daughter as Empress. Finally, the pei gives details of Shih-huo's posthumous honours.

There are numerous aspects of the pei upon which we might comment, such as its relationship to the ideology of legitimation, but since our restricted purpose here is to ascertain the facts of the Empress Wu's immediate background, let us point out only that it provides enough reliable information to supplement and occasionally to revise the official account. The most important of the new perceptions it provides are that the Wu clan was not wholly undistinguished, and that the father of the Empress was a valued friend of

Kao-tsu and a man who enjoyed the trust of T'ai-tsung. Beyond this, it is a source which encourages certain speculations about the early life of the Empress herself. Of these, we might list the possibility that she was born outside the capital in the Szechuan area, and probably in 627. Her earliest years were spent in the provinces, in a wealthy family with close ties by marriage to the imperial clan and high ministers of the T'ang. Her home was one in which Buddhism had a certain influence. From other sources we learn of the visit of a noted fortune-teller to the Wu home,[53] so it may be that popular religion generally was strong there. By offering even this much information, the pei becomes our major, if still meagre source on the first seven or eight years of the Empress Wu's life.

There exists also a corresponding inscription for the Empress' mother,[54] but it unfortunately offers no information on the movements of the family over the next years. We are forced therefore to return to official sources and to resume the narrative with the entrance of the future Empress into T'ai-tsung's haren at the age of fourteen. Dating of this event is problematic because of source conflicts regarding her birthdate, and Ssu-ma Kuang, discussing the matter in the K'ao-i, concludes that it was in 637 that T'ai-tsung "heard of her beauty" and summoned her.[55] There is, however, reason to question this.

First of all, T'ai-tsung had only buried his beloved

Wen-te Empress in the eleventh month of 636[56] and is recorded to have mourned her "for a long time."[57] It seems unlikely he would so soon add to his harem even if Wu had been of outstanding beauty. We find no confirmation in other sources that this was the case, and the fact that she neither advanced from her initial rank of tsai-jen[58] nor bore T'ai-tsung any children might suggest he was not greatly attracted to her. An alternative explanation for her summons to the harem is provided in the fact that in the late 630's one of her cousins became T'ai-tsung's favourite concubine and used her good offices to have Wu selected.[59] If this suggestion is valid, and if we accept the evidence of a later birthdate, we might place Wu's entry into the palace in 640, and attribute it to nepotism rather than her personal qualities. She seems to have had little to do with the emperor, for she totally escaped his notice in 648, when he acted upon a current prophecy that a "martial Price" (wu-wang), who was female, would overturn the T'ang.[60]

Her duties in the imperial wardrobe, however, did bring her into contact with the future Kao-tsung who had been declared Crown Prince in 643. Contrary to T'ang custom, he seems to have occupied the same palace as his father, and in T'ai-tsung's final illness, is said to have been present constantly at his bedside.[61] Some sources give the impression that an incestuous liason was formed at this time,[62] and while we cannot be certain that this was so, it does seem

possible in light of subsequent events.

The career of the Empress Wu should have come to an end with T'ai-tsung's death if, in fact, she retired with his other concubines to a convent. The principal sources agree that she did so,[63] and they go on to record that she was re-summoned to the palace at the urging of Kao-tsung's childless Empress Wang who hoped thereby to detach his affections from a rival concubine called Hsiao Liang-ti.[64] The story is a curious one, with numerous source contradictions and a lack of essential details, so that it may be well to reject altogether the convent story, or to suggest that she entered under different circumstances and for a shorter period of time than is usually assumed.[65] Kao-tsung may well have planned to make her his concubine from the time of their first meetings!

From her return to the palace, Wu Chao-i, as she was now known, is said to have mounted a surreptitious and skillful campaign to discredit both Empress Wang and the concubine, Liang-ti. She bribed servants to spy on them, slandered them to the emperor, and perhaps even smothered her new-born daughter in order to find some crime to blame upon the Empress.[66] The usual source difficulties are, of course, magnified here since events of this sort, occurring within the palace, cannot have been made known through regular channels to the historians. The infant's death, for example, might have been accidental, and it is perhaps significant

that the incident goes unrecorded in the CTS biographies of Wu and Wang. In any event, Wu Chao-i came rapidly to monopolize the love of Kao-tsung, bearing him one or perhaps, two sons in 653-4, and emerging in early 654 as his open favourite.[67] Later that year, Kao-tsung began to seek ministerial approval for her elevation to empress.

This search for approval met initially with almost universal opposition among the tsai-hsiang, a group composed at the time of six men.[68] As one of the significant political crises of the period it is well-documented in primary sources and much studied by modern historians,[69] so that its full details need not concern us here. Certain points of broad importance might be made, however, and the first is that Kao-tsung showed throughout a resolution and ingenuity not often associated with his character. We must recall that his chief opponents, Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi and Ch'ü Sui-liang, were men of enormous prestige and, indeed, had been entrusted by the dying T'ai-tsung with the care of his son.[70] Like their colleagues, they assumed that all matters affecting the Empire fell within their purview, and this attitude had been encouraged by their recent experience in the collegial-style government of T'ai-tsung.[71] They had in his reign played a role in all important decisions including Kao-tsung's selection as Crown Prince, and when the latter argued that the choice of an empress was a domestic matter, their resort to this precedent was not unnatural. Kao-tsung, at the outset,

seems to have accepted this view of prerogative, and so turned to every avenue from cajolery to outright bribery and intimidation in order to gain agreement. Only when this failed did he simply over-rule them, and in so doing he changed the balance of power and the style of rule which had characterized the dynasty to that time.

In the debate itself, he stressed continually that Empress Wang had failed to bear him a son while Wu Chao-i had done so. This was sufficient ground for divorce under Tiang law, and nowhere is there recorded a reference in the debate either to the murder of Wu's daughter, or to the charge of sorcery later cited to justify the Empress Wang's deposition.[72] The arguments of his opponents therefore seem the more cogent since they could speak of the blamelessness of Empress Wang and could even point out the unfilial nature of removing an empress personally selected for her virtue by Kao-tsung's father. Moreover, they claimed, bonds of marriage were sacred, especially in the imperial household where they were an example to all. The sincerity of this argument might be questioned, however, since they admitted that compromise was possible. If Kao-tsung were determined to change empresses, why did he not choose a lady of distinguished lineage? Wu Chao-i was not only of relatively low birth, but as a former concubine of T'ai-tsung she could only blacken with incest the Emperor's historical reputation.[73] In this suggested compromise we see perhaps the real basis of the tsai-hsiang

position. They were not opposed to a new empress provided it were not Wu Chao-i: that is, they would agree to a change if they could guide the emperor's choice. Kao-tsung was probably aware of this, for he made no effort to refute their specific charges against Wu until the edict of her accession in November of 656.[74]

On one level, therefore, the conflict may be regarded as a struggle over the definition of imperial prerogative, and modern scholars have extended its parameters even more widely than this. Ch'en Yin-k'o, for instance, saw it as a regional struggle between rival aristocratic blocs from northeast and northwest.[75] Japanese commentators like Yokota Ji and Matsui Shūichi view it rather as intra-bureaucratic competition between entrenched aristocrats and newly-rising officials like Li I-fu[76] who allied themselves with Kao-tsung for opportunistic reasons or to compensate for the lack of a genealogy which would open to them the highest state posts.[77] Maoist historians, like Chang Chün, incline to the latter view though they emphasize a different sort of class struggle, and use a different vocabulary.[78] More recently, Lo Lung-chih has taken a revisionist position which sees opportunism as the chief motive of both camps.[79] All these approaches provide a certain insight, but the nature of our sources is such that a high degree of speculation is necessarily present in each. Perhaps the nominalist approach still remains most useful, for on both sides we can find such elements as genuine

idealism, Confucian loyalty, and class as well as self interest. The issue of whether or not the Son of Heaven could choose independently his empress is the fundamental one, and by finding a single tsai-hsiang, Li Chi, who agreed he could, Kao-tsung won an important victory. Li's view, "This is a household affair of Your Majesty. Why [do you need to] inquire further from outsiders?" would be invoked often in support of imperial claims in the T'ang.[80] In late 656, after two years of uncertainty, the matter was settled.

The Empress Wu seems instinctively to have grasped that the manner of her elevation put the tsai-hsiang group on the defensive and she lost no time in pressing her advantage. Taking the initiative, and over-riding Kao-tsung's resistance, she had newly-promoted officials like Li I-fu and Hsü Ching-tsung bring criminal charges of dubious validity against all five of her former opponents so that by late 659 all had been driven to disgrace and death.[81] In the same period, she destroyed ex-Empress Wang and Hsiao Liang-ti personally and with needless brutality.[82] Both of these acts appalled the Confucian historians, but it was the first which had the greatest historical significance. Not only was the social and regional configuration of power changed at the highest level of government, a change of great importance in the context of the revision of the national clan list in 659, but the entire political climate at the same level was altered. Ssu-ma Kuang says with only minimal exaggeration, "From the

death of Ch'ü Sui-liang and Han Yüan, inside and outside [the Court, frank] speech was avoided. No one dared oppose the [imperial] will or strongly remonstrate. For almost twenty years [it was like this]."[83]

We might ask at this point what role Kao-tsung played in these years. The standard sources give the impression that as his wife's vengeance unfolded, he became more and more debilitated in spirit and morale, weeping openly for instance, at the fate of his ex-empress and his uncle, Wu-chi.[84] Though certain of his remarks indicate a belief in the need for severity: "My family is unlucky, and there is constant trouble with my relatives,"[85] the strain of the punishments was great, and may have been related to the illness he suffered in 660 and which resulted in the temporary delegation of his duties to the Empress.[86]

In this same period, on the other hand, he was proving with real achievements, to be a competent and even an energetic ruler. His armies, for instance, conquered the Western Turks in 658 and incorporated into the Empire the enormous area of the Protectorate-general of An-hsi.[87] He showed his administrative ability in measures for governing the new territory and by the institution of a biennial census within the Wall, and he did not hesitate to send troops to rescue the tributary state of Paekche from an aggressive Koguryŏ.[88] In 659, as we shall see, he demonstrated his centralizing talents with important measures to weaken

aristocratic regionalism and to confer prestige upon the examination system. With similar purpose, he took steps to strengthen the ideology of the state, and recognizing the force of Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist loyalties among the various groups of his subjects, he took steps to patronize them all. Thus, he commissioned a new Ritual and new versions of the dynastic histories from Liang to Sui, creating shortly thereafter the post of ch'i-chu she-jen or "diarist of activity and repose" in order to facilitate the production of true dynastic records.[89] As early as 655, he showed his respect for Buddhism by publicly greeting the famed pilgrim Hsüan-tsang at the city gates and installing him in the Tz'u-en temple.[90] Two years later, he freed both Buddhist and Taoist clergy from their duty of obeisance to their parents.[91] In the same year, 657, and principally for purposes of centralization and consolidation, he completed an extensive program of building and restoration at Lo-yang, and he designated it the Eastern Capital.[92]

This final measure presents an opportunity to raise a central question. Traditionally, the explanation for the virtual shift of the court to Lo-yang from this period is the antipathy of the Empress Wu to the Ch'ang-an palaces where she was haunted by the apparitions of her early victims.[93] Did she therefore inspire the shift, and was she similarly the moving force behind her husband's other actions? The evidence suggests not. First of all, there existed both

precedents and valid economic and political considerations for the establishment of a second capital, and these were enunciated at the time.[94] Secondly, Kao-tsung rapidly recovered his strength after 660, fathering two more children and making extended tours, most notably to T'ai-Shan in 665.[95] Thirdly, in late 664, he forcibly reminded the Empress of her technically subordinate position by threatening to depose her.[96] This last event is subject to frequent misinterpretation, and so we might examine it more closely.

The Empress Wu, it seems, had been seeing at this time a Taoist priest known to be skilled in the occult (yen-sheng). These activities could easily be construed as sorcery, the crime to which Empress Wang's fall had been attributed, and it was as such that a eunuch reported it to Kao-tsung. In anger, he sought advice from one of his chief-ministers, Shang-kuan I, a man who had been closely connected with the former Crown Prince Chung and also with the fallen elder statesmen.[97] Warned that the unrestrained influence of the Empress was detrimental to the Empire, he had Shang-kuan draft a decree of deposition. What happened next is not recorded in our earliest source, the CTS, and so may be suspect at least in detail. The HTS says the Empress heard what was happening, hastened to her husband to confess, and "the Emperor therefore repented. He also feared her anger and so said it was done on the advice of Shang-kuan I."[98] I and his eunuch accomplice were executed on charges of conspiracy with

the ex-Crown Prince, and the TCTC, following the HTS, says,

> . . . from this [event], whenever the Emperor attended to business, the Empress then hung a curtain [and listened] behind. There was no matter of government, great or small, which she did not hear. The whole power of the Empire passed into her hands: reward and punishment, life and death, she decided. The Emperor folded his hands and that is all. In court and country, they were called the Two Sages . . .[99]

This passage, although dubious in origin and extravagant in expression, has been extraordinarily influential in creating the too-common perception that from 664 Kao-tsung was no more than a puppet ruler. The CTS, in the parallel section, offers a different view: "From this, the Empress for several decades aided (nei-fu) in government with power and authority no different from that of the Emperor. They were designated at that time as the Two Sages."[100] Whichever interpretation we choose to accept, it is clear that only in 664 did contemporaries begin to regard the Empress even as an equal partner in government, using a phrase, incidentally, which had been similarly applied to Sui Wen-ti and his wife.[101] Until 664, Kao-tsung was almost certainly the senior partner, and it was possibly only when he began to lose ground after 660 that he considered deposition. We might even speculate from the rapidity of his "repentance", that deposition was never a serious alternative in his mind, for he had the evidence, the power and the support necessary to do it had he been determined to do so. It seems more reasonable to suggest that essentially, Kao-tsung ruled just as his father had,

co-operatively: only in his case, the Empress Wu played the supportive role traditionally assigned to the ministerial body. Kao-tsung recognized, it seems, the unusual talents of his wife, and sharing with her a concurrence of purpose, used the events of 664 simply as a warning, never thereafter withdrawing his trust. There is no sign that the relationship between the "Two Sages" became antagonistic after 664, and indeed Kao-tsung's first reaction on the return of his illness in 675 was to offer his wife the regency.[102]

Kao-tsung was to live for another two decades, presiding with the Empress Wu over a largely successful administration and a prosperous state. The policies of these years are examined in subsequent chapters, but before we pass on to them, we might outline here some of the more intimate events of court life as they touched the career of the Empress, and to a degree, were determinants of her public actions.

The year 665 was notable for the celebration of the _feng_ and _shan_ sacrifices, the most important of state rituals whose function it was to announce to Heaven the successful achievement of the totality of a ruler's task and to beg continued blessings.[103] Both Kao-tsu and T'ai-tsung, feeling unworthy to perform this most solemn of rites, had refused ministerial requests to do so, the latter on five different occasions.[104] In 665, the initiative seems to have been the rulers', and while certainly related to domestic prosperity and the success of Chinese arms abroad, may incidentally have

symbolic of the restored harmony of Kao-tsung's family life. The ceremonial, as we shall note, represents the unique instance in Chinese history of female participation, and though this later came to be considered a sacrilege, it seems at the time to have done nothing to dim the lustre of the occasion.

The aftermath of the ceremony was not, however, so happy. Because of Confucian sensitivity to her own unusually great role in politics, the Empress Wu had always been careful to avoid the charge that her family, the wai-ch'i, benefitted too greatly from her position. In 656, she had therefore presented a public "instruction" to her clan which resulted in the transfer of her half-brothers and their families to provincial postings.[105] Most sources suggest that the real reason for the transfer was the Empress' long-standing dislike of them occasioned by their disrespect for her mother.[106] Both brothers had died at their posts, but the sons of the elder, Wei-liang and Huai-yün, were invited to the feng celebration, and returned afterwards to the capital with the imperial party. Also in the capital was the Empress' niece, Ho-lan Kuo-ch'ü, daughter of her elder sister and, the histories allege, recipient of Kao-tsung's favours as her mother had been before her.[107] Though their vocabulary here is deliberately vague, Kao-tsung seems to have made it known that he wished the girl as a concubine, so that the allegations may have been true. The Empress was in any case jealous

of her, and in the eighth month of 666, at a banquet in the home of her mother, Madame Yang, the girl died in convulsions. The nephews of the Empress were executed as poisoners, but suspicion was naturally directed toward the Empress herself. This is the first of a series of deaths within her family circle and for which she is implicitly blamed in the histories.

It is impossible, so long after the fact, to pass judgement on the innocence or guilt of the Empress, but on the basis of what evidence we have, an alternative explanation is possible. Madame Yang, we know, greatly disliked her step-family and at the same time she was naturally anxious that her daughter retain the Emperor's favour. Her banquet may therefore have been given to rid herself of the step-family which seemed to be regaining favour, and simultaneously, to destroy her daughter's rival. This interpretation is supported by the fact that when Wei-liang's execution left Wu Shih-huo without a descendant in the male line to carry on the ancestral sacrifices, he was replaced not by a surviving member of the Wu clan, but rather by Ho-lan Min-chih, Madame Yang's real grandson.[108] As the brother of her rival, he is not likely to have risen to this honour and been granted the Wu surname by the Empress if she had been jealous enough to murder his sister!

Min-chih, in the event, proved an unworthy candidate, shortly discrediting himself in various ways. Not only is he

said to have seduced the palace-ladies who attended the T'ai-p'ing princess, but also to have raped the betrothed of the Crown Prince. In 670, he callously ignored the mourning regulations for Madame Yang, who had been his constant protector, and in punishment was exiled to the provinces. He committed suicide on the road, thus opening the way for the return to Court of the last survivors of the Wu clan, Ch'eng-ssu and San-ssu,[109] men who would have great prominence during their aunt's usurpation.

There is little to be gained, perhaps, in speculating upon the guilt or innocence of the Empress in matters like these except insofar as they relate to her character and to the progress of her career. Domestic tragedy seems to have had little effect on her role in government though it may be possible to suggest that it contributed to a weakening of her self-confidence. We see signs of this in 670, the year of her mother's death, and also a year of calamity both in domestic and foreign affairs. At the same time, a number of ill omens were observed,[110] and the Empress seems to have blamed herself, for in the [intercalary] ninth month she offered to resign her position (pi-wei). The HTS suggests that her request was a false one,[111] but even Ssu-ma Kuang who is usually ready to believe the worst of her, does not question her sincerity.[112] Kao-tsung, as we might expect, declined the offer, re-affirming his confidence in her, and demonstrating it even more clearly four years later when, at her

suggestion, he appropriated to both of them the unprecedented title, "Celestial".[113]

This measure is well-known and is usually attributed simply to a whim of the Empress: her desire to avoid the style of all former rulers.[114] As we shall see, this motive was present, but in all likelihood was not the sole one. The titles were taken in a mood of celebration, part of a general measure to correct and standardize the posthumous honorifics of the imperial clan, so that Kao-tsung and the Empress Wu made themselves, while still alive, part of a recognized tradition of good government. This aspect of motivation became more clear within a few months when the Empress presented her husband with a twelve-part memorial on the subject of governmental improvement.[115] In it she proposed a comprehensive programme which envisaged in a state of peace and plenty, low taxes, light corvée and only a small army so that transformation could be carried out by virtue not force. The administration was to be more frugal, opening reserved lands to cultivation and economizing on public works and donations to monasteries and temples. The government was also to be more open, prohibiting all slander but welcoming free representation on any matter from all subjects. The servants of the state were to be better rewarded, with salary raises in the capital and promotions for those in low ranks who had no one to recommend them. Two measures were new: the first extended the mourning period for a dead mother to the full

three years hitherto reserved for a father, and the second encouraged the study by all, of Lao Tzu's Tao-te ching. On these, we shall comment later.

Although one source says that to some degree all the suggestions were implemented,[116] practical considerations would seem to have made impossible, for instance, any large-scale demobilization of troops.[117] At the same time, however, the symbolic nature of the act was perhaps most important and its basic principle--concern for the people's welfare generally, and for the lower orders of society and bureaucracy in particular, must have been a popular one. Hostile historians have tended thus to see the memorial as a transparent device to win popular support and pave the Empress' way to usurpation, but on examination we must reject this view. The encouragement of Taoist studies, for instance, could only strengthen the T'ang, and of greater importance, in the years 684-690 when the Empress was preparing her usurpation and was most in need of public support, her policies diverged widely from the suggestions of the memorial, encompassing corvée-built public works, the lavish patronage of Buddhism, and the dependence on ruthless and slanderous officials. Administration in the Chou, conversely, was based closely enough on the principles of 674 that we might instead accept the programme as a sincere one.

One of the reasons that historians see the memorial in the context of usurpation is that in 674-5, the succession

question was becoming central. Kao-tsung's old illness was returning, and in the third month of 675 he suffered so serious a relapse that he suggested his wife become regent, desisting only when Hao Ch'ü-chün, vice-president of the Secretariat, protested, "The Son of Heaven manages the external and the Empress the internal. This is the way of Heaven."[118] A second reason was that, less than two months later, the Crown Prince Hung died in mysterious circumstances, and as Ssu-ma Kuang puts it, "people of the time considered that the Celestial Empress [Wu] poisoned him."[119]

Evidence for the crime, as Kuang admits in the K'ao-i, is of the most tenuous sort, arising from a Court rumour in the time of Su-tsung (756-62),[120] but the accounts agree at least on the details of the story. Hung was a popular prince, rapidly gaining reputation as a humane, filial and serious man, and, as his independence grew, he came occasionally into conflict with his mother on policy matters. The most recent of those occasions was his persuasion of Kao-tsung that the two daughters of Hsiao Liang-ti, confined at the Empress' wish since 656, should be released and allowed to marry. The Empress showed her resentment by finding them husbands of low degree. Shortly after this Hung accompanied his parents to the Ho-pi palace near Lo-yang where he died.

The HTS is the only one of the primary sources to suggest he was poisoned,[121] and other evidence exists which points rather to a natural death. In the first place, it

seems unlikely that the Empress so early planned to usurp; and even if she did, to poison her son in the very presence of a father who loved him, seems an extreme and foolhardy tactic. Also arguing against murder is the fact that Prince Hsien, the next-in-line, was probably not the Empress Wu's son at all,[122] and therefore was not a man she would have been anxious to have succeed. Finally, there are indications that the dead heir was not of a healthy constitution.[123]

Hsien, who became Crown Prince in the sixth month of 675, was a man interested in scholarship and Buddhism; he was open and lively, and fond, we are told, of wine and women.[124] The rumour of his illegitimate birth, so soon to surface, must have been known in certain circles at his accession, but there is reason to believe that even so, the Empress was willing to see his succession to the throne. She took a personal hand in his education, writing him letters of instruction and reprimand, and permitting the appointment as his counsellors (pin-k'o) of four men not known to be friendly to her, among them Hao Ch'ü-chün.[125] Hsien seems to have begun well, and he won praise from his father in 676, the same year he presented to the throne his Hou Han-shu commentary.[126]

Soon after that, however, his reputation began to deteriorate. It came to his ears at this time that his mother had been advised by one of her intimates, a man holding regular office and also skilled in fortune-telling, that he had not the look of a future emperor and was less noble than his younger

brothers. His response, according to a palace servant with whom he had an improper liaison, was to procure the fortune-teller's murder,[127] and although proof was lacking, the Empress was naturally suspicious.

Shortly after this, when Hsien rejected the advice of one of his secretaries to end his liaison, the Empress seized the chance to have a formal enquiry made into his affairs. In searching his residence, the investigators found in his stables several hundred suits of armour which they reported as evidence of treason. Kao-tsung, although he had also had earlier reservations about Hsien's suitability,[128] was willing to pardon him, but on the Empress' insistence, the armour was publicly destroyed and Hsien demoted to the status of commoner.[129] Soon, he was exiled to the provinces where he committed suicide in 684, with suspicion falling on the Empress as the instigator of his death.[130] His position as Crown Prince was taken by his younger brother, the future Chung-tsung.

Was Hsien, like his elder brother, a victim of Empress Wu's ambition? Once again, the nature of our sources make certainty impossible. The evidence of the armour seems damning enough for the penalty of degradation and in logical terms, the Empress had little to gain from the heir's removal. Two sons remained and would always stand between her and the throne, and besides, Chung-tsung was not only allowed to succeed but was later to comment specifically on the kind treatment he received from his mother.[131] In 682, Kao-tsung, presumably with the agreement of his wife, took the unusual step of establishing Chung-tsung's son as "Heir Apparent Grandson" (huang-t'ai-sun),[132] a measure which might be regarded as an expression of his fear that Empress Wu would deprive the Li clan of the throne. Yet this interpretation is also dubious in view of the long partnership of the "Two Sages", and especially in view of the great power Kao-tsung was to leave the Empress in his last testament. More likely, the measure was designed to quiet the fear and suspicions inspired at court by the unaccustomed influence of an empress, and the disappearance of two heirs to the throne. When Kao-tsung died at the end of 683 it seems to have been in the belief that the succession was assured and that his heir would benefit from the expertise of the Empress Wu.

Kao-tsung's death presents us with a suitable opportunity to summarize some conclusions. From the discussion

thus far, one of the strongest impressions to emerge is that of the weight of historical bias against the Empress. We have cited a number of instances where unprecedented or discreditable acts are ascribed to her without convincing evidence, and have shown that on occasion, the historian prefaces his allegation with the phrase, "people at the time believed . . .". This is important, for the "people" to whom the historian refers were principally the bureaucratic element at court, a group ready consistently to believe the worst of the Empress. We have suggested that their attitude arose from loyalty to the Confucian tradition which was highly resistant to female influence in government even if it was of the greatest order of competence.

The existence of this attitude had two principal effects. Firstly, it helped to delineate the Empress' constituency and to define the form taken by her search for legitimation. As we shall suggest, the prejudice against female rule was not so strong among the masses. Secondly, the overt presence of the Empress in her husband's administration meant that his reign was a period of exceptional tension in the highest circles of government. It was a tension which hastened historical change, and perhaps the most notable aspect of this was the relative decline of ministerial power. Since over-powerful ministers had been a chief cause of dynastic change in the period of disunion, it could be argued that this development contributed to the longevity of the

T'ang.

Dynastic consolidation, as we shall shortly suggest, was the central policy of Kao-tsung's reign, and in view of her eventual usurpation, the loyalty of the Empress Wu to this aim is striking. Historians who see her plotting to seize the throne in Kao-tsung's lifetime neglect to consider, for instance, that she and her entire clan owed their rise to the T'ang. As we shall see, policies of the period in which her hand is obvious, the celebration of the feng and shan, the extension of Buddhist patronage, and the emphasis placed on examinations, literature and the polite arts, were all elaborate and effective means of expressing dynastic self-confidence and convincing the Empire that the T'ang were essentially different from their short-lived predecessors.

It is in this light that we have taken our position on the succession question. If we accept the possibility that Hung's death was accidental, then Hsien's degradation could hardly advance usurping aims, and he becomes simply one more example of the over-ambitious Crown Prince seen in every reign of the T'ang up until that time. If, indeed, he was the son of the Empress Wu's sister, we could even construe his fall as the result of her extreme concern for legitimate succession, and thereby strengthen our conjecture that at Kao-tsung's death, the Empress Wu had not yet conceived any intention of establishing a dynasty of her own.

We have devoted so much attention to the succession

question not only for the light it sheds on the career of the Empress, but also because of its great importance in 683. From the late 670's the prosperity of the dynasty was beginning to appear jeopardized as successive years of natural disaster and meagre harvest brought about regional scarcity and general economic uncertainty. By 681, these conditions had brought about something of a crisis as grain prices fluctuated wildly and the government was forced to take the unusual step of permitting the starving households of Honan-Hopei to change their registration by settling farther South.[133] The next year, 683, the fu-ping units of Kuan-nei were set to the work of cultivation in the southwest,[134] a good indication of the severity of the situation since the government was at the same time attempting to constitute expeditionary forces to meet the resurgent Turks. A strong ruler, therefore, seemed to be an absolute necessity.

Before turning to the question of why Wu Tse-t'ien should be thrust into that role instead of her mature sons, let us raise a theoretical matter of central importance, the creation of an ideological basis of rule.

NOTES

(Chapter III)

[1]See Note 21 to this chapter.

[2]The text of this inscription is found WYYH 875:1a and CTW 249:1a. See also the memorial from its author, Li Chiao, thanking the Empress for the rewards he received on its completion. WYYH 592:2a and CTW 246:7b.

In 669, the Empress changed the name of the bureau in charge of her father's tomb from Hao-ling shu to P'an-lung t'ai and according to the Sung epigraphical collection P'ao-k'o ts'ung-pien 7:22, the stele itself was erected in 700. The Chin-shih lu 25:5b describes the stele and tells us that the calligraphy was that of Chung-tsung.

Citations are from the WYYH text.

[3]Just northwest of present-day Ch'eng-ku hsien in Shansi, about six miles east of the Fen river. HTS 39:3723:1, TT 179:11b, THY 70, p. 1257. For geographical references I depend chiefly on Hiraoka Takeo (ed.), Todai no gyosei chiri, T'ang Civilization Reference Series No. 2 (Tokyo, 1955).

[4]I am not certain of the sense of the phrase which runs yin meng ku-chieh. The parallel HTS passage runs, yin-pei ku-chieh.

[5]According to TCTC 183, p. 5732, Shih-huo was occupying this post in 617, and TFYK 345:22a gives a more specific chronology, indicating that he was appointed at the time of Kao-tsu's attack on Hsi-ho chün which would mean the sixth lunar month. See also TCTC 184, p. 5739 and Nunome Chōfu, Zui Toshi kenkyu (Tokyo, 1968), p. 117ff. The post of ssu-chi was in charge of armour, weapons, etc. See des Rotours, R., Traité des fonctionnaires et traité de l'armée, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1947), II, p. 511. This work is henceforth cited as Fonctionnaires.

[6]For a good discussion of fu-jui, see a paper recently presented by Dr. Anna Seidel to the ACLS conference on legitimation at Asilomar, June, 1975. The paper is called "Dynastic Treasures and Taoist lu Registers".

[7]Biographies are found respectively CTS 58:3295:1,

HTS 90:3896:1, and CTS 194 shang:3596:3, HTS 105:3923:1.

[8]Neither of these figures has a biography. From the description of the incident found TCTC 183, p. 5733ff., we know that Wang Wei was deputy liu-shou at the time and inferior therefore only to Kao-tsu. Both he and Kao were executed in 617.

[9]No biography.

[10]Another name for the ssu-chi post mentioned in note 5.

[11]On the honorific post of kuang-lu ta-fu see Fonctionnaires, I, p. 35. Both the pei and the HTS call the dukedom I-yüan but I am unable to verify that such a geographical designation existed. On the rank of chün-kung, Fonctionnaires, I, pp. 45 and 451.

[12]That is, president of the Board of Public Works, a position of the third rank, second grade. The pei adds that the real revenues (shih-shih feng) of 800 households were awarded with the feoffdom.

[13]On the position of tu-tu or governor-general, see Fonctionnaires, II, p. 668 and 675ff. Ching-chou was 1730 li from the capital.

[14]President of the Board of Rites. The pei adds that T'ai-tsung expressed great sorrow at his death and suggested that he be called "loyal and filial".

[15]CTS 58:3295:4. The HTS biography is 206:4109:2 and the genealogy HTS 74 shang:3849:3. The latter is summarized without significant alteration in Shen Ping-chen, Erh-shih-wu-shih pu-pien, III, p. 7575 (K'ai-ming ed.).

[16]Chapter V offers several observations on contemporary beliefs about heredity. We might also note in this regard the remark of Sui Yang-ti, "From the house of a general must come a general, and from the house of a minister, a minister." TCTC 182, p. 5672. The suggestion that Wu Shih-huo was of rather obscure origin and mediocre ability was also, therefore, a comment on his offspring.

[17]Li Chiao (CTS 94:3368:1, HTS 123:3957:4) was an aristocrat from one of the great lineages of Chao-chou. At a precocious age he passed the chin-shih exam and showed a great deal both of literary and administrative talent early in his career. The collected works mentioned in his biographies are no longer extant, but a large number of his own

memorials and those he wrote for members of the Wu clan still survive. See CTW 242 to 250. He seems to have been a highly-skilled politician and in spite of his close identification in the Chou with the Chang brothers, he survived their fall with only a temporary demotion to the provinces.

His major positions were in the Chancellery, Secretariat, and History Office, and though some of his memorials are sycophantic, there are many severe remonstrances and suggestions for administrative improvements. He was a skilled politician and the TFYK preserves a number of notices which show that his literary talents were widely recognized. See 551:5b as well as 460:3a, 671:25a, and 327:24a.

[18]The charge was made by various of the tsai-hsiang in the course of the controversy surrounding her elevation, and was raised again in the rebellion of Li Ching-yeh. These instances are outlined in the text.

[19]T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi 137:4b. The local history, called the T'ai-yüan shih-chi, is attributed in the HTS treatise to Li Chang (CTS 164:3506:4, HTS 152:4008:3) and was 14 chüan in length. Li was posted in T'ai-yüan sometime between 847 and 860 so that his account is some 250 years after the fact. An article on Shih-huo in Wei Hsin-tzu, Shu-pen fen-men ku-chin lei-shih, 15:10ab, because of its almost identical wording seems to be based also on Li's work.

[20]The post of cheng was of the seventh rank, third class, too low to confer the yin privilege of facilitated bureaucratic entry upon any of Wu Hua's sons. Since the pei also points out that he predeceased Wen-ti, it seems logical to conclude that the family resided in Lo-yang sometime between 589-605.

[21]As we suggest in Chapter V, the Wu lineage was probably not included in the carefully-researched Shih-tsu chih of T'ai-tsung's reign, and was first published, though in abbreviated form, in the Hsing-shih lu of 659. It was not until Kao-tsung's death, and in two stages, that the Empress began to embellish her genealogy in an effort to win acceptance and bolster her legitimation in an age where genealogy retained a good deal of importance.

In 684, just after her seizure of the regency, she erected ancestral temples for five generations of her ancestors and bestowed posthumous honours on them (HTS 75:3867:2, TCTC 203, p. 6422). Included at this time were:

a) Wu K'o-chi who was said to have held the post of san-ch'i ch'ang-shih in the T'o-pa Wei. His existence is confirmed in no other source though the HTS treatise adds the information that he held the positions of ta-chung-cheng ssu-t'u and Yüeh-wang ch'ang-shih and inherited the title of

Shou-yang kung. His wife was of the P'ei clan, perhaps the eminent Ho-tung lineage examined by Yano Chikara, "Tosho no kizoku seiji ni tsuite," Tohogaku 9 (Oct., 1954), pp. 12-18.

b) His son, Chü-ch'ang, held the position of Yin-chou ssu-ma in the Ch'i (550-577), succeeded to the ducal title, and was posthumously made t'ai-wei. The HTS adds that he was sometime chen-yüan chiang-chün, the first military post in the family. Chü-ch'ang has no biography in the dynastic history, but his existence is mentioned by Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819) in his Lung-ch'eng lu 72:9a. Nunome, Zui Toshi, p. 142, also accepts the truth of this part of the genealogy. Chü-ch'ang's wife was of the Liu clan. It is of some importance to notice the Wu identification with the Ch'i dynasty, a fact which later contributed to the Empress' acceptance by the great northeastern clans.

c) The family fortunes in the later Chou seem to have taken a turn for the worse. Chü-ch'ang's son, called Chien, did not succeed to his father's rank and held only the low military post of ts'an-chün. The HTS mentions a posthumous award of prefect of Ch'i-chou. His wife's maiden name was Sung, and it is interesting to notice that the Wu clan, unlike the contemporary Chinese élite at the local level, seems to have avoided marriage with barbarian surnames.

d) Of Wu Hua, the HTS says that in addition to his cheng position at Lo-yang, he was posthumously awarded the rank of Ping-chou prefect, further confirming the family connection with that area. His wife was of the Chao clan.

e) Wu Shih-huo, his fourth son, was entitled t'ai-shih and Prince of Wei in 684.

After a thorough search for collaborating evidence to establish the truth of the genealogy, I am inclined to believe that it was a true record. It was promulgated after all, at a time when claims could easily have been checked and when there existed a number of potential opponents who must have been eager to prove them false. The Empress was in no position to risk public ridicule at this stage of her career and the genealogy therefore does not claim too much.

In the second stage of genealogical publication, four days after the proclamation of the Chou, Wu Shih-huo was posthumously entitled emperor (T'ai-tsu hsiao-ming kao huang-ti). At this time, a sixth-generation ancestor, Wu Hsia-shih, said to have been duke of Chin-yang in the Wei, was added to the genealogical list. While this award strengthens the family connection with the Wen-shui area, it seems strange that he went unmentioned in 684 even though only five ancestral temples were established, and I am reluctant to accept the claim. TCTC 204, p. 6467 and HTS 76:3867:4 point out that at this time, the progenitors of the clan were identified as King Wen of Chou and his son, Wu. See Shih-chi 4:0013:2 and 4:0013:3. This was a perfectly conventional move paralleling the T'ang claim of descent from Lao Tzu, and might also be

seen as a bid for Confucian support in her new dynasty.

In sum, we have complete certainty in the Wu genealogy only to the paternal grandfather of the Empress, but a high likelihood of truth to the fifth generation.

On the distaff side, the Yang clan of the Empress' mother was divided into five branches, and hers, the Kuan-wang, was the second. It took its name from Yang Hung (Sui-shu 43:2469:1) who was tsu-tzu [son of paternal male third cousin] to Sui Wen-ti. Hung held numerous posts in the Sui until he aroused the jealousy of Yang-ti, and is classified as one of the "four eminents" of the dynasty. His younger brother, Ta (Sui-shu 43:2469:4), was the maternal grandfather of the Empress Wu, and served as chief-minister (na-yen) under Yang-ti. He died in a military campaign, probably in 616, leaving a son and daughter, the Empress' mother. Her own background is outlined in Ta Chou wu-shang hsiao-ming kao huang-hou pei-ming, CTW 239:2a, by Wu San-ssu. The inscription dates probably from 693 when she received the title. Judging by the pei-ming, which accords with TCTC 201, p. 6369, and disagrees with CTS 183:3553:2, she lived from 579 to 670. There is no record of an earlier marriage, though she was in her thirties when her father died.

[22] See Chapter V.

[23] Summarizing the evidence from earlier notes, it seems that the clan held a feoffdom until the sixth century, and even after that, maintained its land-owning character and military tradition. Numome, Zui Toshi, p. 144, concludes without citing evidence, that the Wu could be numbered among the hao-tsu or magnate clans.

On the matter of their local prominence, some interesting evidence has recently come to light through one of the Tun-huang manuscripts from the Peking collection. This is wei 79 (discussed further in Chapter V), and is, in brief, a list of clans prominent in T'ang times in the various prefectures of the Empire. A 1971 Ph.D. thesis for the U. of California, Johnson, D.G., The Medieval Chinese Oligarchy: A Study of the Great Families in their Social, Political and Institutional Setting, Chapter VIII, has demonstrated a connection between this list and one of similar nature from the Sung geography, T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi. Leaving aside the question of the validity of the relationship, an interesting concordance appears in the parallel sections on Ping-chou. Wei 79, which has several lacunai, runs:

太原郡十一姓 [ ]并[ ]州 [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]郝溫閻智交狐尉遲

The T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi says:

太原郡 十一姓 王武郭霍廖郝溫閻智交狐尉遲 并州

While the nature of the connection between the two sources makes the evidence suggestive rather than conclusive,

the similarity is striking and the same is true when other parts of the list are compared. The possibility that the Empress' own prominence caused the inclusion of her clan in the list can be discounted since this did not happen in the case of great contemporaries like Ma Chou, Wei Cheng, Ti Jen-chieh and Chang Yüeh. At the very least, the concordance of the two lists strongly supports other evidence of the clan's local importance.

[24]WYYH 875:36. On the T'ang p'i-chao system of appointment see Tonami Mamoru, "Chūsei kizokusei no hōkai to hekishōsei", Tōyōshi kenkyū 21:3 (1962). Tsukiyama Chisaburō, Tōdai seiji seido no kenkyū (Osaka, 1967), p. 209FF., contains a number of relevant but less coherent remarks. Although the three principal literary examinations were established in the Sui (T'ang yü-lin 8:12b, and T'ang chih-yen 1:3b), all our evidence shows that only a minute proportion of officials took a degree and that appointment was based principally on the yin privilege, on recommendation and p'i-chao.

[25]Ibid. The governor was Yang Liang, and his biography (Sui-shu 45:2471:3, Pei-shih 71:2971:2) places him in Ping-chou in 597. Nunome, Zui-Tōshi, p. 128, lists Shih-huo among six early adherents of the T'ang who had held Sui office.

[26]WYYH 875:4a. Yang Su's biography (Sui-shu 48:2475:2, Pei-shih 41:2882:2) contains no mention of the incident. The Empress Wu, at the urging of the Chang brothers, was to ban the descendants of Su from capital office. See TTCLC 114:7b, CTW 95:12a. This perhaps supports the truth of the pei story.

[27]WYYH 875:4b5a which calls the book Ku-chin tien-yao, an error. Interestingly, CTS and TCTC accept the belief that the book was given to the emperor while HTS does not mention the incident. The Shih-ch'i-shih shang-chiao 86:9ab specifically rejects it.

[28]WYYH 875:5b. The rebellion occurred in 613 and is outlined TCTC 182, p. 5671ff. and in the biography of the rebel leader Yang Hsüan-kan. See Sui-shu 70:2510:4, Pei-shih 41:2883:2. The best secondary treatment is Nunome, Zui Tōshi, pp. 19-49.

[29]WYYH 875:5b.

[30]WYYH 875:6a.

[31]Ibid. On Li Mi, see Sui-shu 70:2511:4, Pei-shih 60:2939:4, CTS 53:3283:2, HTS 84:3886:4. See also the numerous

references in Bingham, W., The Founding of the T'ang Dynasty (Baltimore, 1941).

[32]WYYH 875:6a.

[33]WYYH 875:6ab.

[34]Kao-tsu's campaign here against the rebel Li Fei is well documented, but no source mentions the participation of Shih-huo.

[35]WYYH 875:6b. Omens in the form of dreams were of great importance at the time. See, for instance, the biography of Lu Tsai, CTS 79:3338:4 and HTS 107:3926:4. Fu Yu-i, CTS 186 shang:3564:4, HTS 223 shang:4163:4 committed suicide because of his dream of imperium. The TFYK account of the dream, 766:12b, does not suggest that Shih-huo touched the heavens.

[36]WYYH 875:6a7b.

[37]WYYH 875:7a.

[38]WYYH 875:7b. The posts were nei-shih-ling and na-yen.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Fonctionnaires, I, p. 8.

[41]TFYK 626:7b and 627:6a. According to Yen Keng-wang's T'ang p'u-shang ch'eng-lang piao, pp. 222-3, .

Shih-huo held the board presidency from 620 to 624 or 625 when he was commissioned to Yang-chou.

Both edicts seem to date from early 620 since the second gives his rank as yu-hsiang su-wei and the pei records that he held the post early in the year. The edict mentions that although Shih-huo had lost both his wife and two sons, he had not reported [and asked leave-of-absence], so that he could be regarded as a model.

Another index of Kao-tsu's regard is the fact that Shih-huo was among fourteen men granted the extraordinary privilege of amnesty-in-advance in 618. See HTS 88:3893:2, biography of P'ei Chi.

[42]WYYH 875:10a.

[43]Shih-huo's first wife was of the Hsiang-li clan, the first barbarian surname to appear in the family tree. On the surname, see Dai kanwa jiten 8, p. 8315.

His second marriage into a clan so much more exalted

than his own has always been a puzzle to historians. Ch'en Yin-k'o in "Li-T'ang Wu-Chou hsien-shih shih-chi tsa-k'ao", CYYY 6:4, pp. 553-6, is forced to suggest that Shih-huo's timber dealings brought him into contact with Yang Ta who was charged with a number of building projects in Lo-yang. The explanation in the pei, confirmed TFYK 853:16a, is much more plausible. In it, Kao-tsu suggests to Shih-huo that he take a new wife and recommends Madame Yang as a virtuous and intelligent woman. He is said to have delegated the Kuei-yang princess to serve as go-between, and he offered to have the state bear the marriage expenses. The pei, exaggerating, places Kao-tsu in the role of go-between.

The Kuei-yang princess, incidentally, was married to Yang Shih-tao, son of Yang Hsiung, and therefore first cousin of the bride. Her choice shows the difficulty of marriage between social unequals in the T'ang. Nunome, Zui-Toshi, pp. 314-69 presents a full account of the marriage connections between the imperial clans of the Sui and T'ang.

On the marriage, see also CTW 239:10ab.

[44] WYYH 875:8ab.

[45] WYYH 875:9a. On Yang-chou, see CTS 40:3223:1, HTS 41:3727:2, THY 71, p. 1270, and on Fu Kung-shih, see CTS 56: 3920:3, HTS 87:3891:4. According to the dating in the TCTC 190, pp. 5970-71, the appointment would have been made just after the third month of 624.

Kuo Mo-jo conjectures that Shih-huo was also posted to Li-chou in this year since he believes the Empress was born here and accepts the traditional date of 624. See note 50. This seems unlikely since TFYK 671:24a and the pei both place him in the capital prior to his appointment, and we know that he remained in this post for more than a year. See also TFYK 690:19a.

[46] TFYK 677:21b and WYYH loc. cit.

[47] On the rebellion, see TCTC 192, p. 6032 and p. 6039. It occurred at the end of 627.

Li-chou was in Shan-nan (CTS 39:3220:1, HTS 40:3725: 3, THY 70, p. 1237, TT 176:9b).

[48] WYYH 875:9b.

[49] WYYH 875:10a. In addition to his post as Ching-chou governor-general, he is said to have been charged with the military affairs of six additional prefectures. The pei exaggerates the posting, calling it ta-tu-fu, but its additional assertion that it was accompanied by T'ai-tsung's commendation is confirmed by TFYK 681:17b and T'ang-wen shih-i 1:7b.

[50]The time (and place) of Empress Wu's birth has been a perplexing problem since primary sources give three different dates. See Appendix I (a). If she was born in 623, 624 or 625, then she would have been born either in Ch'ang-an or in Yang-chou where her father was posted in these years.

Kuo Mo-jo suggests in the appendix to Wu Tse-t'ien, pp. 152-59, and in an article in Kuang-ming jih-pao, Sept. 26, 1962, that her birthplace was Li-chou. He bases this belief on a poem by Li I-shan, found in CTShih 20:47a and T'ang-jen pa-chia shih 2:10a in which Li-chou is given as the birthplace of the "Golden Wheel", a title used by the Empress in the Chou. I have found additional confirmation for the belief in Yü-chi sheng-shih chien-chü by the Ch'ing scholar Feng Hao, 2:30b-31a. Feng quotes Hu Chen-hsing, a Ming expert on T'ang literature.

Kuo Mo-jo goes on to mention a 1955 archeological expedition to the area (see K'ao-ku, July, 1960) which excavated a stele identified by the leader of the expedition, Chang Ming-shan, as belonging to a temple built to commemorate the Empress in her birthplace. Prof. Chang cites other manifestations of the belief, among them certain place-names and an annual festival on the twenty-third of the first lunar month, supposedly in celebration of her birthday.

The stele contains some 800 characters, and Kuo quite convincingly establishes its authenticity, pp. 135-39. There are a number of lacunae, three of them occurring in the key passage which Kuo reconstructs to form a specific statement that the Empress was born in Li-chou. His case is convincing.

The question of birth-date now arises. I am not persuaded to Kuo's conjecture that Shih-huo was posted to Li-chou in 624 because his movements that year are accounted for, and because the stele says the event referred to occurred when he was tu-tu. This can be no earlier than 627. Kuo also calls attention to an anecdote in which the soothsayer Yüan T'ien-kang (CTS 191:3590:2, HTS 206:4106:1) predicts the Empress' imperium while she was still an infant in the care of her nurse. Even in its most detailed form, TFYK 860:27a and T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi 224:2b, the story is too vague to be dated and says only that Yüan stopped in Li-chou on his way to the capital at the request of Madame Yang. The T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi, 221, mentions a trip to the capital, but in 632. I have no doubt that the incident is authentic, but I would use it rather to demonstrate that the Empress was born later than 624.

What seems to emerge here is that the age of the Empress was generally unknown even to contemporaries. Since I find convincing the evidence that Li-chou was her birthplace, I believe she was born either in 627 or 628, making her approximately the same age as Kao-tsung. An otherwise unexplained ceremonial in the first month of 678 (TCTC 202, p. 6384) in which the court attended upon the Empress might

have been in honour of her fiftieth birthday.

[51] WYYH 875:10ab.

[52] WYYH 875:10bff.

[53] See note 50 above.

[54] Note 21 above.

[55] See Appendix I (a).

[56] TCTC 6121-22, and see Wechsler, Mirror, p. 137.

[57] HTS 76:3867:1. The future empress, ibid., is said to have been highly pleased at her summons to the harem even though the chances of advancement were slim. Interestingly, the CTS does not mention the incident.

[58] T'ai-tsung had a large harem whose organization is outlined CTS 51:3278:3 and THY 3, pp. 32-33. There were nine tsai-jen, all of the fifth rank. See also TCTC 199, p. 6284.

T'ai-tsung ultimately had fourteen sons, of whom his wife bore three, and twenty-one daughters. See CTS 76:3331:1 and Nunome, Zui-Toshi, pp. 341-57.

[59] Following the lead of Ch'en, "Li Wu Wei Yang hun-in", several scholars have demonstrated the primacy of political concerns in the choice of imperial concubines in the T'ang. See especially, Nunome, Zui-Toshi, pp. 314-67. On these grounds, Wu's choice is rather puzzling since she was the orphaned daughter of a man with no enduring influence and T'ai-tsung, moreover, had already three concubines of the Yang surname. Kuo Mo-jo, op. cit., p. 117ff., is eloquent on the subject of her beauty, but it is difficult to find contemporary collaboration that she was outstanding.

My own explanation is based on a notice in HTS 80: 3877:3: "The mother of Ming, prince of Ts'ao, was originally the concubine of [T'ai-tsung's executed brother] the prince of Ch'ao. T'ai-tsung 'favoured' her and wanted to make her [his] empress. Wei Cheng remonstrated . . . and he gave up the plan." The CTS 62:3303:1 identifies the lady as the niece of Yang Shih-tao. This made her a same-generation cousin of Wu. Other evidence (T'ang-chien 6, pp. 51-2) suggests the favour of the Yang concubine dates from the late 630's.

If this was the case, and Wu came to T'ai-tsung's attention through her cousin, her entry into the harem was unlikely to have occurred in 637 as Ssu-ma Kuang dates it. She was fourteen (Chinese-style) at her entry, and if my suggested birth-date is correct, the event probably occurred

in 640. While the element of speculation in this chronology is great, it is warranted I think, by the numerous contradictions in the sources.

[60] TCTC 199, pp. 6259-6. The prophecy surfaced because of an astrological configuration which presaged the rule of a woman, and because of a popular tradition that the T'ang would be overturned after three generations by a female. Although T'ai-tsung managed to have the suspected threat, a general whose nickname as a child had been "Fifth lady", executed, he was told that he could not cheat destiny, and that although the female ruler would destroy most of the T'ang clan, she would be merciful in her old age. It is interesting to notice that the Great Cloud Commentary refers to this tradition.

[61] TCTC 199, p. 6267. T'ai-tsung's Yü-hua palace seems also to have had quarters in it for the Crown Prince (TCTC 198, p. 6253, HTS 3:3638:3).

[62] The origin of the story may be the 684 polemic of Lo Pin-wang quoted earlier. The standard histories are silent on the matter and TCTC 199, p. 6284, simply says that she "pleased" Kao-tsung when he came to wait on his father.

[63] See CTS 6:3075:3, HTS 76:3867:1, TCTC 199, p. 6284, THY 3, p. 23, Ch'ang-an chih 9, p. 115. The major discrepancy in the sources lies in the name of the convent, with HTS and CAC calling it the An-yeh ssu, and the others, the Kan-yeh. I am unable to verify the existence of the latter in any of the nine sources indexed by Kiraoka and Imai in Choan to Rakuyo, T'ang Civilization Reference series, vols. 5, 6 and 7 (1956). Hu San-hsing, TCTC, loc. cit. suggests that Ssu-ma Kuang is in error. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 17-19, gives an account of the incident, using the wrong name.

[64] A story given in all the primary sources. The Hsiao concubine was one of the three highest consorts, placed directly below the empress in the first rank.

[65] The question is fully treated by Li Shu-t'ung, T'ang-shih k'ao-pien (Taipei, 1965), pp. 310-35. Prof. Li advances five reasons which, he believes, render invalid the traditional account. These are given below with my comments interpolated.

a) The account has a number of inconsistencies, of which the most important is the contention that Kao-tsung visited the convent on the "taboo day" (chi-jih). This would be the third day of the fifth month in 650, and he was not in the capital at the time.

Here, Prof. Li is assuming that it is T'ai-tsung's "taboo day" which is meant. There were, however, several of these days each year to commemorate both emperors and empresses. THY 23, p. 448ff. I am unable to verify that Kao-tsung was out of the capital at this time.

b) HTS 76, the only source to date Wu's return to the palace, places it "at the end of chen-kuan". If she had taken the tonsure, it would require two years for her hair to grow out to the customary length for concubines.

This seems unconvincing since the shaving of the head accompanied final vows, and we are not certain that former concubines actually became full-fledged nuns. The form of the tonsure in T'ang times may not have meant a complete shaving of the head.

c) Kao-tsung's decree of 656 releasing a number of former concubines from the palace (CTW 12:1a) indicates that it was the older consorts who entered the convent. It is therefore unlikely that Wu went.

While I agree that all concubines were not necessarily forced into a convent (see for instance, THY 3, pp. 35-37), I read the decree differently and would interpret the phrase nien-lao kung-jen i-ling fang-ch'u, as "the older palace women were already ordered to be sent away". I think the subsequent phrase that many women still remained refers to the younger concubines, since the decree was probably inspired by Wu's fear of female rivals. I agree with Prof. Li's conclusion.

d) The decree establishing Wu as empress (Note 6, Chap. II) claims that T'ai-tsung bestowed her on his son. This is untrue and was probably inserted in the record to explain why she did not enter the convent.

I believe the claim was made to suggest that Wu had never had relations with T'ai-tsung and absolve Kao-tsung from the charge of incest which had in fact been levelled against him.

e) There is no evidence that the Empress Wu ever favoured or supported the An-yeh monastery. It was not chosen to commemorate her.

The obvious explanation, of course, is that she wished to conceal any connection with the monastery which had taken in T'ai-tsung's consorts whether she had ever been there or not.

In summation, I do not believe that Prof. Li makes a very convincing case even though I accept his conclusion.

The issue, I think, is so confused because we have no idea of the source of the story. The confusion of detail may suggest more than one source, and the lack of any reliable chronology compounds the problem. Prof. Li suggest simple fabrication by Hsü Ching-tsung to show his patrons in a favourable light by emphasizing the jealousy of Empress Wang, and that Wu later destroyed all those who knew the truth.

Ching-tsung's shih-lu of Kao-tsung became the official version.

I find this an appealing explanation and would add the notion that it was an explanation concocted late, probably around 657-8 when the shih-lu was being completed. Initially, Kao-tsung hoped the fact of incest could be concealed, but when he found it was impossible, a second and more elaborate justification was developed. I believe that Wu was simply concealed after T'ai-tsung's death, possibly at the An-yeh monastery, since she and Kao-tsung had already planned to continue their liaison, and sought thereby to avoid immediate scandal.

An article in Kuang-ming jih-pao, Sept. 12, 1962 under the pseudonym Ching T'ang, accepts the nunnery story but is puzzled by the chronology and tries to show that the Empress Wu returned to the palace in 651 or 652.

[66] See CTS 6:3075:3 and 51:3279:3. The best-known incident in the rivalry is the allegation that Wu killed her own infant daughter in order to blame Empress Wang and give Kao-tsung an excuse to depose her. See HTS 76:3867:1 and TCTC 199, pp. 6286-7. Interestingly, the event is not recorded in the CTS and Ssu-ma Kuang concludes his account by pointing out that Wang failed to clear herself. For Fitzgerald's views on the matter, see Empress Wu, pp. 22-23.

The Empress Wang, CTS 51:3279:2, HTS 76:3866:4, was from the same prefecture as Wu, the daughter of one of T'ai-tsung's officials. The clan already had a marriage connection with the T'ang, and her great-aunt, a princess, seems to have had her married to Kao-tsung before he became Crown Prince. Her great misfortune was sterility, and in 652 she adopted one of her husband's sons by another consort so that an heir could be proclaimed.

Her uncle Liu Shih (CTS 77:3334:3, HTS 112:3938:3) seems to have risen to tsai-hsiang rank because of his niece's position, and it was his resignation in the sixth month of 654 which signalled publicly that she had lost favour. See TCTC 199, p. 6285.

[67] TCTC 199, pp. 6283-4. In the third month of 654, Wu persuaded Kao-tsung to elevate the posthumous titles of the thirteen ministers considered to be Kao-tsu's earliest adherents, thereby enhancing her father's prestige. It seems likely that the court recognized his motives.

[68] In mid-655 when the important debate outlined TCTC 199, p. 6289ff. took place, the tsai-hsiang body was composed of Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi, Ch'ü Sui-liang, Lai Chi, Han Yüan, Yü Chih-ning and Li Chi. Their careers are summarized in Appendix II.

[69]The principal studies, in addition to Ch'en Yin-k'o's "Li, Wu, Wei, Yang hun-yin" cited above, are:
(a) Yokota Ji, "Bu-Shu seiken seiritsu no zentei", Tōyōshi kenkyū 14:4 (March, 1956), pp. 273-94.
(b) Matsui Shuichi, "Sokuten Buko no yōritsu o megutte", Hokudai shigaku, 9 (Sept., 1966), pp. 1-18.
(c) Chang Ch'un, "Lun T'ang k'ai-yüan ch'ien ti cheng-chih chi-t'uan", Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao, 1:2 (Feb., 1956), pp. 281-303.
(d) Lo Lung-chih, "Lun T'ang-ch'u kung-li-ssu-hsiang yü Wu Chao tai T'ang ti kuan-hsi", Shih-yüan, 1 (July 1, 1970), pp. 1-11.

[70]TCTC 199, p. 6267. T'ai-tsung also told his son that while Wu-chi and Sui-liang were alive, he need have no anxiety about the Empire.

There is a good deal of evidence that Wu-chi hoped to dominate Kao-tsung. This is conveniently summarized in Sun Kao-tung, "T'ang chen-kuan yung-hui chien tang-cheng ti shih-i", Hsin-ya shu-yüan hsüeh-shu nien-k'an, 7 (1965), pp. 40-43.

[71]See Wechsler, Mirror, Chap. 4.

[72]TCTC 200, p. 6293.

[73]The validity of the incest argument is a moot point, and it is perhaps significant that it was raised by Ch'ü Sui-liang, a southerner. There is a good deal of evidence that this sort of union was common in Central Asia and not unknown in North China at the time. See Ch'en Ku-yüan, Chung-kuo hun-yin shih, Chap. III, and Lin Hui-hsiang, Wen-hua jen-lei hsüeh, p. 214ff. Lin T'ien-wei, Sui-T'ang shih hsin-pien (Hong Kong, 1968), pp. 56-75, amply demonstrates the Turkic cast of the T'ang court by listing 164 great ministers whose lineage was wholly or in part "barbarian". Both levirate and sororate marriages are attested in the biography of Li O (Sui-shu 66:2503:2, Pei-shih 77:2985:2).

In the T'ang imperial clan, the practice was not unknown and we have earlier noted T'ai-tsung's desire to raise his brother's consort to the position of empress. Though it is not generally known, he also took the consort of a half-brother, releasing her on Wang Kuei's objection. See HTS 78:3908:2. The T'ang marriage laws (TLSI 12-14, especially 14, pp. 123-5, and TRSI, p. 248ff.) seem to contain no prohibition, and Chung-tsung, Hsüan-tsung, and Shun-tsung were all involved in similar relationships.

Sui-liang's objection, therefore, seems less important than the political reasons for tsai-hsiang opposition. Kao-tsung, as earlier suggested, attempted to conceal Wu's relationship with his father, but he did so probably in deference to the feelings of the more purely Chinese of his ministers. It was, after all, an age marked by the re-asser-

tion of Chinese cultural values.

[74]Chapter II, note 6.

[75]For this and the following interpretations, see note 69 above.

[76]On Li I-fu, Appendix 2, #39.

[77]Note 69, above.

[78]Note 69, above.

[79]Note 69, above.

[80]TCTC 199, pp. 6291-2, and note the commentary. For Empress Wu's view on "household matters", Chapter IX.

[81]See the biographies of the victims, Appendix II, numbers 14, 30, 32, 37 and 38. Also, TCTC 200, pp. 6303-4 and 6312ff.

[82]CTS 51:3279:3, TCTC 200, p. 6294. She had the hands and feet of the women cut off and drowned them in a wine-vat.

[83]TCTC 203, pp. 6410-11. See also THY 30, pp. 556-7, Yü-hai 157:29b.

While there is a certain rhetorical exaggeration in the account, there seems to have been an equal degree of truth. In 665, Kao-tsung complained that his ministers never remonstrated, only to be told by Li Chi that this was because there was no need to do so. TCTC 201, p. 6343. The first real remonstrance is dated 682 by Ssu-ma Kuang, TCTC 203, pp. 6410-11.

[84]TCTC 200, p. 6294 tells how Kao-tsung visited the prison of his ex-wife and at her request, changed its name to Court of Recollection (hui-hsin yüan). On his reaction to the charges against Wu-chi, see TCTC 200, p. 6313.

[85]TCTC 200, p. 6313.

[86]See TCTC 200, p. 6322, CTS 6:3075:2. Ssu-ma Kuang here follows the CTS in admitting that the Empress was highly intelligent and well-versed in literature and history.

[87]TCTC 200, pp. 6309 and 6317 where the commentary identifies the various administrative centers. See also Chapter VIII.

[88]THY 85, p. 1557. This census was designed to keep

up-to-date the system of nine grades to which each household was assigned. See Twitchett, D.C., Financial Administration under the T'ang Dynasty (Cambridge U.P., 1959), p. 29ff.

[89]See CTS 4:3071:4ff. On the new office, Fonctionnaires, I, p. 187.

[90]CTS 4:3071:4.

[91]TCTC 200, p. 6308, and see Chapter V.

[92]CTS 4:3071:4, TCTC 200, p. 6308. See also Chapter VI.

[93]TCTC 200, p. 6295. THY 3, p. 24.

[94]CTW 12:6ab. The edict begins by tracing back Lo-yang's history as a good capital site to the Duke of Chou, and comments upon its favourable strategic and economic location. It points out that earlier dynasties had established the precedent of two capitals and that since Lo-yang had often been one of them, it had become a majestic city. Its central location facilitated the payment of taxes and tribute and henceforth it would be the residence of the ruler.

[95]CTS 4:3072:4, TCTC 201, p. 6344ff.

[96]Ssu-ma Kuang, TCTC 201, pp. 6342-3, begins his account by remarking the Empress' initial humility and willingness to serve Kao-tsung, and suggests that for this reason, he was willing to elevate her in spite of opposition. As time went on, she is said to have arrogated more and more power to herself, much to her husband's chagrin. See also HTS 105:3924:1 and Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 44-47.

[97]Appendix II, #47.

[98]HTS 105:3924:2.

[99]TCTC 201, p. 6343. "Two Sages" dates from 660.

[100]CTS 6:3075:3. The same work dates her real power from about 675 when she was offered the regency. On this question see also Chou Tao-chi, Han T'ang tsai-hsiang chih-tu (Taipei, 1963), p. 631, and CTS 5:3074:1.

[101]Sui-shu 36:2457:2. Wen-ti's wife, of course, was not nearly so prominent in government as Empress Wu, and the Sui-shu specifies that the term "Two Sages" was used within the palace.

[102]CTS 5:3074:1, TCTC 202, pp. 6375-76. The phrase

is she-chih kuo-cheng.

[103] See the exhaustive study of the ceremonial by E. Chavannes, Le T'ai Chan (Paris, 1910), and my Chapter IV.

[104] See Wechsler, Mirror, especially pp. 123-25.

[105] CTS 4:3071:4. On the official posts held by the half-brothers of the Empress, see TCTC 201, p. 6349 which also outlines the source of discord in the family.

[106] TCTC 201, p. 6349, HTS 76:3867:1 and 2.

[107] CTS 183:3553:1, HTS 76:3867:2, TCTC 201, p. 6350.

[108] On Min-chih, see CTS 183:3553:1, TCTC 202, pp. 6366-7.

It is interesting to notice that the HTS account of his death, 76:3867:2, portrays him as an innocent victim of Wu's suspicion that he considered her the murderer of his sister.

[109] Their biographies are found CTS 183:3553:1ff., and HTS 206:4109:2ff. On their arrival at court, TCTC 202, p. 6372.

[110] CTS 5:3073:4 and 3074:1.

[111] HTS 76:3867:2.

[112] TCTC 201, p. 6365. The offer may have been connected with serious drought in Kuanchung at the time. See CTS 5:3073:3.

[113] CTS 5:3074:1, HTS 3:3640:1, TCTC 202, p. 6372.

[114] TCTC 202, p. 6372.

[115] Submitted in the twelfth month of 674. The fullest text is HTS 76:3867:2, and see also CTS 5:3074:1, THY 37, pp. 675-76, TFYK 564:56, TCTC 202, p. 6374.

[116] HTS, loc. cit. With the exception of the provisions relating to the Tao-te ching and the mother's mourning period, the standard sources offer no evidence of action. Notices in TFYK 80:10b and 490:10ab suggest that early in 675, various promotions were made and taxes and corvée lightened, and on some of the other provisions, no formal edict was needed.

[117] See Chapter VIII.

[118]TCTC 201, pp. 6375-76. See also TFYK 180:7a. The remonstrance went on to suggest that Kao-tsung would be betraying his heritage should he fail to bequeath the Empire to his son.

[119]TCTC 202, p. 6377. See also TFYK 261:17b, THY 2, p. 20, CTS 5:3071:1.

[120]TCTC 202, p. 6377. The K'ao-i points out that neither the shih-lu nor the CTS suggest murder.

[121]HTS 76:3867:2.

[122]Note 124.

[123]See CTS 86:3350:1, HTS 81:3878:3. The ill-health of the Crown Prince, conversely, may have provided the Empress with a convenient explanation for his sudden death, and it may be that she made certain it was mentioned in his epitaph. For the epigraphical collections containing this, see Chin-k'o t'i-po so-yin, p. 53b.

[124]Biographies CTS 86:3350:3, HTS 81:3878:3. There is no direct evidence of illegitimate birth beyond the rumour referred to in the text and his reaction to it.

[125]CTS 5:3074:1. This seems to be yet another indication that Kao-tsung retained his independence.

[126]CTS 86:3350:3.

[127]TCTC 202, p. 6397. The CTS gives no details.

[128]Kao-tsung, according to Hsien's biography and THY 4, p. 42, regarded him as a most precocious and talented child and rewarded him lavishly for his Hou Han-shu commentary. At the same time, he remarked in 678 on how he loved most his youngest son who had just married a praiseworthy woman, and after Hsien's fall, expressed disapproval of his reading matter. TCTC 202, pp. 6397-98. The Empress Wu is said to have attempted to instruct him in his duties by sending him uplifting books and personal instruction. CTS 86: 3350:3.

[129]CTS 86:3350:3, THY 4, p. 42, TCTC 202, p. 6397.

[130]TCTC 203, p. 6419. Though Ssu-ma Kuang states flatly that the Empress ordered her son's death, he does not identify his source. Neither of the official histories suggests openly that she did so.

[131]See CTW 17:5a.

[132]TCTC 203, p. 6406. There were precedents for the establishment of a t'ai-sun in the Chin and Ch'i dynasties.

[133]CTS 5:3075:1.

[134]CTS 5:3074:4.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EMPRESS WU

AND THE CREATION OF STATE IDEOLOGY

Since the collapse of the Han Empire in the late second century, the re-unification of China had become a constant though increasingly elusive ideal. Successive dynasties in north and south had frequently exhausted their strength in the search for systems of conquest, control and practical administration which might weld into a coherent whole, a pluralistic culture of strong and persistent regional loyalties. In this process, certain military, economic and organizational mechanisms had been developed which constitute, in some recent scholarship, the principal explanation for the restoration of the Empire in the sixth century.[1] There is much that is appealing in analyses of this sort, but at the same time, they have in common a tendency to ignore the role of what one scholar calls, the "suasive accompaniment to the exercise of power,"[2] what we shall refer to as the state ideology: that which justifies the legitimation of the power-holder and disposes the populace to accept and support his policies. "Ideology" was a basic concern of all Sui-T'ang rulers, and a first priority of the Empress Wu. Without making significant change in its traditional form, she could

not have become emperor.

Before we proceed, some further clarification of terminology is required, for even among social scientists there is much debate about the definition of "ideology" and its relation both to comparable terms like "political theory", "culture" and "value structure" as well as to its various components such as national myths and the religious and intellectual life of those it seeks to influence.[3] We shall give the term wide connotations in the following discussion, using it to refer to the totality of words, symbols, rituals, ideas and principles used to legitimize particular individuals, institutions and procedures. We shall recognize, secondly, that it is a concept subject to re-definition, for to be successful an ideology is process not stasis, and is responsive to the shifts of values and constituencies. This is something seen clearly in the most successful of ideologies prior to the Sui-T'ang period, the so-called Han Confucianism, which during its lengthy development in the second half of the second century B.C., came to include several of the ideas and rituals associated originally with such schools as Taoism, Legalism and Yin-Yang.

In the Later Han, however, this ideology became first outmoded then impotent, as rapid social change and the spread of Buddhism created new values, and as increasingly weak rulers succeeded each other, each less responsive than the last. In spite of this, one feature of the syncretic Han

ideology which survived even in the barbarization of North China was its perception of the imperial institution. The emperor continued to be seen as a "cosmic pivot", the harmonizer of heaven, earth and man, and for this reason, the formulation of state ideology became more and more an imperial responsibility. Thus, in the Sui re-unification of China, Wen-ti's greatest achievement lay perhaps in his ability to turn to the purposes of centralization and the consolidation of dynastic power, the values and symbols of Confucianism, Taoism and especially Buddhism, the faith of the vast majority of his subjects.[4]

The first rulers of the T'ang, facing a hierarchy of problems very similar to those of the Sui were able to adopt similar solutions, and at least in broad outline, to espouse an ideology whose only major variation was its reliance on Taoist Messianism.[5] The mid-dynasty usurpation of the Empress Wu, however, was a very different case. Because of its unprecedented nature, the Chou dynasty required different justifications for legitimation and different estimates of societal response. It is principally for this reason that traditional historiography has dwelt on the anomolies of the period, with most sources depicting the era as one of brilliant, extravagant and vulgar ceremonials, of constant omens and of a ceaseless attempt to influence both domestic and foreign affairs by the manipulation of the supernatural. Seen in contrast to the more rationalistic attitude of T'ai-tsung, the

emphasis has a certain justification, but we must re-call that T'ai-tsung was more firmly established in legitimate dynastic succession than was the Empress, and was, in any case, of a vastly different temperament.

This final point is of some importance. Because the formation of state ideology was so intimately connected with imperial prerogative, the character, background and training of the ruler were significant factors in its creation and form. We have earlier seen that the background of the Empress Wu differed in several respects from the rulers of the Sui and the early T'ang: her clan was of a lower social stratum, northeastern rather than northwestern, and she herself spent her formative years outside the capital where she must have been exposed widely to what Maoist historians term the "people's culture".[6] And because her ministerial body was so aristocratic and metropolitan in coloration, clashes were bound to be frequent. Of even greater significance, the Empress was raised in a strongly religious atmosphere, and as we will attempt to show, this particular aspect of her background was evident in each of the several stages which ultimately gave Buddhism a brief precedence over both Confucianism and Taoism as components of the ideology of the Chou.

The roots of the Empress Wu's deep religious feeling can be traced probably to the influence of her mother, Madame Yang. The Yang clan as a whole was known in Sui times for its particular generosity toward the Buddhist <u>T'ien-t'ai</u> or

Lotus Sect, and both emperors had been lavish in their patronage of Buddhism in general.[7] Several scholars have commented upon Madame Yang's own piety and upon her generous support for the work of translation and the erection of votive images,[8] and one goes so far as to suggest that she early placed her daughter, the future Empress, in a convent.[9] Evidence for this is dubious, but it is generally acknowledged that from the mid-650's, as mother of the reigning Empress, she was one of the most influential patrons of Buddhism in the land. In the Chi sha-men pu-ying pai-su teng-shih, our fullest account of the obeisance controversy of 662, she is depicted as the most staunch and steadfast of the Church's allies at Court, and credited with a share in its victory.[10]

At the same time, however, Madame Yang was typical of her times in the syncretism of her beliefs. She had once welcomed to her home the soothsayer Yüan T'ien-kang to prophesy about her children,[11] and it was she, perhaps, who introduced to her daughter the Taoist priest (tao-shih) whose skill in the black arts (yen-sheng) almost caused her deposition in 664.[12] It is little wonder, therefore, that the Empress Wu was herself inclined to the mystical and the supernatural, and we may note the earliest manifestation of this tendency in her attempt to exorcise from the palace the bloody apparitions of the murdered Empress Wang and Hsiao Liang-ti. Failure to do so, according to traditional historiography, led her to desert Ch'ang-an for Lo-yang.[13]

These few illustrations raise an interesting point. Prophecy, divination, exorcism and practices of the sort were not, since the Han, the exclusive property of any of the three principal philosophical traditions. As we will later suggest, there are numerous contemporary examples of avowed Confucians engaging in such activities as the interpretation of omens and dreams, as well as numerous miracle-workers among the Buddhists; and for that reason, the discussion which follows is restricted to those aspects of state ideology which were directed toward definable and discrete groupings and beliefs. It should become evident that the Empress propounded no novel system, but rather "juggled" or re-assembled in her ideology existing elements of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism in response to the needs of the time. We will also see three distinct stages.

Both the early Sui and the reign of T'ang T'ai-tsung are regarded in the standard histories as a time of flourishing Confucianism,[14] and it is to be expected that the Empress would see the advantages of a continued appeal to the educated classes, the aristocrats and officials, on the basis of Confucian ritual and values. Especially in the period following her controversial and unorthodox elevation, she was the very model of the humble, supportive, and ostensibly non-interfering Confucian empress. Her relatives were not raised to high posts and she publicly praised the devotion to duty of those

ministers who had opposed her, remaining detached at least in the public eye from their destruction.[15] Even the hostile Ssu-ma Kuang remarks her initial modesty![16] In this same period, much attention was devoted to Confucian ethical values: a new Ritual was promulgated and the rules of filial reverence extended.[17] A new college, the ch'ung-hsien-kuan, was founded,[18] and an otherwise severe critic in 657 praised the standard of education both in the capital and the country-side.[19] Education was of course a priority of Confucians, and to win the loyalty of a still-developing ruling group, both Kao-tsung and his wife were to patronize consistently the schools and more especially the examinations, a matter we shall later discuss in detail. It may have been that in this period the Empress Wu devoted some attention also to her own studies, for she was soon to demonstrate an intimate knowledge of Confucian symbolism, nomenclature and ritual tradition which could be used both for state and personal purposes.

The first and most striking instance of her ability in this regard came in 665 when Kao-tsung decided to celebrate the most awesome of state sacrifices, the feng and shan on Mount T'ai, reporting to Heaven the fulfillment of harmony and acknowledging the continuing responsibilities of his man-date.[20] Given that rulers of the calibre of Sui Wen-ti and T'ai-tsung had felt themselves unworthy to perform the ritual, its celebration at this time was an expression of unusual personal self-confidence and dynastic congratulation, and

even more unusual was the fact that the Empress Wu was able to persuade the officials of ritual that she be allowed to participate in it. E. Chavannes, who has made the most thorough study of the sacrifice,[21] translates from her request:

> . . . d'après ce qu'expose la doctrine des livres classiques, la cérémonial féminin et la cérémonial masculin sout donc distincts: lorsqu'il s'est agi de constituer des associés pour l'autel féminin, on s'est conformé au sexe de la divinité de la Terre; . . . d'ailleurs, puisqu'on invite les augustes impératrices défuntes à venir en personne participer au précieux festin, pourquoi ordonne-t-on à de hauts fonctionnaires de sexe masculin de p'immiscer à des sacrifices parfaits offerts à des femmes? Si on raisonne en bonne logique, il y a quelque chose qui jette le désordre dans une excellente ordonnance. . . .[22]

With Kao-tsung's consent, the Empress thus became the first woman to participate in the shan sacrifice, and it is noteworthy that there was no overt protest at the time. In 725, the great savant Chang Yüeh was to cite this sacrilege as the cause of the T'ang overthrow and the success of the Chou usurpation,[23] but at the time of the sacrifice, the whole Court joined in congratulation of the Emperor and accepted the lavish rewards he offered.[24]

It is useful to speculate here upon the motives of the Empress in requesting to participate. There is no direct evidence for the usual assumption that she herself inspired the sacrifice, but once it was decided, she undoubtedly desired correctness of form. More than this, however, her request was an assertion of the imperial prerogative to define that correctness, and this was probably a more important motive than, for example, any concern she may have had to

advance the position of women. More specifically, and within the context of Confucian ideology, she sought the best of both worlds, preserving the broad basis of the ancient rite while making real change in the name of the spirit of the regulations. "Why," she asked her husband, "should you conform to outmoded rules and not institute a perfect regulation?",[25] and with this, the emperor transcended precedent and became the interpreter of a tradition which had so often tied the hands of former rulers. Chang Yüeh's later protest was essentially an attempt to repudiate this view.

Lest this interpretation seem too political, we might adduce a few further examples to show the consistency with which the Two Sages performed resolutely Confucian actions with a subtle originality which kept them ever from becoming imprisoned by form. Confucius, for instance, was awarded the honorific title t'ai-shih in 666,[26] a term once used for the most honoured of the San-kung of antiquity and an office held by the Duke of Chou, but wholly unprecedented. Similarly, the title "Celestial" (t'ien-huang, t'ien-hou) which the monarchs appropriated for themselves in 674,[27] had classical connotations of high antiquity, but had never been used for living rulers. On two occasions, in 662 and in 684, new names were created for the posts and titles at every level of the bureaucracy.[28] Other rulers like Wang Mang, concerned ostensibly with the very Confucian principle of the "rectification of names" (cheng-ming) had also made extensive revisions

of the sort,[29] but there was no parallel for such thorough reform in mid-dynasty. Of greater interest perhaps, is the fact that most of the names chosen in 662, such as those for the Three Departments and Six Boards were wholly new, while those of 684, for reasons we shall discuss later, were largely an echo of the Ritual of Chou.

From the above summary, we may conclude that in Kao-tsung's lifetime two aspects of the Confucian tradition, its social-ethical and its ritual-symbolic values, were espoused to bolster the state. In both areas, there were well-worn examples to follow and even where ritual innovations were made, protest was absent, a phenomenon to be contrasted with the response to similar measures undertaken by the Empress after her husband's death. The lack of protest may be attributed perhaps, to the skillful form of innovation, to the simultaneous and welcome patronage of schools, examinations and the social progress of the lesser aristocracy, and finally to the intimidation of the upper levels of the bureaucracy and the great clans. Another factor, and one to which we shall now turn, was the fact that the developing state ideology was coming in the same period to embrace Taoism and Buddhism, philosophies which had their supporters among the ruling group, but which were far more important among the lower orders and so could be crucial components in the maintenance of social order.

Taoism, to begin with, had occupied a special position

in the T'ang since T'ai-tsung's declaration in 637 that Lao Tzu was the direct ancestor of the imperial family.[30] Such a claim was not unusual in the aristocratic climate of the times and was made chiefly for the purposes of dynastic consolidation: to dissociate the T'ang from the Sui with its highly-Buddhistic ideology and to enhance the royal lineage vis-à-vis the pretensions of the great Shantung clans. The success of Kao-tsu's rebellion against the Sui had been attributable in part to the potency of the "Saviour Li" myth of Taoist Messianism,[31] and T'ai-tsung thus hoped to use the awe of inherited charisma to further his centralizing aims. In the same edict in which he declared his descent, he also decreed the precedence of Taoist over Buddhist representatives in all Court ceremonials, and though the Empress Wu was to reverse the order in 691,[32] she saw the value of the myth and while Kao-tsung lived, she encouraged and supported him in his Taoist patronage. A good example of this occurred immediately after the feng and shan when one Taoist and one Buddhist temple were founded in every prefecture of the empire, and twenty-seven monks ordained and attached to each site, all expense borne by the state.[33] Returning from Mount T'ai, the imperial party also visited the reputed birthplace of Lao-tzu in Hao-chou, and there conferred upon the sage the honorific T'ai-shang hsüan-yüan huang-ti, a mark of great respect.[34] Four years later, the Empress took the initiative by ordaining her only daughter, the princess T'ai-p'ing as a Taoist

nun (nü-kuan), and though her motive was probably the circumvention of Tibetan requests for a marriage alliance,[35] the act retained symbolic value, and must have pleased the Taoist church.

These measures then, were calculated to win the support of religious Taoists whose communities had grown increasingly numerous since the fall of the Han, and who, largely through a virtual monopoly of calendar-making functions at court in the period of division, had come to wield a good deal of political influence.[36] There existed also, however, a large number of educated men who might be termed philosophical Taoists, men interested in the wisdom or scientific writing of that tradition. In 675, the Empress appealed directly to them when she formally memorialized in praise of the sagacity and relevance of Lao-tzu, and requested that ". . . all those below the rank of prince or duke, officials both inside and outside [the capital], and all the people study the Tao-te ching . . ."[37] As a result, the Taoist classic became part of the examination curriculum, and shortly thereafter was declared the equal of the Classic of Filial Piety (Hsiao-ching) as the most important object of study for all scholars.[38] Taoist philosophy received therefore an enormous stimulus.

It is difficult to know whether or not the Empress had any sincere attachment to Taoism. As a philosophy of rule it was unlikely to hold much attraction for her, but on the other

hand, she must have been aware of the deleterious effects on the Northern Chou of its proscription of Taoism and Buddhism between 574-78.[39] On quite another level, we have already suggested that the Empress was much attracted to the supernatural, and Lao Tzu after the Han had not only been adopted and deified by religious Taoism, but had become associated in the popular mind with numerous culture heroes, folk deities, and indeed, the cult of immortality (shen-hsien).[40] Taoist adepts were the most active practitioners of the occult--exorcism (chang-chiao), amulets (fu-lu) and conjurations (chang-fu), and had moreover produced or interpreted prognostications used both by the Sui and the T'ang in taking power.[41] Taoism, finally, with its rich and exotic pantheon, had created a realm of opulent imagination which might be expected to appeal to a romantic mind like that of the Empress. In any case, and whatever its attractions, Taoism appears in the traditional sources as a prominent feature of Court life in the Chou dynasty, even though imperial patronage toward the organized religion was largely withdrawn. Traditional historiography, as we shall see, remarks that the Empress was "fond of auspicious omens",[42] and portrays her dynasty as a time when charlatans abounded. It points, for example, to her support of a notorious brothel in the belief that it was a convent whose abbess survived on a single grain of rice per day, and to the Taoist priest associated with the abbess who became a tsai-hsiang because of his supposed magical powers.[43]

Above all, it documents her relations with the Chang brothers, one of whom she believed to be the re-incarnation of a Taoist divinity and for whom she created a fairyland-like setting where frequent and unseemly celebrations became something of a scandal in her last years.[44] It seems reasonable to conclude, on the basis of evidence like this, that the Empress had a personal interest in Taoism which was divorced from state purposes.

The same is true, though to an infinitely greater degree with Buddhism. It is here, perhaps, that we encounter the core of the Empress' spiritual life, and her short dynasty was to be, in the words of a modern Buddhist historian, "a turning point, a time of rapid advance"[45] in the fortunes of the Church. Interestingly, the empire saw little evidence of her preference before Kao-tsung's death, though this is not surprising in view of the T'ang commitment to the rival Taoist ideology. There exist several references to her private devotion in this period--the support of votive sculpture at Lung Men, and the reception of a series of eminent monks,[46] but she eschewed the adoption of any public stance in Church-state relations. Dynastic consolidation and embellishment of the imperial lineage called for the subordination of religious to state interests, and the clearest indication of her willingness to do this is found in the great obeisance (pai) controversy of 662.

The issue, whether or not monks and nuns of the Taoist

and Buddhist churches should do obeisance to ruler and parents, was not a new one. From the Eastern Chou onwards, it had arisen in almost every dynasty and while the practice had varied from one to the other, clerics in the South had been consistently free of the obligation until Sui Yang-ti's edict of 607.[47] In church-state relations, it represented the most basic of clashes--the other-worldly nature of clerical vocation opposed to the Chinese way of li and i. More than this, should clerics be free of the obligation to bow to the ruler, they would in effect enjoy "extraterritorial" rights; and to refuse obeisance to parents was clearly subversive to filial piety. The T'ang, as a dynasty of doubtful pedigree, had increasingly emphasized filial piety and the hierarchical relationships of Confucianism as the centre of the Chinese Way.[48]

T'ai-tsung had opened the debate in the T'ang complaining that clerics ". . . falsely respect themselves. Seated, they accept homage from father and mother, damaging [our] customs, perverting the Ritual (Li-ching) . . ."[49] If the situation depicted is a true one, it seems that Yang-ti's edict had had no lasting effect, and as far as we can determine, T'ai-tsung had no better luck.[50] In 657, Kao-tsung was forced to decree that the clergy receive no homage from parents and seniors,[51] and either because this was ignored or because he wished to reverse the situation, he called for a full discussion of the matter in 662. In the edict, his own

position was clear:

> . . . We wish now to order Taoist and Buddhist monks and nuns to do obeisance before Emperor, Empress and Crown Prince, as well as their [own] parents. [Since] sometimes we fear the loss of deeply-rooted feelings, it is proper to have the officials concerned discuss the matter critically and memorialize . . .[52]

The effect of this decree on the Buddhist community in the capital seems to have been electrifying. Within the week, over two hundred monks appeared at the gates of the P'eng-lai palace bearing a brief of opposition prepared by the eminent cleric Wei-hsiu of the Ta-chuang-yen temple.[53] In rapid succession similar petitions were carried to influential patrons: to Li Hsien, second son of the Empress and still a boy, to her mother, Madame Yang, and collectively to the tsai-hsiang body.[54] When the debate proper began two weeks later, more than a thousand officials including many from the provinces were in attendance, as were more than three hundred monks led by the famous Tao-hsüan who had prepared earlier briefs. Perhaps in fear of undue pressure, the chairman ruled that of the clerics, only those with civil rank (su-kuan) should be allowed to remain.[55]

The meeting rapidly polarized into two groups, and several sources preserve the positions of each, though not in a very comprehensive or systematic fashion.[56] The range of debate was wide and since as a whole it constitutes a summary of earlier debates on the subject, we might do well to outline briefly the opposing positions.

Those who advocated the duty of obeisance maintained that because of the relationship established between Heaven, Earth and Man (san-i), homage to ruler and parent was essential, a gauge of civilization among all peoples, and clerical exemption thus undermined the entire Way. The power (te) of the Son of Heaven was moreover absolute and unique, spanning present and future worlds, and both the unity of the Empire and the order of the universe depended on it. Even if clerics were removed by ordination from the secular world they still lived in the Empire, and owed to the ruler a debt of gratitude for his protection and transmission of the religion. In a slightly different vein, proponents of the obligation argued that Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism were at the most basic level, the same. It was wrong therefore for the two churches to withhold the sign of their respect from the Confucian relationships. They pointed out that the Tao-te ching, for example, numbered the ruler among the Four Greats (ssu-ta), and that no less than four Buddhist sutras also supported the obligation.[57] Other tenets of Buddhism--humility, respect and discipline were cited as reasons for the pai, and several of the briefs which pursue this line of argument contain veiled threats by referring to the arrogance of the clergy and to the "excessive" numbers of monks and nuns.

A total of twenty-nine briefs putting this side of the case are found in the Ch'uan T'ang-wen, and it is interesting to note that in them the question of obeisance to

parents receives a good deal less attention. Here the argument can be distilled to the simple proposition that human life is a gift of one's parents. Is it not both natural and seemly that all men should wish tangibly to show their gratitude? Because this was the first ethical objection faced by Buddhist proselytism in China, answers had been developed centuries before,[58] and there may have been a feeling that since new arguments were unlikely to be adduced, this aspect of the question need not be emphasized.

The fundamental position of the clerical party was that ordination constituted an effective withdrawal from the world and was a casting aside of state, society and family to enter a transcendental sphere of existence where Confucian li had no place. As Tao-hsüan put it,

> . . . In his manner of living, the monk has no regard for wealth and sensuous beauty. . . . Therefore, he is proclaimed as one who has left the household life. One who has done so no longer embraces the rites of one who remains in the family, one who has forsaken the world is no longer immersed in the practices of the world. . . .[59]

Though this premise was constantly repeated in the debate, the clerical party had several other propositions to advance. They contended that the sangha was subject to its own rule, the Vinaya, and thus had no need to acknowledge secular authority. Several sutras were specific in forbidding the practice of pai, and one of these warns that he who accepts homage from a monk does himself harm.[60] They argued further that historical tradition freed clerics from the

obligation and cleverly turning back upon their opponents their own arguments, pointed out that a ruler who re-instated the practice would be betraying his own ancestors and committing a breach of filial piety! Still on the attack, they reminded the emperor of his duty to respect the spirits, and since the Buddha was a spirit, the emperor should perhaps pay homage to his representatives rather than vice-versa. Moreover, they said, it is the emperor who permits a monk to leave the secular world by ordination. Was it not a denial of his own imperial action to subject a monk once more to worldly obligations? As effective as this point may have been in the debate, it was also a bald admission that the ruler had the right to control ordination, and as such, was ultimately destructive to the independence of the Church.

In a more conciliatory view, several members of the clerical group suggested that obeisance was simply an external sign, and that the clerical vocation was by nature filial and respectful. They explained the merits of a monk's ordination and prayerful life extended to three generations of his family, and they further emphasized the filial piety of the funeral rites and memorial services held after a relative's death. Finally, they objected to the manner in which their opponents had interpreted the sutras, and offered counter-arguments.

On neither side was there much novelty in the arguments and it is unlikely that many minds were changed. The

final vote, however, must have been unexpected in view of Kao-tsung's instructions. The clerical party under Ling-hu Te-fen[61] mustered 539 votes against the pai obligation while their opponents under Yen Li-pen[62] could gather only 354. The Emperor compromised the next month with a decree that homage to the ruler was unnecessary, but that parents were entitled to receive it.[63] This solution seems to have been unsatisfactory to the sangha who continued to petition their patrons, including Madame Yang, and possibly with success. The Confucian sources are silent on the matter but the Sung kao-seng chuan relates that even the pai to parents was ended.[64] When the issue next arose in 714, Hsüan-tsung is found to be ordering obeisance both to ruler and parents.[65]

There are numerous facets of the incident which might profitably be explored, but what concerns us here is the position of the Empress Wu. She seems to have made no public expression of her view, and the clerical party, perhaps in deference to Kao-tsung, made no direct representation to her. There is evidence, however, that she was active behind the scenes, for of the extant briefs which advocate the pai obligation, almost one-third were produced by her blood-relations or by men closely tied to her in other ways.[66] Among them was Ho-lan Min-chih, her nephew and the future heir to her father.[67] The outcome was therefore unsatisfactory to her and it was not characteristic that she bow to defeat. Why did she do so?

The answer lies perhaps in her adaptability and far-sightedness. It is significant first of all, that she and her husband sought to settle the question by concensus rather than by fiat, and when the outcome revealed the strength of the Church in the highest circles of government, it was clear that Buddhism must play an important role in the ideology of the state. To antagonize its supporters could prejudice both present and future freedom of action. Beyond this, we might re-call that the inclinations of the Empress were Buddhistic and she saw little threat, political or economic, from a Church recently weakened by the relatively unfavorable attitude of T'ai-tsung.[68] In the debate it is true, a blow had been struck at imperial prerogative but at the same time the Buddhists had acknowledged the right of the throne to control ordination, and what is more, Taoism with its T'ang associations, had a share in the victory. The fact that South China, a priority of centralization, had traditionally rejected the pai obligation may have played a part in the decision, as indeed may have the fact that if Confucian piety were weakened, so was its constricting view of women. In short, the Empress seems to have reflected, then changed her position to one which was probably more congenial and certainly offered greater long-term advantages. Kao-tsung who was much more friendly to Buddhism than is generally recognized,[69] was perhaps persuaded to let the matter rest.

State patronage of religion in the next two decades

was, as we suggested earlier, both balanced and generous. The best illustration is the foundation of the Kuo-fen temples in 666, valuable to both Churches in a symbolic as well as an economic sense,[70] and Buddhist sources offer other examples. Throughout these years, the Buddhists in particular made great strides in theology, conversion and translation so that they were well-prepared for the new role to be thrust upon them in the regime of the Empress Wu. Though in retrospect we must acknowledge that the Church was driven to depths of sycophancy in the Chou, we must also admit it reached heights of prosperity unseen since Liang Wu-ti or Empress-dowager Ling of the Wei, and we must turn our attention now to the reasons for this development.

In the latter part of the fourth century and largely through the work of the eminent monk Tao-an, there had developed in China a special devotion to the future Buddha, Maitreya.[71] From a private, clerical spiritual exercise, it had developed soon into a cult of statewide proportions whose most prominent feature was the belief that in the last period of the dharma, Maitreya would return as a universal monarch to cleanse a corrupt and confused world, and to inaugurate a new golden age. This belief was not the exclusive property of any single sect and there was much variation among them in dating the apocalypse,[72] but judging from such evidence as the votive sculpture at Lung-men, Maitreya was the most popular object of devotion by the early sixth century.[73] Although

the cult could be a potentially subversive one, and by the T'ang had a history of popular uprising and proscription,[74] it was not easy to suppress and as late as 664, we find Hsüan-tsang, the famed pilgrim and an imperial favorite, exhorting the multitudes to pray to Maitreya in his last sermon.[75]

There is little evidence in subsequent years of any growth in devotion to Maitreya, and indeed there seems to have been a decline among the societal élite; but a number of events are recorded which kept alive the belief that the last stage of the law was at hand and the coming of the future Buddha imminent. Among these, two were of sufficient importance to find a place in official historiography. The first was a mysterious aura which appeared over a site in the capital in 677, and when a great cache of Buddhist relics was found buried beneath, the Kuang-chai temple was founded on the spot.[76] Knowledge of the event was disseminated through the Empire in 684 when the reign title was changed to kuang-chai. About the same time as the relics were discovered, Sui-chou in Shensi was becoming a popular and lucrative centre of pilgrimage because of the excavation there of a buried image whose whereabouts had been revealed by a Buddha-light above it. In 683, the perpetrator of what the court then regarded as a hoax, declared himself Kuang-ming sheng Emperor and rose in rebellion, seizing two hsien before he was suppressed.[77] Though his title was more closely connected with Amitābha or

Ćandraprabha than with Maitreya,[78] his rebellion demonstrated the force of Buddhist legitimation and must also have re-inforced among the people the belief that the last period of the law was at hand.

Only a few months after the rebellion, Kao-tsung died, and as we shall suggest in the next chapter, the Empress Wu became almost immediately the de facto ruler of the state. The precise timing of her decision to usurp must remain surmisal, but as we shall note, between 684-690 she turned first to the Confucian supports for legitimation. Prominent among the symbolic measures of the period was the re-naming of all posts and offices in 684 using the Chou-li as the major inspiration,[79] the choice of ch'ui-kung, a phrase from the Shu-ching, as the lengthiest of her reign-titles,[80] and the erection in 688 of a Ming-T'ang or cosmic hall, a typically Han institution but one based on the Li-chi and one which former Sui and T'ang rulers had feared to emulate.[81] There are several other examples, such as the creation of new forms for several Chinese characters,[82] but in the face of growing opposition which was kept in check largely by a system of terrorism, it must have been apparent to the Empress that Confucian strictures against a woman ruler retained their force. She was forced therefore to seek a new ideology, and to legitimize her power, found in Buddhism a source of support which would make her the sole female emperor in Chinese history.

The man chiefly responsible for this development is known to history as Hsüeh Huai-i, a virile, unlettered seller of sedge and other herbs who appeared at Lo-yang in the mid-680's and there formed a liaison with a servant-maid of the princess Ch'ien-chin.[83] When the princess reported to the Empress that he was a man of "unusual ability" (fei-ch'ang tsai-yung), he was summoned to imperial audience and before long given unrestricted entry to the palace. His official biography scrupulously avoids the suggestion that he became lover to the Empress, and though this is broadly hinted in later Chinese sources and generally accepted by modern historians, what evidence exists is wholly deductive. One source of the belief, perhaps, is her refusal to have him castrated, and to avoid the scandal this entailed, her choice of the alternative of Buddhist ordination. While serving with certain bhadanta like Fa-ming in the palace-chapel (nei-tao-ch'ang),[84] Huai-i became a familiar figure in the capital--an arrogant, eccentric man and a chauvinistic Buddhist referred to by the people as "Master Hsüeh". By late 685, he had been installed as abbot of the reconstructed White Horse Monastery west of the capital, a site traditionally regarded as the most ancient repository of the Law in China. Though the official sources are reluctant to accord him either piety or learning, he may have acquired at least the latter in subsequent years for when omens of dynastic change began to appear in 688-89, he was quick to offer his services. With Fa-ming and seven

other monks, he seized upon the Mahāmegha or Great Cloud Sutra, and seeking justification for female rule outside the Confucian tradition, provided commentary to demonstrate that Maitreya was to be re-bron as a woman and that the long-awaited reincarnation was the Empress Wu.[85]

There is a good deal of contradiction among primary sources about the nature of the sutra, and the most persistent myth is that it was quite simply a forgery.[86] Japanese scholarship, however, has demonstrated the authenticity of the work and shown that it was five times translated prior to the T'ang, and from Tun-huang findings we know that it was the Northern Liang version of Dharmarakṣa that was most commonly used in the seventh century.[87] Ironically, in view of the use to which it was put, the sutra was a favorite of T'ai-tsung.[88] The HTS is alone among the standard sources in suggesting that the Empress Wu commissioned the commentary,[89] and given her demonstrated piety, the assumption seems a dubious one. She was, in any case, gratified when the work was presented and lost no time in promulgating the sutra and its commentary throughout the land. In 690, immediately after the dynastic change, Great Cloud temples were founded as repositories in every prefecture, and over a thousand monks were specially ordained to go forth and chant the sutra, explaining to the faithful its real meaning.[90]

The effect of these two measures was incalculable. Not only did they constitute an act of Buddhist patronage

staggering in scope, but as symbols of the end of equal support for Taoism, served notice that the new regime would base itself upon a different ideology.[91] More importantly, they were part of the most ambitious attempt in medieval China to mold men's minds, to use religious feeling to justify the very existence of a regime and even to rationalize its most unpopular acts. The degree to which this was the case can be gauged with accuracy, for discovered among the Tun-huang documents were several nearly-complete fragments of the Great Cloud Commentary. These have permitted a fairly full reconstruction,[92] and in the translation which follows, we shall see that the document not only transforms the Empress into Maitreya and so draws divine sanction for her supreme power from all the weight of Buddhist tradition, but at the same time enlists the support of other prognostic texts like the Ho-t'u, and cites omens which seem to have gone otherwise unrecorded in support of her claims. The document is one of both intrinsic and extrinsic interest.

[][][][][][][][][][]是方便之身
[][][][][][][][][][]發願乃有三人一大
[][][][][][][][][][]悉[匡]法林前後記
[][][][][]大王之事

The Buddha then praised first the beauties of purity and shame, and next made manifest the proof of the prophecy of the heavenly maiden (t'ien-nu shou-chi): that is, that one in female form must rule the land. This is she who is called the sheng-mu shen-huang [the Empress Wu][1]

How do we prove it?

According to the commentary: we prove it by the Yin-yen ch'an [Hetupratyayakṣa][2] which says: "The Venerable One has told that when Maitreya the Lord of Worlds is re-born, all evil shall be eliminated. If there are arrogant and recalcitrant men, I shall send t'ien-t'ung-tzu (deva) with rods of gold to punish them. East of the river the Lord of Worth and Brilliance (chih-ming-chu) shall see the King of the Brilliant Law (ming-fa-wang)[3]. And the Venerable One wished Maitreya to build for him a City of Transformation (hua-ch'eng) with a pillar of white silver above, and below an inscription [to endure] forever. The Heavenly Maiden (t'ien-nu) will don heavenly robes and on the piller hang golden bells. She will summon all my disciples (fa-tzu) to enter all at once into the City of Transformation."

According to the commentary, Maitreya thus corresponds to the Empress.[4] The Empress must be the one and the meaning agrees.

[The reasons are that] the elimination of the evil and the ordering of deva to punish the recalcitrant has clearly the meaning of destroying violent men and purging the Empire. [The reference to] the Lord of Worth and Brilliance east of the river who is able to see the King of the Brilliant Law is from the Book of Changes where it says: "The emperor comes from Ch'en. Ch'en is in the east." This is clear [for] the Empress comes from Ch'en and rules the Empire. Also she lives in the Sanctified Capital (shen-tu)[5] which is east of the river. The City of Transformation is the Ming T'ang and the white piller is its central column. The inscription which endures forever is the Kuang-wu ming.[6] [The phrase about] the Heavenly Maiden donning heavenly robes is a clear reference to the dragon robes worn by the Empress. The golden bells hung on the piller refer to teaching (sheng-chiao) of the four seasons at the Ming T'ang. The phrase about the summoning of disciples is [a reference to] the

myriad states [like] rivers returning to the sea, gathering at the Ming T'ang.

It also says: "The Brilliant King and the Sage King (ming-wang, sheng-wang) shall both be in the City of Transformation, and on the top of the tower shall beat the golden drum, proclaiming to all disciples that if this law has hetupratyaya, then it will apply and be heard [everywhere] within ten thousand miles. If this law is without it, though they beat the drum, the adjoining room will not hear."

[In this passage] the golden drum is the great ceremonial of the Ming T'ang. The "ten thousand mile hearing" means that those who are far-off and who seek transformation and offer loyalty will all see the Ming T'ang and hear the great ceremonial. The reason that the "adjoining room will not hear" is that from the time the Empress began to care for her people,[7] all those who caused disorder had to be wiped out, and the cunning and vicious destroyed themselves. The Ho-t'u says, "Evil men become good [for if] they rebel, they destroy themselves."[8]

Because the Ming T'ang was erected, and sacrifice was to be offered to the Three Sages,[9] [the Empress] summoned governors, frontier officials and relatives to gather at Lo-yang for the great ceremonial. Then all the members of the Hui clan[10] rebelled, and reaped defeat and destruction. Those who survived were pardoned and exiled to distant areas where they heard not the great ceremonial. This is proof [of the statement] that the adjoining room will not hear.

It also says, "I will send the Raksasavīra King,[11] and on his head will be the K'un-lun Mountains, and from the earth shall come streams and springs." This refers to the Hsin-feng-ch'ing Mountain from which issues the Pool of the Spirits.[12]

It also says, "In the east is the Po-shan palace." This is the Flying Cloud chamber of the great White Horse monastery. "In the west is the P'an-lung court." This is

the Ming T'ang. [It goes on,] "the spiritual jewel and the bright moon are directly above the side of the city." This means that above the Ming T'ang, the sun, moon and stars show in the early morning (ch'en) configuration.[13] Because of these meanings, the reference is to the Empress Wu.

The [Great Cloud] Sutra says: "[She] will obtain one-quarter of the domain of Cakravartin." Now the Empress rules south [to] Jambudvīpa and has united the Empire. If we compare this to [the domain of] Cakravartirāja, it is one-quarter.[14]

The Sutra says: "The people will flourish, secure from desolation, illness, worry, fear and disaster. All that is auspicious will be achieved at a stroke. In[to] the land held by Jambudvīpa all will come in submission and there will be no opposition in far-off places."[15] This means that right now the great ministers and the people are wholly loyal. They shall have sons and grandsons in abundance, the years will be without scarcity, and all will be peaceful and happy without sickness and other calamities. All these felicitous things happen at once. And because of the great wisdom, prestige and virtuous transformation [of the Empress] which extends everywhere, the four barbarian peoples all come to submit. If their allegiance is whole-hearted and eternal, then they will receive these same blessings. If they waver and rebel, even if they escape punishment from our state, Great Heaven (shang-t'ien) will chastize them and they will destroy themselves. Therefore, the I-t'ung-shih chi[16] says: "Wherever there is sedition, it will come to nought." This proves it.

The Sutra says: "obtain the great and be self-existent" (te-ta tzu-tsai).[17] [This means] the Empress has brought all states to submission, and her power is without parallel.

According to the Kuang-wu ming: "It is small men who have inscribed this ming." This refers to the men who obtained

the omen. "[She] who reads this ming is the Sage Ruler," refers to the Empress who personally reads it. The ming [also] says: "[She] who is unlike the leopard or the wolf is called Wu, and as king, is in Lo-yang." This corresponds to the kingship of the Empress in the Sanctified Capital. [In the phrase] "the great king, three [plus?] two inscriptions, then is seen,"[18] the word "great" means her sage virtue spreads far and encompasses all things. From the wen-ming period [i.e. 684], five years in all had elapsed, before [we who] wanted to see but did not see [were rewarded] in the wu-tzu year [i.e. 688]. [The reason the ming says] "The yellow-robed ruler is called wan-sui" is that whenever the imperial robes are worn at the time of the [ruler's] birthday, [people] always call it wan-sui. "The one of Earthly Virtue rules Ch'i-ch'ang"[19] means the Empress. "None of the elderly peasants lose their senses," says that the people of the Empire makes themselves serve the state whole-heartedly and do not lose their senses and rebel. [The phrase] "a cat, far-off, shall be your guard in the four directions," [refers to] the Book of Changes [which] says "far-off (li) means bright (ming)"[20] and [so] the position is the South. Also [it uses] this [term] "woman in the centre" (chung-nü) which refers to the Empress who faces south and rules the Empire. This corresponds also to the wen-ming period. The cat is the representation (hsiang) of the Wu and Wu belongs to the [category of] sage-clans (sheng-shih).

"For thirty-six [or three times six] years, a few sang [a song called] T'ang-T'ang," [we can interpret that] three times six is eighteen and eighteen sons mean [the] Li [surname].[21] This is the surname of the imperial clan and "T'ang" is the name of the dynasty. Then, next, they still sing [in the same song?] of Wu Mei-niang. This clearly means that after the Three Sages [i.e. the first three T'ang emperors], the Empress will rule the Empire. [In the phrase] "to

travel not too far nor fly too high; to remain in the centre and not move," the word "centre" means Lo-yang is at the centre of the earth, and it also means the Empress is the great king of Lo-yang. "The Sage Way [extends] far to those accept the light everywhere" means the Sage Transformation of the Empress extends to all, everywhere and without limit.

[The passage] "hua-fo tsung-k'ung lai mo-ting wei shou-chi"[22] corresponds to the prediction of the Great Cloud Sutra, and [the phrase] kuang-chai ssu-t'ien-hsia pa-piao i-shih chih has the following meaning. "Kuang-chai" means the Empress rules the Empire and can enlighten all the world. Ssu-t'ien-hsia means [all] within the four seas. The "pa-piao" are the eight cords [which maintain order in the world], and "i-shih-chih" means the whole world accepts her Sage Transformation and all intend to come and submit. [The phrase] "the people are all peaceful and happy, well-versed in civil and military loyalty," means that the civil and military officials will from now on want even more to be loyal. [The phrase], "for a thousand generations the [imperial] clan changes not" says that her sage rule lasts forever."[23] [The phrase] "eighteen become princely men" refers to the emperors.

The song says:[24] "not old not new": and "not old" means the Empress is not [too] old to rule, while "not new" means she was already a mother [before becoming Empress] so she is also not new and this phrase is used. "Crossed sevens become a person," means the word for "woman",[25] and the phrase "along the base of the mountain appears a sage" [also by using the components of the various characters] denotes a woman (fu). Twice therefore, is the sage virtue of the Empress shown.

The Sutra says: "Sārī [Buddhist relics] cannot be obtained. If the leg of a mosquito could be used to make a bridge [strong enough for] a crowd [of people] could cross

at once, Sārī could be obtained. If leeches in the water could grow white teeth the size of an elephant's tusk, Sārī could be obtained. If rabbits could grow horns which could be used as ladders which reached the sky, Sārī could be obtained. If a small boat could carry the Hsü-mi Mountains across the great sea, Sārī could be obtained."[26] These parallels are numerous and show that the Sārī of the Buddha-to-come (ju-lai) cannot be obtained. In the Sutra, we are told that the king of Jambudvipa was the guardian of the True Law and obtained many Sārī. He wanted to house them, so he travelled through the land erecting stupa of the Seven Treasures. When he saw monks living in accord with the Law and with their Rule, he praised and lavishly supported them. When he saw some who ignored the Rule and broke the True Law, he rebuked and destroyed them. Now the Empress rules the Empire and she has obtained more and more Sārī. There were shown earlier, omens at the Kuang-chai temple,[27] and now we see them [re-appear] in the tsai-ch'u year [i.e. 689]. Therefore [the passage in] the Kuang-wu ming, "kuang-chai . . . i-shih chih" means the Empress has already shown her generous desire to build 8,040,000 Sārī stupa[28] to distribute through the Empire the Sārī obtained at the Kuang-chai fang. This corresponds to the sending down of Sārī by the eight cords, [for] it is not something done by the power of mere men, but all by the eight cords. The spiritual achievements are all completed and this is proof that we see the protection of the True Law[29] and the obtaining of many Sārī.

The Sutra says: "Those who accept teaching and transformation, male and female, old and young everywhere embrace the Pañcaveramanī."[30] Because the Empress embraces the rules of P'u-sa, transforms the people and keeps them from committing crimes, then good spirits guard and protect their persons. This proves that all who are taught and transformed accept and embrace the Pañcaveramani.

The Sutra says: "[She will] cast out the heterodox and the various perverse doctrines." The Holy Mother Empress[31] teaches and transforms all beings and none can fathom it. Thus she orders the Deva Māra[32] to sigh and look up [in respect], and the heretics to return to the truth. This is the conversion by the White Horse [of Buddism] of the yellow-capped [Taoists].

The Sutra says: "In another age [i.e. incarnation] you truly were P'u-sa and to transform all beings now receive female form." According to the K'ung-tzu ch'an,[33] "[when] Heaven gives birth to a sage, he who emerges from the grass is not called male." This is a cryptic saying, a prophecy. The Empress rules the Empire and so it is said the sage emerges from the grass. Also, according to the Yüan-sung-ch'an,[34] " when there is born a unicorn with two horns for generations the people [shih-min][35] did not know. When it was grown, full in majesty, those who presented it received offices and posts. Virtuous, loyal [men] then were [found] at court, the unworthy were expelled from the ruler's sight. He was able well to discriminate and everlasting abundance (yung-lung) brings peace to the land." Now the family of the Empress' mother is called Yang, [yang also means sheep], and the sheep has two horns. So the term "two-horned unicorn" is used. Shih-min is the personal name of [the Emperor] T'ai-tsung. [The phrase] "when it was grown . . ." says that when the Empress grew to great majesty, there were whole-heartedly loyal [men], and all were given offices and posts, enjoying honour and salary. This corresponds. "Virtuous, loyal [men] then were [found] at court" means that right now, all at court are wise and good. "The unworthy were expelled . . ." means the Empress examines good and bad, deserting the evil and purifying the conduct of the Court. Thus it is said, "the unworthy are driven away . . ." [The phrase] "want to be able to discriminate well[36] and everlasting abundance brings peace

to the land," [refers to] the rebellion of the commoner [and former Crown Prince] Hsien at the beginning of the yung-lung period [680]. The Empress, in governing for the utmost public good, did not privately [extend clemency even] to her son. Well she distinguished [good from bad] and exiled him to Pachou. So we say "everlasting abundance brought peace to the land."

The parahita of P'u-sa[37] is without set form and the transformation varies with the circumstances. The present form, we see, is therefore female.

[There may be] a question. "The Fa-sheng hsüan-chi[38] is unclear, [especially in regard to the details of name and clan.] Several female rulers are included, so how do we know that she who rules now is the right one?" The answer lies in the prediction of Buddha (fo-chi) that there must be sixty-five rulers from the Han to the [present] sage period. While female rulers are numerous, none received the sign. Their titles were Empress-dowager and [so] they do not correspond to the prophecy. Now our Holy Mother Empress truly conforms to the prediction. Thus, the Sutra says, "the female ruler, self-existent, [rules] everywhere in Jambudvīpa and raises many stupa, benefitting the affairs of the Buddha."

Also we find that the T'ien-shou sheng-t'u[39] says: "A holy mother shall rule mankind, and her imperium shall bring eternal prosperity." This means, [and some words are parallel to those of the Sūtra prophecy], that the Empress rules the Empire and has erected on the foundation of the Three Sages, everlasting prosperity.

Also, the Jui-shih[40] says: "stop, one woman, everywhere, blessings." [In this] "stop" means "end war,"[41] and "one woman" is the Empress. It also says: "one person, sage, eighteen thousand," and, "woman ruler, thousands and thousands," and, "our woman, one person, thousands and thousands of years." All these [attest] that Heaven-on-high has sent

down blessings and prove the prediction that her sage line will continue long.

Also, the Lung-t'u t'u[42] contains the words: "in wu-tzu [688], a mother-sage emperor, thousand-year foundation." [This] means the T'ang united heaven and earth. Hearts at peace,[43] all the Li [clan] continued long and only the policy of the Ming T'ang was neglected for a thousand years. The Empress, in the ch'ui-kung period [685-89] began the Hsing-yang kuan and in wu-tzu completed the achievement [as the Ming T'ang]. Regarding the phrase, "mother-sage-emperor," the commentary says that the one who examines the Way is the emperor, and this shows that the sage-mother understands the True Way in her rule. This is the meaning and the reason we say that [the phrase] "in wu-tzu, a mother-sage-emperor, thousand-year foundation" means the T'ang. They "united the hearts of heaven and earth," [is interpreted]; "unity" means that heaven attains unity by purity, earth by peace, the spirits by energy (ling), the valleys by being filled, all life by birth, and the nobility (hou-wang) by rectification of the Empire. This means the Empress, reaching [herself] the Way, transforms men and harmonizes the heart of heaven and earth. [In the phrase] "in peace, all the Li continued long," "Li" is the surname of the imperial clan, and we mean the Empress restored peace to the land and caused the dynasty to endure long. This hidden manifestation accords with the omens, ancient and modern, and means the sage [rule of the] Empress is long and without limit.

The Sutra says: "the P'u-sa of the Great Cloud and the Hidden Treasury said he wished only that the Buddha-to-come [would come] for the sake of all living things." This speech refers to the future [coming] of the Heavenly Maiden. The Buddha said, "I will show [the way to] Nirvāna for your advantage for seven hundred years, and after that there will be a small state in southern India which is called No-thought

(wu-hsiang). There is in this state, a river called the Black River, and on its southern bank is a city called Bountiful Harvest. Its king is called Teng-ch'eng and his wife will give him a daughter called Seng-ch'ang."

[There may be] a question [about these passages]: "if we draw our evidence from the Sutra, [we find] this state is different." The answer is that the teaching about the Buddha-to-come is both clear and obscure. The first four chapters [of the Sutra] are clear teaching and the sixth is obscure. If we calculate the time from the passing of the Buddha, it is seventeen hundred years to now. But the Sutra says seven hundred, not mentioning the one thousand. This is obscure. If we examine other Sutra [we find] after the Buddha's passing that [both the period of] the True Law and the period of the Semblance Law last [respectively] one thousand years.[44] In the first, many men are pure and faithful, and in the second, evil gradually spreads and a sage ruler of majesty and power must be granted to protect [the people]. But [the Sutra] speaks only of the seven hundred years of Semblance Law, not the thousand years of True Law. It is like the [words of the] Nirvana Sutra: "Seven hundred years after this, will come the time of demons. [Evil] gradually will destroy and confuse my True Law." Thus we know that evil gradually arises in the period of Semblance Law. [The phrase] "southern India" refers to a land ruled in the south by Jambuvīpa, and so is referred to as "south". Also, the meaning says that according to the great Vibhāsā-śāstra,[45] there shall be four noble truths[46] (āryasatyāni) to correspond to the four directions and that of the south is the truth of the Way [to extinction]. The "Way" means the Eightfold Path and shows the Empress is the ruler of the Way and points south, transforming the Eight Improper Practices.[47] [The passage] only mentions the south and not the other [directions]. "India" (t'ien-chü) is a Sanscrit sound and says "moon". If

the moon comes out, there must be two powers--one to cool, the other to heat. The Empress rules the universe and so makes the same these two ceremonials.

[The Sutra] says "India", and "there is a small country." It said earlier, "[she] shall obtain one-quarter of the domain of Ćakravartin whose transformation is said [to extend] everywhere." The state of the Great T'ang ruled Jambudvīpa, but in comparison with "everywhere" it was small. It says, "[the state] is called No-thought" and earlier in the Sutra, it says, "the Heavenly Maiden of the Floating Light shall cultivate the samādhi[48] of No-thought." Thus the state is called No-thought. Now the Empress cultivates no thought that is selfish, thinking [only] of all living things. So the state is called no-thought.

The Sutra says: "this state has a river called the Black River." Birth and death are called a river and worries and troubles are seen as black. This shows the Empress is an incarnation of the Bodhisattva of Compassion, who transforms all life in the great river banishing cares and troubles. Also, we know that Wu is one of the Yü surnames found in the north and the colour of the north is black. Yü also [is used] for water. Thus it says "Black River".

"Black River" becomes [thus] a surname and also refers to black clothing. The K'ung-tzu ch'an has a similar omen of the Black River, and [we know] the Empress when she was a child already wore black robes.[49] This is certainly the meaning of "black robes".

Also, in Ping-chou, by the tomb of her ancestor there was of old a well called by the people the Well of Wu. At first there was water but afterwards it dried up. From the end of the Sui[50] there was a little water, it filled with the founding of the state [of the T'ang], and now it overflows, and several large streams empty into the Fen river. Thus, in the Sui, there was a saying that the water of 獫 [51] was

exhausted but the Well of Wu overflowed. This means that right at that time a sage appeared and the water flowed. This corresponds with the Empress [who is] not of Kuan[-chung] nor of the Liu surname.[52] At the time of Liu Wu-chou people said if [the water] burst forth and flowed [Liu would succeed]: if not, the Li [would succeed]. Wu-chou was without knowledge and did not understand the saying. He of the Liu surname, subsequently rose in rebellion, was killed and his line destroyed. What a mistake, but how could he know the Black River meant the Water of Wu?

[When] the Sutra speaks of the city of Bountiful Harvest on the south bank, and later says its king rules the land by fathering this daughter, [we know] when there are bountiful harvests [people are] boundlessly happy. Thus, the city is called Bountiful Harvest. Another meaning is that the Yellow River here corresponds to the Black River of the omen, so that the city on the south bank is the Sanctified Capital [i.e. Lo-yang]. The present harvests which are so bountiful, [prove it].

According to the T'ui-pei t'u:[53] "Great accumulation, eight months, wisdom and brilliance reach everywhere, stop war, prosperity. A female ruler shall stand straight and raise the T'ang. Evil men will be driven from Court, [and] a dragon shall come as guard changing and purifying [all within] the four seas, enlightening the eight regions." [The phrase] "great accumulation, eight months" is used because the Empress came to power in the yu year,[54] and "Wisdom and brilliance reached everywhere." [The phrase] "stop war" [when put together to form a single character] means Wu. "Prosperity" means just that, and means her reign will be prosperous. [In the phrase] "female ruler shall stand straight and raise the T'ang," "T'ang" is the dynastic name and this means the Empress stands straight and restores the imperial house and the Sage Enterprise. "Evil men are driven from Court and a

dragon shall come as guard." This means the Empress gets rid of those who are flattering and insinuating, and the dragon thus is a spiritual dragon who guards the sage body [the Empress?]. [The phrase] "changing and purifying . . ." means that even now the Sage Transformation is extending through the universe, purifying the eight regions and all the people are in harmony.

The prophecy (ch'an)[55] says: "This year is kuei-yu and the powerful bandits are all thwarted. The Empire is at peace and no man is anxious about the [rich] harvests nor the oxen." Accordingly [we point out that] the first day of the first month of the coming year is kuei-yu.[56] From the rebellion of P'ei [Yen] and Li [Ching-yeh] and their attempt to seize the Western Capital, they have denounced themselves, and their fellows submitted for their crimes, and peace reigns inside and outside the Empire. This is why it is said that the strong bandits are all thwarted. At the present time, the harvest is that of an especially rich year. From ancient times good harvests were regional: there was famine in the east and plenty in the west, or a meagre harvest in the north and a rich one in the south. Never was it like this! This year there is surplus everywhere, and how can it fail to show that next year, kuei-yu will accord exactly with the omen. All that is evil will disappear. Thus it is said that the Empire will obtain . . . [there follow from this point a series of lacunae. The meaning of the last few lines is hence unclear.] [][][][], everlasting purity. The people will all then be free of worry and fear [][][][] buffaloes unnecessary in the fields. We know clearly [][][][][][][] will grow by itself, abundant in every field [][][][][][][][] the prophecy says: a vessel three [][][][][][][][][] means end war.[57]

NOTES TO COMMENTARY

[1]The Empress Wu is referred to throughout the document by this title, or simply by the term "shen-huang". She adopted the title after the discovery of the Pao-t'u discussed in Chapter V.

The identity of the monk Fa-lin who is identified in the early lines as the compiler, is unknown and this may be a copyist's error for Fa-ming.

[2]A sutra classified as false in the Sui index, but which seems to have been popular in the seventh century. The text and its relation to the Great Cloud sutra are discussed by Yabuki, Sangaikyō, p. 720ff.

[3]I am unable to identify these references.

[4]Here, there is inserted an additional commentary in small characters which explains that Maitreya is written as Mi-lo is Sanscrit and that the Chinese often use the term "tz'u-shih", "the compassionate one". Compassion is a womanly quality.

[5]Lo-Yang was officially christened Shen-tu in the Act of Grace of 684. CTW 96:11a.

[6]This seems to have been another name for the Pao-t'u since HTS 76:3867:4 records that in 688, the stream in which it was found was re-named Kuang-wu. The frequent references to the ming throughout the commentary indicate that the inscription on the stone was much longer than the eight characters quoted in the standard sources. Yabuki, op. cit., pp. 229-31, collects the scattered references in the ming to give a rough re-construction.

[7]I am unsure of the translation here because I cannot identify the character 𠂤. W. Bauer has shown me a picture of a female figure beating upon a drum from an illustrated version of the T'ui-pei-t'u, one of the ch'an-wei texts later cited in the commentary. This seems a further illustration of the syncretic nature of the prophecies used here to justify the dynastic change.

[8]The Ho-t'u was a prophetic text supposedly transmitted

from the Yellow Emperor to King Wen of Chou. It enjoyed great currency in the Han and was later outlawed because of its subversive potential by a number of rulers. See Dai kanwa jiten 6:17245:182 and the remarks of A. Seidel in "Dynastic Treasures". Granet's discussion, Pensée, pp. 148-74 is most enlightening.

[9]The reference is to the first three T'ang emperors. See also TCTC 204, p. 6447.

[10]The family name of the imperial clan was changed to "hui" after the Princes' Rebellion of 688. See Chapter V.

[11]A feared figure in Buddhist mythology, ruling a race of cannibalistic black-bodied, red-haired demons in the kingdom of the southwest in the heavens.

[12]A reference to the new mountain peak of 686, discussed passim. CTS 37:3203:4.

[13]See THY 11, p. 277.

[14]See Ta-fang teng wu-hsiang ching, TD 12, p. 1098a. The Cakravartin was the universal monarch "whose chariot wheels roll everywhere without hindrance," and Jambudvipa, strictly speaking, was the southernmost of the four Buddhist kingdoms. Mochizuki Shinkō, Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten (Kyoto, 1958), I:317, suggests that Jambudvipa was also used for the eastern lands like China. See also TCTC 204, p. 6466.

[15]TD, loc. cit., p. 1107a.

[16]I am unable to identify the reference.

[17]TD, loc. cit., p. 1097c.

[18]The phrase "san-erh ming" seems to require the reading of "plus" to give the total of five which gives meaning to the next line.

[19]The characters given are 崴昌 and the meaning is thus obscure.

[20]Hexagram 30. The reference to the chung-nü is also from the I-ching but I am not sure in what way a cat was connected with the Wu clan.

[21]By using the characters "son" (子), "ten" (十), and "eight" (八), the surname Li (李) is composed.

[22]See Yabuki, op. cit., p. 730. A further explanation

occurs later in the commentary.

[23]In this passage, the use of two of the Empress' era-names, "kuang-chai" and "yung-ch'ang" might be noted. They were proclaimed respectively in 684 and 689.

[24]This is the second reference the commentary makes to the song of Wu and this tradition is verified in the prophecy which surfaced in 648. See TCTC 199, p. 6259. Note also TCTC 209, p. 6619 which makes the references clear.

[25]In the fashion 七 + 十 = 女.

[26]TD, loc. cit., p. 1096c.

[27]See note 76 to this chapter. The standard sources make no mention of the omen's re-appearance.

[28]In imitation of the Emperor Aśoka (r. about 274-237 B.C.) who is said to have erected 84,000 stupa. On Wen-ti's use of the same model, see Wright, "Sui Ideology," pp. 102-3. Note the copyist's error in the commentary.

[29]The reference here is to the return of the era of the True Law (cheng-fa) after a period of seven hundred years of Semblance Law (hsiang-fa) with the re-birth of Maitreya. The text contains another error, repeating the word cheng and using both the standard form of the word and the Empress' new character.

[30]The first five commandments against killing, stealing, adultery, lying and intoxication. They bind both clergy and laity. See TD, loc. cit., p. 1098a.

[31]Another copyist's error here.

[32]Māra is the destroyer and can appear in different categories like desire, falsehood, killing, etc.

[33]Probably a reference to Confucius' "writings behind closed doors," the ch'an-wei texts associated with the Classics. These are rapidly reviewed, with bibliography, by A. Seidel, "Dynastic Treasures".

[34]This is mentioned in the Hsüan-shih chih 5, and is said to consist of a number of stone carvings dating from the Northern Wei, and presented to Kao-tsung in 674 who locked them away. Their author is said to be "one who had attained the Way", so they may have been associated with the Taoist tradition. It seems to have been based on word-play.

[35]Shih-min was also the given-name of T'ai-tsung.

[36]I am not sure why the idea "want to" is inserted here.

[37]The term P'u-sa refers usually to a bodhisattva rather than to the Buddha himself.

[38]I cannot locate the reference here though it has been suggested to me that it is perhaps to the Amitayus Sutra (Wu-liang-shou ching).

[39]This is an alternate name for the P'ao-t'u discussed in the following chapter. See HTS 76:3867:3.

[40]Yabuki considers this another reference to the P'ao-t'u but because of its form, I rather think it means the Yüan-sung ch'an mentioned earlier.

[41]Perhaps an attempt to depict the Wu surname in the fashion 步 + 戈 = 武

[42]I am unable to locate a specific prognostic text by this name though the Ho-t'u seems to have contained a Lung-t'u.

[43]The diction here is unclear and the meaning might be instead, "They united the heart of heaven and earth, and in peace, the Li clan . . . ."

[44]The dating of these periods varied from sect to sect. See Chen, Buddhism, pp. 297-98.

[45]A philosophical text by Kātyāaniputra, translated in 383 A.D.

[46]This refers to the truths of suffering, its causes, the possibility of its extinction and the Way of its extinction.

[47]The opposite of the pa-cheng (āryamārga) or eight right ways. Soothill and Hodus, p. 37b. The connotation is one of heterodoxy.

[48]A term of wide definition, referring here probably to intense concentration, perfect absorption and a kind of unity between the meditator and the object of meditation.

[49]Sometimes taken to mean that the Empress was ordained as a nun in her youth. There is no collaborating evidence.

[50] I find no mention of this omen in other sources.

[51] I cannot identify the character.

[52] The copyist variously writes the surname "Liu" as 劉 or 劉.

[53] A prognostic work in one volume completed in the reign of T'ang T'ai-tsung and said initially to have contained sixty prophecies.

[54] The cyclical character yu occurs in the years 661, 673, and 685, and the Empress did not take power in any of those years.

[55] I am not sure which prophecy is meant, though the context suggests the T'ui-pei t'u.

[56] Because of the switch to the Chou calendar just prior to the usurpation, there is some confusion of dates. The second year of t'ien-shou runs cheng, intercalary, first; and kuei-yu is the first day both of the cheng and the first month. The reference, I think, is to the former, running from Dec. 6, 690 to January 4, 691.

[57] The commentary seems here to resume the millenarian vision of the Sutra.

Within the context of state ideology in the seventh century, the commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra holds a unique place. It was, first of all, the basic justification for the Chou usurpation and the principal source of legitimation for China's only woman emperor. It is unquestionably the strongest of several appeals to Buddhist legitimation in the middle period of Chinese history,[93] and marks the beginning of a brief primacy of Buddhism over all other doctrines in the formulation of state ideology.

The commentary is noteworthy for this reason alone, but its implications go far beyond a simple assertion of the transformation of Maitreya, and his incarnation in the person of the Empress Wu. Invocation of the myth of the mo-fa, the last period of the Law, enabled her to stigmatize her enemies, foremost among them the imperial Li clan, as devadatta or demons who had to be destroyed to purify the world. On similar grounds, specific unpopular acts like the destruction of P'ei Yen and of former Crown Prince Hsien were rationalized, and by extension, other acts of bloodshed, past and future, could find justification. Even the infamy of the terror was made more comprehensible. It is somewhat ironic that the cult of Maitreya, so long a subversive movement, should thus be turned to into a bolster for the exercise of secular power, and doubly ironic when we consider that the commentary makes clear the wish of Maitreya incarnate that the Buddhist Church confine itself to spiritual matters. The parable of the king

of Jambudvīpa who destroyed the errant clergy was a clear warning that the state would regulate the Church. And this final point illustrates a feature of the commentary we must not ignore. Widely disseminated through the Empire, it was virtually a blueprint for rule. Its omens and prophecies referred not only to past and present, but also to the future, and forming a network of mutual reinforcement, they served initially to strengthen the position of the Empress but later locked her into a pattern of economic and foreign policy decisions whose results were not always beneficial to the state.

The centre of this problem lies in the resumption in the commentary of the Sutra's chiliastic vision:

> . . . Harvests will be bountiful, joy without limit. The people will flourish, free of desolation and illness, of worry, fear, and disaster. . . . The rulers of neighbouring lands will all come to offer submission. . . . At that time all her subjects will give allegiance to this woman as the successor to the imperial throne. Once she has taken the Right Way, the world will be awed into submission. . . .[94]

With these words, the Empress promised that her dynasty would be one of material prosperity, of domestic peace, and of foreign domination.

The vision itself, to return to the question of Buddhism in state ideology, had an additional significance. It constituted the first dynastic espousal of an alternative to the Confucian utopia described in the Book of Rites,[95] and as well, a transformation of the Chinese world view. No longer

was China to be the centre of a hierarchical, familial universe, but rather, was one part of a universal Buddhist Empire presided over by "Maitreya the Peerless, Golden Wheel, Sage and Holy Emperor," titles the Empress appropriated in stages over the next few years.[96]

The title was itself a unique one, and to a degree anomolous, since it combined the realms of Maitreya and Cakravartin, who in classical Buddhist doctrine do not appear in the same kalpa.[97] Not until the k'ai-yüan period [713-742], however, is there any recorded protest. Although at that time, the claims of the Empress to be Maitreya re-born were classified by Chih-sheng as one of the "three evil treasures (hsieh-san-pao) of the t'ien-shou period",[98] the Church seems generally to have acquiesced in the use to which its teachings were put in the Chou dynasty. And this marks an important stage in its development, for with the reversal of the Taoist precedence over Buddhism in 691,[99] and with the attachment of the Church to the tz'u-pu in 694,[100] it was embraced by the secular power as virtually a state religion, and thrust therefore into an unexpected and unsuitable role. The rewards of this collusion started the Church upon the road to the persecutions of 841-45, and of greater importance, the Buddhist idea was twisted, expanded, and intensified to the point of exhaustion. It seems no coincidence that with the Hua-yen systematization of the Chou period, the doctrinal creativity of philosophical Buddhism in China came to an end.[101]

This development, however, was hardly apparent at the time, for in an atmosphere of lavish patronage, both official and private, the Church must have seemed more prosperous than ever before. There is as yet no detailed accounting of state expenditure on Buddhism in the Chou dynasty but it must have been enormous. The ongoing expense of maintaining the Great Cloud temples was of course great, and the sources speak in some awe of the numerous new foundations at the time, of the erection of images at Lung-men and in the capital, and above all, of the Ming T'ang complex which was soon characterized by gold and jewels, by the "Seven Treasures" and by a gilded statue so large that several tens of men could stand on its outstretched finger.[102] The classical Ming T'ang was to have been a simple thatched but, but we must re-call that the Great Cloud Commentary saw it as the City of Transformation or of Temporary Nirvāna,[103] and as time went on, it was modified to accord with the omens. It was also here that Hsüeh Huai-i staged his "no-barrier" rites (wu-che-hui), a form of ritual dating back to Liang Wu-ti and deriving its name probably from the free mingling of social classes.[104] Each of these rites, according to one source, "cost 10,000 strings of cash (min). Men and women gathered like clouds and ten cart-loads of money were scattered [to them], causing them to fight to gather it, with some [trampled to] death in the scramble . . ."[105] Orthodox officials made frequent protest about these expenditures, and though the Empress occasionally

enjoined others to religious frugality,[106] she only belatedly became aware of the financial drain on state resources caused by her own generosity. The first example is not found until the year 700 when she proposed a special tax on monks and nuns for a great statue, and droppped the entire plan when the most trusted of all her ministers memorialized on the parasitical nature of the Church and pointed out that "the temples and monasteries of today [already] surpass [in splendour] the imperial palaces . . ."[107]

There were other ways, however, in which the Empress could demonstrate her love for Buddhism. She is, for instance, unique in history for the frequency and duration of her bans on the butchery of animals and the taking of fish. From the time of Liang Wu-ti, various dynasties had recognized this first commandment of the Pañcaveramanī, usually with three-day prohibitions. Incredible though it may seem, the Empress Wu forbade her subjects to take life to eat for the entire period between 692 and 700![108] As another sign of favour, the penalties for crimes against temples and monasteries were in 694 made equivalent to those for crimes against state property.[109] Measures of this sort offer fine illustrations of the expanding and mutually beneficial relationship between Church and state in the period. The frequent signs of imperial favour could not but "bring benefit to the shrines of the Buddha," but each one had also its ideological content and for example, used the religion for centralizing

purposes, as a vehicle to carry everywhere civil enactments. In brief, the relationship was becoming symbiotic and its chief symbol was the existence in every prefecture of the Empire of the Great Cloud monks, many of whom wore the insignia of hsien-kung, a civil position of the fourth rank.[110]

The relationship, however, was not an equal one, and those scholars who characterize the Chou as a "golden age" or a "high-point" of Buddhism[111] are only partly correct. As we have remarked earlier, Buddhist affairs were attached in 694 to the Bureau of National Sacrifice (tz'u-pu), and if this measure gave the religion state sanction, it also rationalized state control. In the k'ai-yüan period, this organ came to exercise wide functions: the preparation of a clerical registry, the limitation and review of the legality of ordination, the appointment of monastery leaders (san-kang), and the determination of prayers and services for state occasions.[112] It is extremely doubtful, however, that the first three functions were exercised with any consistency during the Chou, and we know for example that clerical registration was not regularized until 729 and that in 714, private ordination was still a matter of concern.[113] In these matters, the Empress was content, it seems, with the symbol of control and while she did re-assert the throne's right to "ordain by grace" (en-tu) in 701,[114] she relied largely upon the morale and responsibility of the Church to prevent abuse.

The same may be said in the area of clerical discip-

line; a vexed question, since the Church had long resisted the application of secular law in the belief that the Vināya was sufficient. The T'ang had failed to accept this argument, issuing in about 637, a code of governance called the Tao-seng ko,[115] and incorporating into the Code presented in 653, numerous provisions to deal with secular offenses by clerics.[116] Civil officials had also for some time had a duty to "admonish publicly and privately" misbehaving clergy, but since the pai controversy in 662, it seems reasonable to assume a certain reluctance to do so, and except where a specific secular offense was committed the scope of discipline was ill-defined. In the Chou, the difficulties of those ministers who wished to subject Huai-i and his followers to the law is a good case in point. The Empress Wu, as far as we can tell, issued only three disciplinary edicts in the period--two designed to reduce Buddhist-Taoist friction and the third forbidding monks to bury relics and show improper emotion at the death of one of their community.[117] Because these edicts threaten the penalty of laicization and empower civil officials to enforce them, they may be seen as a continuation of the erosion of the sangha's independent status, but the fact remains that the Empress resorted only rarely to state intervention. In sum, we might suggest that while she maintained a posture of state supremacy and encouraged integration of the religious communities into the body politic, her relations with the Church were singularly harmonious. She seems never

to have lost sight of their quid pro quo basis but the worst that can be said of her Buddhist patronage is that she created the climate which fostered the selling of ordinations, false registration of clerics and large-scale land dealings which blighted the next two reigns.[118] In the Chou, orthodox officials were quick to attack any Buddhist abuse, but it is significant that beyond the standard complaints against the wealth and non-productivity of the Church, the only charge levelled prior to 705 was that it neglected its obligation of charity to the poor.[119]

From what we have said above, it may seem that the Buddhism of the Empress Wu was cynical or insincere, subordinate to state interests. There is much evidence, however, to the contrary. The biographies of eminent monks of her period, collected principally in the Sung kao-seng chuan,[120] are filled with references to her support for their translation projects and to the lectures they gave before her, and one of the reasons for the concord of her relations with the Church was undoubtedly her piety and doctrinal understanding, and the lively clerical respect this won for her. Prior to the Chou dynasty, she had already shown a desire for knowledge, and probably listened to Hsüan-tsang and Tzu-en explain the tenets of the Fa-hsiang school.[121] Perhaps because this school was in the process of eclipsing the T'ien-t'ai which was so closely associated with her maternal clan, she seems to have shown it no particular favour, but in 670 she took a

great interest in Fa-tsang, the brilliant young disciple of Chih-yen, and the systematizer and real founder of the Hua-yen or Flower Garland sect.[122] What first attracted her to this most recondite and sophisticated of Chinese sects is difficult to say, but when Fa-tsang was summoned to the capital and placed at the head of the T'ai-yüan temple founded to commemorate the Empress' mother,[123] he was only twenty-seven and was to retain a close association with her until her death. It was the Empress who, in 674, gave him the name "Sage head" (hsien-shou) by which he is best-known, and who had ten of the most honoured of capital bhadanta confer on him the holiest form of ordination (man-fen-chieh) in 680.[124] In the same year, she installed the famed translator Divākara[125] in the T'ai-yüan temple with him and together they decided upon the need for a new translation of the huge Hua-yen (Avataṁsaka, Gandavyūha) Sutra. The Empress coöperated by summoning from Khotan an even more eminent scholar, Siksānanda, who brought his own copy of the work to Lo-yang, and taking charge of the project, completed a new translation in eighty fascicles in 699.[126] The Empress herself is said to have participated in the work, editing and assisting at lectures; and she wrote a Preface for the final version, taking note as might be expected, of the Great Cloud omens.[127] Another well-known participant in the project was the pilgrim and prolific translator, I-ching, who also received from the Empress support for his work and respect as a Master.[128]

While there can be no doubt that the Empress Wu reserved her highest interest for the Hua-yen sect, and her inspiration of one of its most famous texts, the Treatise on the Golden Lion (chin-shih-tzu chang), is a good example, she was not exclusivistic in her desire for instruction. Among the famous monks she received are names like Chih-hsien of the Pure Land sect, Heng-ching of T'ien-t'ai and many others.[129] She was especially interested also in Ch'an or Zen, and if Hui-neng, the patriarch of the Southern school refused her summons to the capital,[130] the Northern Ch'an patriarch, Shen-hsiu, was one of her favourites. His biography relates that on his arrival at the palace, the Empress knelt before him and by the admiration she showed, made him an object of lionization in the capital.[131] This is undoubtedly one of the reasons Buddhist sources serve as a counterweight to their Confucian counterparts, almost invariably seeing the Empress in a favourable light. In the new catalogue of the Tripitaka she had compiled in 695, the editor, Ming-ch'üan, speaks of her as the long-awaited Universal Ruler who would bring salvation to all.[132]

The preponderance of Buddhism in the state ideology of the Chou, seems, on the basis of the foregoing discussion, to have served well the purposes of the Empress. Before we look more closely at this question, however, we might briefly raise another matter, the effect upon Buddhism of imperial patronage. Historians in recent years have begun to take

note of social and political influences in the sixth and seventh centuries as determinants of the doctrinal form of the eight schools which arose at that time, and what seems to emerge from this research is the notion that imperial patronage of a leading monk was based first of all on the needs of a particular ruler, and this in turn, not only determined which sect would be paramount in his reign, but also played a role in shaping its characteristics.[133] In this way, the Sui dynasty, as unifier, supported Chih-i and T'ien-t'ai whose genius lay in the synthesis and unification of doctrine and scripture from preceding exegetical traditions.[134] The T'ang rejected T'ien-t'ai because of its Sui associations and turned to Hsüan-tsang and the Fa-hsiang school, a regressive Indian form of Buddhism which accorded with the cosmopolitanism of the dynasty. It was, we might add, also a school less congenial to the Chinese mind and so, less likely to challenge the Taoist bias of the dynasty.

If the argument holds, the Empress Wu chose Hua-yen to set off her dynasty from the T'ang, and because the central concept of the school, the doctrine of totality or the complete and harmonious interfusion of the worlds of phenomenon and ultimate principle converging on the single point of the Buddha, served her centralizing, totalitarian ends. The paradigm is a persuasive one, but in the case of the Empress, can constitute only a partial explanation. Her favoritism of Hua-yen, we must re-call, was demonstrated as

early as 670 when she could have had a T'ien-t'ai foundation commemorate her mother and when she was probably considering abdication rather than usurpation. Her patronage, moreover, was not exclusive and as we have noted, Ch'an was not far behind Hua-yen as a recipient of her patronage. Though the basic doctrines of this school ranked high in Fa-hsiang's fivefold hierarchy of Buddhist doctrine,[135] its basic and profound egoism can hardly be considered useful to centralizing, totalitarian ends.

It is more accurate, perhaps, to see the Empress' special fondness for Hua-yen as the product of sincere faith and of a metaphysical sophistication which found few parallels among T'ang rulers. Hua-yen is quite simply the most demanding in intellectual terms of all the sects, and is even today regarded by many as the "perfect teaching" of the Buddha.[136] It is also a school with a strongly altruistic bias: the bodhisattva reaches enlightenment in ten stages, and along the way gains the power to perform miracles, to unite the universe and to deliver sentient beings from pain and desire.[137] As a re-incarnation of the bodhisattva Maitreya, the Empress could only find this a most congenial doctrine.

In assessing the relationship of the Empress Wu to state ideology over the half-century in which she played a role in its formulation, we might put forward a number of suggestions. In the first place, her ideology was developed

in stages and was characterized by timeliness and flexibility, an acute perception of the needs of the time and an ability to respond to them. For this reason, Taoism and Confucianism were given the first places in her husband's lifetime, and continued to rank above Buddhism, though not necessarily in the same order, prior to the composition of the Great Cloud commentary. For the usurpation itself, legitimation was sought principally in the symbols of Buddhism and Confucianism but Taoism made a negative contribution, retaining its precedence over Buddhism and its place in the examination curriculum. The Chou dynasty saw Buddhism paramount, but as we shall see in subsequent chapters, there was occasional resort to Confucian symbolism and more importantly, the constant presence of a substantive Confucianism in the attitudes of the Empress to the bureaucracy, education, examinations, literature and music, and war. Taoism, because of its special significance to the T'ang, necessarily lost ground but with the coming of the Chang brothers to Court, its symbols began once more to appear, and by the end of the Chou, the three traditions were more in balance than had been the case at the beginning of the dynasty. The grand compilation of 1300 volumes called the San-chiao chu-ying, produced early in the eighth century by the institute of which the Chang brothers had charge[138] symbolized as well as anything else, the awareness of the Empress that balance was the key to a successful ideology.

To the question of whether or not her ideology was successful, our answer is a qualified affirmative. In the largest sense, we base this conclusion upon the domestic peace, briefly interrupted only twice during her period of activity, upon the trend to cohesion and consolidation which permitted both usurpation and restoration to be effected with relative peace, and upon the factious but brilliant galaxy of ministers who consistently emerged to offer their services to the state. A second measure of success is the simple fact that her ideological manipulation, supplemented of course with intimidation and the exercise of raw power, overturned centuries of tradition and enabled a woman to ascend the throne. The fifteen years of power she enjoyed were characterized by the gradual relaxation of force and coercion, and by the growth of confidence and affection on the part of her subjects. The palace coup which deposed her was the reluctant work of a small minority of her ministers.

We shall never know whether the Empress Wu ever overcame wholly, even for a short time, the Confucian prejudice against female rule. The fact of her deposition argues against it, and the judgment of traditional historiography, as we have seen, would suggest that the effect of her reign was to strengthen this very prejudice. For this reason, her ideology was but a qualified success: qualified, because in the Chou at least, it was so highly personal that there was never any real chance that her dynasty would survive her.

The people of China would support her, but not her nephews and not any other woman, as the cases of the princesses An-lo and T'ai-p'ing would show in the next reigns.

But in these remarks we anticipate ourselves too greatly. It is time now to return to our narrative.

NOTES

(Chapter IV)

[1]Most notably, Elvin, M., The Pattern of the Chinese Past (London, 1973).

[2]The phrase is that of A.F. Wright in "The Formation of Sui Ideology, 581-604", found Fairbank, J.K. (ed.), Chinese Thought and Institutions (U. of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 71-104.

[3]These questions are succinctly discussed in Starr, J.B., Ideology and Culture (U. of California Press, 1973), Chapters 1 and 3.

[4]There are, of course, no accurate estimates of the proportion of the Chinese population which gave its primary allegiance to Buddhism in the sixth and seventh centuries but Wright, "Sui Ideology", conveys a realistic impression of its great importance in the eyes of the state, and there are a number of suggestive indications to be found in the works of Gernet, Tsukamoto and Michihata cited in later notes.

[5]See the remarks in Bingham, Founding, p. 51ff., on the "Saviour Li" myth, and the much more systematic treatment by Seidel, A.K., "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism", History of Religions, 9:2-3 (1969-70).

[6]A distinction first emphasized in 1940 by Lü Chen-yü, Chung-kuo shih-hui-shih chu wen-t'i (Chungking, 1940), and which seems to have become standard in later works like the co-operative volume, Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh shih (Peking, 1958). Notice also J. Levenson's reflection on the paradigm in Confucian China and its Modern Fate, Vol. III (U. of California Press, 1965), p. 56ff.

[7]See Yamasaki Hiroshi, "Zuichō no Bukkyō fukkō ni tsuite", Bukkyō shigaku, 1:1 (1949), pp. 50-58, and by the same author, "Zui no Yōtei to Tendai daishi Chigi", Tōyō shigaku roushū (Tokyo, 1953). Ch'en Yin-k'o, "Wu Chao yü fo-chiao", CYYY 5:2, pp. 137-47, offers information more specific to the mother of the Empress and the Yang clan, and Chen, K., Buddhism in China (Princeton U.P., 1964), p. 194ff.,

presents a good summary.

[8]See for instance, TD 52:2108, Chi sha-men pu-ying pai— su teng-shih 3, p. 456a. The latter is henceforth cited as PSTS.

[9]Ch'en, "Fo-chiao", p. 143.

[10]Note 8. The author, Yen-tsung, states that Madame Yang was in fact, important to the survival of the Church.

[11]Chapter 3, note 52.

[12]Chapter 3, note 96.

[13]TCTC 200, pp. 6294-95.

[14]See Shi-shu 75:2520:2 and CTS 189 shang:3575:1.

[15]TCTC 200, p. 6294. It was, of course, Hsü Ching-tsung who brought the formal accusations against those who had opposed Wu's elevation.

[16]TCTC 201, p. 6342.

[17]CTS 4:3071:4. On the new Ritual, THY 37, p. 670, and on the extension of filial reverence, THY 26, p. 498.

[18]THY 64, p. 1117.

[19]This was Liu Hsiang-tao, whose memorial is discussed in Chapter VII. His comment is found in the abstract of this critique, TT 17, p. 93b.

[20]In addition to the sources mentioned in the preceding chapter, see the succinct history of the ceremonial during the T'ang, THY 7, p.79ff. Also CTS 23:3159:1.

[21]Chavannes, E., Le T'ai Chan (Paris, 1910).

[22]Chavannes, op. cit., p. 185. On the ceremony of 665, see also TCTC 201, p. 6344ff., CTS 5:3073:1, TFYK 36:2a, 40:20b, 780:24a and 80:9a.

The celebration of 665 seems to have been appropriately timed, and Ssu-ma Kuang remarks on the generalized prosperity which had followed five successive bountiful harvests. Barbarian representatives attended from as far away as Persia, attesting to the success of Chinese arms.

The quoted passage is also found CTW 97:1ab.

[23]CTS 23:3160:2. The occasion of his remark was an

order to prepare a brief on the feng-shan which Hsüan-tsung was considering at the time. On Chang, see Pulleyblank, Background, p. 194.

It is of interest to note that Empress Wu became the first woman ever to participate in the great sacrifice of the Southern Suburb in 669. TFYK 596:28b.

[24]TCTC 201, p. 6346.

[25]CTS 23:3159:4.

[26]TCTC 201, p. 6347. See also TT 20, p. 114b.

[27]CTS 5:3074:1, TFYK 30:5a, THY 1, p. 3, TCTC 202, p. 6372. See also Tz'u-hai, pp. 262 and 266.

[28]On the changes of 662, see TCTC 200, pp. 6326-27, CTS 4:3072:3, HTS 3:3639:2. The new names were given in two stages, in the second and fourth month of the year, and while it is difficult to identify a consistent source of inspiration, the new titles seem in the main to have been wholly new or else derived from those used at the height of the Han. It may be possible, therefore, to see the changes as a re-assertion of Chinese-ness, an attempt to dissociate the T'ang from the "barbarian" regimes which immediately preceded its rise. The motive of ritual replication seems also to have been present, and if so, the reversion to the old names in 670 (TCTC 201, p. 6365, CTS 5:3073:3) was an acknowledgement of error. The year 670, of course, was an economic low-point in Kao-tsung's reign with the worst drought and famine of the period, and was marked by other ritual attempts at solution like the change of nien-hao and the Empress' offer to abdicate.

The second change, as comprehensive as the first, occurred in the ninth month of 684, shortly after the accession of Jui-tsung. See TCTC 203, p. 6421, CTW 96:11a, WYYH 463:6b. On this occasion, the chief inspiration for the new names seems to have been the Chou-li so that the Six Boards, for instance, were designated by heaven, earth and the four seasons. A few, as we shall later see, came from the Taoist pantheon and some were unprecedented, so that the purposes were probably ideological and designed to signal a new and prosperous era.

[29]See Pan Ku, The History of the Former Han Dynasty (H.H. Dubs trans.) (Baltimore, 1955), Vol. III, p. 103ff. On the close connection between Chou-li symbolism and usurpers and reformers, see Tanigawa Michio, "Shu-Zui kakumei no keii ni tsuite," Kodai bunka, 18:5 (1967).

[30]CTW 6:6b7a, THY 49, p. 859, Kuang hung-ming chi 25,

TD 52:283c. The claim was re-asserted in each subsequent reign: by Kao-tsung in 666 (CTW 12:13b) and Chung-tsung in 708 (CTW 18:8a). On T'ai-tsung's edict, the disputed date and the possibility of a second one in 641, see Michihata Ryōshū, Chūgoku Bukkyōshi (Kyoto, 1958), p. 153.

[31]Note 5.

[32]TCTC 204, p. 6374, THY 49, p. 859, CTW 95:4a, TTCLC 113:4a. The edict reviews the Buddhist omens which helped bring the Empress to the throne. It is of importance to note that an edict of 675 had given the clerics of both churches equal places at Court. THY 49, p. 859, TFYK 60: 10a.

[33]CTS 5:3073:1. On these foundations, see Tsukamoto Zenryū, Nishi Bukkyo koshoshi no kenkyu (Tokyo, 1944), p. 24ff.

[34]TCTC 201, p. 6347. On a similar move by Wen-ti, see Wright, "Sui Ideology", p. 87.

[35]HTS 83:3884:2, TFYK 303:20b, THY 50, p. 870. In spite of her later importance, little is known of T'ai-ping's early life. The youngest of Kao-tsung's three daughters and the only one born to the Empress, she was only six when her ordination occurred. The HTS tells us that a palace was re-modelled to look like a convent, but the princess seems to have found the monastic life uncongenial and in 681 she was married in a lavish ceremony marred by the accidental burning of the trees along the processional route (TCTC 202, p. 6402, TFYK 84:17a). Her husband died in prison at the end of 688 (TCTC 204, p. 6453), and two years later she married Wu Yu-chi, a grandson of Shih-huo. This was part of her mother's plan to unite the Li and Wu clans and the sources say she had to arrange for the death of Yu-chi's wife to make it possible.

From this time, T'ai-p'ing became her mother's closest confidante, and a mark of her favour is the fact that she came to hold a feoff of revenue (shih-shih feng) of 3,000 households, almost ten times the statutory limit for a princess. TCTC 204, p. 6466, and see also CTS 183:3554:2.

[36]There is, as yet, no systematic study on the development of organized Taoism from Han to T'ang, but see, in addition to the works of A. Seidel cited earlier, her La divinisation de Lao-tseu dans le taoisme des Han (Paris, 1969), and Maspero, H., Le Taoisme (Paris, 1950). J.R. Ware's "The Wei Shu and the Sui Shu on Taoism," JAOS 3:3 (1933), pp. 215-250, is still useful, as are several sections of Tokiwa Daijo, Bukkyō to Jūkyō Dōkyo (Tokyo, 1930). A number

of works in the TD make reference to the size of the canon and the activities of the Church in the early T'ang. See for instance, TD 49, Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai 12:581bff.

[37]WHTK 29, p. 271c. This was one of the suggestions of her twelve-point memorial.

While her motive was most closely connected with Taoist ideology, it is also possible that the Tao-te ching was chosen for its mother imagery and its assertion of female superiority.

[38]In 678. See THY 75, p. 1373, TFYK 639:19a.

[39]The best study is a three-part series by Tsukamoto Zenryū, "Hokushū no haibutsu ni tsuite" in Tōhō gakuhō, 16 (1948), pp. 29-101 and 18 (1950), pp. 78-111. The final section, on the failure of the suppression, is found in Bukkyō shigaku, 1 (1949), pp. 3-31.

[40]Maspero, Taoisme, pp. 15ff. and 116ff. See also the extensive bibliography in Seidel, Divinisation.

[41]Wright, "Sui Ideology", pp. 86-87, and above.

[42]TCTC 205, p. 6484. Some of the most conspicuous of the omens, and excluding those mentioned in the text, are a three-legged chicken in 684 (TFYK 46:12a), a new mountain-peak in 686 (THY 70, p. 1243), an unseasonal snowfall in 693 (THY 28, p. 533), unusual flowers in 698 (THY 51, p. 889), and the footprint of the Buddha in 701 (TFYK 15:15ab). These are also mentioned in the standard histories.

Like earlier T'ang rulers, she found it necessary to prohibit magical and superstitious practices among the people and did so in 689 and 695. See THY 44, p. 797, and CTW 96:2a.

[43]TCTC 205, pp. 6494-95. See Appendix II, #110.

[44]See Chapter IX.

[45]Kamata Shigeo, Chūgoku kegon shisōshi no kenkyu (Tokyo, 1965), p. 120.

[46]See, for instance, TD 49, Fo-tsu t'ung-chi 39:368a and 369b for reference to her votive patronage at Lung-men and the monks she received in this period. Tzukamoto Zenryū, Shina Bukkyōshi kenkyū (Tokyo, 1942), p. 372ff., shows that the greatest activity at Lung-men occurred in the second half of the seventh century. We might also note an edict of 673 prohibiting the cruel sharing of animals, TFYK 42:15a.

[47]On the history of the conflict see Chen, K., The

Chinese Transformation of Buddhism (Princeton U.P., 1973), p. 78ff. and Yen Tsung's PSTS. The origins of the problem are examined in Itano Chohachi, "To-shin ni okeru butto no rikei mondai", Toho gakuho 12:2, and Tokiwa, Bukkyo to Jukyo Dokyo, p. 56ff. contains some useful references. Yang-ti's edict is discussed also in Chen, K., Buddhism in China (Princeton U.P., 1964), p. 202.

[48]This is suggested at a number of points in the text and by two articles in Wright, A.F. and D.C. Twitchett (ed.), Perspectives on the T'ang (Yale U.P., 1973), pp. 239-307. The work is henceforth cited simply as Perspectives. The Fo-tsu t'ung-chi, not always a reliable source because of its late date, mentions an early directive that clerical conduct should be guided by the Hsiao-ching. See 39:365b.

[49]Chen-kuan cheng-yao (Ssu-pu pei-yao ed.) 7:10a-11b, quoted Michihata, Bukkyōshi, p. 336. T'ai-tsung once remarked on the importance of Buddhist devotion among his people (THY 47, p. 836) and as the two articles in Perspectives, note 48 above, make clear, considered it important in his state ideology.

[50]Fo-tsu t'ung-chi 39, TD 49:364b suggests that the edict was rescinded two years later, while Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai 11, TD 49:569a puts the original edict in 632 and does not mention its withdrawal. Caution is necessary in the use of Buddhist sources.

[51]Chen, Transformation, p. 81, and Michihata, Bukkyōshi, p. 339. See also THY 47, p. 836 and Fo-tsu t'ung chi 39, TD 49:367a.

[52]CTW 12:4a. See also Kuang-hung ming-chi 25, TD 52: 284a; PSTS 3, TD 52:455b. The edict is dated the sixteenth day of the fourth month in Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai 12, TD 49:580b.

[53]Michihata, Bukkyōshi, p. 337 and Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai, loc. cit. On Wei-hsiu, see Sung kao-seng chuan 17, TD 50:812b, henceforth cited as SKSC.

[54]Chen, Transformation, pp. 79-80. Michihata, Bukkyōshi, loc. cit.

Prince Hsien, of course, was still a child and unless he had been in some way connected to the church as a child, it is difficult to know why he was chosen. The Crown Prince, of course, had been called Hung because of the force of the name in Taoist Messianism, and Chung-tsung, we are told, was called Fo-kuang Wang because of a light appearing at his birth. See Fo-tsu t'ung-chi 39, TD 49, 367a.

The brief to Madame Yang is found PSTS 3, TD 52:456a.

[55]Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai 12, TD 49:580c. I am not sure what forms the civil rank (su-kuan) took.

[56]Most particularly, PSTS 3, TD 52:455bff. and the CTW, which preserves a total of thirty-six briefs connected with the debate, only seven of them advocating freedom from obeisance. Michihata, Bukkyoshi, pp. 335-57, has summarized the arguments of both sides and identified some of their sources. The discussion in the text is based largely upon his work.

[57]Tao-te ching, chang 25. The ssu-ta are the Tao, heaven, earth, and the ruler.

[58]See for instance, Zürcher, E., The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaption of Buddhism in Medieval China (Leiden, 1959), vol. I, and notice the early appearance of such works as the T'ai-p'ing ching (ca. 126-144) which, in their attack on Buddhism, began with its unfilial nature. See Chen, Buddhism, pp. 51-52.

[59]Quoted Chen, Transformation, p. 79. The original is found Kuang-hung ming-chi 25, TD 52:286a.

[60]For the references, Michihata, Bukkyōshi, p. 343.

[61]CTS 73:3325:4, HTS 102:3918:3. The member of a clan originally from Tun-huang, and in the T'ang, one of the most eminent of Ho-hsi, Ling-hu Te-fen had held high posts under the first two emperors. A very erudite man, he had worked both on dynastic histories and the Shih-tsu chih. Shortly after the pai controversy, he resigned his posts, and died in 666 at the age of 84. His biography contains no suggestion of Buddhist loyalties.

[62]See Appendix II, #58.

[63]CTW 12:7b, Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai 12, TD 49:561a. See also, Chen, Transformation, p. 80.

[64]SKSC 17, TD 50:812c. With no confirmation elsewhere, even in PSTS, I am inclined to doubt the statement.

[65]CTS 8:3081:2.

[66]These are Yang Ssu-hsüan (CTS 62:3303:2), who submitted a joint brief with Yang Shou-chüeh, and was a maternal cousin of the Empress. Yang Ssu-chien and Yang Ssu-cheng (HTS 71 shang:3814:4) were his brothers. Yang Ling-chieh

(HTS 71 shang:3814:2) was from a different branch of the same clan, and with Ho-lan Min-chih, nephew of the Empress, the Yang clan thus accounted for five briefs. Lu Tsai (CTS 79: 3338:4) was a close associate of Hsü Ching-tsung and Li Ch'un-feng who are mentioned as advocates of the imperial party in PSTS, and both he and Li submitted briefs. Li I-fan was the brother of Li I-fu, and Ch'iu Shen-chi was an adherent of the Empress later used to dispose of her son Hsien.

Other examples could be adduced but the role of Hsü Ching-tsung, and the stance of the Yang clan which contrasts so strongly with that of the Empress' mother, are perhaps sufficient to illustrate our point.

[67]Chapter III, note 108.

[68]Perspectives, pp. 239-265. See also the short exploration of T'ai-tsung's Taoist bias in Yūki Reimon, "Shotō Bukkyō no shisōshi mujun to kokka kenryoku to no kōsaku," Tōyō Bunka Kenkyujō kiyō 25 (1961), pp. 8-14.

[69]Kao-tsung was by no means an ardent supporter of Buddhism and we agree substantially with the conclusions of S. Weinstein in "Imperial Patronage of T'ang Buddhism," Perspectives, pp. 265-306. At the same time, he recognized the force of Buddhism among his subjects when he founded a temple to commemorate his mother (CTW 11:6b), and when he commented specifically in an edict attempting to place an abbot, that Buddhism was declining in the West but flourishing in the East, in China. (CTW 11:8a). His establishment of the Kuo-fen temples in every prefecture after the feng-shan sacrifice in 665 was the greatest act of patronage the T'ang had yet seen and led the monk Tao-shih to conclude his great encyclopedia of 668, the Fa-yüan chü-lin, with the judgment that no former ruler was comparable to him. We have earlier commented on his public stance of respect for Hsüan-tsang, and Buddhist sources comment on other concessions toward the Church such as his exemption of their literature from the use of "taboo" characters. See Fo-tsu t'ung-chi 39, TD 49:369a.

[70]Tsukamoto, Nishi Bukkyō, p. 21ff. and earlier references.

[71]Zürcher, Buddhist Conquest, I, pp. 194-5; T'ang Yung-t'ung, Han-Wei liang-Chin nan-pei ch'ao fo-chiao shih (Peking, 1955), pp. 217-19.

[72]See, for instance, Chen, Buddhism, p. 279ff., and Wright, "Sui Ideology," pp. 95-96.

[73]Tsukamoto, Shina Bukkyōshi, p. 273ff. and 581ff.

[74]See Eberhard, W., Das Tobareich Nordchinas (Leiden, 1949). Chapter 18, and Shigematsu Shunso, "To So jidai no Mirokukyo-hi," Shien 3 (1931), pp. 68-103. The TFYK 921:17b notes that a man called Sung Tzu-hsien had gained some credence and a rebellious following in 613 by calling himself an incarnation of Maitreya. I find no formal prohibition of the sect in the T'ang until 715.

[75]Fo-tsu t'ung-chi 39, TD 49:367c. The late date of the source and the lack of confirmation elsewhere make the notice somewhat suspect.

[76]THY 48, p. 846. This event, recalled in 684 accounts for the change of era-name to kuang-chai. Soothill, W.E., and L. Hodus, A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms (Revised ed., Taipei, 1961), p. 202a, gives a short history of the temple founded to commemorate the event. The incident is also mentioned in the Great Cloud Commentary.

[77]TCTC 203, pp. 6413-14.

[78]The K'ao-i notice, ibid. says that another source calls him the Yüeh-kuang wang or Candraprabha.

[79]Note 28 above.

[80]Tz'u-yüan, p. 339c. It was the era-name from 685-89.

[81]See Wright, "Sui Ideology," p. 90, and on the history of the institution in the T'ang, THY 11, p. 271ff. The best examination of the symbolism of the Ming-T'ang and its origins is Granet, M., La pensée chinoise, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1968), especially pp. 175ff. and 210-29. Wang Mang, of course, also used a Ming-T'ang for legitimizing purposes. See Pan Ku, Former Han, pp. 191-94.

[82]In the eleventh month of 689. See HTS 76:3867:4, TCTC 204, pp. 6462-63, and the Act of Grace which promulgated the measure, WYYH 463:1b and CTW 96:16b.

In the act, the Empress remarked upon how the writing system had become progressively confused and complicated so that even scholars had difficulty in understanding some of the characters. As part of a continuing reform, she was issuing twelve new characters which would preserve the foundation of the words while illustrating their meaning. The first of the new forms was the replacement of the Chao (照) in the Empress' own given name by a new character Chao (曌) whose components symbolized the heavenly bodies illuminating the void below.

Some sources simply attribute the fabrication of the

new characters to the Empress but they were, in fact, the invention of Tsung Chin-k'o (CTS 92:3365:4, HTS 109:3930:4), a close supporter and a relative by marriage.

While the new characters have been a source of fascination to scholars, especially to those interested in the epigraphy of the period, there seems to exist no concensus on their form. The only full secondary study is that of Tokiwa Daijo, "Bu-Shu shinji no ichi kenkyu," Hattori sensei koki shukuga kinen: Toho gakuho 6, pp. 2-37. In it, nineteen new characters are identified showing that the list was, in fact, supplemented. It is also clear that the new forms were used universally for the space of fifteen years, and examples have been found both in Tun-huang and in Japan.

The new characters are given below:

Heaven	天	而	Year	載	𠦂 or 𠦂*
Earth	地	𡈼	Beginning	初	𡈼 or 𡈼
Sun	日	㊀	Country	國	囝
Moon	月	㊊	Year	年	𠂤
Star	星	〇	Minister	臣	悉
Prince	君	𠁣	Life	生	匡
Upright	正	𡆥	Luminous	照	曌
Man	人	𠄎	Sage	聖	埊 or 埊
Proof	證	𪨰	Give	授	𥘅

*The nineteeth is probably a variant form.

A number of these characters were used in the reign titles of the Empress, and so appeared in all official documents.

Tokiwa also finds 卍 used for 萬 "ten thousand" since 693, but I am not convinced that this was one of the Empress' new characters.

As a legitimizing device, the new characters might have been intended to suggest an implicit comparison with the legendary inventor of script, or perhaps, to emphasize the "new beginning" of a second Chou ruling the united Empire. Alternatively, they might be seen simply as a sign of the Confucian ruler's concern with literacy and education.

[83]The fullest account of this figure is CTS 183:3554:

3, and see also TCTC 203, pp. 6436-37. He obtained the surname Hsüeh when the Empress had him adopted into her daughter T'ai-p'ing's family, since he was not himself of the shih class.

[84]Chen, Buddhism, p. 222, seems to suggest that while palace chapels had existed in earlier dynasties including the Sui, they date from 691 in the T'ang. It seems clear from Huai-i's biography that this was not the case though I have seen no earlier reference in the dynasty. On ministerial complaints about Huai-i and the request that he be castrated, see TCTC 203, p. 6441.

[85]The fullest study of this event is Yabuki Keiki, Sangaikyō no kenkyū (Tokyo, 1926), pp. 686-761. His work is based chiefly on a reconstruction of one of the Tun-huang manuscripts, Stein 2658, which he regards as an explanation or commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra to make clear the omens which demonstrated that Empress Wu was Maitreya re-born. It is on his work that the translation in the text is based.

Recently, his work has been supplemented by examination of Stein 6502 which is a lengthier version of 2658. See Shigenoi Shizuka, Tōdai Bukkyōshi ron (Tokyo , 1973), pp. 203-37. I have been unable to lengthen my translation to incorporate the additional lines but it might be noted that those found at the beginning of 6502 simply resume two of the prophetic passages from the Sutra. The first is found Taisho Shihshu Daizōkyō 12, no. 387, p. 1097b and refers to the circumstances of Maitreya's re-birth; the second, p. 1107a, explains the transformation into female form. Most of the commentary's references to the Sutra come from these sections.

[86]The two T'ang histories use the term "falsely compiled" (wei-chuan or wei-tsao), while Ssu-ma Kuang, who says it was a four-chüan work while all extant versions are in six, simply says it was composed and presented. (TCTC 204, p. 6466). The Fo-tsu t'ung-chi says it was "translated by imperial order" (ch'ih-i) and the Seng-shih lüeh says it was re-translated (ch'ung-i). Similar discrepancies exist on the matter of the number of monks involved.

[87]Yabuki, Sangaikyō, p. 716ff.

[88]Chen, Buddhism, p. 217 and Tsukamoto, Nisshi Bukkyō, p. 27.

[89]HTS 76:3867:4.

[90]TCTC 204, p. 6469, CTS 6:3076:1, HTS 4:3641:3. In most cases the foundation of the Great Cloud temples involved only a name change for existing establishments, and Tsukamoto,

Nisshi Bukkyō, p. 29 shows that large and powerful temples were chosen. The source of the new monks is unspecified.

[91]In contrast to the equality of Buddhist and Taoist foundations in 666. It must be noted that in 689 the Empress stripped Lao Tzu of the honorific bestowed at that time. THY 50, p. 865.

[92]Note 85 above. I am grateful to H. Franke, W. Bauer, and A. Seidel for suggestions about some of the more obscure references.

[93]Wright, "Sui Ideology," p. 97ff., in pointing out how Wen-ti stopped short of proclaiming himself the Tathagāta, suggests that this formula had been used by the rulers of the Northern Wei. This tactic and the hostile reaction of the south against it is studied by Takao Giken, Chūgoku Bukkyō-shiron (Kyoto, 1952), pp. 37-53. It is important to notice, however, that the Wei precedents were neither so elaborate nor systematic as the action of the Empress Wu who established special temples and monks and who used her imperial title, her architecture and ceremonial, to establish her claim.

[94]Ta-fang-teng wu-hsiang-ching 6, TD 12:1107a. The vision described was not a particularly original one and might be compared with that of another of Dharmaraksa's translations, the Fo-shuo Mi-lo hsia-sheng ching, TD 14:453.

[95]Eloquently translated in de Bary, W.T. et al., Sources of Chinese Tradition (Columbia U.P., 1964), Vol. I, pp. 175-76.

[96]CTS 6:3076:2, HTS 4:3641:4, TCTC 205, pp. 6492, 6494 and 6496. The Empress took her full title in three stages. In the autumn of 693 and in response to a petition of 5,000 names solicited by Wu Ch'eng-ssu, she called herself "Golden Wheel," the symbol of the Cakravartin. This move was in response to the presentation of a second sutra, that of the Precious Rain (Shigenoi, Bukkyōshiron, p. 218ff.), which portrayed her as a Cakravartin and was followed by the erection in the Ming-T'ang of the Sapta-ratna--the seven treasures of the Cakra. See Soothill and Hodus, p. 303a, and TCTC, loc. cit.

In 694, Ch'eng-ssu again sponsored a petition of 26,000 names requesting an augmentation of title, and "Peerless" was added. Ch'eng-ssu seems in this to have been flattering his aunt in hopes of gaining the succession. Only at the beginning of 695, and with no apparent reason, was "Maitreya" added to the title.

The sequence if somewhat puzzling in view of the importance the Empress attached to the Maitreya omen and to

which she referred on other occasions. See, for instance, CTW 97:6b-7a, her preface to the new translation of the Hua-yen sutra. In the second month of 696, and immediately after the Ming T'ang burned, she divested herself of "Maitreya the Peerless" (TCTC 205, p. 6502) seeming therefore to connect the assumption of the title with the calamity which followed. Her initial reluctance to call herself Maitreya might perhaps be attributed to humility and reverence.

[97]Yabuki, op. cit., p. 726.

[98]K'ai-yüan shih-chiao lu 18:39b. The "three evil treasures" were the Great Cloud omens, the claim of the Empress to be Maitreya re-born, and the Great Cloud temples erected under the auspices of the "false monk" Huai-i.

[99]THY 49, p. 859, TCTC 204, p. 6473. The edict is found TTCLC 113:4a and CTW 95:4a.

[100]THY 49, p. 859. See also Fonctionnaires, I, p. 412, note 1. According to TTLT 18:13a-14b, the tz'u-pu was to supervise the Buddhist and Taoist clergy and nominate their temple heads (san-kang) as well as the bhadanta (ta-te) of the capital. It later carried out a triennial census and registration (TRSI, p. 859).

Earlier in the T'ang, the affairs of the Church had been overseen by two offices attached to the Board of Rites, the ch'ung-hsüan shu which was primarily concerned with Taoism, and the hung-lu ssu whose principal function was the management of tribute envoys. The implications of this organization are that Buddhism was seen as an extension of Taoism, and as a foreign religion.

On the matter of clerical discipline and state regulation, see Moroto Tatsuo, "Tōsho ni okeru Bukkyō kyōdan no tōsei," Bunka 16:6 (1952).

[101]The only sect to rise after the Chou was that of Ch'an, and it might be argued that its principal tenets were developed prior to the end of the Chou. I am suggesting that once Buddhism was espoused as a state doctrine by a dynasty which ruled the entire Empire, the earlier spirit of evangelism and proselytism disappeared.

[102]See TCTC 205, p. 6498. According to Ssu-ma Kuang, the expense was so great that the treasuries were emptied to pay for it. See also TCTC 205, pp. 6499-6501. On the opposition to Buddhist expenditures, THY 49, p. 857ff.

[103]See the Commentary translated in the text. Whether or not the Ming T'ang was ever so simple as the ideal would suggest, is difficult to know but those who protested the 696

plan to re-construct it seem to have seen it in this light. This is discussed in later notes.

[104] See Mochizuki, Bukkyō daijiten.

[105] TCTC 205, p. 6498.

[106] See for instance, CTW 95:8a and TTCLC 80:11b for a decree of 696 condemning excessively elaborate funerals and other forms of commemoration. The clan instructions of Yao Ch'ung (Appendix II, #122) warned his descendants against excessive patronage of Buddhism. CTW 207:5b.

[107] THY 49, p. 857, TFYK 327:21b, and TCTC 207, pp. 6549-50. Ti Jen-chieh criticized not only the wealth of the Church but the burdens which the clergy placed on the people by the non-productive nature of their vocation, their sale of sutras and relics, and their disregard of the law. He went on to point out that as a compassionate religion, Buddhism should not be the cause of imposing labour upon the people.

The Empress apparently rescinded the call for corvée labour, but continued to make collections from the clergy for five months. Li Chiao later pointed out that over 170 million ch'ien had been collected and suggested that this be distributed to the poor at the rate of 1,000 ch'ien per household. The suggestion does not seem to have been followed. THY 49, pp. 857-58.

[108] THY 41, p. 731, CTS 6:3076:1, TCTC 205, p. 6482. Ssu-ma Kuang adds that the ban included fishing and since there was drought and famine in the South, caused starvation. Human life was thus deemed less valuable than animal.

Bans on butchery seem first to have been enacted in China under Liang Wu-ti and there are examples in the Sui and T'ang, though usually for the space of three days. It is difficult to know how severely the ban was enforced, but TCTC, loc. cit. mentions one high official nearly cashiered for contravening it, and the memorial of Ts'ui Jung which resulted in its lifting indicated that it had caused much suffering among the poor though the rich had often managed to avoid it. THY 41, p. 731. Ts'ui's biographies are CTS 94:3368:3, HTS 114:3940:1.

See also Huang Sheng-fu, T'ang-tai fo-chiao tui cheng-chih chih ying-hsiang (Hong Kong, 1959), p. 107ff.

[109] THY 41, p. 746. This meant that crimes against state property entered the ta-ni category of punishment. TLSI 1, p. 15ff. and 19, p. 61. This enactment occurred shortly after Buddhism was attached to the tz'u-pu, again emphasizing its position in the state.

[110]TCTC 205, p. 6469. The notice says that only the nine men who, with Huai-i were responsible for the commentary were awarded the red (instead of black) cope, and the silver belt ornament of fourth-rank officials. Judging from Stein 2278, reproduced by Yabuki, op. cit., p. 748ff., the award was much wider. Twenty-seven monks are given name and rank, and several who had no connection with the Sutra are hsien-kung. Since the document in question is another containing omens of the Empress' imperium, its compilers are likely to have been Great Cloud monks.

[111]See, for instance, Huang, Fo-chiao, p. 67, and Weinstein's remarks, "Imperial Patronage," Perspectives, p. 265.

[112]See Chen, Transformation, p. 85ff.

[113]Chen, Transformation, pp. 85 and 92.

[114]Chen, Transformation, loc. cit.

[115]See Chen, Transformation, p. 95 and Michihata, Bukkyōshi, pp. 137-77 for a more general examination of the problem of clerical discipline. Wright, "T'ai-tsung and Buddhism," Perspectives, pp. 261-63 has some interesting remarks on another attempt to regulate the clergy through a sutra called the I-chiao ching.

[116]See for instance, TLSI 2, pp. 48-49 which outlines the punishments for such offenses as fornication (chien), disrespect to or assault upon superiors, mistreatment or killing of slaves, theft, etc. In most cases, punishment was heavier than that imposed for the same offense upon commoners. See also Chen, Transformation, p. 102.

[117]CTW 95:9b, 96:5b, and 95:11b respectively. The first two date from 698 and 700. I have been unable to date the third.

[118]See the several references to the abuses of this period in Gernet, J., Les aspects économiques du Bouddhisme dans la societé chinoise du Ve du Xe siècle (Saigon, 1956). See also TCTC 209, p. 6624.

[119]See note 107 above and note the 704 remonstrance by Chang T'ing-hui (CTS 101:3385:1, HTS 118:3946:1) found TCTC 207, p. 6571. As a result of this memorial, the Empress halted her plan to erect an enormous and costly image.

[120]TD 50. Cited henceforth as SKSC.

[121]Hsüan-tsang (600-664) has a full biography in Ta-tz'u-en-ssu san-tsang fa-shih chuan, TD 50, no. 2053 and SKSC 4:721b. Tz'u-en (632-82) was his successor and the systematizer of Fa-hsiang doctrine. SKSC 4:725b.

When Hsüan-tsang returned to China in 645, T'ai-tsung had supported his translation work and Kao-tsung continued this patronage. He seems to have had a fondness for Tz'u-en, setting him up in the temple he founded for his mother, listening to his lectures and composing a eulogy for him.

[122]The best account of Fa-tsang's life and the historiographical problems surrounding it is Kamata, Kegon, p. 129ff. See also SKSC 5:732b, and Ts'ui Chih-yüan's biography, TD 50:280c.

On Chih-yen, see Fa-tsang's biography of him in Hua-yen-ching ch'uan-chi 3, TD 51:163b. He lived from 602 to 668 and though he seems to have been at court, the favoured position of the Fa-hsiang school meant that he received little support.

The Hua-yen or Avatamsaka school derives its name from the massive sutra first translated in 403. See the Hua-yen ching ch'uan-chi, TD 51:153a. It is often considered the most sophisticated and recondite of Chinese schools. The most useful study for the T'ang is that of Kamata cited above, and Chang, G.C.C., The Buddhist Teaching of Totality (Pennsylvania State U.P., 1971) is an ambitious attempt at an overview of the sect.

[123]THY 48, p. 848 and Bukkyō Daijii 5:3149a. The THY mistakenly dates the foundation in 675 rather than 670, and according to SKSC 2:719a, there was a T'ai-yüan temple in each capital.

[124]Kamata, Kegon, p. 130. On the conferral of honorific names, see Huang, Fo-chiao, p. 64ff.

[125]K'ai-yüan chih-chiao lu 9, TD 55:564a, SKSC 2:719a. Also associated with them at the time was the monk Buddhapāla who came from Kabul in 676. SKSC 2:717c. Divākara translated eighteen texts before his death and the KYSCL, loc. cit. says the Empress contributed a preface to his canon.

[126]SKSC 2:718c. The notice here gives the impression that the Empress considered the former translation inadequate and hearing of the existence of an earlier Sanscrit version in Khotan, sent a messenger to summon Siksānanda. The origin of the belief is probably the claim she makes in her preface to the new translation. Kamata, Kegon, p. 130 mentions some of the other collaborators. See also KYSCL 9, TD 55:566a.

[127]Found CTW 97:5b and TD 10.

[128]SKSC 1:710b. After his two maritime pilgrimages to India in 671 and 685, he brought back to China over 400 texts he had collected. The Empress is said to have met him at the gates of Lo-yang, showered him with gifts and set him to work on the Hua-yen translation. She later supported his other translations and his studies of the lands he had visited since she "respected the Law and valued the man." KYSCL 9, TD 55:968bc. Chavannes, E., Memoires sur les religieux eminents (Paris, 1894),translates from his work.

[129]See respectively, Li-tai fa-pao chi, TD 51:184a, and SKSC 5:732b on Heng-ching who became Master of Precepts (shou-chieh shih), perhaps because of the Yang clan's friendship for T'ien-t'ai. Other examples are found SKSC 19:832b on Wu-hsiang, and 20:836b on Ch'u-chi of Pure Land, as well as Pao ssu-wei (3:720a), Bodhiruchi (3:720b), Yin-tsung (4:731b), Tao-tsun (8:758a), Tao-ch'eng (14:791b), Hui-an (14:823b), etc.

[130]Hui-neng (SKSC 8:754b), was invited at the request of Shen-hsiu, but because of illness, did not attend.

[131]SKSC 8:755c. The Empress may have played a part, though unintentionally, in the eclipse of Northern Ch'an by its southern rival. Yamasaki, H., Zui-To Bukkyoshi no kenkyu (Tokyo, 1967), p. 197ff., sees the success of Northern Ch'an in gaining imperial support and converts among the upper classes as the cause of southern Ch'an's greater success among the masses and hence its longevity.

Further instances of the Empress' support for Northern Ch'an are found CTW 97:6b and in the fact that Shen-hsiu is one of only three monks to be given an official biography. See CTS 191:3592:2.

[132]Ta-Chou k'an-ting chung-ching mu-lu, TD 55:372c.

[133]Kamata, Kegon, p. 144ff., and more recently, Weinstein, "Imperial Patronage," Perspectives, pp. 265-306.

[134]Weinstein, op. cit., pp. 274-91.

[135]Kamata, Kegon, p. 134ff. Ch'an had not yet systematized its doctrine at the time of Fa-tsang's schema, but in the second-highest category of "abrupt teaching", he placed such basic Ch'an doctrines as that of sudden enlightenment and the ineffable character of all religious experience.

[136]Chang, Totality, p. ix.

[137]Chang, Totality, p. 28ff.

[138]THY 36, p. 657, and see CTW 78:8ab.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ROAD TO USURPATION

Little is known of the Emperor Chung-tsung who came to the throne in January of 684. As the seventh son of Kao-tsung, the second or third born to Empress Wu, his chances of succession had seemed remote, and quite naturally, his early education and training had been designed less to prepare him as future emperor, than to prepare him as one who would constitute no threat to the ruler.[1] His career was to be an unfortunate one, and the sources depict his character as ar. unhappy combination of qualities: a weak will and sensuous nature, but stubborn and quick to anger. He had been Crown Prince for only three years prior to his succession and Kao-tsung may have had some reservations about his experience and general fitness, for his last testament provided for the continuation of his widow's influence in government: "When important matters of defense and administration (chün-kuo ta-shih) cannot be decided, the course of action [decided by] the Celestial Empress shall be adopted in both [types of problem]."[2]

This sort of provision was not unprecedented[3] but, strictly speaking, it differed from earlier female regencies

in that the power of the Empress Wu was subject to defined limitation. Her interpretation of the clause, however, seems to have been wide and she immediately contravened another provision of the will, that Chung-tsung should succeed "before the coffin", by delaying his coronation a full week.[4] We are given no explanation for the delay, and might regard it therefore as a symbolic gesture. The Empress-dowager Wu did not yet seek the usual honoured but impotent retirement and was making clear to her son that his actions would not go unobserved.

If warning it was, Chung-tsung paid little attention, and he had ruled less than a month when he committed the act which was to cost him his throne. Like his father, he was married to a formidable woman, but one very different from Empress Wu. The possessor of a proud lineage and a woman lacking in political sensitivity,[5] the new Empress persuaded her husband to elevate her father, Wei Hsüan-chen, to president of the Chancellery, a violation of the customary limitation on posts granted to the consort family.[6]

The appointment created a crisis. It was unwelcome to the Empress Wu, who had been extremely careful to exclude her family from any meaningful political role, and who clearly resented the rivalry of her daughter-in-law; and in the higher circles of the bureaucracy, where a revival of ministerial power had been anticipated, it met an even more hostile reception. The spokesman for this group was P'ei Yen,

an ambitious man who had risen through the examination system from the minor gentry of Shansi and was now paramount among the chief ministers as president of the Department of State Affairs.[7] He had been closely associated with Chung-tsung before his elevation, and when his own prestige was enhanced still further as the sole receptor of Kao-tsung's testament, he had immediately asserted his leadership over the tsai-hsiang body by tranferring their meeting-place from the Chancellery to his own department.[8] To him, the entrance into politics of another empress and especially one who represented an extensive and powerful Kuan-chung clan was an unhappy development and he lodged a forceful protest. Chung-tsung, with ill-considered temper replied, "What is to stop me from handing over the Empire to Wei Hsüan-chen? So why should I be sparing with the post of Chancellery president?"[9] Yen was angered and astounded at so strong a rebuke and reported it at once to the Empress Wu. Choosing to take her son's statement as one of literal intent, she summoned the full court, charged her son with treasonable intent, and had him forcibly removed from the throne by members of the Yü-lin Guard, a group which played a key role in virtually all the coups of the early T'ang.[10] Demoted to princely rank Chung-tsung was soon exiled with his pregnant wife to Fang-chou in Hu-pei, and was not to return to the capital until 698.[11]

He was succeeded by his twenty-two year old brother, Jui-tsung, who was wholly unprepared for his new role, and if

we may judge from his actions after the restoration, he was a reluctant ruler even at this time.[12] Wu Tse-t'ien, claiming he had a speech impediment and couldn't talk,[13] "appeared in court and pronounced decrees". There is no record of Jui-tsung ever asserting his prerogatives, and as the Mirror puts it: "Political affairs were decided by the Empress-dowager. She installed Jui-tsung in a detached palace and he had no chance to participate."[14]

The legality of these acts, as we have seen, was disputed even in the T'ang, with one school of thought maintaining that Chung-tsung never lost the Mandate, and we must ask from whence derived the power of an empress-dowager to depose a mature emperor. Although there was at least one Han precedent for the replacement of an emperor on a dowager's authority,[15] this does not seem to have been a normative act and went unmentioned in 684. Of greater importance, therefore, was the ability of the Empress Wu to draw on the authority of Kao-tsung's will and define the situation as an emergency, one in which the dynasty faced the well-worn threat of an ambitious consort family. By convincing P'ei Yen and other high officials that this was the case, or perhaps by playing on their ambition, she in effect, borrowed the legitimacy of their position to supplement her own, and so win the support of the Yü-lin Guard who added a second essential element, that of coercion. The presence of force makes it difficult to know how sincerely the claim of the Empress to legitimate

authority was accepted, but perhaps by examining briefly the nature of legitimacy, we can offer some explanation.

From Roman times onward, historians, theologians and politicians have speculated on the sources and nature of legitimate authority, and even in very modern times, the debate continues.[16] Present-day social scientists tend usually to take as their starting point the formulations of Max Weber,[17] and distinguish at least three pure types, but a number of convincing advances have been made by such scholars as Easton and Etzioni.[18] Many of these studies rely upon empirical evidence, but since this is unavailable to us, we must instead discuss the claims to legitimacy made by the Empress Wu, and in default of evidence to the contrary, assume that their validity was accepted at least by the politically active component of her constituency.

A recent manuscript[19] suggests the existence of five types of claim which we might use for analytical purposes: the cultural, ideological, structural, personal and instrumental. A claim to cultural legitimacy, corresponding to Weber's "traditional" legitimation, posits a congruence between societal values and the operative form of government and political élite within it. In the context of seventh-century China, this claim would encompass such concepts as the Mandate of Heaven, the traditional role of the Son of Heaven and his bureaucracy, and the position of this élite vis-à-vis the masses, especially as it was defined by the theorists of Han

Confucianism. Wu Tse-t'ien, as a woman, could never claim complete cultural legitimacy. Ideological claims, on the other hand, suggest a discongruence, and must inevitably suggest an alternative to the present system, deriving authority from the fact that new procedures and power-holders are better than the old. In 684, the Empress might well be seen as "better" than Chung-tsung or his brother, but not until the usurpation did she posit a new set of principles. As we suggested in the preceding chapter, the new regime drew more force from the Buddhist world-view than the Confucian.

Structural claims argue that particular power-holders ought to be considered legitimate because they legally occupy positions within a structure <u>already</u> considered legitimate on cultural or ideological grounds. Because an empress-dowager had no formal, legally-defined prerogatives of rule in traditional China, Wu was forced to rely on <u>tsai-hsiang</u> support to depose Chung-tsung and immediately to assume the position of regent. In no source do we find the regency formally conferred, and she seems therefore to have taken advantage of the lack of defined legal procedure to assume the position on her own authority.[20] Undoubtedly, Jui-tsung gave tacit consent, and from 684-690, the Empress possessed the structural legitimacy of regent.

Finally, the Empress won acceptance in 684 through personal and instrumental claims, categories closely related to Weber's "charismatic" legitimacy and the real key to her

successful usurpation in 690. Personal legitimation is that type derived from superior qualities and capabilities, and is closely related to the instrumental type in that these particular qualities are seen by subjects to be necessary for or beneficial to the attainment of specific values or benefits. The special feature of these types of legitimation is that power-holders who possess them can usually defy at least some of the cultural-traditional requisites of legitimacy, thus presenting their constituents with a choice of legitimized objects; either the integrity of a traditional system or the benefits which might accrue from the rule of superior or charismatic personalities.

This dichotomy presents us with an interesting perspective on the period prior to the usurpation. It may be recalled that in our discussion of state ideology, we suggested that while the Confucian tradition was extensively patronized, it was also the tradition upon which innovation was most often imposed. The form of the feng and shan, the new titles appropriated by the rulers and bestowed on official posts, new mourning regulations for mothers, and the innovations in the examination system are examples of this process. We suggested that one of the reasons behind it was the unwillingness of the "Two Sages" to become prisoners of tradition and in the context of legitimation, we might suggest that Confucianism was singled out for attack because of its prohibition on female influence in government. If

this perspective is valid, we are witnessing a dual process. Confucianism was patronized sufficiently to enable it to remain primary among the three philosophies as a legitimizing ideology, but at the same time it was subtly weakened by acquiescence in innovation or modification, and the net result was that by 690, personality overshadowed tradition and a woman could become huang-ti.

It is difficult to know whether or not the Empress Wu was consciously seeking personal legitimation in this manner prior to 684, but her actions as regent suggest an affirmative answer. Within the first month of the new regime she began to cast aside the former conventions of female rule, appearing for instance in imperial regalia and disdaining to "hang the curtain" in the audience-hall.[21] She ignored the protests of her elder statesmen, P'ei Yen and Liu Jen-kuei, who suggested that she was beginning to conduct herself like the Han Empress Lü,[22] and uncharacteristically, not only appointed her senior nephew to tsai-hsiang rank but created for him the new title "huang-ssu" which seems to have had the sense of "emperor-expectant".[23] This was an ominous sign since Jui-tsung had produced an heir five years earlier, and it must have appeared even more suspicious when word reached the capital that the former Crown Prince Hsien had suicided in exile on the arrival of an envoy from his mother.[24]

The possibility of usurpation seems now for the first time to have occurred to the Empress and shortly after, she

sent up two "trial balloons". The first of these was an Act of Grace in the ninth month of 684, and the second, the decision to establish at Lo-yang seven ancestral temples (miao) for the Wu clan, a number customarily reserved for the imperial family.[25] Both these acts met with protest: the temples causing P'ei Yen to compare her once more with Empress Lü,[26] and the Act sparking the armed rebellion of Li Ching-yeh.

Before passing on to the rebellion, we might pause here to examine some features of this Act not only because of its particular historical role, but because it was typical of many in the T'ang. The original purpose of the Act of Grace (she) was the reward of merit and the pardon of convicted felons on auspicious occasions, but at the same time, they were often used to promulgate important administrative measures. While only a small number have survived in their entirety,[27] those which have are of wide scope and are useful sources for the general policy lines of their period.

The first portion of the Act[28] of 684 was the one which confirmed suspicions of approaching usurpation by transforming the external symbolism of the regime. Banners henceforth would be gold with violet trim, and certain officials would wear different robes and insignia. Lo-yang was to be re-named "Sanctified Capital" (shen-tu) and its palaces called the "Great Beginning" (t'ai-ch'ü). The deep concern of the Empress with symbolism and nomenclature and

their relation to state ideology was reflected in her claim that official titles and posts were defective, and for the second time since she came to power, all were to be re-named. This time, most of the new names harked back to the first Chou dynasty--a demonstration of Confucian reverence bearing a close resemblance to the use of Chou-li symbolism by other successful usurpers like Wang Mang.[29] Some of the new names were also drawn from a mythology principally Taoist, and several of these, like Phoenix Court (feng-k'o) and Luan Terrace (luan-t'ai) have remained unique in Chinese history.[30] Since the Act was itself issued to commemorate the discovery of Buddhist relics,[31] we might see in the symbolic manipulation here, the balance common to the Empress' entire ideological policy. Finally, she pointed out that the posthumous title of her mother was not of sufficient dignity and so raised it to Empress-dowager (hsien-t'ien t'ai-hou), a measure whose clear implication was that she was herself of imperial birth.

Though many in the Empire were convinced that these measures were open indications of an intention to seize the throne, there is in the Act no mention of the signs of heavenly approval necessary for a successful transfer of the Mandate, and when we examine the rest of the document an alternative explanation becomes possible. Chung-tsung, in 705, was to remark on the desperate situation in 684,[32] and while he probably had in mind the rebellion itself, we can

see from the Act that the problems of the early 680's required a strong and experienced ruler.

In the next section of the Act, and in measures reminiscent of her lengthy memorial a decade earlier, the Empress demonstrated, by her concern for the people's welfare, that this is precisely what she was. Here were to be found her benevolence, humanity and frugality as she pardoned criminals, made gifts to the aged and filial, offered relief to the poor and sick, and went on to restore lost ranks, grant temporary tax holidays to some areas, seek improvement in the distribution of military rewards and release a number of serving women from the palace.[33] None of these measures were unique to the Empress' Acts, and though some contemporaries regarded her as over-generous in her awards,[34] there is little evidence that she differed in any appreciable degree from her predecessors. These were not tactics to "win the hearts of the people" as some historians allege, but rather, were representative of the spirit of the Acts and were designed to maintain rather than to enhance her position.

Our final division of the Act is that which deals with current problems, and here the Empress began with the most basic--the rapid expansion of population, with a consequential decline in the standards of provincial administration. This was revealed in false registration, tax evasion and other forms of corruption. To combat it, a new branch of the Censorate was to be formed to supervise closely the

provinces and make frequent inspection tours, while at the same time, counties and prefectures were to be standardized with populations respectively of 10,000 and 30,000 households. New ones were to be created where necessary.[35] Demographic change was a prominent feature of the late seventh century, and because of the close relationship of the census to tax, equal-field and military systems,[36] household registration was a continuing and thorny problem of the government. The Empress was later to approve a rather radical suggestion from Li Chiao to divide the Empire into twenty provinces for the purposes of closer supervision, but in this, was thwarted by hostile bureaucratic opinion.[37]

Another problem of the period was the growth of military abuse, principally the decline of morale which resulted from careless and excessive conferral of rewards (hsün), and their purchase by wealthy persons who had never served.[38] Because of the nature of the fu-ping militia which we shall discuss later, this was extremely serious, particularly since it dated at least from the Korean expeditions of the 660's. The Act called for investigation and punishment of offenses but had no new solutions to offer, and judging from later observations, the deterioration was not arrested. Some scholars, in the T'ang and later, were to blame upon the Empress the destruction of the fu-ping.[39]

If this was the case, there is no sign that it was intentional for the Empress was genuinely concerned with

administrative improvement and in the Act, put forward again the Confucian panacea for all governmental problems, the recruitment of "men of virtue" (hsien). On this occasion, she decreed that virtually all high officials were to recommend for office one man of either civil or military ability.[40] While it is difficult to know whether she used this form of recruitment more than earlier rulers, there is no doubt she used it often, and under her, almost every form of recommendation was used at least once.[41] Historians tend often to comment on the numerical increase of the bureaucracy which was partly a result of this, but seldom notice its other effects--a high quality bureaucracy, largely loyal to the Empress who created it: and on the other side of the coin, a bureaucracy which in its turn would have the heavy responsibility of recommendation. Penalty for errors in this duty could be heavy, and as we shall later suggest, officials were often intimidated, and therefore anxious to conform to the ruler's definition of "virtue".

In summary, we might remark that the Act of 684 provides a useful starting point for any assessment of the Empress Wu's political concerns over the next two decades, and in addition, reveals her priorities in the restless political climate of Chung-tsung's deposition. It shows that she was concerned first with the viability of the T'ang and secondly, with her own place in it. It was only in this context that usurpation could be considered.

Let us explain further. As we have suggested, the institutions of the early T'ang, by 684, were showing signs of strain. The long internal peace and the acquisition of empire had spurred population increase, commercial development and demographic mobility. In turn, these placed pressure on the registration of population, and the various systems of taxation, equal-field distribution and fu-ping service which depended upon it. The rapid expansion of civil and military bureaucracy found some justification in this, but at the same time, the emoluments of officialdom and the costs of defense were becoming the largest items of state expenditure. Furthermore, the widening opportunities of bureaucratic employment, principally by means other than the examination system, were creating something akin to a "revolution of expectations" among men whose lack of a suitable genealogy had prevented their advancement to high office earlier in the dynasty. All these developments are explored in detail in later chapters.

The point here, however, is different. In 684 a turning point, albeit artificial, arrived with the deposition of Chung-tsung. Officials were beginning to call for reform, and some, like the important critic Ch'en Tzu-ang, wanted it to be thorough: ". . . Those who would rectify the end must first correct the beginning, and those who purify a stream must first cleanse its source. . . . The abuses in the Empire have existed already for a long time . . ."[42]

As we shall see, however, there is little evidence of thorough reform by the Empress in the next years, and the reason for this is the basic concern of this chapter. We must remember, first of all, that the administrative problems we have been discussing were the result of policies initiated by the first T'ang emperors and brought to fruition by those she and Kao-tsung had pursued. Together, they had not hesitated to innovate in areas like state ideology and in their treatment of the upper bureaucracy and the old aristocracy, but they had been wholly loyal to the lü-ling system of codified law upon which the dynasty was based. A clear sign of this was their regular issue of regulations (ko) which amended and supplemented the penal code (lü) and administrative statutes (ling). The last set of regulations had been issued in 677 and the Empress was to promulgate a shorter one in 685, but from that time until the restoration there were no more.[43] Institutional reform seems therefore to have had low priority. Now in some cases, like that of the fu-ping, rejuvenation may have been impracticable, while in others, like the tsu-yung-tiao taxation system, the problem was not yet serious. In some cases, like registration and vagrant households, solutions were sought but only in a piecemeal and ineffective fashion, and we might suggest therefore, that the nature of the problem determined the approach to its solution. A second possibility is that the Empress never held any real intention of depriving the T'ang permanently of the Empire,

and so eschewed radical change lest it be identified with her usurpation and nullified at the restoration. In this view, she saw her role as that of a caretaker.

A further possibility, and the most likely of the three, lies in the evolution of the imperial institution, or at least, in the Empress' perception of it. In the preceding thirty years, she and Kao-tsung had progressively diminished the prerogatives of the upper bureaucracy with the result that the spectrum of opinion constricted and scope for administrative innovation narrowed. Increasingly, rule by fiat had been replacing coöperative decision and the ruler became therefore more and more the pivot of statescraft. We need not make too much of this, for the Empress was following some well-worn precedents and her political "style" marked a turning point only within the context of her examination policy and her success in putting the great aristocracy on the defensive. The point here is different. The Empress truly saw herself as the pivot, or to switch metaphors, as the mortar which held together the state structure. It was therefore her greatest priority to win for the imperial institution the confidence and support of the people, rather than to undertake reform which would inevitably alienate certain segments of the population. If she could win this type of support for the ruler, she could afford to leave the task of institutional and economic reform to a strong emperor in the restored T'ang who would know how to use the new

bureaucracy she would continue to build. If so, it is in the reign of Hsüan-tsung that we must measure her success. And if so, her usurpation was the result of necessity and not ambition.

We have made this lengthy digression in the hope of providing an alternative to the usual view that the Empress' policies in the years 684-690 were basically little more than preparatory steps on the road to usurpation. We are suggesting, instead, that she perceived a dynastic crisis with which legitimate succession could not cope, a challenge from the consort family and from powerful ministers like P'ei Yen, and she took extreme steps to meet it.

These steps, in the short run, however, compounded the crisis, for it was largely in response to the Act of 684 that the rebellion of Li Ching-yeh broke out. Ching-yeh was the grandson of Li Chi, conqueror of Korea and one of the early supporters of the Empress Wu.[44] When he died in 669, reportedly foreseeing his grandson's disgrace,[45] his accumulated honours had assured his descendants of privileged entry (yin) into the civil service and Ching-yeh had begun a career in the bureaucracy. Dismissed from his post for a misdemeanor, he had taken up residence in Yang-chou at the junction of the Yangtze and the Grand Canal.[46] In the brash yet indolent atmosphere of this commercial centre, his closest companions were disgraced officials of family and repute,[47] anxious to restore their lost fortunes. By the end of 684,

the actions of the Empress had created what seemed an ideal climate for rebellion and in November, the insurrection broke out.

Its aims were ambiguous. Although the rebels claimed to be partisans of the deposed Chung-tsung, they soon placed nominally at their head a "look-alike" of Prince Hsien who of course, had suicided earlier in the year.[48] In view of this duplicity on the part of Ching-yeh, we might be justified in thinking he planned no restoration, but rather, had dynastic ambitions of his own. This conjecture gains force when we examine the rebel manifesto, a brilliant polemic by Lo Pin-wang,[49] which successfully blackens the Empress Wu while remaining non-committal about Ching-yeh's other aims. It runs,

> The woman Wu, who has falsely usurped the throne, is by nature obdurate and unyielding, by origin, truly obscure. Formerly, she was among the lower ranks of T'ai-tsung's servants and served him by changing his clothes.[49a] When she reached mature age, she brought disorder to the palace of the Crown Prince, concealing her private [relationship] with the former Emperor. She then plotted covertly to gain favour in the Inner Chambers . . . and concealing her mouth behind her sleeve, she skillfully slandered the other women. With cunning flattery and perverse artfulness she deluded the ruler. She then usurped the pheasant regalia of empress and entrapped our ruler in incest.
>
> Then, with a heart like a serpent and a nature like a wolf, she favoured evil flatterers while destroying her good and loyal officials. She has killed her elder sister, butchered her elder brothers, murdered the ruler, poisoned her mother![50] She is hated by gods and men alike: neither heaven nor earth can bear her. Still, she harbours calamitous intentions and plans [to steal] the sacred regalia [of the ruler]. The beloved son of the ruler she keeps in a separate palace, and she has

> given the most important offices [of state] to her own group of bandits. . . .[51]

The statement continues with a series of historical allusions to the evil effects of female political dominance in earlier times, and concludes,

> I, Ching-yeh, am a former minister of the great T'ang, the eldest son of a noble family. I received the testament of our former Emperor and I owe gratitude for the liberal graciousness of our ruling house.[52] . . . My spirit rises in anger like the wind and the clouds; my will is determined to restore tranquility to the altars of soil and grain. The whole world has lost hope and the people of the Empire have placed their trust in me. I therefore raise the standard of righteous rebellion in order to purify the Empire of the baleful omens of disaster. . . .
>
> You my lords! . . . Some of you have been entrusted by weighty charges by the words [of the late Emperor], and others have received his dying commands in the audience-chamber. His words are still in your ears. How can loyalty have gone from your hearts? The earth on his tomb is not yet dry and where are his young orphan-princes? We may yet change bad fortune to good, show homage to the dead Emperor and serve his living successor.[53] May you one and all arise and devote yourself to the cause of the ruler. Do not permit our former Emperor's orders to be brought to nothing. . . . I ask you to look at the world today. Which house possesses the Empire? . . .[54]

Though many of the allegations made against the Empress are false, they must reveal at least some contemporary belief, and as the tract became more and more familiar as a model of T'ang literary style, various of its details were adopted by hostile historians. We cannot fail to notice, however, the absence from the list of murders of the infant daughter of the Empress, and of her son Hung--the very crimes to which historians most frequently allude. We might therefore conjecture either that she was innocent or that she had

successfully concealed these events in her own time. She herself showed a sardonic appreciation of the polemic when a copy came into her hands, blaming her tsai-hsiang for their incompetence in leaving a man of such literary talent as its author to languish in provincial obscurity.[55]

In retrospect, the rebellion of Li Ching-yeh seems hardly to have constituted a serious threat to the Empress, lasting only three months and affecting only three prefectures. Part of the reason for its failure lay undoubtedly in the rapidity and skill of imperial response,[56] but Ching-yeh's failings as a commander may have been even more important. In the first days of the rising, 100,000 men are said to have joined him, and encouraged perhaps by this, he refused to move from his Kiangsu base in spite of the advice of lieutenants who urged a northern march into Hopei where, they claimed, were to be found the finest fighting men and the greatest resentment and disappointment at the "dictatorship" (chuan-chih) of the Empress.[57] Some recent scholarship has tended to confirm the soundness of this strategy,[58] and in rejecting it, Ching-yeh revealed once more his own ambitions. Instead, he sent a part of his forces to take Nanking (Chinling), the old southern capital, which he believed still to have an "imperial air" (wang-ch'i).[59] This seems to have been a serious error, for a month of siege warfare yielded only the eastern garrison-town of the city, and by that time, imperial forces comprising over 300,000 men were advancing in

a pincer movement. Despite the ineptitude of the T'ang prince who led the northern army, the issue was not long in doubt and in the eleventh month of 684, the rebels were destroyed and their leaders slain.[60]

Had this been the extent of the rebellion, it seems likely that its consequences would have been less serious. From the point of view of the Empress, however, a greater danger was present in rebel connections at court, and shortly after the rising began, the capital was shocked to learn that P'ei Yen had been arrested and charged with treason.

This was the event which led directly to a virtual reign of terror in the next years, and for that reason, the guilt or innocence of P'ei Yen has been the subject of much debate. Only in his HTS biography do we find the direct charge that he was planning to seize the Empress on a projected journey to the Cave Buddhas of Lung-men and was thwarted when rain cancelled the trip,[61] but at the same time, we must re-call his earlier signs of ambition and the presence of his nephew as a prominent rebel.[62] We are told, moreover, that he early advised the Empress that her retirement would end the rebellion without fighting,[63] and at that time, a number of ministers seem to have regarded his motives as suspect. To his several defenders, the Empress claimed to have proof of guilt,[64] but since we have no record of its presentation, we might assume that her consistent fear of the growth of ministerial power played at least

some part in her decision to bring the matter to trial. She seems to have acted, after all, only when a Censor pointed out, "P'ei Yen served in the Court of the late Emperor for over twenty years. He received the testament of guardianship [of the state] and [already] enjoys great power. If he had no disloyal design (i-t'u), why would he ask you to return political control [to Jui-tsung]?"[65] After a tribunal found Yen guilty, he suffered the degradation of public execution and the most prominent of his defenders, General Ch'eng Wu-t'ing, met a similar fate in the very midst of his unprotesting troops.[66] The Empress therefore had found herself betrayed not only by the scion of an eminent clan, but also by men in highest of civil and military positions and according to one source, she assembled her entire court to confront them with this fact. Raising in turn the example of her three slain enemies, she warned:

> . . . These three men were looked up to [with respect, but] they were harmful to me and I was able to destroy them. If [any of] you have abilities [which] surpass these three men, then you must act accordingly. If not, you should change your hearts and serve me, not making [of yourselves an object of] ridicule for the Empire. . . .[67]

Ssu-ma Kuang, who relates this anecdote, doubts that the Empress would speak in such a fashion to her ministers,[68] but only, perhaps, because he fails to perceive the depth of her anger and shock. The rebellion itself, and what she seems clearly to have seen as a betrayal by ungrateful and over-ambitious officials, came as a profound disillusionment.

Convinced of her own indispensability and regarding herself as the legitimate representative of the throne, she determined never again to be threatened in such a way. To this end, she initiated what is termed, not inappropriately, a "reign of terror" which was to claim thousands of victims over the next six years and become a feature of her reign which is almost universally condemned.

In some respects, this system of delation was simply an extension of earlier policies of the Empress: the frequent demotions and shifting of posts through which she had long attempted to ensure that loyal men surrounded the throne.[69] Ssu-ma Kuang, however, sees its origins in an incident of 684 when a privately-expressed protest at Chung-tsung's deposition brought summary execution to the protestor and generous reward to the informant.[70] There is justification in this view, but at the same time, we have no indication that it would have been repeated had the rebellion not occurred. It was not until early 685 that there began to appear in the Censorate and the Board of Punishments the agents of the terror--men of obscure origin whose biographies are grouped in the CTS under the special category "evil" (k'u).[71] Most prominent among them were Chou Hsing and Lai Chün-ch'en who soon set in operation a network of spies and informers, ostensibly to eliminate the remnants of the rebellion. Before long, however, their victims included the patently innocent. In a new prison, they extracted "confessions" by forgery,

torture and other methods later described by Lai in a handbook called the Classic of Entrapment (Lo-chih ching),[72] and the Empress seems to have been convinced of the existence of plots everywhere. In early 686, she established a great bronze urn (kuei), which in modified form was to endure as an institution until the end of the dynasty.[73] At the beginning, the urn was constructed of four compartments, each for the reception of a particular sort of report: self-recommendation, criticism of the government, grievances and wrongs, and finally, omens, calamities and secret plans. Soon it was little more than a repository for a growing number of denunciations, and ironically claimed its inventor among the first victims.[74]

The terror lasted until the usurpation was secure and the climate created in court and countryside may well be imagined. Protests poured in, and in frankness and eloquence, that of Ch'en Tzu-ang in 689 is representative:

> . . . From [the start of] this year, your servant has seen secret denunciations in every corner [of the Empire]. We imprison hundreds and thousands of men, and the majority are [still] denounced in connection with [the] Yang-chou [rebellion]. When we examine carefully [the charges], not one in a hundred is true.
>
> Your Majesty is humane and merciful . . . [but] you have appointed a deceitful and evil group [of officials], reckless and in rivalry with each other. With angry looks of suspicion, they then report the existence of secret [plots]. One man is accused and a hundred fill the prisons. . . . Some say that for every man Your Majesty loves, there are a hundred you harm. The Empire gasps and no one knows a place of rest. . . .[75]

Seen in these terms, the terror is indefensible. On

the other hand, however, centuries of Confucian historiography may have gone too far in unremitting condemnation, thus ignoring its implications, so that we might suggest here a more balanced view. The terror was born of well-grounded fear--the response of a woman ruler to a tradition committed to non-recognition and non-acceptance of her because of biological accident. She permitted it to continue even after seeing its evils, because she saw in it, values beyond the elimination of disloyalty, and because she also knew that the phenomenon itself enhanced her power and hence her ability to control its excesses.

This view seems the more tenable when we isolate certain ramifications of the terror. The most obvious, as suggested earlier, was the further transformation of the political climate. A common denominator of the victims was that the overwhelming majority were officials above the fifth-rank, a pattern consistent both before and after the usurpation.[76] The result of this was fear and uncertainty in the upper bureaucracy, and no minister could gain over the Empress, the degree of influence which ministers like Wei Cheng had exercised over T'ai-tsung. The latter, in 630, had gone so far as to encourage officials not to follow blindly his edicts and on several occasions was to withdraw them in deference to ministerial opinion.[77] In 687, when the paramount minister, Liu Wei-chih, refused an edict not ratified by his own department of the Secretariat, the Empress was so

angered by the ingratitude of one "to whom We have given employment", that she ordered his immediate suicide.[78] Traditional historians have found here a vivid contrast with the "good government of chen-kuan", but we might notice instead the consistency of the Empress' determination to reduce the relative power of high officials.

A second set of implications seldom pointed out concerns the social effects of the terror. As we shall shortly suggest, a number of steps were taken in the early T'ang to put on the defensive the great aristocratic clans who had dominated political life in the period of disunion. From mid-century, these clans had become increasingly bureaucratized, and profiting from cohesion and court connection, from wealth and education, had become the predominant element in the upper bureaucracy. Less-suited by temperament and training than officials of lower social origin for co-existence with a female ruler, they became easy targets for the trumped-up allegations of Lai Chün-ch'en, and since the charges brought against them were usually those of treason, the penalties extended to their families who were exiled or enslaved, and to their property which was confiscated to the state.[79] A good illustration is the final purge, that of 697, which followed the conspiracy of Liu Ssu-li. Of the thirty-six chief victims, the Mirror says, "all of them were renowned [members of the] shih of the land", and goes on to say that over a thousand of their relatives and friends

suffered the secondary punishment of exile.[80]

As far as we can judge, the incident was not atypical, and particularly because the Ling-nan exiles were more than once massacred by self-seeking inspectors from the capital,[81] we cannot estimate how many families were wholly extinguished. Those who survived were able only gradually to regain liang or free status with its attendant rights of examination and office-holding, so that in spite of amnesties before and after the restoration they were weakened in the competition for office, and often took generations to recover. Some of the factional strife under Hsüan-tsung can be traced to this time.

Less tangible, but no less important were a series of decrees in 686 which empowered informers of any social class to travel at public expense to the capital to make denunciations, and receiving the provisions of fifth-rank officials along the way.[82] T'ai-tsung, in 628, had decreed death for any slave attempting to bring charges against his master,[83] but now incidents of this sort became frequent and there were several examples of illiterate commoners rewarded with high official posts for informing.[84] The Mirror speaks of a wave of fear so great that "people all marked time and held their breath",[85] and there was a stream of protest against excessive punishments throughout the 680's. These critics, undoubtedly, were also aware of the social disruption which accompanied the imperial commissioners who combed the provinces in search

of disloyal elements, and the sad processions of once-mighty families plodding the long road to exile in Ling-nan.

For most of her reign, even in the 690's when from our perspective, her position seemed relatively secure, the Empress ignored the protests. In this, there may have been a certain paranoia, but at the same time, she could hardly be unaware that whatever its drawbacks, the terror always served as a tangible, nation-wide reminder of the power of the central government, and of its head, herself.

Finally, we must acknowledge that in the terror the T'ang judicial system survived a most severe test. Injustice was too often the rule, but a review of the trials of the period suggests that it was found mainly where the secret police acted upon confessions extracted by torture or by promises of clemency toward the family of the victim.[86] When these were presented to the Empress she had little alternative but punishment. Often, however, she presided personally at important proceedings, and several sources offer evidence that when courageous censors like Hsü Yu-kung pointed out miscarriages of justice, she acted immediately to rectify them.[87] After 697, when she destroyed the last of her evil officials and was puzzled that denunciations ceased, she replied to an explanation by Yao Yüan-ch'ung, "Recently, the tsai-hsiang followed their own interests and deceived me into acting as a ruler [too fond] of excessive punishments."[88] This avoidance of responsibility somehow lacks the ring of

sincerity, but it is a fact that from this time the executions stopped and prominent victims of the terror like Wei Yüan-chung were rapidly restored to office.

The initiation of the terror is often taken as the definitive sign that Wu had made up her mind to usurp. Indications are equally strong, however, that she made no firm decision to do so until the discovery of the Pao-t'u in 688. One sign of this is the intimate relationship she formed in 685 with Hsüeh Huai-i, whose origins and early career were discussed above. We have noted the ambiguous suggestion of a sexual relationship, but whatever the truth of the matter, the Empress seems to have fallen into a state of unaccustomed infatuation. His visits to the palace were frequent, and despite his arrogance and impropriety which she had to excuse to irate ministers,[89] she refused to dissociate herself from him. She began the year 686 with a decree restoring power to Jui-tsung, but says the Mirror, he "knew the Empress-dowager was not true-hearted",[90] and so refused. The offer, perhaps, was insincere, but it is at least possible that the Empress was considering for herself a less exhausting role in government since she was about sixty at the time. Her association with Huai-i continued for the next decade and he was to serve her in several capacities; unsuccessfully as a general against the Turks, and more notably as chief architect in 688 of the Ming T'ang.

The years immediately prior to the usurpation are

depicted in the Confucian sources as years dominated by the terror, by the rise of such favourites as Huai-i and the Wu nephews, and by the advancement of the Empress' usurping aims. This last perception is certainly a valid one, but it could also be suggested that the end of the policies she pursued at this time was not necessarily the overthrow of the T'ang. Jui-tsung had just indicated his unwillingness to assume power, and if we bear in mind that legitimation is not a static, but a continuing process, the repairs the Empress now made in the administrative structure become not simply devices to win support, but rather the continuation of the political expertise she had demonstrated for so long a time.

We have already noted the new Regulations of 685, and the creation that same year of special censors to oversee the activities of Buddhist monks in the capital. Migration to the south continued throughout the period, and new administrative units were set up each year in Chiang-nan to accommodate the shift. In response to the escalating border raids of Turks and Tibetans, several large expeditions were dispatched, and the An-pei protectorate reorganized,[91] though without lasting success. Informed officials, appalled by the state of tu-hu-fu administration, were beginning to predict the loss of the entire Ho-hsi region unless decisive steps were taken,[92] but as we shall see, this was not a priority of the Empress and the garrisons were not augmented.

Emphasis during these years was clearly on domestic

affairs, and symtomatic was the rapid growth of the bureaucracy. Though statistical evidence is lacking, the trend to expansion is seen in such developments as the encouragement of self-recommendation, already extensive since the foundation of the Urn, the increase of chin-shih degrees, especially at Lo-yang,[93] and the creation of new posts like market commissioners (shih-ling), registrars (lü-shih), and correctors of the imperial oversights (shih-i, fu-ch'üeh).[94] Commissioners made frequent tours of the provinces and among their duties was the recruitment of personnel for the new positions.[95] Appointment of auxiliary (yüan-wai) officials became more frequent, and especially in the Six Boards the number of such positions was increased.[96] In many cases, for instance, that of the Board of Civil Office, the increase was justified, and it seems reasonable to assume that as administration tightened, the quality of government improved. We cannot know whether this was the chief motive of the Empress or whether she expanded the bureaucracy to win the support of those whose entry was thereby facilitated, but if our earlier view of her perception of legitimation is correct, then the first of these motives was probably the primary one. Another indication of this is that she began in this period to demonstrate a strong concern for the economic problems which had been growing ever more serious since the end of Kao-tsung's reign.

As early as 666, and especially with the failure of

the new hsien-feng coinage, counterfeiting and inflation were beginning to receive official notice, and by the death of Kao-tsung, the cost of rice was said to be a hundred times that of the prosperous 630's.[97] Sumptuary regulations were issued with little effect, and the problems were exacerbated by a series of bad harvests and the growing costs of defense. In the early 680's, the first instances occurred of tax evasion by households fleeing their registration, and while the problem was still very much localized in the border areas,[98] it increased the financial strain on the government. None of these problems were unprecedented, and solutions were proposed by several ministers, though invariably they fell into the time-worn categories of reduction of military activity and bureaucratic recruitment, and the end of the building schemes and religious patronage which were so costly in man-hours and money. This would rejuvenate agriculture and strengthen the state's base of revenue.

Unfortunately, political expediency seems to have precluded any sustained effort in these directions. If the Empress were to maintain confidence in the dynasty and in herself, the borders must remain secure, and the bureaucracy active, smooth-running and receptive to new recruits. If she were to increase confidence, the "sanctified capital" of Lo-yang must be a worthy centre for the dynasty. Economic reform consisted therefore of palliatives, extra slaves instead of a raise in salary for the lower bureaucracy and

rapid suppression of the rare instance of resistance to taxation,[99] but no coherent programme of reform. In fairness, we must also acknowledge that measures like these seem to have been considered sufficient by the majority of the Empress' constituency as they were soon to make clear in the so-called Princes' Rebellion.

In this sense, also, the economic measures of the period were closely related to the question of legitimation. Since out-of-work officials had been the guiding force of Li Ching-yeh's rebellion, the cost of bureaucratic expansion might be justified. Similarly, since the very existence of female rule was a source of opposition to the existing regime, the temples, palaces and monuments which made Lo-yang as brilliant a city as Ch'ang-an, were expressions of imperial self-confidence, and more than that, the buildings themselves were often designed to win Heaven's sanction. The same was true of the court itself, as ceremonials became more frequent and more magnificent, and more often evoked the ritual of the first Chou dynasty.

This last tactic is a most interesting one, for ever since Wang Mang, the Chou-li had had a particular attraction for usurpers.[100] Why this was the case is not altogether clear, but it seems to be related to recognition of the excellence of the institutions begun by the Duke of Chou and Confucius' admiration of them: "The Chou surveyed the two [preceding] dynasties. How replete was its culture. I follow

the Chou."[101] The Chou, moreover, had held the Mandate longer than any other of the historical dynasties, and so must have been exceptionally pleasing to Heaven. Finally, for a usurper, the greatest source of opposition was the Confucian loyalty of existing officialdom, and thus if a new dynasty could clothe itself in the purest and most exalted form of this tradition, it could dilute some of this natural hostility.

In this argument, we perhaps anticipate ourselves, for we have earlier suggested that not until the summer of 688 did the Empress decide to usurp. The event which occasioned her decision, however, was one closely related to the omen tradition of Han Confucianism and one which paralleled exactly a portent of Wang Mang's usurpation,[102] the discovery in the Lo River of what came to be called the Pao-t'u.

The Pao-t'u was a white stone bearing the eight-character legend, "A Sage Mother shall come to [rule] mankind and eternally prosperous shall be her imperium" (sheng-mu lin-jen yung-ch'ang ti-yeh).[103] Beyond this we know little of the omen--evidence from Tunhuang suggests a longer inscription;[104] but all sources agree that it was fabricated by Wu Ch'eng-ssu who still held the title of huang-ssu and whose motives are therefore obvious. No source implies collusion on the part of the Empress and it seems certain that she was convinced of its validity, for in the next two months she made known the prophecy everywhere. An Act of Grace was

issued, and a public ceremony held to give thanks. The Lo River was made sacred and fishing banned there, and the Empress took a new title, "Sage Mother, Sovereign Divine" (sheng-mu shen-huang).[105] At the same time, she announced a magnificent festival to venerate formally the omen and to change the reign-title to yung-ch'ang to accord with it. The festival would also celebrate the opening of the Ming T'ang, an achievement of note, since although T'ai-tsung had proposed its construction as early as 631, the dynasty had thus far failed to act on it.[106] It was decreed that every single notability in the Empire should assemble for the celebration--prefects, governors-general, and of course, the numerous princes of the T'ang clan, most of whom held provincial postings at the time.

For them, the invitation was not a welcome one. Since 684, when two scions of the clan, sons of Kao-tsu, had fallen under suspicion as potentially subversive,[107] they had been progressively excluded from any meaningful role in politics or ceremonial, "orphaned outside [the capital] without a place to lodge their feet."[108] The Empress, of course, had consistently claimed that Jui-tsung's interests demanded this, and Li Ching-yeh's claim that he would restore Chung-tsung by rebellion gave it some validity, but from the perspective of the princes, it must have seemed she was now committed to usurpation. The opening of a Ming T'ang, so often used in the past as a legitimizing device,[109] added to

their suspicions and the princes began to fear they were being assembled in the capital to be massacred.[110] They realized at the same time, that refusal en masse to attend would also condemn them, and faced with this dilemma they chose to rebel in the cause of "saving the state" (kuang-fu).

The moving spirit in their rising was Li Chuan, an uncle of Jui-tsung, and at that time, prefect of T'ung-chou in Shan-nan. Forging edicts and sending out messengers to his relatives in every direction, he worked against time and communication difficulties to coördinate the insurrection. His plans were ruined, however, and the secrecy of the enterprise destroyed by an over-hasty levy of troops in Po-chou, Ho-pei, where the prefect was Li Ch'ung, a grandson of T'ai-tsung. This area, where there was a strong militarist tradition as well as separatist tendencies, would seem to have been fertile ground for rebellion, yet Ch'ung could raise no more than 5,000 men. Even these were not enthusiastic, and melted away before engaging the imperial troops, killing their leader to avoid punishment. In Yü-chou, near Lo-yang, Ch'ung's father, Li Chen was prefect, and realizing that his son's actions had doomed him, rebelled in turn. His small force also fled as imperial troops approached, and with his defeat and suicide, the so-called Princes' rebellion came to an end.[111]

Though this rebellion, lasting only a few weeks, scarcely constituted a threat to the position of the Empress,

she permitted her judicial officers to implicate the entire Li clan, so that horrifyingly disproportionate punishment fell on innocent and guilty alike. In this, she far exceeded earlier usurpers like Wang Mang, and it seems fair to conclude that after the initial reprisals, the executions were carried out chiefly to facilitate usurpation. By mid-690, probably several hundred households had been extinguished, and only a few children survived as exiles in the remote south.[112]

This particular aspect of the rising, of course, receives a good deal of attention in traditional historiography, but at the same time, the historians admit that neither the prestige of the T'ang name nor the (forged) edicts bearing the seal of Jui-tsung raised any significant support. The Mirror, while attributing the Princes' failure to their lack of coördinated action and daring, admits that of the five hundred members of Chen's group who bore official rank, all but one had been coerced into joining![113] The legitimacy of the Empress seems therefore to have been accorded recognition at least in the provincial bureaucracy.

No force stood now between the Empress and the throne, but still she was reluctant to move without further ideological legitimation. Signalling the end of the T'ang by divesting Lao Tzu of the honorific bestowed in 666,[114] she presided over her delayed ceremonials in early 689. At the Lo River, what the sources call the most magnificent ceremonial since

the T'ang began gave publicity to the omen of Heaven's favour, and at the Ming T'ang, she preceded Jui-tsung in the offering, while sacrifices to her father followed those of the T'ang emperors. She herself carried the regalia (ta-kuei, chen-kuei) of the ancient Chou, and later that year decreed the implementation of its calendar.[115]

In the same Act which proclaimed the new calendar[116] she promulgated an unusual piece of propaganda, one which not only reflected the common concern of usurpers for the rectification of names but showed the same flair for subtle modification which had characterized her earlier measures of Confucian ideological patronage. Suggesting that in the development of the writing system anomolies and corruptions which made understanding difficult had crept in, she created a dozen new characters for such common words as "day" and "month", as well as a new name for herself, using forms which would illustrate the foundation of the words and still preserve their meaning.[117] In this measure, there may have been an implicit comparison with the legendary inventor of Chinese script,[118] but from another perspective, it suggests a certain desperation. As the foundation of the Palace Examination a month later[119] shows, she was still uncertain of the support of officialdom at the capital, and so must have been particularly gratified when, in the seventh month of 690, Hsüeh Huai-i presented his commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra. Recalling the strength of Buddhist loyalty in the bureaucracy

from the pai controversy of 662, she must have been aware that the commentary could be as effective, among them as among the Buddhist masses.

In the preceding chapter, we alluded to the key role played by the Buddhist tradition in facilitating the usurpation and it is time now to place this judgment in context. Firstly, we must recognize that the use of Buddhist legitimation was not new in medieval China, and had, for instance, played an important role in the ideology of the Sui.[120] Nor was it unknown for rulers to adopt Buddhist titles, though usually in an informal fashion. Liang Wu-ti had been called Huang-ti p'u-sa and P'u-sa t'ien-tzu and certain of the T'o-pa Wei rulers were referred to by the saṅgha, as Tathāgata (ju-lai).[121] Conversely, the persecution or proscription of Buddhism seems unquestionably to have had a detrimental effect on dynastic life-span.[122] Patronage of the religion was therefore an important part of statescraft, but the case of the Empress Wu is distinctive in that unlike earlier rulers, she was not simply a model of Buddhist kingly behaviour, but Maitreya incarnate. Her claim, as we have seen, was a bold stroke which not only disarmed a potentially-subversive cult, but aimed to inaugurate a new era in Buddhistic world history.

Secondly, we must ask whether the Sutra and its commentary were of equal or greater importance than the various symbols of the Confucian tradition used in legitimizing Wu

Tse-t'ien as emperor. To answer this question, we might first notice that the Sutra itself was not by its nature, an effective legitimizing device. T'ai-tsung had seen nothing subversive in it, and aside from its chiliastic vision, it did no more than tell that when Maitreya was re-born, it would be in female form. The Commentary is therefore crucial, for it not only identifies the Empress as the Tathāgata of the Sutra but supports the identification with all the weight of native prognostic tradition, both Confucian and Taoist. We have commented previously on the ideological value of the Commentary as a legitimizing force and here might expand these observations to clarify its relationship with other aspects of legitimation.

The invocation of the mo-fa, once again, is extremely important, for it permitted the stigmatization of all the Empress' enemies, including the T'ang princes, as devadatta whose purge was righteous and necessary for the purification of the world. On similar grounds, acts like the destruction of Li Ching-yeh, P'ei Yen and the former Crown Prince Hsien were specifically rationalized and by extension, other acts of punishment, past and future, could be justified. The infamy of the terror became more comprehensible, and legitimation, once obtained, could be preserved by force. It is significant that immediately prior to her usurpation, the Empress substantially augmented the Yü-lin Guard.[123]

At least half the Commentary, secondly, deals with

the omens of dynastic change proper to the tradition of Han Confucianism, and so is just as interested in depicting Wu Tse-t'ien as a culturally legitimate secular ruler, as in showing her as a parahita. These signs of Heaven's favour seem to have been of more interest to the Chinese than claims of divinity, and it is interesting to note that when a skilled diviner enumerated for Chung-tsung the signs of usurpation and restoration, he made no mention at all of the Sutra.[124] In some senses, moreover, the Buddhist prognostications of the Commentary were the least convincing of all, and in 693, when Huai-i presented a new translation of the Precious Rain Sutra (Pao-yü ching), the interpolations attempted to clarify the time sequence of Maitreya's re-birth, to portray the Empress additionally as a Ćakravartīn, and also to supplement the conventional omens of the Commentary with others, like the appearance of a five-coloured cloud.[125] What seems to emerge here is that Buddhism alone was deficient as a legitimizing force. Stated in positive terms, we might suggest that although the Commentary provides a classic example of charismatic legitimation, it emphasizes traditional or cultural legitimation to an equal degree. This is clear not only in its frequent resort to Confucian tradition, but in the very nature of the Sutra's prophecy: ". . . you must know therefore that this is a transcendent body and not a real woman's body . . .".[126] If Chinese tradition outlawed female rule, a male deity in "transcendent" female form might win

acceptance. The transformation therefore gave Wu what we have called structural legitimation.

Finally, to show that Buddhism played a subordinate role in the success of the usurpation, we must recall that the Sutra appeared only two months prior to the Chou foundation and at a time when the symbolism of the first Chou was already well-established. Knowledge of its contents and their meaning could not have been widespread until at least a month after the usurpation when the temples were founded and the interpreters of the Sutra ordained. We see, moreover, no signs of Maitreya symbolism in the early days of the new regime: the colour white was never used, and the Empress did not assume the first of her Buddhist titles, "Golden Wheel" until the autumn of 693. She added "Maitreya" only in early 695 and divested herself of it less than a year later, after the Ming T'ang was burned.[127] Finally, we cannot overemphasize the fact that the Sutra was itself interpreted in the context of native legitimizing tradition--classical works like the I-ching and the Chou-li, oracular texts like the Ho-t'u, and "Taoistic" devices like popular songs.

The influence of Buddhism in Wu's legitimation was therefore not negligible, but it was not predominant. Two months after the presentation of the Sutra, in September of 690, petitions which requested the Empress to found the Chou dynasty began to appear.[128] One of them bore 60,000 names, representing officials, monks of both Churches, commoners and

barbarians. Jui-tsung, at the same time, requested the Wu surname. The Empress followed the custom of modest demurral until she was informed of the sighting of a phoenix, a sign since ancient times of the impending appearance of a sage-king.[129] A second omen, a flock of red birds in the audience-hall, reminiscent of the red bird of the first Chou,[130] made it clear that Heaven could no longer be denied. Jui-tsung abdicated, becoming "Emperor-expectant", and Wu Tse-t'ien ascended the throne as "Holy and Divine Emperor" (shen-sheng huang-ti), choosing as her first reign-title, "heaven-bestowed" (t'ien-shou), a reference to the omen of the Lo River, whose confirmation, it seems, she considered to be the key element in her successful usurpation.[131]

In summation, we might suggest that the legitimation of Wu Tse-t'ien was the result of a long, and on her part, a partially unconscious process. Her outstanding administrative ability, her lengthy devotion to the aims of the T'ang, and her instinctive concern for the masses made her in the course of thirty years, a familiar, respected, and almost indispensable part of T'ang government. In the context of her achievements, the fact of her sex diminished in importance, and to the vast majority of her subjects, those who supported her against the princes and against the rebels of 684, narrow and legalistic considerations of legitimacy became largely irrelevant. To the guardians of tradition, who were found mostly in the upper bureaucracy and whose

opposition might have been directed as much against a forceful and absolutist temperament as against a woman ruler, she remained unacceptable well into the 680's. In the years immediately prior to the usurpation, her dual policy of delation and manipulation of Confucian and Buddhist legitimation rendered them amenable to her dynasty, but because of the central role of coercion, we cannot judge how sincerely they accepted her claim. We shall return in later chapters to this question.

Events in the Chou, particularly the manipulation of the succession, would demonstrate the need constantly to re-new her legitimation, and this was to be a principal motif of the next fifteen years. As we shall see, it was principally through the continuation of T'ang policies that the Empress maintained her position, and it is time now to examine those policies in order to establish the lines of continuity.

NOTES

(Chapter V)

[1]On Chung-tsung, CTS 7:3077:2, HTS 4:3642:4, THY 1, p. 4. He was born in late 656 and prior to his elevation to Crown Prince in 680, had held only the usual sinecure of younger imperial sons, the position of mu in the two capitals. See Fonctionnaires, pp. 396-404 and 884-904. There is no record either of civil or military administrative experience beyond this.

[2]TCTC 203, p. 6416. The complete document is found TTCLC 11:3b and CTW 13:20a.

[3]Yang, Excursions, p. 31.

[4]TCTC 203, p. 6416. P'ei Yen, the paramount minister, memorialized to ask that the coronation take place without delay.

[5]Empress Wei (CTS 51:3279:3, HTS 76:3868:2) was a member either of the Yung-chou or Tu-ling branch of the Wei clan, both of them extensive and powerful, and both having produced both consorts and chief-ministers earlier in the dynasty. Wei became Chung-tsung's consort only after the death of his first wife who had incurred the displeasure of the Empress Wu, and was to give him only a son and a daughter. The son was executed in 701. The total domination of Wei over her husband is traditionally dated from his exile in 684, when in gratitude for her support, he is said to have promised her a free hand should better days ever come. She seems to have become virtual ruler on his restoration and was responsible for much of the corruption and administrative decline which marked the period. Some sources accuse her of poisoning her husband in 610, an allegation which Ssu-ma Kuang accepts, TCTC 209, pp. 6641-2.

[6]TCTC 203, p. 6417. See also CTS 87:3351:3, HTS 117:3945:2. The Empress' father had been made prefect when Chung-tsung became Crown Prince in 680, and this customarily, was the highest post he should hold. Chung-tsung wished simultaneously to raise the son of his wet-nurse, a man not of the "clear stream" to the fifth-rank.

[7]CTS 87:3351:3, HTS 117:3945:2.

[8]See Sun Kuo-t'ung, "T'ang tai san-sheng-chih chih fa-chan yen-chiu", Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao 3:1, pp. 17-121, sees the transfer of the Cheng-shih t'ang to the Dept. of State Affairs as a result of the gradual shift of departmental importance. The evidence is quite convincing and fails only to account for the timing of the move, since the Chancellery had lost its paramount position prior to 684. What is more, the Chancellery was at that time under Liu Jen-kuei (Appendix II, #51), a man of greater experience and prestige than P'ei Yen, and the one person feared by the Empress at the deposition. TCTC 203, pp. 6418-19. It seems therefore to have been an inappropriate moment for Yen to assert his leadership.

I believe that to Prof. Sun's analysis, we must add the character and ambition of P'ei Yen. It seems clear from his biography that he was highly ambitious, once trying to cashier P'ei Hsing-chien of whom he was jealous, and remaining as close as possible to the Crown Prince as Kao-tsung died. Since Jen-kuei was over eighty in 684, he found it a propitious moment to seize control of the tsai-hsiang group, and was especially hostile to the plan to replace Jen-kuei with Empress Wei's father since this would obviously dilute his personal power. It was for this reason, I think, that he took the extreme step of betraying Chung-tsung to Empress Wu.

Subsequently, he became the strongest advocate of a restoration of power to Jui-tsung and his failure in this may have led him to the attempted coup of which he was accused later in the year.

[9]TCTC 203, p. 6417. See also CTS 86:3351:3.

[10]TCTC 203, pp. 6417-18, and note the commentary. On the Yü-lin Guard, see Fonctionnaires II, pp. 555-560, and more particularly, Ch'en Yin-k'o, Cheng-chih shih, p. 39ff. for a demonstration of how the Yü-lin Guard determined every palace revolution in the early T'ang. At this time, they numbered only about a hundred men, most of them retainers of the Li clan (CTS 106:3396:2) so their willingness to depose Chung-tsung is doubly interesting. Their number was to be greatly increased in 689 by the Empress Wu; and under Chung-tsung's restoration, the force reached 10,000. THY 72, pp. 1291-92. See also Pulleyblank, An Lu-Shan, pp. 64-67.

[11]CTS 7:3077:1, TCTC 203, p. 6420. Chung-tsung, demoted to Prince of Lu-ling, was soon transferred to Chün-chou, even farther from the capital. Empress Wei gave birth to the notorious An-lo princess on the way.

[12]On Jui-tsung, CTS 7:3079:1, HTS 5:3643:3, THY 1, p. 5.

[13]TCTC 203, p. 6418.

[14]Ibid.

[15]See Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, Han Social Structure (U. of Washington Press, 1972), p. 74.

[16]See the excellent short review by D. Sternberger in the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (Macmillan, 1968), IX, pp. 244-48.

[17]Found chiefly in The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (Henderson, A.M. and T. Parsons trans.), (New York, 1947), p. 152ff. Weber, of course, distinguishes three pure types of legitimacy: the traditional, charismatic, and the legal-rational.

[18]See particularly Easton, D., A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York, 1965), and Etzioni, A., The Active Society: A Theory of Societal and Political Processes (New York, 1969). These and other sociological theories are very well reviewed in an unpublished paper by Anne F. Thurston, "Authority, Legitimacy and Power: A Reformulation," which is part of a Ph.D. thesis for Yale University. I am indebted to her for some of the ideas which follow in the text.

[19]Thurston, "Reformulation," p. 49ff.

[20]See for instance TCTC 203, p. 6418 in which she admits self-assumption of the regency.

[21]TCTC 203, p. 6419. I have seen no instance of "hanging the curtain" prior to its usage by Empress Wu and it might therefore have been her own innovation cast aside at this time.

[22]See the two biographies cited in notes 7 and 8 above.

[23]CTS 183:3551:1, TCTC 203, p. 6419.

[24]TCTC 203, p. 6419, and see Chapter IV.

[25]TCTC 203, p. 6422, and see THY 12, p. 294ff. and 15, p. 325ff. Subsequent discussions on the ancestral temples in the T'ang invariably referred to the sacrilege of Empress Wu. A.F. Wright in a recent paper on the formal procedures by which Sui Wen-ti legitimized himself (Asilomar, 1975), has emphasized the importance of ancestral temples and titles.

[26]TCTC 203, p. 6422.

[27]The Act of 684 is found TTCLC 3:4b, WYYH 463:6b, CTW 96:11a. See also TFYK 15:14bff. For Empress Wu, this Act and that of 689 are the only ones extant in their entirety.

[28]I have divided the document somewhat arbitrarily into three sections which seem to contain provisions of the same nature.

[29]I do not mean to suggest here that Wu was openly and consciously following the model of Wang Mang. If anything she avoided exact duplication of his actions. As we shall later suggest, however, the use of Chou-li symbolism seems to have had a great appeal to rulers concerned about their legitimacy. On the peculiarly Confucian use of literary titles see Dubs' remarks in Pan Ku, Former Han, III, p. 104ff.

[30]The Pheonix Court and Luan [a type of pheonix] Terrace were used respectively for the Department of State Affairs and the Chancellery. The Luan, for instance, is said to have conveyed the Han Taoist adept, Mei Fu, to the land of the immortals. The phoenix had been since ancient times, a sign of the impending appearance of a sage-king.

[31]The era-name was changed to kuang-chai to commemorate the discovery of relics described in the last chapter.

[32]CTW 17:10a.

[33]See the CTW text 8b, and 14b-16a.

[34]A number of examples are given in Chapter IX, and we might note the specific criticism of the frequency of the Acts by Liu Chih-chi in 695. TCTC 205, pp. 6500-01, and THY 81, pp. 1494-5.

[35]CTW 96:15a. On the new branch of the Censorate, THY 60, p. 1041.

[36]See Twitchett, D.C., Financial Administration under the T'ang (Cambridge U.P., 1963), and the succinct summary of the T'ang lü-ling system by Ikeda On in Sekai Rekishi V (Iwanami koza, Tokyo, 1970), pp. 277-325. On the census itself, TRSI, pp. 242-45.

[37]CTS 94:3368:2.

[38]CTW 96:15a.

[39]See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, Chap. V, and my remarks in Chapter VIII.

The usual starting-point in discussing the decline of

the fu-ping is the Yeh-hou chia-chuan (Yu-hai 138:20ab), translated by Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, p. 143. Yeh's remarks seem to have been influential in Ch'en Yin-k'o's suggestion [Chapter VI] that Empress Wu deliberately weakened the fu-ping, and the contention of Ku Chi-kuang, Fu-ping chih-tu k'ao-shih (Shanghai, 1962), p. 216 that her reign was "the decisive first step" in the decline of the institution. Hamaguchi Shigekuni, "Fuhei seido yori shinheisei e," Shigaku zasshi 61:11 (1930) and 61:12 (1930) has explored the question in detail.

Generally speaking, the aspects of the Chou isolated by modern scholarship in the fu-ping decline are:
a) The political climate of the Chou court--factionalism and disputes among tsai-hsiang and generals, as well as the Empress' disgrace or execution of so many high military officials.
b) The Empress' over-use of the troops.
c) The expansion of her personal bodyguard and the use of eunuchs in it. The Yü-lin Guard came to overshadow the fu-ping and exercise too much control over the court.
d) The over-generous conferral of honorific rank, even to the non-military, which destroyed the merit principle. Tangible rewards of land and grain were curtailed in spite of promises to the contrary so that expectations were disappointed.
e) Landlord and official classes scorned the fu-ping and hired peasants, often the poor and weak, to serve for them. Worse, they bribed the officials in charge of draft-lists to exempt them, so that peasants were unfairly conscripted or quotas were left unfilled. Tun-huang evidence makes clear this absolutely key factor in the decline of the system.
f) The government could not control the problem of vagrant or fugitive households. Unable to tell who was eligible for fu-ping service, it was unable to equalize the burden.

As we shall see, there is some evidence that all of these factors were present in the Chou, but because our evidence is scanty, it is difficult to judge the degree to which they affected the system's decline. It should not be too much to say, however, that the list alone reveals something of Wu's attitude toward the system, and it seems unreasonable to deny that she failed to offer it support or contribute to its viability.

Her motives are difficult and I can agree with Prof. Ch'en only in the widest sense. The fu-ping was at its most basic level, an instrument of centralization, but because the initial distribution of units was so weighted in favour of the northwest, contradiction was inherent from the first. If the system had to be weakened in the name of regional equalization, then Prof. Ch'en is right. I am not sure, however, that this was the case.

By the Chou dynasty, two ill-fated rebellions had demonstrated that a viable centralization had been achieved

and that the T'ang system could withstand even a female ruler. As we shall see, the hard-pressed northeastern prefectures resisted strongly the invasions of Khitan and Turk and their invitations both to collaborate and to aid in the deposition of the Empress. In these circumstances, the fu-ping had no function that could not be better served by professional armies, and what is more, its inadequacies had become apparent as early as mid-century when it was first used as a semi-permanent garrison in Korea and when the decline in its morale came to imperial notice. By the Chou dynasty, it was probably too late to arrest the decline without a full-scale reform, and for reasons we shall suggest, this was impracticable.

In short, while we admit that the Empress Wu bears much of the responsibility for the decline of the fu-ping, we are not convinced that she set out consciously to destroy it.

[40] CTW 96:15ab.

[41] The most striking use of recommendation for appointment came in 686 when the establishment of the Urn began a continuing process whereby anyone who felt himself qualified for office could recommend himself for appointment. In addition, decrees were issued from 684 onwards whereby present officials were asked to recommend a self-replacement, and in some cases to suggest up to three names (THY 26, p. 890). Specified ranks were often ordered to recommend, sometimes the third-rank and above (THY 53, p. 920), but more commonly, fifth-rank and above (TFYK 67:27bff.). On occasion, the hereditary principle was served by having officials recommend "sons and nephews" (THY 53, p. 919) or conversely, those "not of powerful or influential clan" (CTW 13:14a, Kao-tsung). Decrees calling for recommandation were issued both on auspicious occasions and calamitous ones, as in the case of the burning of the Ming T'ang (CTW 96:2b). An edict of Kao-tsung in 677 commanded that capital officials above the third-rank every year recommend all whom they knew of civil or military talent or good character (CTW 13:14a, TFYK 67:28a).

In the Chou, we find commissioners sent out to seek worthy men, and prefects and tu-tu enjoined to recommend, so that as we shall show, the Empress became the butt of much criticism. Monographic study of the frequency with which she used this method of recruitment relative to other T'ang rulers would be useful.

Judging from CTW 95:14b, there were legal penalties for a bad recommendation in response to these decrees and a number of biographies suggest that existing officials were reluctant to recommend since their own fate was then tied to that of their protegés. Yang Tsai-ssu (Appendix II, #III) "never once recommended another" in the course of his successful career.

[42]From a memorial of 685. See Ch'en Tzu-ang chi, Hsü P'eng-chiao ed., (Shanghai, 1960), p. 184.

[43]Discussed in detail, Twitchett, D.C., "A Note on the Tunhuang Fragments of the T'ang Regulations (ko)," BSOAS 30:2 (1967), pp. 369-81.

[44]On Li Chi, Appendix II, #27.

[45]TCTC 201, p. 6360.

[46]A good study of the area in this period is Ch'üan Han-sheng, "T'ang Sung shih-tai Yang-chou ching-chi ching-k'uang ti fan-jung yü shuai-lo," CYYY 11 (1947), pp. 149-76.

[47]The names and former ranks of a number of these figures are found TCTC 203, p. 6422.

[48]The rebels restored the era-name of Chung-tsung and claimed to be acting on his behalf but there is no indication that he was even cognizant of the rising. The use of a double for the deposed Prince Hsien throws suspicion on Ching-yeh's motives. See TCTC 203, pp. 6423-24.

[49]On Lo Pin-wang, see CTS 190 shang:3581:3, HTS 201: 4100:3 and Kuo Mo-jo's speculation on his fate, Wu Tse-t'ien, p. 147. The Manifesto is found CTW 197:1a and is abstracted TCTC 203, pp. 6423-4.

[49a]A reference to the duties of a tsai-jen concubine in the imperial wardrobe. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, p. 97, renders the passage, "Formerly she served T'ai Tsung with her body and then made use of an occasion when [Kao Tsung] was changing his clothes to commit fornication with him."

[50]The reference here is probably to Wu's niece rather than to her sister (Chapter III, n. 107), and there is of course, no evidence that Wu had anything to do with the death either of Kao-tsung or of her mother. It is interesting to notice that Pin-wang makes no reference to the murder of her infant daughter, or indeed to Prince Hung.

[51]Here Pin-wang is referring to Jui-tsung's exclusion from politics and also, perhaps, to the rapid rise of the Wu nephews. It might be noted that Wang Mang was also charged with murdering the ruler and planning usurpation in Chai I's rebel manifesto in 8 A.D. Pan Ku, Former Han, pp. 235-36.

[52]There is no evidence that Ching-yeh received Kao-tsung's testament or that he ever held a post higher than prefect.

[53]The ambiguity might be deliberate here since the rebels were using the names both of Crown Prince Hsien and of Chung-tsung.

[54]CTW 197:1aff.

[55]TCTC 203, p. 6424.

[56]The imperial force consisted of 300,000 men led by one of the T'ang princes, and amnesty was extended to all who would voluntarily submit. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, outlines the campaign, p. 98ff. On the leader of the force, see CTS 60:3298:3 and HTS 78:3872:4.

[57]The advice of Wei Ssu-wen about whom nothing is known except that he was a demoted Censor. See TCTC 203, pp. 6426-27.

[58]See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 75-81 and the references cited in later chapters.

[59]TCTC 203, p. 6426.

[60]On the end of the campaign, TCTC 203, pp. 6430-31.

[61]HTS 117:3945:2. See also TCTC 203, pp. 6425-6 where the K'ao-i examines the conflict. Ssu-ma Kuang repeats a story from the Ch'ao-yeh ch'ien-tsai which also suggests that P'ei Yen was connected with the rebels but concludes that the allegations arose from his enemies, and so refuses to give credence to his guilt.

[62]Note 8 above and TCTC 203, p. 6425.

[63]TCTC loc. cit., HTS 117:3945:2.

[64]TCTC 203, p. 6426. "I know that P'ei Yen was rebellious. . . ."

[65]CTS 87:3551:4, TCTC 203, p. 6425.

[66]TCTC 203, p. 6432. On Ch'eng, see CTS 83:3345:2, HTS 111:3935:2. He had been a prominent and successful commander against the Turks and had been given a command in the Yü-lin Guard just prior to Chung-tsung's deposition in which he assisted. This perhaps indicates a very close relationship to P'ei Yen. Two of his friends were also prominent among the rebels, so that his defense of Yen may not have been the sole reason for his execution.

The Turks are said to have rejoiced at his demise.

[67] TCTC 203, p. 6432, K'ao-i which traces the incident to the T'ang t'ung-chi, a source which Ssu-ma Kuang refuses to accept. The story is also found HTS 76:3867:3.

[68] TCTC, loc. cit.

[69] Discussed in Chapter IX.

[70] TCTC 203, p. 6418. Chung-tsung had apparently been generous with his hunting attendants and one of them expressed dissatisfaction at his deposition. On the establishment of these attendants, TCTC 195, p. 6141.

[71] CTS 186 shang:3564:1.

[72] CTS, loc. cit. and TCTC 203, pp. 6439-40. See also Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 115-117.

[73] TCTC 203, pp. 6437-38, THY 55, pp. 956-59. Fonctionnaires I, pp. 143-46, Feng-shih wen-chien chi 4, pp. 42-44. Some sources suggest there were originally four urns, only later united into one.

[74] TCTC 203, p. 6438.

[75] Ch'en Tzu-ang chi, pp. 216-17. The memorial is abstracted TCTC 203, pp. 6440-41.

[76] See Chao I, "Wu-hou chih jen," Nien-erh-shih cha-chi, 19, and the lengthy discussion in Hamaguchi Shigekuni, Tō ōcho no sennin seido (Kyoto, 1966). The question is explored in Chapter VI.

[77] See TCTC 192, p. 6031 and 193, p. 6080. Wechsler, Mirror, notes several occasions on which T'ai-tsung withdrew edicts on the advice of Wei Cheng or others.

[78] On Liu, Appendix II, #72. He was an early favourite of the Empress, seconded P'ei Yen at Chung-tsung's deposition, and was paramount minister from the time of Yen's death. On this occasion, he challenged the legality of an order to have him investigated for bribery and adultery.

[79] TLSI 3:I, p. 40ff. lists three types of punishment for errant officials. The first was removal from present office, the second, the stripping of all posts including honorific ones, and the third, "eradication of name". The latter was the most severe and meant that the official lost all offices and titles, and paid tax and corvée according to his basic status (pen-se). Once convicted, a man could hand on to his sons none of the privileges of rank and was often

himself without livelihood. The penalty of eradication was often applied together with those of exile or of chi-mo (TLSI 17:3, p. 40) in which the criminal himself, his father and son(s) were executed with the sole concession that those under fifteen and over sixty could be strangled rather than beheaded. His mother, daughter(s), wife and concubines, his grandfather and grandson(s), brother(s), sister(s), and slaves all became state property, while his land, dwellings and property were confiscated.

[80]TCTC 206, p. 6513.

[81]TCTC 205, pp. 6491-92. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 150-151.

[82]TCTC 203, pp. 6438-39.

[83]TCTC 183, p. 6061.

[84]The most famous was Hou Ssu-chih, a cake-seller, who rose to the Censorate after convincing the Empress that illiteracy was no barrier to the fulfillment of his functions. TCTC 204, p. 6464.

[85]TCTC 203, p. 6439.

[86]For this rather insidious principle see TLSI I:1, pp. 26-27. In 697, the Empress commented that she had always seen the confessions of those who were executed. TCTC 206, p. 6523.

[87]On Hsü Yu-kung, see CTS 85:3349:1, HTS 113:3939:3. A summary of the trials in which he acted as defender is found TT 169, p. 894cff. and TFYK, 616 and 617. A case could be made to suggest that the precedents set by the cases he won contributed to making the law more lenient during the terror.

[88]TCTC 206, p. 6523. On Yao, Appendix II, #122. The phrase I have translated as "followed their own interests," might be rendered "took care of things without hindrance."

[89]CTS 183:3554:4, TCTC 205, p. 6498. A Censor had been given permission to examine the monk's conduct but Huai-i rode his horse into the courtroom, dismounted briefly, then rode out again. The Empress did not order a re-trial but gave the Censor permission to exile the many ruffians with whom Huai-i had surrounded himself.

[90]TCTC 203, p. 6437.

[91]Sources here are contradictory. The Turkish raids which had become a problem in Kao-tsung's last years had increased in intensity and in early 685 the Chinese had suffered a great defeat in Hsin-chou, losing over 5,000 men. Three months later, they were able to recoup their losses and the An-pei protectorate was moved to T'ung-ch'eng to accept the surrender of the defeated tribes. TCTC 203, p. 6435 and Hu San-hsing locate the new centre. I think the date given, however, is a year too early since THY 73, p. 1309, Yü-hai 133:20a, Yüan-ho chun-hsien t'u-chih 4, and Ch'en Tzu-ang chi, p. 190ff. suggest that the move occurred in conjunction with the abolition of the Shan-yü protectorate which was put under a garrison commissioner in the fifth month of 686. See also Ts'en, T'u-chüeh, pp. 309-20 for a full examination of events.

Ch'en Tzu-ang at this time had just left a posting in Kan-chou and the long memorial cited is our best contemporary source for the state of the Turks and the Uighurs in the period. In it, Ch'en suggests first of all that the court discard its arrogant refusal to receive the so-called Shih-hsing tribes who had just inflicted heavy defeats on the Uighurs without instructions from China. Secondly, he suggested that the new An-pei protectorate be substantially strengthened and much better supplied in order to deal with the surrendered Turks. Finally, he suggested that since Kan-chou was the key to the defense of the northwest and was also an object of plunder both to the Tibetans and the Chiu-hsing Turks, it should also be more seriously colonized. Pointing out that the 3,000 kuan-hu there supplied scarcely a hundred good troops and were unable even to bring in the annual harvest, it was entirely possible that all three prefectures of Kan, Liang and Su would soon be lost to the barbarians along with the entire Ho-hsi region.

The situation he describes was all too typical of the protectorate system in the late seventh century. The memorial is also found Ch'en shih-i chi, 8.

[92]Note 92 above.

[93]In 689, Lo-yang for the first time produced more chin-shih than Ch'ang-an. Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, first year of yung-ch'ang.

[94]See respectively, THY 69, p. 1213 [687], THY 69, p. 1213 [685] and THY 56, pp. 965-66 [685].

[95]See for instance, TCTC 205, pp. 6477-78.

[96]The precise origins and definition of yüan-wai officialdom are unclear. The Hu commentary, TCTC 201, p. 6356, suggests that the first time one of these supernumeraries received equivalent rank and emoluments (yüan-wai t'ung-cheng)

was 654, but implies that the practice did not become widespread until 668. THY 58, p. 1003ff. lists many of these appointments as they were regularized in the Boards, and I have found that in the decade following 668, yüan-wai officials were added almost every year to one or another of them.

Because this was a time when officialdom generally was expanding, the new appointments were warranted and probably beneficial, especially in the Board of Civil Office. In 697, however, a massive increase occurred when Li Chiao, in charge of the selection system, "began the establishment of several thousand yüan-wai-kuan". (TCTC 206, p. 6525). I think this meant that the practice was extended to the provinces. Ironically, Li Chiao advocated a great reduction in these positions in 706, contending that they performed no service but drew salaries and extorted from the people. CTW 247:26.

[97]TT 7, p. 40c. See also THY 89, pp. 1623-4, Yü-hai 80:18b. On these problems, there are several useful remarks in Twitchett, Financial Administration, especially, p. 66ff.

[98]The literature on the question of registration and vagracy has grown very large since the Tunhuang discoveries and a good review of the problem is Nakagawa Manabu, "To So no kakkyo ni kansuru shokenkyu," Toyo gakuho 46:2 (1965). Pulleyblank's comments, An Lu-shan, pp. 27-32, are still useful and the modifications suggested by Tonami Mamoru, "To no ritsuryo taisei to Yü-wen Jung no katsuko," Toho gakuho 41:3 (1960), solve many of the outstanding questions. Li Chiao's thorough memorial of 695 on the problem has been translated by E. Balazs in Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen, 34 (1931), p. 27ff. Judging from his remarks, the problem had existed for some time but the measures of 684 which we mentioned earlier, seem to have kept it under control.

[99]See THY 91, p. 1652, and TCTC 204, p. 6445 respectively.

[100]See Chapter IV, note 29. It is difficult to account for the attraction of the Chou-li although the Confucian doctrine of rectification of names certainly played a part. Analects II:23 and especially III:14, provide a clue: "Chou had the advantage of viewing the two past dynasties. How complete and elegant are its regulations. I follow Chou." (Legge, Four Books, p. 31).

[101]Note 101 above.

[102]Pan Ku, Former Han, p. 219. Like the Pao-t'u the stone found in 6 A.D. was white with red writing. A. Seidel discusses omens of this sort in "Dynastic Treasures".

[103]CTS 6:3075:4, HTS 76:3867:3, TCTC 204, p. 6449. See also the commentary to the Great Cloud Sutra translated in the preceding chapter.

[104]Commentary, Chapter IV, note 6.

[105]TCTC 204, p. 6449, HTS 76:3867:3. I have found no previous instance of a ruler adopting the title shen-huang though there may be some connection with the san-huang of antiquity or perhaps to the shen-huang of Taoist mythology who possessed the secret of immortality.

[106]Chapter 4, note 81.

[107]TCTC 203, p. 6425.

[108]HTS 76:3867:4. TCTC 204, p. 6449, suggests that after the discovery of the Pao-t'u, the Empress determined to usurp and decided to eliminate the imperial clan.

[109]See, for instance, Pan Ku, Former Han, pp. 191-92, and Wright, "Sui Ideology," pp. 89-90.

[110]TCTC 204, p. 6449, which suggests that the princes were beginning to make plans to save the state (kuang-fu). See also CTS 64:3307:4, biography of Li Yüan-chia.

[111]On Li Chuan, CTS 64:3307:4, HTS 79:3875:1; on Ch'ung, CTS 76:3332:3 and HTS 80:3877:1. On the rising generally, TCTC 204, pp. 6449-53 and Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 121-23. The imperial forces were not large, consisting of two armies of about 100,000 each.

[112]TCTC 204, p. 6467. Ssu-ma Kuang points out that princess Ch'ien-chin who had introduced the Empress to Hsüeh Huai-i was the only adult survivor, and TCTC 205, p. 6485 offers a rough estimate of the victims.

[113]TCTC 204, p. 6451.

[114]THY 50, p. 865.

[115]TCTC 204, p. 6454, HTS 76:3867:4. CTShih 5 preserves the verses she is said to have composed for the ceremonial at the Lo River. On the calendar, TCTC 204, p. 6462.

[116]CTW 96:20b, TTCLC 4:1b.

[117]Chapter IV, note 83.

[118]A suggestion of Lin Yutang in the novel, Lady Wu,

which I don't find very convincing. It is interesting to note, however, the legend that Yü was able to compose the Hung-fan after receiving the Lo-shu which was engraved on the shell of a turtle which emerged from the Lo River. W.R.B. Acker, Some T'ang and pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting, I (Leiden, 1954), p. 85-94, looks at some legends of this sort.

[119]TCTC 204, p. 6463. See Chapter VII.

[120]Wright, "Sui Ideology," pp. 93-104.

[121]See Chapter IV, and Chen, Transformation, p. 82ff.

[122]Wright, "Sui Ideology," pp. 85-86, discusses the most notable example, that of the Northern Chou.

[123]CTS 6:3075:4.

[124]HTS 109:3931:1. The diviner was attempting to show Chung-tsung that the Chou and T'ang were the same (Chou T'ang i-t'ung) and that the course of events could have been predicted on the basis of eight signs.

[125]Shigenoi, Bukkyōshiron, pp. 216-33.

[126]Ta-fang teng wu-hsiang ching 6, TD 12:1107a.

[127]Chapter IV, note 96.

[128]TCTC 204, p. 6467.

[129]Tz'u-yüan, p. 1688b.

[130]See Book of History, Legge, II, p. 298. The comparison may seem forced, but in view of the preceding replication of Chou symbolism, and the fact that the Empress was to choose red as the colour of her banners, it does not strike me as unreasonable.

[131]CTS 6:3076:1, HTS 76:3867:4, TCTC 204, p. 6467.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPERIAL POWER AND THE RULING CLASS

The single most intriguing theme of the régime of the Empress Wu, at least for modern historians, has been that of social change. Though the debate continues, Maoist historians seem to have reached a broad concensus that her opposition to the aristocracy and to the large-landlord class intensified class struggle both inside and outside the ruling group, and so constituted an important stage in the dialectical process.[1] Western scholars who are interested in the problem have usually taken as their starting-point the work of two major scholars. From Naitō Torajiro has come the idea that the late T'ang saw social changes which made it the transitional period between medieval-aristocratic and modern-bureaucratic China,[2] and from Ch'en Yin-k'o, the perception of T'ang history prior to the An Lu-shan rebellion as a struggle between two blocs--an entrenched aristocracy and a newly-rising group of examination bureaucrats.[3] Professor Ch'en elaborated his thesis by the division of the aristocracy into contending northeastern and northwestern groups, and by suggesting that the Empress Wu was responsible for the most significant change:

> . . . From the establishment of the T'ang by Kao-tsu and T'ai-tsung, until just prior to the accession of Kao-tsung, those who held the most important civil and military posts in the state were mostly the successors of the Sui, Northern Chou, and Western Wei. This is to say that they were the descendants of the bloc assembled under the banner of Yü Wen-t'ai's "Kuanchung first" policy. From the time the Empress Wu seized power, she step-by-step destroyed this traditional policy, and because of her ambition to found her own dynasty, she began the destruction of the fu-ping system which was the traditional prop of the Kuanchung bloc. [So] in this period, social classes were in a state of flux, rising and falling.
>
> As for the chin-shih and other exams, although established in the Sui, they were unnecessary for the attainment of civil office. Under the Empress Wu, great emphasis was placed upon selecting officials for their literary abilities, and [because] she broke the old rules of selection, the chin-shih degree became the object of great competition everywhere. At that time there existed many persons in Shantung and Chiangtso who had devoted themselves to literary pursuits, but lack of membership in the Kuanchung bloc had disqualified them from rising to official positions. The political revolution of the Empress Wu brought them to court. After this, the high positions formerly monopolized by the old [élite] of Wei, Chou, and Sui were necessarily taken and occupied by this newly-rising class. The replacement of Li-T'ang by Wu-Chou was thus not merely a political change. It was a social revolution, and seen in this light, was a more significant change than the dynastic succession from Sui to T'ang. . . .[4]

Both these hypotheses are persuasive ones, though the former has proven to be somewhat more durable than the latter. In Ch'en's work, certain weaknesses in premise and definition, as well as internal contradiction, have led to the successful challenge of some of his conclusions,[5] but a number of his insights remain valuable and the emphasis he places upon regionalism, examinations, and imperial policy as a determinant of change seem still to be warranted. More than this, his work suggests a number of questions which might profitably

be raised in the present context. Did the Empress Wu, for instance, consciously forment a "social revolution" even in the narrow sense in which Professor Ch'en uses the term? Did her reign see the rise of any new "class"? What role was played by the examination system and the decline of the fu-ping in societal change? And finally, what was the nature of the T'ang ruling class, and within it, the relationship between status and office? While the nature of our sources for the early T'ang is such that all statements regarding social mobility contain a certain degree of speculation,[6] partial or interim answers to all these questions are possible.

Of the several contemporary observations on the subject of the T'ang ruling class and its development, that of the genealogist-historian, Liu Fang, is perhaps the most comprehensive.[7] In his "Discussion of Surnames and Lineages" (Hsing-hsi lun),[8] dating from about 719, he wrote that clans and lineages had been a state concern from the most ancient times,

> . . . and therefore, there existed a work called the Shih-pen which recorded the names, titles, and lineages of the feudal lords and great officers from the [time of the] Yellow Emperor down to the Spring and Autumn period. . . . After the Han arose, Ssu-ma Ch'ien and his father edited the Shih-pen [for inclusion in] their work, the Shih-chi. They clarified the [origins of the] hereditary houses, following the Chou genealogies and so came to know the origins of their surnames and clan names. . . .
>
> [Now] when Han Kao-ti had risen, and on foot, had gained control of the Empire, he appointed his officials because of their wisdom, and conferred noble rank for merit. . . . He employed [only] those descendants of former princes, dukes and great ministers who were talented, and he rejected those without ability. He made no

distinction between shih and shu,[9] and so for the first time, office [rather than lineage] was much esteemed. Still, however, the Shantung hao-chieh[10] were transported to fill the capital city. At this time, the Chu and T'ien of Ch'i and the Ch'ü and Ching of Ch'u were all [considered to be] the pre-eminent surnames [yu-hsing]. . . .[11]

The Wei [dynasty] set up the 'Nine Rank' system and established [officials called] the 'Impartial and Upright' (chung-cheng) to recommend [potential officials] and they esteemed men of noble descent (shih-chou) and looked down upon those scholars of low birth (han-shih). Power reverted again to the pre-eminent surnames. . . .

The Chin and Sung followed this method and so for the first time, surnames (hsing) reached the pinnacle of importance. Therefore, the shih and the shu, the noble (kuei) and base (chien)[12] were clearly separated once and for all. At that time, when officials came to select men for promotion, they were certain to examine their genealogy (p'u) and registration (chi) and check to see that there was no fraud. Thus every official possessed his genealogical table (shih-chou p'u) and it listed the offices [of family members] for generations. . . .

South of the Yangtse [the greatest clans] were [called] the ch'iao-hsing and the greatest were the Wang, Hsieh, Yüan and Hsiao. In the southeast were the wu-hsing, and the greatest were the Chu, Chang, Ku and Lu. East of the mountains (Shantung) were the chün-hsing, and the greatest were the Wang, Ts'ui, Lu, Li and Cheng. In Kuan-chung, they were also [called] the chün-hsing, and the greatest were Wei, P'ei, Liu, Hsüeh, Yang and Tu. In northern Shansi (Tai-pei) were the lo-hsing, and the greatest were the Yüan, Ch'ang-sun, Yü-wen, Yü, Lu, Yüan and Tou. These lo-hsing were the [so-called] 'eight clans and ten-surnames' and the 'eighty-six lineages and ninety-two surnames' of the time when [the Northern] Wei [emperor] Hsiao Wen-ti moved his capital to Lo-yang [in 494]. . . . and they called themselves men of Lo-yang in Ho-nan. . . .[13]

[Liu goes on here at some length to explain how the chün-hsing were ranked according to the offices held by family members into four groups, and how this was the true origin of the term 'four surnames' (ssu-hsing) later appropriated by the Shantung clans alone. He points out that the Northern Ch'i restricted office to those numbered in the ssu-hsing.]

Formerly, [during] the Southern Dynasties (Chiang-tso), their system of status for clans and lineages was to consider the first of the ranking surnames in each commandery the 'pre-eminent surnames'. During the t'ai-ho period [477-500] of the Wei, all the 'four surnames' of each commandery were considered 'pre-eminent surnames'. The

same term ['pre-eminent surnames'] was used for those classified as chia-men in the Lei-li of the monk T'an-kang[14] of the Northern Ch'i; for the 'clans respected by all' (ssu-hai t'ung-wang) in the chien-te [572-78] compilation of the Northern Chou;[15] for those called the mao-hsing in the Sui compilation of k'ai-huang [581-601];[16] and [finally] when the Shih-tsu chih was compiled in the chen-kuan period of the T'ang, the same term was used for those there classified as the first-rank families. Those whom Lu [Ching-shun] calls the sheng-men in his Chu-hsing lüeh[17] were also considered as 'pre-eminent surnames'.

> Any [classification] which fails to accord with these practices of successive dynasties should not be called 'genealogy' with them. The present-day custom of referring to the Ts'ui, Lu, Li and Cheng as the 'four surnames' . . . certainly does not follow this standard rule.
>
> When culture (wen) is in decay, honour is given to false [genealogies]. The Sui was heir to this sort of decay but did not realize why there was corruption and so went against the way of antiquity. They abolished the way of local recommendation (hsiang-chü) and did not consider persons [for selection] in reference to their place of origin (ti-chu). They valued officials only for their administration. The shih thus had no locality or village of their own; villages had no officials, and the people lost integrity and their sense of shame. The shih lineages were thrown into disarray and the shu-jen went beyond their appointed station. . . .
>
> When the people have nothing left to preserve, the shih lineages will be destroyed. And when the shih lineages are destroyed, the state perishes as a result. . . .[18]

Liu Fang's analysis, impressive in its detail and in its familiarity with a full range of status terminology, is important in several respects. In the first place, it identifies a stratum of local shih, a minor aristocracy which was recognized by the state to exist "in every commandery" in post-Han times, and which was, in Liu's view, a crucial factor in the maintenance of social order at a local level. Without them, the state would perish, and as a result, they were an object of concern to the throne from the Han onwards. He points out that although rulers like Han Kao-tsu had success-

fully asserted their right to define the criteria of status, the practice of respect for lineages distinguished either by nobility or by a tradition of state service was a very ancient one and that as time went on, the growing contiguity between title and office produced a class with a virtually hereditary charisma which was highly impervious to imperial control. The gradual establishment of the ethic of Han Confucianism made such qualities as superior humanity and refinement, scholarship and service to inferiors the hallmark of prestige, and the means of distinction between shih and shu. There is ample evidence in the period of division that conferral of shih status stood beyond the imperial prerogative, and that heredity was an essential element in its attainment.[19] When a high minister of the Sung [420-477] remarked "Between shih and shu there is a gulf ordained by heaven,"[20] he was affirming not only the validity and necessity of distinction, but also an hereditary source of charisma beyond definition by man.

Liu Fang refers secondly, to state recognition of shih status, most notably through the bureaucratic and legal privileges it granted in the nine-rank chung-cheng system. Although much could be said about this system and the aristocratic monopoly of power it produced, the important result for present purposes is that it helped to make distinctions within the aristocracy: Liu's élite of "pre-eminent surnames," and the "blocs" identified by Ch'en Yin-k'o. Genealogical

compilation became common practice both for individual clans and for the state,[21] but the motives were different, and as Liu suggests, there arose a parallel divergence between the public and private criteria of status. To him, this was a serious matter, and as we shall see, the first emperors of the T'ang shared his concern.

In specific terms, Liu saw the ideal state as one characterized by wen, a word of wide connotation referring both to civil virtue and high culture. Honour, both from above and below, should be bestowed on the basis of wen, and its twin foundations were office-holding (kuan) and lineage (hsing). More than this, as he suggests in the same essay, the clans of certain areas preserved through the generations, different types of virtue:

> . . . The people East of the Mountains are unsophisticated and honest (chih), and so they esteem marriage connections. Their sincerity (hsin) is worthy of praise. Those of Chiang-tso [the Yangtze valley] are highly-cultured (wen) and so esteem individual worth. Their wisdom (chih) is admirable. In Kuan-chung, the people are brave and manly (hsiung) and so esteem office-holding. Their perception (ta) is admirable. The people of Tai-pei [northern Shensi] are martial (wu) and so esteem noble relationships (kuei-ch'i). Their breadth [of mind] (t'ai) is admirable. . . .[22]

In this statement lies the problem. While great clans could base their claim to status on regional values, genuine centralization was illusory. In other words, a dynasty seeking to consolidate its rule had first to unify the definition of wen since this was the acknowledged basis of respect. Ideally, it should itself personify the highest wen

and enforce conformity upon rival claimants. It seems clear from Liu's statement, however, that intangible and long-standing clan tradition was relatively immune from imperial control, and that the successive attempts by ambitious dynasties to compile state genealogical lists had failed to achieve their aims. Only by revising his triadial relationship, by emphasizing kuan over hsing as a component of wen and as a claim to the status and prerequisites of the shih class could a dynasty triumph over regionalism and incipient rivalry. And for the T'ang, the political history of post-Han China and the disintegration which accompanied the fall of the Sui made priorities clear. The following discussion is largely the story of how the dynasty sought to deal with the centrifugal tendencies of the aristocratic élite, and how under Kao-tsung and the Empress Wu, a solution was found which ultimately effected a change in the nature of the ruling class in China, and so hastened the end of the aristocratic government which had been perhaps the outstanding feature of "medieval" China.

The climate of the court in the early days of the T'ang was highly aristocratic and was seen in that light by others than Liu Fang. Su Mien, in his important encyclopedia (Hui-yao) of 803 wrote:

> Of the great officials who were founders of the present dynasty, all were of aristocratic clan (kuei-tsu). Since the Three Dynasties of antiquity, has there ever been a dynasty [so aristocratic] as ours?[23]

The imperial house, of course, was aware of this phenomenon, but between the first two emperors, Kao-tsu and T'ai-tsung, there was a great difference in attitude. The former, judging by remarks attributed to him, was both confident and proud in his lineage. Speaking once to the scion of a great northwestern clan, he said:

> Our clan, the Li, was in olden times wealthy and influential in Lung-hsi, and in my grandfather's time [even] married into the imperial family. Then I raised my righteous troops, the whole Empire joined me and in a few days, I rose to become Son of Heaven. Looking at the rulers of former times, many rose from humble origins, toiling in the ranks and scarcely able to sustain their lives. You sir, are also from an eminent clan (shih-chou ming-chia) which has successively held pure and illustrious (ch'ing-hsien) [posts]. . . . After a thousand years, only the descendants of you and me will be unashamed of their antecedents![24]

Kao-tsu in this speech makes clear the degree to which a proud genealogy had become the source of pride, satisfaction and even self-respect by the seventh century. In his claim of relationship to the Lung-hsi Li clan--a claim almost certainly false,[25] he also betrays a certain anxiety. For although the wealth, the regional influence, and the status of former consort clan with its implied concomitant of title and office which he claimed would seem an impressive enough background even for an imperial house, in the early T'ang it was not. The reason for this is the existence of a regional aristocracy whose prestige and pride was much greater. In 632, only a dozen years after his father's boast, T'ai-tsung defined the rivalry.

. . . At the time, the court discussed how the shih from East of the Mountains liked to boast of themselves. Although in successive generations they had declined, they still relied upon their former status (ti) and when their daughters married into other clans, they had [to be paid] an enormous bride-gift (p'in-ts'ai).[26] T'ai-tsung disliked this, considering it very detrimental to the teachings of rectitude (chiao-i).

As a result, he decreed that [Kao] Shih-lien, . . . Wei T'ing, . . . Ts'en Wen-pen . . . and Ling-hu Te-fen[27] should revise and correct the [state list of] clans. Thereupon, the genealogies (p'u-tieh) of the whole Empire were investigated and checked against historical records to verify their truth. The loyal and virtuous were commended and advanced, while the disloyal and recalcitrant were censured and demoted. The compilation was called the Shih-tsu chih and Shih-lien then grouped the clans in ranks and categories (teng-ti) and submitted [the work].

T'ai-tsung said, 'For a long time, I have borne no resentment against the Ts'ui, Lu, Li and Cheng [clans] of Shantung. I consider that over the generations they have declined to insignificance and have failed wholly to produce officials. Yet still they call themselves shih-ta-fu and in their marriages they demand huge sums in money and silk. In ability and knowledge they are deficient, but [still] they esteem themselves. They [are forced to] sell the trees from ancestral graves and rely upon [marriage to] the rich and noble. I cannot understand why the people respect them [so greatly].

Previously, the Ch'i dynasty was restricted only to Hopei while the Liang and Ch'en possessed no more than Chiangnan. At that time, though they had talented men, they were minor insignificant states and not worthy of respect. Yet today, the Ts'ui and the Lu, the Wang and the Hsieh are admired.[28] I have pacified the [entire] Empire and made one family of all the world. The shih of my court are all renowned for their achievements and the loyalty and piety of some is praiseworthy while the learning and talent of others is wide. [For this] they were chosen and employed. [Yet even] those who occupy positions above the third-rank seek to become the relatives [by marriage] of those decayed, ancient families, sending them lavish [gifts of] money and silk, paying them homage.[29]

Now when I specially decreed the settlement of clan [rankings], I desired to honour the officials of this court. Why then has Ts'ui Kan still been placed in the first rank? . . .[30] Do you gentlemen not respect the offices and titles of my court? You were not instructed to discuss former generations but simply to choose present

> offices and titles for your ranking.
>
> Subsequently, Ts'ui Kan was placed in the third rank. The [revised] work [completed in 638] was made up of one hundred chüan and was promulgated by decree to the Empire. . . .[31]

This important incident, which permits great insight into T'ai-tsung's vision of a united China, has wide implications. He and his father had indeed united the Empire into a single family, and he was determined that status should derive from himself as head of that family, and should be earned in service to the T'ang. As emperor, he could hardly have been unaware of the existence of the four regional super-élites identified by Liu Fang, but he directed his attack only against the clans of the northeast. His ostensible reasons were their pretensions, their exclusivistic posture which failed to produce central officials, and marriage customs he regarded as detrimental to established morality. It seems unlikely, however, that these exhaust his reasons, and his disclaimer notwithstanding, he was probably aware of the Shantung clans' source of prestige and felt both inferior and insecure before it.

In the seventh century, the Shantung "ssu-hsing" quite simply represented the longest, purest, and most uncompromising strain of the Confucian tradition. Centred around the historical birthplace of the sage, they had made li, a respect for the Way, the core of their pride, and when north China fell into barbarian hands they had refused both to flee south and leave their ancestral graves untended, and in most cases,

to sully their bloodlines by marrying with the conquerors.[32] When Hsiao Wen-ti, for instance, accepted a consort from the Lung-hsi Li clan in 496, he had to compel the same four clans mentioned by T'ai-tsung to provide inmates for his harem and wives for his sons.[33]

For reasons like these, the élite of the northeast had distinguished themselves from their counterparts in other regions of northern China, and had added to their accolade by the traditional severity of their clan rules and the value they placed on the maintenance of morality and ceremonial within their families.[34] Their prestige arose therefore more from social than bureaucratic causes, and their general aloofness from office under the barbarian regimes which preceded the Sui provided them with the appearance and sometimes the actuality of martyrdom.[35] Reluctance to hold capital office accentuated their regional characteristics, intensified their cohesiveness and exclusivity, and dissociated them both from the exploitative nature of the barbarian régimes and from the parasitical character of the collaborating Chinese élite.[36]

We might notice, finally, that it was in the northeast that the T'ang had found the greatest resistance to their dynastic foundation, and as we shall see, had reason to suspect the area of separatist tendencies for many years to come.[37] Although Liu Fang had associated the military arts with the clans of Tai-pei, there is ample contemporary evidence to suggest that as a whole, the northeast possessed the

finest fighting men and that the term hao-chieh or hao-tsu, which seems to have been a wide generic classification for the great clans in Han times, came to connote such characteristics as self-sufficiency and martial skill, and was reserved increasingly for the people of Shantung.[38] Both in economic and strategic terms, the area was a key one in the survival of the dynasty and so could not be permitted to remain aloof from the centralizing policies which T'ai-tsung considered so important.

His special treatment of the area sprang therefore from two causes. The greatest clans of Shantung enjoyed a status in the popular view which was beyond imperial control, and with their superior prestige, marriage revenues and court connections, as well as their traditional military power, could threaten not only national unity, but the very life of the dynasty. Status-fixing by the state was an old solution, but in the newly-united T'ang Empire, one with a new importance.

The revised version of the Shih-tsu chih, according to the T'ang History, was greeted with general approval,[39] but there are indications that in its stated aim of equating status with present success in the service of the central government, its effects were minimal. There was no rush of Shantung aristocrats to the capital, and in 642, the emperor was forced once more to attack the same clans, charging that they had abandoned the profession of official, and striking

at a key source of their economic viability with a decree forbidding the sale of marriages (mai-hun).[40] In the same edict he again commented on the pretensions of the group, and complained that new officials and wealthy families still contended to marry with them, a custom which was now well-established. Perhaps in order to justify what must have seemed a harsh order, he contended that marriages of this sort degraded the great clans, led to friction among in-laws because of status differences and even caused the "buyers" of marriage to adopt the pretensions of the northeasterners. His deeper motives were perhaps punitive, reflecting both his frustration that the Shantung clans still remained aloof, and his determination that they would be forced into acquiescence. If this is the case, his tactics were wrong, for as Ssu-ma Kuang remarks of a later ban,

> . . . Since [these] great clans (tsu-wang) were the object of contemporary respect, in the end, the prohibition could not succeed. Some [of the clans] secretly sent their daughters to the [intended] groom's house, and others [permitted their] daughters to grow old as spinsters. . .[41]

In short, these two measures of T'ai-tsung must have struck the Shantung élite as expressions of regional discrimination on the part of a dynasty whose own origins were northwestern, and as a result, can hardly have persuaded them to contribute their services to it for reasons other than economic necessity. Secure in their social prestige, and realizing that if status were dependent on office, the Kuanchung clans already had a thirty-year "head-start" over them, they seem

for the most part to have continued their policy of non-coöperation. Of the Shantung representatives among T'ai-tsung's chief ministers not a single one was of the group of families he identified as objects of his centralizing concern.[42]

We have suggested earlier that Kao-tsung inherited his father's bureaucracy and that the preponderance of Kuan-chung influence in its highest levels has led some scholars to interpret the political struggle over Empress Wu's elevation as a conflict between regional aristocracies. While we have attempted to show the deficiencies of this view, we have also admitted a certain validity in it, and the fact that it has been so widely discussed indicates at least, that the problem of regional jealousy within the ruling class had not wholly been solved. The events following Wu's elevation, most particularly her destruction of the principal north-western tsai-hsiang and the declaration of Lo-yang as the eastern capital created a favourable climate for another attempt to conciliate the Shantung élite, and in 659, with a new clan list and marriage ban, the attempt was made.

The immediate inspiration for the revision of the national clan list in 659 was, we are told, the fact that Empress Wu's clan was unranked or "not clearly" ranked in the Shih-tsu chih.[43] While this may be true, it seems from such facts as the comparatively low rank of the compilers[44] and the extant descriptions of the completed work, that the

motives for the revision paralleled those of T'ai-tsung two decades earlier. The chief differences between the two works is to be found in their size and scope, in the exact correlation of official and treatise rank in 659 and in the omission in the later work of all but the immediate family of the individual ranked. These differences are presented in tabular form as follows:[45]

Title of Work	Shih-tsu chih (final form 638)	Hsing-shih lu (completed 659)
No. of chüan	100	200
Contents	293 surnames (姓) 1,651 lineages (家)	245 surnames (姓) 2,287 lineages (家)
Features	(a) arranged by rank (等) (b) Imperial clan placed first, followed by the consort families. The Ts'ui clan, which had originally ranked first, was placed third.	(a) same. (b) Ranking reputedly decided by the Emperor, who also wrote a preface. [The Imperial clan probably occupied a special rank at the top.] In the first rank, were placed the four consort families (獨孤, 竇, 長孫, 武),[1] the Imperial clans of Sui and Chou (楊, 宇文),[2] the clans of those who had [in the T'ang] held the posts of san-kung (三公),[3] of t'ai-ssu (台司),[4] of t'ai-tzu san-shih (太子三師),[5] of k'ai-fu-i-t'ung san-ssu (開府儀同三司),[6] of pu-shè (僕射).[7] Civil and military officials of the second grade (二品) and [active] civil officials of the third grade (知政事者三品) were placed in the second rank. Every [other] official was ranked according to his grade (品).
	(c) a total of 9 ranks (等)	(c) same.
	(d) aim to distinguish shih (士) from shu (庶)[1]	(d) Inclusion of all who had reached at least the fifth grade (五品) in the T'ang period. No relatives of the

Title of Work	Shih-tsu chih (final form 638)	Hsing-shih lu (completed 659)
		man ranked, except his brothers, his sons and grandsons, were included.
	(e) Greeted generally with approval.	(e) Since all who had achieved the fifth grade were elevated to shih (士) status, even soldiers, the gentlefolk (搢紳士大夫) were all ashamed to be ranked. They called the work the Rule of Meritorious Service to the State (勳格).
Notes	(1) An observation found in the Comprehensive Mirror, and in CTS, 189, 3578:1, biography of Liu Chung (劉沖).	(1) The respective empresses of Li Ping (李昞), of Kao-tsu, T'ai-tsung, and Kao-tsung. (2) Referred to as 鄫公 and 介公. (3) The posts of t'ai-wei (太尉), ssu-t'u (司徒) and ssu-k'ung (司空). In addition to the Imperial clan, members of the P'ei (裴), Ch'ang-sun (長孫), Fang (房) and Li (李) clans had held one of the posts. (4) The heads of the Chancellery, Secretariat and Department of State which were second and third grade posts. (5) The Three Preceptors of the Crown Prince, who were all first grade officials. Four men had held the post. (6) An honorary official title of the first class. (7) The two vice-presidents of the Department of State Affairs. Six men not included elsewhere in the first rank would be found here.

The substantive differences between the Shih-tsu chih and the Hsing-shih lu reflect as much as anything else a different tactical approach to an identical problem. As we have seen, the first work is said to have been greeted with aristocratic approval, and moreover, to have had as one aim the separation of shih and shu. Both of these attest to its traditional character, and the necessity for a marriage ban four years later suggests that perceptions of status were little changed by it. T'ai-tsung clearly was not anti-aristocratic, nor did he seek by the treatise to weaken or destroy the northeastern clans. He sought rather to woo them into direct service to the T'ang, but his openly indiscreet and hostile attitude, and his arbitrary reduction of the Ts'ui clan's ranking could only have had the effect of polarizing the two sides. Moreover, since he decreed that the list was to be a permanent ordinance (yung-shih),[46] the proud clans of the northeast would be forever inferior in the eyes of the state to those whom they regarded as the "upstart" clans of the northwest.

The Hsing-shih lu was at once more conciliatory and more firm. Like its predecessor, it emphasized state service over family as a determinant of status, but even more greatly, stressed the individual over the clan. The truly important change lay in the fact, therefore, that heredity was no longer a factor in obtaining shih status and that any individual who reached fifth-rank officialdom needed no other qualification

to be accounted a shih. At a stroke, office-holding became more desirable and more necessary, and marriage into a Shantung clan no longer held the same attraction for those who sought rapidly to raise their status.

At the same time, however, the olive-branch of conciliation was held out to Shantung with the collection and burning of all available copies of the Shih-tsu chih[47] and the elimination thereby of the clan superiority of the northwest. Probably for the same reasons, the new work recognized the validity of marriage as status in the high ranking of consort families and removed the imperial clan from competition with the northeast by creating a special rank for it. The northeast, moreover, had produced its share of regional officials above the fifth rank,[48] and by providing most of the manpower for T'ai-tsung's Korean campaigns, had probably come to hold the major proportion of honorific rank. On these two grounds, its representation in the second work was in relative terms, likely to have been better than in the first. Although the new list took even less account of genealogy than the old, on balance it was probably more palatable to the northeastern clans.

The same was true of the marriage ban issued four months later. This document forbade the intermarriage of seven surnames (hsing) and specified limitations on the bride-gift.[49] Pragmatic and free of moralizing, it listed first the Lung-hsi Li clan, thereby implicitly bonding the imperial

family to the six greatest clans of Shantung who made up the remainder of the list. It tied the bride-gift to present official rank, thus providing additional incentive for the aloof clans to seek high capital office. In this way, the ban was directed not so much against their economic base as against their exclusive marriage circle and the cohesion which fostered their sense of regional independence.

If this is the correct interpretation of the ban's purpose, and if it succeeded in drawing more of the Shantung élite to the capital, it would seem logical to conclude that there was no real need for enforcement of its specific prohibitions. As we have seen, traditional historians record that the response of the great clans was to marry secretly or to keep their daughters unwed, and recent scholarship has empirically demonstrated that this was indeed the case.[50] In spite of this, there is no evidence until after the Chou dynasty that the throne insisted on enforcement,[51] and the principal reason seems to have been that there was no need to do so.

From all we can gather, the two status measures of 659 seem to have succeeded in wiping clean the slate. By permitting a limited bride-gift rather than outlawing the practice as T'ai-tsung had done, Kao-tsung and the Empress Wu were recognizing that the Shantung clans had at least a social claim to superior status. The Hsing-shih lu at the same time served notice that status would henceforth be tied principally

and definitively to office in the T'ang. In comparison to the Shih-tsu chih, it was more in the nature of a Who's Who than an Almanach de Gotha, and so, acted as an invitation to the Shantung clans to diversify their claims and compete for status on the same terms as the other regional élites. The fact that the Empress, considered by contemporaries to be an easterner and known to favour Lo-yang over Ch'ang-an,[52] was by 659 being seen almost as an equal partner in Kao-tsung's government, must have served as an additional attraction to the northeast. It seems more than coincidence, therefore, that before Kao-tsung's death, all but one of the lineages specified in the marriage ban of 659 provided the T'ang with a chief minister; and in the Chou dynasty, the high proportion of these same surnames in tsai-hsiang ranks further attests to the success of her reconciliation.[53]

Finally, we might notice in this regard, the form of what seems to have been the last major attempt by the T'ang at status-fixing on a nation-wide scale, the Hsing-tsu-hsi lu of 714.[54] Though details of the work are scarce, it was altogether a more "professional" compilation than its predecessors,[55] and as much as anything else, reflects a general acknowledgement that the state had won the right to set the criteria of status. The proposal for its composition in 707 suggested, first of all, that ". . . official families (kuan-mien chih chia) have changed, rising and falling. . . . Judgments of former times can hardly be used as a rule for the

present."[56] Chung-tsung concurred, decreeing that a treatise of eminent clans (yu-hsing) be compiled to include ". . . men of high repute and great virtue, of pure occupation and good breeding; [men] whose titles are inherited, of the standard of well-known scholars, whose bravery has been often demonstrated, who have received honorific rank, who are of supreme distinction at this court, and who are honoured in court and countryside, their fame united with general admiration. . . . Barbarian chieftains of notable official service should be placed in a separate category. . . ."[57] The work was to be based on the Shih-tsu chih which seems therefore, to have escaped total destruction, and was completed in two hundred chüan.[58]

Although it is sometimes suggested that this compilation reflects the "aristocratic revival" said to follow the deposition of Empress Wu, these surviving details seem to indicate that it resembled the Hsing-shih lu rather more than the Shih-tsu chih. Once again, for instance, the emphasis was placed on the individual rather than the clan, and once again, it listed recipients of honorific rank and barbarian chieftains--the groups whose inclusion in the 659 compilation had led to widespread criticism. On this occasion we hear of no such protest, and as a result, might be justified in assuming that in the intervening seventy years, a principle had been successfully established. The Hsing-tsu-hsi lu was designed not so much to create as to identify present

membership in the shih class.

In 714, success and reputation in the T'ang were accepted as the sole criteria of eminence, and scholars, soldiers and "barbarians" were all eligible seemingly without reference to their antecedents. The fact that in the two generations which had passed since the Shih-tsu chih, status had come to depend more on office than on clan, on achievement rather than birth, represents a social change of truly grand significance.

And it is perhaps the most important historical change for which the Empress Wu was responsible. She had done no less than redefine the ruling group, the shih class, shifting its principal characteristic from "aristocratic" to "bureaucratic", and winning popular acceptance for the new view of societal stratification. One of her husband's chief-ministers summed up the change when he retired from office in 683, reportedly remarking on the three disappointments he had suffered in his life: his failure to win the chin-shih degree, to marry a daughter of the Shantung wu-hsing, and to be a compiler of the National History.[59] The fact that he was the scion of one of the pre-eminent clans makes his perception the more meaningful.

The means by which the change the wrought, most particularly the growth of the examination system, belong properly to the next chapter, but two other aspects of it are notable here. In the first place, the changes which occurred in the

ruling class were as much qualitative as quantitative. Secondly, and in a directly related process, the new, more highly-bureaucratized shih began to show signs of melding with its former antithesis, the shu, to form a single class of subject in a more "modern" societal configuration. Under Hsüan-tsung when the change was embodied formally in law, the epoch was truly marked.

To understand these two developments, it is necessary to return to the state registers of status. From the descriptions provided of the two works of the seventh century, it seems abundantly clear that the clans counted in the nationwide élite comprised only a miniscule proportion of the population, and indeed, as early as the Sung, traditional scholars had pointed out that they were really the élite of an élite, existing above a generalized, locally-prominent shih class who were also exclusive in their marriages and able to claim both social and bureaucratic preferment.[60] As we have suggested, this situation is reflected only slightly in the state registers, with the clans listed in the Shih-tsu chih, for instance, numbering no more than .05 of the entire population.[61] Although the Hsing-shih lu was increased to 245 clans and 2,287 lineages, the proportion was probably not much greater, and since status ranking was to correspond to official rank and there were over 16,000 liu-nei officials at the time,[62] this seems a situation difficult to explain. Even considering the nepotistic nature of the early T'ang bureau-

cracy, the majority of officials must have gone unlisted, and from this indirect evidence, it seems reasonable to assume the existence of a much larger shih stratum whose lineage made them desirable as prospective officials, but whose social standing was still too low for the national standard of registration.

Until the discovery of the Tun-huang manuscripts, further development of this hypothesis was difficult. Several documents in various collections, however, have recently thrown light on the problem, though there remains a certain controversy over their exact interpretation.[63] These conflicts aside, they constitute an extremely valuable source.

The documents in question, four or possibly five in number,[64] date from the middle of the eighth century and offer detailed information on those clans considered to possess social prominence in the various chou and chün of the Empire. Collation of them with later geographies and rhyme dictionaries[65] reveals the existence of a second level of shih lineages which was perhaps five times the size of the super-élite of the Shih-tsu chih.[66] This configuration is the chief explanation for the form taken by social development in the second half of the seventh century.

Let us explain further. In the early T'ang, prestige, influence, and the prerequisites of rule belonged to the shih class, but an inordinate share of social status was monopolized by a tiny, nationally-renowned super-élite concentrated east

of the T'ai-hang Mountains. The following map, based on manuscript wei 79 in the Peking National Library, illustrates the regional disparity and shows the distribution of the aristocratic groupings identified by Liu Fang. As we have earlier suggested, the Shantung clans were exclusivistic, proud, and largely through marriage practices, self-sufficient. Their concern with genealogy, clan solidarity and Confucian ritual was partly at least, an attempt to remain distinct not only from the other regional super-élites, but also from a wider stratum of local shih which aspired to the same heights. Provided the criteria of status remained unchanged, their security was assured.

The attempt begun by T'ai-tsung to equate status with present office, essentially a measure designed to balance rather than weaken the great clans, changed the situation. Whatever the failings of his policy, he had at least recognized the use to which the local shih could be put, recognized their aspirations and their adaptability, and thus it will be recalled, had canvassed the genealogies of the entire Empire rather than simply concentrating on the areas where the super-élite were concentrated. Kao-tsung and Empress Wu in 659 had extended this principle, attempting further to blur distinctions within the aristocracy while at the same time, conciliating the alienated northeast. For them, the second part of the policy was of greater immediate importance, and until the 670's, it reflected the need for unity, for acceptance on the

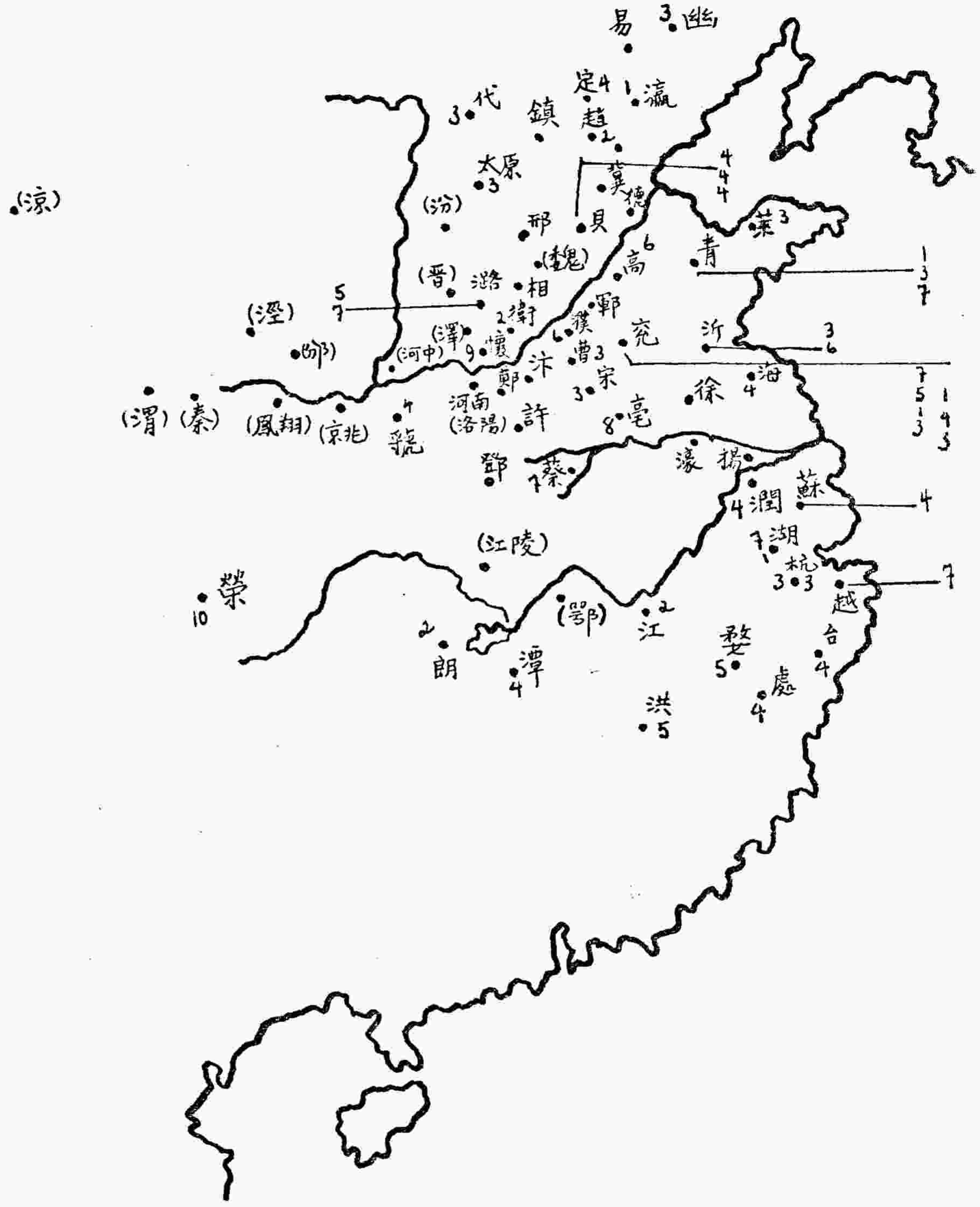


FIGURE 1

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE GREAT CLANS IN T'ANG TIMES

The map, with perspective distorted for clarity, is based upon Peking wei 79 and Ikeda On's reconstruction from T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi. Locations bracketed appear only in the latter, and all figures come from the former. More than one figure for a particular chou shows that several chün within it were distinguished as the home of eminent clans. The number of clans there may be determined by simple addition.

part of an "upstart" dynasty, and for a coöperative northeast to support the Korean campaigns. Imperial success in these aims was not total, but a good deal of evidence can be adduced to show that by Kao-tsung's death, the national élite were more prominent and more balanced in the chief ministerial ranks than had been the case in the 650's, and as we shall later show, that they came to dominate such governmental organs as the Chancellery and the Board of Civil Office.[67]

During this same period, however, the bureaucracy was expanding rapidly,[68] and if the regional distinctions within the super-élite were being diluted by their common bureaucratization, the group as a whole found itself pressured from below by the inferior layer of shih lineages who were rising in the bureaucracy through examination and the decreasing imperial emphasis on genealogy. Having committed themselves to court politics and become vulnerable to their vicissitudes, the great clans found themselves on the defensive in the maintenance of the prestige they had so long monopolized. To compensate for their surrender to one form of state definition of status, they seem to have responded by intensifying what they still monopolized, the purity of their Confucian tradition.[69]

When Kao-tsung died and the Empress Wu seized control of the government, they found themselves therefore in an impossible position. As representatives of the Confucian opposition to a woman ruler and as possessors of great

political influence, they became the primary objects of the terror, and over the next decade, hundreds of families suffered extinction or eclipse, in many cases taking generations to recover.[70] Though monographic studies on the subject are lacking, it seems safe to assume that the great aristocracy suffered a severe blow under the régime of the Empress, and that had they clung more tenaciously to their regional bases, they might have attained a much higher rate of survival.

This, of course, lies in the realm of speculation and in any case, it is difficult to see continued aloofness as a viable alternative. The message of the state registers and marriage bans was difficult to ignore, and as we shall shortly see, from about the time of the examination reforms of 669, imperial recruitment policies were directed largely toward the provincial élite whose self-interest, traditions, and competence made them natural alternatives to the great aristocrats in the highest ranks of officialdom. Lest this group displace them by default, the latter were forced to respond to bureaucratization, and judging from our remaining lists of high officials, this was as true of the other regional super-élites as of the Shantung wu-hsing. As we shall see, even the scions of great clans applied increasingly for the state examinations.

These developments served therefore not only to initiate change within the aristocracy, but also within the

bureaucracy. By the Chou and throughout the dynasty, officialdom was growing not only in numerical terms, but in the lower ranks at least, its highly-aristocratic character was progressively diluted. And within it there appeared a new dynamic. The super-élite, still well entrenched in high office, found themselves pressured from below by the lesser shih, and at the same time subject to the Empress' systematic policy of decapitation of the bureaucracy. There was no need for status registers and marriage bans between 659 and the end of the Chou principally because the great clans had been enticed into a larger and more "egalitarian" bureaucracy, and so had ceased to threaten the state from a position of independence. A good representative of the emerging pattern is Li Ching-hsüan, who was a member of the eminent Chao-chün Li clan, entered the bureaucracy through recommendation, recruited "myriads" each year, mostly from the northeast, as president of the Board of Civil Office, married three times into the Shantung aristocracy, was disgraced in 680, and his whole family was later exterminated.[71]

The second major social change which occurred in the last half of the seventh century, the blurring of the distinction between shih and shu, was closely related to the policies discussed above and was equally the result of conscious imperial aim. Although the change was not completed until the k'ai-yüan period and although it is difficult to say whether T'ang policy generally or the special situation of

the Empress Wu was a more important factor in the change, the end of the distinction may be viewed as an event which truly marked an epoch.

Until the Sui dynasty, it seems clear that the shih-shu division had had at least a quasi-legal basis,[72] and as we have earlier noticed, T'ai-tsung's Shih-tsu chih had as one of its aims, the preservation of the distinction. The Hsing-shih lu, however, was a major departure from this principle and had included in its rankings such groups as the recipients of honorific rank and barbarian chieftains who were in most cases, not of the shih class. And from 659, the policy of the throne seems to have sought further to erode the distinction. The principal tactic, as we shall shortly see, was the extension of the examination principle and the wooing of liu-wai officialdom, but from 684 onwards we find a much wider range of specific measures designed to achieve the same end. A number of edicts, for instance, called specifically for the recommendation of virtuous men, "whether shih or shu" to fill official positions, and in 685, talented commoners (pai-hsing) were given the right to recommend themselves for posts.[73] During the terror, servants and even slaves were given the right to denounce their masters and to travel at state expense to the capital to make their reports, while in the great Khitan rebellion, slaves and convicts were permitted for the first time to enlist in the army and to be eligible therefore for the various military rewards.[74] These

measures were of the sort responsible for what Professor Ch'en termed the "social flux" of the Empress' period, but generally, were measures of expediency and need not be seen as any more than the most striking examples of an evolving perception of status dating at least from 659. A systematic analysis of the edicts of the Chou period shows that the term shih is almost invariably used in its bureaucratic sense, the connotation shifting from social class to official function.[75] Conversely, the term shu, which seldom appears in edicts at least in relation to the frequency of such terms as min or pai-hsing, is used for those who held no rank in the official hierarchy.

The effect of this practice, which included the substitution of a distinction between "free" (kuei or liang) and "unfree" (chien), was soon to be recognized in law, and embodied both in the Administrative Statutes of 719 and in the Code of 737.[76] And it seems fair to say, therefore, that the régime of Wu Tse-t'ien marks a defined stage in the evolution of status perceptions in medieval China. In specific terms, it was the state status register she inspired, and her own edicts or ling which were largely responsible for the creation of the simplified, two-level model of stratification upon which the lü-ling system of the T'ang was henceforth to be based.[77]

In summarizing the role of the Empress Wu in the social change which occurred in her era, we must take care

not to overestimate her vision. While her unorthodox governmental role was clearly a catalyst, she remained in many respects typical of her times. In her regime we find the customary sumptuary regulations directed against merchants and artisans, and at least one measure designed to limit the official advancement of such groups as astronomers, musicians, physicians and diviners.[78] We have seen how, in 683, she took great pains to embellish her genealogy, and on other occasions she was not above crude snobbery. Objecting once to the family into which her daughter planned to marry, she asked "How can my daughter become the sister-in-law to farm-girls (t'ien-she nü)?"[79] On several occasions she affirmed her belief in the hereditary nature of good and evil character, and the effect of geography upon it.[80] Nonetheless, she was a pragmatist before all else, and because of her background, her Buddhism and her evolving dynastic aims, she was less inflexible than her predecessors in regard to the upward mobility of worthy and talented men.

Finally, the direction of social change and status perception must be related to the most basic of the Empress' aims, her attempt to establish first the T'ang, then the Chou in an age when regional and clan tradition were paramount and when dynasties originated in the great clans. This meant that the status claims and the prestige of the super-élite, and not only in the northeast, had to be subordinated to those of the state. She and Kao-tsung together took the

first step, following T'ai-tsung's lead, but the development of the policy, particularly the patronage of the exam system and the lower stratum of shih whose rise it fostered, seems to have been more her own policy than her husband's. This theme we shall discuss in the following chapter.

Once office-holding had become the sine qua non of status, and when the road to high office was opened more widely, the greatest clans found themselves on the defensive. They possessed, after all, no monopoly on talent. When they finally acknowledged state control of status by their "rush" to bureaucratization, their invulnerability was ended. As we have suggested, from 684 onward, so many suffered execution or the penalty of "eradication of name" (ch'u-ming) that their entire clan was suddenly plunged into economic hardship and social obscurity.[81]

In spite of this, the policies of the Empress were not per se anti-aristocratic. She was opposed only to those characteristics of the great clans which she saw as detrimental to state unity and to the full function of imperial power and administrative efficiency. In this opposition, however, lay the seeds of the conflict within the ruling class which would be so pronounced a feature of her own dynasty, and which would help to cement the changing perceptions of status which had evolved in the preceding decades. There is little evidence that her regime fostered the rise of any new class, but it did facilitate the advancement of an already-defined,

secondary shih class, and perhaps of greater importance, hastened the decline of the proud oligarchy whose monopoly of political power was the outstanding characteristic of post-Han China.

NOTES

(CHAPTER VI)

[1]See Chapter One, notes 46ff.

[2]See Miyakawa Hisayuki, "An Outline of the Naitō Hypothesis and its Effects on Japanese Studies of China," Far Eastern Quarterly, 14 (1954-55), pp. 533-52, and Miyakawa Ichisada, "The Four Ages of Chinese History," in Meskill, J. (ed.), The Pattern of Chinese History (Boston, 1968), pp. 53-56.

[3]The thesis is presented most systematically in Parts One and Two of T'ang-tai cheng-chih shih lüeh-lun k'ao (Chungking, 1944), pp. 1-94.

[4]Ch'en, Cheng-chih shih, p. 14.

[5]See for instance, Wechsler, "Factionalism," Perspectives, pp. 87-120, and the several remarks in Johnson, Oligarchy.

In general, the objections to Prof. Ch'en's thesis can be reduced to three large categories. Firstly, his belief that the ruling class polarized along historico-geographical lines because of the Chou-Ch'i rivalry does not give sufficient weight to the fact that the imperial clans of both originated in the so-called "Four Garrisons", and that the ruling group in both was composed of precisely the same type of clan: that is to say, of Hsien-pei and collaborating Chinese who were not numbered among the pre-eminent surnames of the time.

This latter fact is important because while the refusal of the northeastern élite to collaborate with the Ch'i and the Sui is well-known, the corresponding attitude of the northwestern clans usually goes unremarked. Liu Fang, in his "Discussion on Surnames" [note 8 below], identified as the pre-eminent of the northwest, the six clans of Wei, P'ei, Liu, Hsüeh, Yang and Tu. While they were prominent in the government of Sui and T'ang, they seemed to play hardly any role at all in the Chou central administration, and so can hardly be identified with Yü-wen T'ai's "northwestern bloc". The imperial clans of Sui and T'ang both claimed kinship with the purely-Chinese élite of this area, but it is well-established

that these were spurious claims, and that both were of "Four Garrison" (Wu-ch'uan) origins. For this reason, there seems no cause to assume a political polarization of the T'ang ruling class on purely regional grounds. We shall later suggest that friction arose more from perceptions of cultural and/or racial purity than from geography.

The second criticism of Ch'en's formulations is one applied to his definitions. To him, the T'ang "ruling class" consisted of "the [imperial] Li clan and the high civil and military officials," so that the local and semi-official power structure receives too little consideration. His use of such terms as "class" and "social revolution" are rather vague and more seriously, his attempt to divide the so-called Shantung and Kuanchung blocs by the existence of the T'ai-hang Mountains, is hardly adequate. To cite only one example, the native-place of the Empress Wu lies to the northwest of the range, yet as we shall show, she was considered by contemporaries to be an "easterner".

Finally, Prof. Ch'en seems never to resolve the dynamic of basic conflict. After depicting so clearly the regional rivalry in Part One of his book, he moves on in Part Two to the struggle between the new [post-Empress Wu] and the old élites, writing on p. 53, "Before the Empress Wu destroyed the old 'Kuanchung First' policy, the T'ang ruling class had been made up not only of the Chinese, non-Chinese, and semi-Chinese clans of Yu-wen T'ai's northwestern bloc, but also of the great Shantung clans who in tradition, followed that of the northern dynasties. Men of this type composed almost the whole of the upper bureaucracy. . . ." [My emphasis]. A comparison of this passage with that quoted in the text shows a direct contradiction, caused by an initial failure to define closely the ruling class.

These criticisms, of course, do not invalidate Ch'en's work but they do suggest that some modification is required.

[6]Of several reasons which could be cited, the most important is that extant sources provide information on only a tiny proportion of the T'ang population, and that with the exception of the Tunhuang manuscripts, no local history has survived. Twitchett, D.C., "The Composition of the T'ang Ruling Class," Perspectives, pp. 47-85.

[7]See CTS 149:3479:3, HTS 132:3975:3, and Twitchett, D.C., "Liu Fang: A Forgotten T'ang Historian," Asia Major 17 (1972). This article contains a full, annotated translation of the Hsing-hsi lun.

[8]The full text is found CTW 372:7a-11b, and in an abbreviated form, HTS 199:4093:4. It is the only lengthy discussion of the subject remaining from T'ang times.

[9]This distinction was the most crucial in medieval status terminology, and was sanctioned both by law and by custom. While shu is rendered conventionally by "commoner", the term shih has yet to find a suitable English equivalent, and rather than use "scholar", "gentry" or "literati", I prefer to leave the word in its Chinese form and define the characteristics of the group.

The best studies on the term are Niida Noboru, Shina Mibunhō shi (Tokyo, 1942), and his supplementary remarks in "Rikuchō yori Tōsho no mibunteki naikonsei," Rekishigaku kenkyū 9:8, pp. 756-776. Miyakawa Hisayuki, Rikuchōshi kenkyū (Tokyo, 1956) attempts to make the distinction a precise one, and Mao Han-kuang, Liang-Chin nan-pei-ch'ao shih-tzu cheng-chih yen-chiu, 2 vols. (Taipei, 1966), demonstrates the wide range of status terminology used even within the shih class. Miyazaki Ichisada, Kyuhin kanjinhō no kenkyū: kakyo zenshi, (Kyoto, 1956) shows in his classic work that the meaning of shih varied over time, and differed in North and South. Johnson, Oligarchy, Chaps. II and III elaborates upon some of this research.

Working from these studies, the following salient characteristics of the shih in the early T'ang might be isolated:

(a) They were generally and by social convention recognized to constitute a class distinct from the shu.

(b) The criminal code granted them no concessions on the basis of social as opposed to occupational status (Johnson, Oligarchy, pp. 47-52).

(c) They were exempted from corvée, and this privilege was a mark of their social status (Miyazaki, Kyuhin, p. 249, and Mao, Liang-Chin, p. 283).

(d) State schools, both central and provincial, tended to admit only the shih, but Miyazaki's view (p. 247) that education was reserved to the shih is an over-statement.

(e) Shih status depended principally upon the sanction of other shih, and was beyond the power of the Emperor to confer (Chou I-liang, Wei Chin Nan-Pei ch'ao shih-lün-chi, [Peking, 1963], pp. 99-100).

(f) The hallmark of the shih was culture: morality, high standards of conduct, loyalty to discipline and tradition, a certain commitment to noblesse oblige and to the self-consciousness of class. Within these parameters, it was an hereditary status.

(g) The shih were distinguished by an exclusive marriage circle, and by a determination not to marry below their station (Mao, Liang-Chin, pp. 230-37). There was no statutory ban on marriage with commoners (Niida, "Naikonsei," p. 722).

(h) Status and office-holding were closely connected. Commoners found it exceedingly difficult to enter the bureaucracy, and although never barred de jure from officialdom,

tended to rise only in unusual circumstances, chiefly through military prowess in periods of dynastic change. For the shih, state service was an important means of preserving their status, but it was not all-important, and culture and life-style combined with social recognition permitted some clans to eschew office while retaining prominence. See, for example, Ochi Shigeaki, "Nancho no koseki mondai," Shigaku zasshi, 69:8, pp. 940-64. Shih status could be gained by office, but office was granted generally only to those who already possessed shih status.

It is this final point which has led Japanese scholarship in this century to characterize the entire post-Han era, as that of the "aristocratic society" to which Toyama Gunji's book of readings, Kizoku shakai (Tokyo, 1967), provides an excellent short introduction.

[10]A term discussed later in the chapter. I prefer the translation "magnate clans" which perhaps conveys something of the close regional ties, military prowess and "feudal" organization which seem to have been common to their tradition. Liu Fang provides a useful insight here, for by T'ang times the term seems to have included a connotation of opposition to centralization and was applied most frequently to the northeastern clans.

[11]The term yu-hsing is used consistently throughout the essay as the generalized description of the most important clans on the national level.

[12]These terms have received less attention than shih and shu, probably because the latter was the more common distinction until the middle T'ang. Several translations, such as "noble and base" or sometimes "free and unfree" have been used but these are not altogether satisfactory since "chien" is often used for servants, slaves, artisans, merchants, prostitutes, etc., and "kuei" seems often to have been highly-relative and to have meant simply "non-chien". It was replaced by the term liang or "free" in T'ang law. There now exists a full study of the chien class in the T'ang. See Hamaguchi Shigekuni, To ocho no sennin seido (Kyoto, 1966). The opening chapter discusses the distinction.

[13]It was this group who were most prominent in the high officialdom of the early T'ang and who constituted Prof. Chen's "Kuanchung bloc". On the ssu-hsing question which follows in Liu's essay, see Johnson, Oligarchy, pp. 235-38 and note TCTC 140, p. 4394, where Hu San-hsing anachronistically applies the term to the first four clans of the realm. This seems to have been T'ang usage.

[14]The only mention I find is T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi 184:

41a, and the bibliographical treatises of the T'ang histories make no reference to the monk's work. The T'ung-chih, chüan 66 which is probably our most complete listing of genealogical works, mentions neither this nor the next two works listed by Liu Fang.

[15]I find no other reference, though the title seems to indicate that this was a state-wide compilation.

[16]Again I find no details of this work, and it seems odd that it goes unmentioned at the time the Shih-tsu chih was compiled. It would have been a natural work of reference. In this section, we might note the growing tradition in northern dynasties of compiling national status lists, and the parallel development whereby the definition of pre-eminent surnames came increasingly to be divorced from local prominence. It seems clear that whereas in the Wei, each prefecture had its pre-eminent surnames, these later compilations listed only clans of wider prominence and therefore, some prefectures would go wholly unmentioned.

It is important to notice here that the term mao-hsing seems to refer to Chinese clans of long and proud lineage, and suggests that the Sui was more ambiguous than is generally thought in its "anti-aristocratic" policies.

[17]On Lu, see CTS 189 hsia:3577:1, HTS 199:4092:3. His work is attested in the CTS, HTS, TFYK, T'ung-chih and Yü-hai which also mention an earlier compilation called the I-kuan p'u. He died in prison in 696 and is considered by Liu Fang as the father of T'ang genealogical studies.

[18]CTW 372:7a-11b.

[19]Numerous anecdotes from the dynastic histories could be cited to demonstrate this, and some are to be found in Ikeda On's draft chapter for volume III of the forthcoming Cambridge History of China, "The Decline of the T'ang Aristocracy". We might also note, for instance, Nan-shih 56:1754:4 which tells of a man who had the "bearing, [official] qualification and style" of the shih and requested the Southern Ch'i emperor to confer the status. After consultation with his social arbiters, the Emperor had to confess that he could do nothing since "the shih-ta-fu really stand beyond my authority [in this matter]."

Chou I-liang, Shih-lun-chi, pp. 98-99, cites this anecdote to demonstrate the snobbery and the necessity of peer recognition which were part of the shih group, but it seems equally valid to suggest that it was lack of lineage which led to the rejection of the aspiring shih.

Wei-shu 60:2035:2 contains a memorial from Han Hsien-t'ung asking that shih and shu have separate living quarters

in Lo-yang rather than being assigned their places on the basis of official rank. In it, Han contends that official rank is transient, its holders rising and falling. On the other hand, if artisans were to cultivate the conduct and standards of the shih, they would not reach the status in a hundred years. He went on to say that if the sons of the shih followed the behaviour of the artisans, they would become like them in a single morning.

Some scholars, for instance Johnson, Oligarchy, p. 24, see this as a denial of the hereditary principle, but I believe that Han is suggesting that shih status can be lost but that "conduct and standards" are in themselves insufficient to gain the status. The emperor might bestow high office or expose non-shih to their superiors in the hope of raising their status, but according to Han, both tactics are futile.

These examples suggest therefore, that while office and culture are attributes of the shih, they are not the determinants of the status. We shall later attempt to show the tenacity of the hereditary principle in relation to the early-T'ang attempts at status-fixing, and even in the form taken by its regulations concerning the examination system.

[20]Said in relation to Wang Hung, Sung-shih 42:1550:4, an imperial favourite who sought shih status. Similar statements are found in Miyakawa, Rikucho, p. 376ff., and Chou, Shih-lun-chi, p. 99ff.

[21]The secondary literature on this subject is large and T'ung-chih 66, p. 783cff. gives some idea of the volume of these compilations, listing 131 works in the four categories of arrangement, those by rank, rhyme, single area and single clan. Cheng Chiao, T'ung-chih erh-shih-lüeh 1:1b, tells us that under the T'ang, "the study of lineage and clan reached its zenith." A good overview of the subject is the important article by Utsunomiya Kiyoshi, "Tōdai kijin ni tsuite no ichi kōsatsu," Shirin 19:3 (1934), pp. 50-106. A number of studies cited in later notes shows the prevalence of falsification.

[22]CTW 372:10a. This passage offers an interesting insight into Ch'en's northwest-northeast hypothesis. The greater role of Kuanchung in the government of the early T'ang was perhaps as much a matter of choice and regional proclivity as of dynastic policy.

[23]THY 37, p. 663.

[24]CTS 57:3292:4. The minister is P'ei Chi (Appendix II, #2) who though poor in his youth, considered himself a member of the eminent Ho-tung P'ei clan which is systematically

studied by Yano Chikara, "Tōshō no kizoku seiji ni tsuite," Tōhōgaku, 9 (Oct., 1954). Note also Kao-tsu's conversation with Tou Wei (#5), CTS 61:3301:1, in which he speaks in a similar vein.

[25]The lengthy debate on the origins of the T'ang clan has centred chiefly on whether their lineage was purely Chinese or Hsien-pei, and Ch'en, Kuo-shih chiu-wen II, p. 2ff. collects most of the important data. Ch'en Yin-k'o has three articles on the subject in CYYY 3:1, 3:4 and 6:4, but his suggestion that they were a decayed branch of the Chao-chün Li clan seems to have effectively rebutted by Chu Hsi-tsu, "Po Li-T'ang wei hu-hsing shuo," Tung-fang tsa-chih, 33: 15, pp. 67-88, and Liu P'an-sui, "Li-T'ang wei fan-hsing san-k'ao," Yen-ching hsüeh-pao, 15, pp. 235-42. Though conflicting evidence makes the problem a very vexed one, I am of the view that the Lung-hsi connection was false, and that it should be seen in the same light as the Sui attempt to claim connection with the eminent Hung-nung Yang clan.

[26]On the bride-gift, Okamoto Goichi, "Tōdai heizaikō," Haneda hakuse shōju kinen toyōshi ronsō (Kyoto, 1950), pp. 225-48. Okamoto shows that the gifts were often of very great value and as important as the letters of engagement in formalizing the marriage. The state had attempted from the northern dynasties to define the gifts in terms of official rank, but social status seems to have been of greater importance. See also TRSI 9:27 and 30, p. 245ff., and Nien-erh shih cha-chi, 15, p. 197.

[27]On the compilers, see respectively Appendix II, #15; CTS 77:3333:2 and HTS 98:3910:2; #26; and CTS 73:3325:4, HTS 102:3918:3. The large literature on the subject is extremely well reviewed by Ikeda On, "Tōchō shizokushi no ichi kenkyū, Hokkaidō daigaku bungakubu kiyō, 13:2 (1965), pp. 3-64. In this literature, the background of the compilers is generally neglected.

The reason for their choice is difficult to know. Te-fen and Wen-pen had been the compilers of the Chou History in the large project of 629 and so could claim historical expertise, but neither of the other two seem to have been distinguished scholars. Both of them, however, were from relatively eminent clans, both held the highest positions in the Board of Civil Office, and both had present marriage connections with the imperial clan. The Ling-hu and Wei clans shared the background and regional origins of the T'ang, and the grandfather of Ts'en Wen-pen had been closely identified with the later Liang and so may have been included to represent the south in an attempt to achieve regional balance.

Kao Shih-lien was probably the key figure, not only as head of the project but as the only northeasterner in it.

He claimed descent from the imperial clan of Ch'i, and thus his Six Garrison origins and the fact that he was the uncle of T'ai-tsung's wife, would effectively set him apart from the four great Shantung clans against whom the list was directed.

Therefore, although the chief compilers reflected the regional balance typical of the upper bureaucracy in the early T'ang, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the group constituted a "packed jury". Their first verdict must have been a great surprise and attests to the overwhelming prestige of the Shantung clans and the dichotomy between office and social status which was still so strong.

[28]Ikeda On, "Tōdai no gumbōhyō," Tōhō gakuhō 42:3 and 4 (1959), pp. 293-331, and 412-430, in perhaps the most important study to date, correlates Tunhuang evidence with later sources to reconstruct the fullest list of eminent T'ang clans. Interestingly, the Wang and the Hsieh do not seem to appear in the lists. Moriya Mitsuo's classic study of the T'ai-yüan Wang clan, Rikuchō mombatsu no ichi kenkyū (Tokyo, 1951) identifies two branches early established in the south and remaining prominent for three to five centuries, so it may be to one of them that T'ai-tsung refers. Both of the northern Hsieh clans mentioned by Ikeda had southern branches.

[29]T'ai-tsung is reported to have chosen marriage partners for the imperial clan only from the households of his meritorious ministers, and to have refused even to discuss the possibility of a Shantung marriage (TCTC 200, p. 6318). His great ministers, however, men like Wei Cheng, Fang Hsüan-ling and Li Chi, did not hesitate to seek brides from these clans once their fortunes were made. This was an important phenomenon since it was not only the bride-gift, but the influence of and aid from in-laws at court which helped keep these clans solvent.

See also Nunome, Zui-Tōshi, pp. 358-9, 362-3, which offers a complete list of the marriages of T'ang princesses, confirming the boycott of the Shantung élite.

[30]This was Ts'ui Min-kan whom the dynastic histories call Ts'ui Kan since "min" was a taboo character under T'ai-tsung. The Ts'ui clan was composed of ten branches and Min-kan belonged to that of Ch'ing-ho. At the time of the list, he was vice-president of the Chancellery, a post of the fourth-rank, and Wei T'ing was his opposite number.

The CTS diction creates something of a problem here, since the passage in question is usually interpreted to mean that Ts'ui was placed above the imperial clan. I am not sure this was the case. The rather sketchy descriptions of the Shih-tsu chih which remain, tell us that the work contained 100 chüan and placed all the pre-eminent clans of the Empire

in nine ranks. It seems unlikely, therefore, that there would be only one clan in the first-rank and T'ai-tsung was probably objecting to equality rather than precedence.

It would be well to take note here of two possible interpolations in the parallel HTS account found 95:3903:4. In the first, T'ai-tsung is said to have instructed his compilers to "rank first the imperial house and follow it with the consort families. Demote new clans and promote the old, placing the great (kao-liang) on the right and the lesser (han-chün) on the left. . . ." Secondly, just before pointing out that he wished to honour the officials of his own court, he is reported to have said, "for many, unbroken generations to be kung, ch'ing, or ta-fu--that is what should be defined as a great family (men-hu). . . ."

Both these statements are somewhat suspect since they contradict the main criterion for inclusion, that is, present, official position. Since this is confirmed in every other source, the HTS statements must be rejected. They do, however, illustrate the quandry in which the compilers found themselves, and suggest the possibility that the finished work was organized in such a way that the first two ranks were monopolized by the imperial and consort families with the other clans spread through the remaining seven.

[31]CTS 65:3309:2. See also, TCTC 195, pp. 6135-36 and THY 36, p. 664.

[32]Moriya, Rikuchō mombatsu, especially pp. 135-36, shows how narrow the marriage circle of the T'ai-yüan Wang who were often grouped with the Shantung ssu-hsing, remained throughout the T'ang; and an unpublished M.A. thesis by Saitō Aiko for Tokyo University has shown in meticulous detail, that this was true for the other super-élite of the northeast. The contrast with the Li-T'ang clan, whose first rulers had married into the Tu-ku, Tou, and Ch'ang-sun clans, should be noted.

The refusal to marry with barbarians was principally a matter of pride, but a suggestion by Ts'en Chung-mien, Sui-T'ang shih, I, p. 117, has merit. He points out that dissociation from the central power of the barbarian regimes was also dissociation from exploitation of the peasantry, and so became a source of popularity among the masses.

[33]TCTC 143, pp. 4393-6. The passage also offers some information on the Wei perception of the ssu-hsing and their relation to the Lung-hsi Li clan. The northeastern élite was not wholly successful in preserving its daughters from the barbarians.

[34]For a general exposition of the clan rules, see Liu, H.W., The Traditional Chinese Clan Rules (New York,

1959). In the T'ang, the two most celebrated sets of rules were those of Mu Ning and Han Shou, both from prominent northeastern clans. See CTS 155:3487:3 and HTS 163:4026:1. Among the ssu-hsing, the Ts'ui were most famous for their life-style, cohesiveness and piety. See for instance, HTS 182:4062:2, the biography of Ts'ui Tzu-yüan and note how the qualities they instilled in members, suited them for official careers and maintained them as the predominant T'ang clan. The biography of Ts'ui Hsüan-wei (#132) contains an admonition from his mother née Lu, that as he embarked upon his official career he should not seek profit for himself or his clan, but seek only honesty and integrity. Another fine example of clan rules are those of Liu Tz'u (CTS 165:3508:2) whose seat was near the capital, but who had close marriage ties with the Ts'ui.

See also, Utsunomiya, "Kijin," p. 493ff., and Takeda Ryūji, "Tōdai shizoku no kahō ni tsuite," Shigaku 28:1 (April, 1955), pp. 84-104.

[35]The best-known case is that of Ts'ui Hao whose execution in 450 led to the decimation of the entire north-eastern aristocracy. See Wang I-t'ung, "Ts'ui Hao kuo-shu-yü shih-i," CYYY 6:4, pp. 84-99.

[36]Evidence could be adduced to support each of these points, and I suspect that these are what T'ai-tsung had in mind when he suggested that the people of Kuanchung and Shantung were different in their way of thinking (CTS 78: 3336:4). An incomplete study I have made of the data in the HTS tsai-hsiang table suggests that in the two generations from the inauguration of the Sui to the death of T'ai-tsung, the number of officials produced by the Shantung ssu-hsing was proportionately almost the same as that of six super-élite clans of Kuanchung identified by Liu Fang, but as several scholars have suspected, the proportion of central officials was appreciably lower. Interestingly, a fairly high proportion of these provincial appointments were made in the northeast in spite of the fact that from the Sui onward, attempts had been made to restore the Han practice of avoidance. The reasons, I think, are the same as those in the northern and southern dynasties recently explored by Kubozoe Yoshifumi, "Gi-Shin Nanbokuchō ni okeru chihōkan no honseki chininyō ni tsuite," Shigaku zasshi, 83:1 and 2 (1974). The long resistance of the northeast to the T'ang and its continuing hostility meant that Kao-tsu and T'ai-tsung not only used intermediaries like Wei Cheng and Ts'ui Kan there, but seem also to have permitted the region a greater degree of autonomy. See for instance, TCTC 186, p. 5823.

A current debate in Japanese scholarship concerns the precise relationship between the aristocracy and the rural community (hsiang-tang). What seems clear, however, is that

the peasantry even in the T'ang, were still in the habit of looking to the great clans in their area for relief in times of calamity. The early T'ang seems to have been slow to usurp these relief functions in the northeast, and we shall suggest that Kao-tsung and Empress Wu were more active in this respect.

[37]See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, p. 75ff. and the literature reviewed there.

[38]See, for instance, Ch'en Yin-k'o, "Lun Sui-mo T'ang-ch'u so-wei Shan-tung hao-chieh," Ling-nan hsüeh-pao 12:1, pp. 1-14, which stresses the cohesion and military prowess of the group, demonstrating that T'ai-tsung's coup depended on them. Matsui Shuichi, "Tōdai zempanki no Shisen," Shigaku zasshi, 71:9 (1962), pp. 1-37 shows that the term was also used commonly for the aristocracy of the southwest which shared many characteristics with those in the northeast. Kikuchi Hideo, "Setsudoshi Kenryōku to iwayuru togōsō," Rekishi kyōiku, 14:5 (1966), pp. 46-58 is the best short treatment of the hao-chieh as a distinct group and their influence on the societal structure.

[39]CTS 82:3343:4, TCTC 200, p. 6315. I am sceptical about this in view of the forced revision, the treatment of the Shantung ssu-hsing, and the fact that the quoted passage occurs only in the biography of Li I-fu. It met approval, I think, only in relation to the Hsing-shih-lu.

[40]TTCLC 110:4a, TFYK 159:7a, THY 83, p. 1528. The ban was issued in the sixth month of 642 and is discussed with its secondary literature in Ikeda, "Shizokushi," p. 51ff. In it, T'ai-tsung again attacks the northeastern clans saying that traditions and standards of conduct there have declined, and while the clans still enjoyed local prominence and renown, they had fallen into poverty and rejected the propriety of marriage by interesting themselves primarily in the wealth of those clans who wished to marry with them. They turned weddings into a business proposition.

Although T'ai-tsung accused the clans of Shansi (Yen-Chao) of the same fault, his regional bias is clear.

[41]TCTC 200, p. 6318.

[42]See Appendix II. Ts'ui Jen-shih was from Ting-chou in Ho-tung and I find no relationship with the eminent Ts'ui of Ho-pei.

[43]The sources disagree. CTS 82:3343:4 claims that Li I-fu initiated the recompilation because his clan was unranked, and TCTC 200, p. 6315 says Hsü Ching-tsung asked for a

revision because the Empress' clan was unranked. HTS 95:3903:4 and THY 36, p. 665 cite both reasons. I find it hard to believe, in view of Shih-huo's career, that the Wu clan was unranked, and prefer the THY wording: "was not clearly ranked." This would suggest that the Empress was unsatisfied.

Li I-fu was very conscious of his inferior clan status and falsely claimed membership in that of the Chao-chün Li clan. He had to resort to intimidation to enforce the claim but when he attempted to use his false status to marry his son into the Shantung élite, he was rebuffed. His motives for desiring a new list were therefore strong, and he may also have inspired the marriage ban issued the same year that he was attempting to marry his son. See TCTC 200, p. 6318.

[44]The compilation of 659 was delegated to twelve men of whom we have the names of only five. Of these, only Li I-fu and Lu Tsai (CTS 79:3338:4, HTS 107:3926:4) are known in any other context. With the exception of Li I-fu, none occupied a position above the third rank, and one even held a liu-wai post! Since the compilers represented neither great clans nor the upper bureaucracy, a new concept of status was reflected in their choice.

[45]The table is based on information found in all the standard sources, and follows that of Ikeda, "Shizokushi," p. 48.

The chief differences lie in the size and scope of the works. In addition, the Hsing-shih-lu makes an exact correlation of official rank and rank within the treatise and deletes all but the immediate family of the man ranked. The list of 659 was much larger than its predecessor and reflects the growth in officialdom and in the number of persons rising through the military in a time of foreign expansion. The approximate number of clans and persons ranked is difficult to know because we are by no means sure that the term chia is used in the same way in both lists. Johnson, Oligarchy, p. 128 uses the Sui census figures, equates chia with hu ["household"] and reaches a proportion of .018, remarking that this constitutes an amazingly small ruling class. I do not accept this calculation.

In the chart, I have chosen the chia as a "lineage" since the nature of the list means we are dealing with a special sort of family. Imabori Seiji, "Todai shizoku no seikaku sobyo," Rekishigaku kenkyu 9:11, pp. 59-80, convincingly establishes a difference in the size of shih and shu households, and Niida, Mibunhoshi, II, p. 337 suggests an average figure of ten persons in what would here be termed a chia. This, of course, is about double the size of an ordinary hu. Moriya, Rikucho mombatsu, p. 143ff. assembles evidence of a much larger figure, but after finding that a hundred was

not uncommon, is reluctant to use the figure. Judging from specific cases of clans punished by Empress Wu, I would tend to put the number of individuals in a chia at between ten and thirty in this case. See for instance, TCTC 200, p. 6317, and 206, p. 6513. This would put the number in the list at two to six times the estimate of Prof. Johnson.

[46]CTS 82:3343:4. HTS 223 shang:4163:4 uses the term ch'ang-shih. This is rather puzzling since a stated aim of the compilation was to form a nexus between status and official rank it could hardly be left unrevised and was probably intended to serve as the basis of future lists.

[47]CTS 82:3343:4, HTS 223 shang:4163:3, THY 35, p. 665. Ikeda and Johnson are both of the view that the burning did not serve its purpose since the list of 707 was to be based on the Shih-tsu chih. This shows, however, only that some copies survived and underestimates the symbolic importance of the act. In any case, the Hsing-shih lu was the standard of status measurement for half a century of rapid social change, and so, of greater importance than T'ai-tsung's compilation.

[48]Note 36 above.

[49]CTS 82:3343:4, HTS 95:3904:1, THY 83, pp. 1528-29, TCTC 200, p. 6318, Yü-hai 50:25a. In the ban, seven surnames and eleven chia were forbidden to intermarry, and the bride-gift was limited so that chia of the third rank or above could receive 300 p'i of silk [a p'i was 1.8 by 40 feet] and one of the eighth rank received fifty p'i. It had also been the practice, if the groom's house were higher than the bride's, for his chia to accept double these gifts. This was now forbidden.

[50]See the studies of Moriya and Saitō cited above, and Tsukiyama Jisaburō, Tōdai seiji seido no kenkyū (Tokyo, 1967), p. 163ff.

[51]Chung-tsung re-issued the ban, probably in 707 when the new clan-list was compiled. The standard sources do not mention the event, but judging from WYYH 900:7a, this final prohibition specified five surnames, mentioning the Northern Wei head of the clan by name and numbering the sons of each, so that the descendants of a total of forty-four men were forbidden to intermarry. In the case of the Ts'ui, eight generations were represented so that the scope of the ban was wide, including perhaps 300 chia.

[52]On the fondness of the Empress for Lo-yang, see Ch'üan Han-sheng, T'ang-Sung ti-kuo yü yün-ho (Shanghai, 1946), and Ts'en Chung-mien, Sui-T'ang shih, I, pp. 142-47.

Both political and economic factors were present in the lengthy sojourn of the court at Lo-yang from the time of the Empress' rise, and while I accept the belief that there existed antipathy between her and the northwestern clans concentrated near Ch'ang-an, I also believe that she and Kao-tsung were attempting consciously to reconcile the northeast. It is significant that immediately after the marriage-ban, in the intercalary tenth month of 659, they went to Lo-yang where they were to stay for two years. This was, incidentally, a prosperous time in the northwest and a period of drought in Ho-pei. In 660, there was a good deal of construction in Lo-yang--palaces, bridges, market-places, etc., and it was also from here that Su Ting-fang's great Korean expedition was launched. See THY 30, p. 560 and 86, p. 1577, and TCTC 200, p. 6320.

The growing importance of Lo-yang had been evident from about 656 when the first new palace in many years was built there (THY 30, pp. 551-2 and note the reasons why the first T'ang emperors did not build there), and when, in early 657, the officials at Lo-yang were declared in all respects equal to their Ch'ang-an counterparts. THY 68, p. 1190. As we have noted earlier, Lo-yang became the Eastern Capital at the end of that year. It seems clear that the emphasis on Lo-yang reflected not only an appreciation of political and economic realities, but more specifically, was an attempt to reconcile the northeast. In 660, when Kao-tsung and the Empress made a well-publicized trip to Ping-chou, the geographical origins of the Empress were further emphasized.

[53]The exception was the Cheng clan of Jung-yang, and T'ang-kuo shih pu, Shang, p. 21, tells us that even in the T'ang, they were considered reluctant to move from their native place. My calculations suggest the following distribution of tsai-hsiang from the ssu-hsing:

	Kao-tsu	T'ai-tsung	Kao-tsung (from 659)	Empress Wu
Ts'ui	0	0	2	4
Lu	0	0	1	0
Li	0	0	2	6
Cheng	0	0	0	0

[54]CTS 189 hsia:3578:1, and see Utsunomiya, "Kijin," p. 59 for other sources. The work was suggested in 707 and completed seven years later. See also, Ikeda, "Shizokushi," pp. 48 and 56. Lü Ssu-mien, Sui T'ang Wu-tai shih, p. 788 contends that this was the last of the state-sponsored treatises, and although there is evidence of other, much smaller works (Utsunomiya, "Kijin," p. 59ff.), this was certainly the last large-scale manifestation of state concern with status-fixing.

[55]The compilers were all high officials. Headed by Wei Yüan-chung (#121) and Chang Hsi (#124), they included five Board vice-presidents, most of whom were concurrently appointed to the History Office. Wei's death put a temporary stop to the project, but Liu Chung who made original proposal, continued to work with the historians Wu Ching and Liu Chih-chi and five others to complete the project. Hsüan-tsung had it corrected and brought up-to-date by Liu Chung, Liu Chih-chi and Hsüeh Nan-chin. See THY 36, p. 665. The same source notes that Liu Chih-chi had recently created a stir by publishing the first honest and critical genealogy of his clan.

[56]TFYK 560:20b. See also CTW 235:2a and Johnson, Oligarchy, p. 152.

[57]TFYK 560:21a.

[58]CTS 189 hsia:3578:1. The use of the Shih-tsu chih as model is usually explained in terms of an aristocratic revival after the Chou. I doubt, however, that this was the case as early as 707, and I suspect, rather that it reflects a nostalgic wish to associate the era with "the good government of chen-kuan" and to eradicate the influence of Empress Wu in as many respects as possible.

[59]The story is told of Hsüeh Yüan-ch'ao (#61) and is found in T'ang yü-lin 4, pp. 140-41. Interestingly, his biography tells us that he was a compiler of the National History while attached to the Hung-wen kuan, and also that he was married to a T'ang princess. The anecdote may therefore be apocryphal, but if not, his preference in wives is doubly interesting.

The T'ang-shih-kuo pu contains several anecdotes of the sort.

[60]See, for instance, the essay from Shen Kua's Meng-ch'i pi-t'an translated by D. Twitchett, "T'ang Ruling Class," Perspectives, pp. 54-56.

[61]My own estimate. See note 45 above.

[62]TCTC 200, p. 6308, from a memorial by Liu Hsiang-tao, discussed in the following chapter. Liu counts 13,465 liu-nei officials in 657 and says that 1,400 more entered the bureaucracy annually. The list of 659 was to include those who had reached the fifth rank, perhaps one-tenth of this figure. Of these higher posts, there were a total of about 3000 in capital and provinces, so that considering the figures in the Hsing-shih lu, it seems clear that we are dealing with a highly inbred bureaucracy.

[63]There is a fairly full literature on the subject, including the studies of Ikeda, Takeda and Twitchett mentioned earlier. In addition, see Niida Noboru, "Stein Tonkō hakken no t'ien-hsia hsing-wang shih-tsu p'u," Ishihama sensei koki kinen tōyōgaku ronsō (1958), pp. 397-429, and Mou Jun-sun, "Tun-huang T'ang hsieh-pen hsing-shih lu ts'an-ch'üan k'ao," Wen-shih che-hsüeh pao, 3, pp. 61-74.

[64]The most important are Peking wei 79 and Stein 2052. Four fragments collectively numbered S.5861 and P.3191 may, according to Ikeda, be part of a whole. Another Pelliot fragment, P.3421, may be related.

I had intended to discuss these documents in detail because I am reluctant to accept all of Ikeda's conclusions, but Johnson, Oligarchy, pp. 176-231, has recently outlined the relationship and filiation of the documents with great care. I am not sure, however, that his view of the purpose of the lists is correct.

[65]Principally the T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi, a Sung geography by Yüeh Shih, the Kuang-yün rhyming dictionary, and the genealogical work, Ku-chin hsing-shih shu pien-cheng. See Ikeda, "Gumbō hyō," pp. 314-18.

[66]Because the Tunhuang documents give only hsing and not chia, and are so very fragmentary, comparison is difficult. Still, they list about five hsing per prefecture, while the state-lists of 638 and 659 average less than one, so that even allowing for uneven distribution, the multiple of five seems reasonable.

[67]To avoid a major inconsistency of Professor Ch'en Yin-k'o, I must specify here that the term "national élite" henceforth includes the pre-eminent clans of the northeast. These were, I have suggested, well-represented in the Hsing-shih lu, and increasingly accepted high posts in the central government from 659.

Analysis of the T'ang tsai-hsiang or chief ministers has recently become conventional among scholars despite the shortcomings of the group as a representative sample. Johnson, Oligarchy, Appendix A, pp. 317-22, outlines some of the problems and advantages of using the sample, and pp. 287ff., offers the following breakdown in "chief-ministerial man-years":

Period	Great Family	Non-Great Family
Kao-tsu: 618-626	100%	
T'ai-tsung: 627-649	64	36%
Kao-tsung: 650-659	43.5	56.5
Wu (régime): 660-683	54.5	45.5

Period	Great Family	Non-Great Family
Wu (regent & Empress): 684-704	53.5%	51.2 (5.3 unknown)
Early restoration: 705-711	58.3	38.6 (3.1 unknown)
Hsüan-tsung: 712-735	53.4	46.6
(Li Lin-fu): 736-755	11.4	88.6

The chart combines under "great family," true and fraudulent claims, and for purposes of comparison, Johnson points out that the corresponding figures for Chinese chief ministers in the Sui were 78.5 and 21.5.

Much of his subsequent analysis of the T'ang oligarchy is, regrettably, based upon these figures, and the two questions he asks--"What has happened to the celebrated rise of the examination-bureaucrats?" and "What explains the evident decline in the representation of great clans . . . between Sui and T'ang?" seem to me not susceptible to answer using data of this sort.

In the first place, the utilization of "man-years" rather than individual appointment, tends to distort the data, given the evolution of tsai-hsiang status and the conscious change of policy from T'ai-tsung to the Empress Wu (see Chapter IV). Secondly, the turning points isolated by Professor Johnson, the Kao-tsu to T'ai-tsung change and the decade of the 650's are in fact counters to his argument since they represent atypical events--T'ai-tsung's "usurpation," and the destruction by the Empress Wu of almost the entire tsai-hsiang group since they had been united in opposing her rise. Finally, the possession of great-family status did not disqualify a man from being at the same time an "examination-bureaucrat," and as my Appendix II shows, even members of the great clans were turning to examination as a qualification for office in the later part of the century. It seems to me that in dealing with the tsai-hsiang sample, questions of a different sort might be asked, and I attempt to do so in subsequent sections.

I deal with aristocratic domination in the Chancellery and Board of Civil Office in Chapter VII.

[68] See Chapters V and IX.

[69] See Utsunomiya, "Kijin," pp. 81-95. The family codes, private genealogies, and continued exclusivity of marriage were symptoms of the phenomenon, and anecdotal collections offer many examples of the pride of clan tradition continuing to flourish. See, for example, T'ang-kuo shih-pu, shang, p. 20, for Li Chen (李縝) who refused to use his official titles, always signing himself "Lung-hsi Li Chen." Several other interesting points are raised in the excellent article by Takeda Ryūji, "Tōdai shizoku no kahō ni tsuite" (唐代士族の家法について), Shigaku, 28, 1, pp. 84-105.

[70] In order to clarify somewhat the full extent of the tragedy of so many great clans during the period of the Empress Wu, I provide below a list of those exiled and executed for real or alleged crimes. In most cases their immediate families were exiled or enslaved and their property confiscated. Sources are given only for those who do not appear in Appendix II.

(a) In 659, at the instigation of Hsü Ching-tsung, a final revenge was carried out on the former tsai-hsiang Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi, Ch'u Sui-liang, Han Yüan, and Liu Shih. In every case, their immediate families were enslaved, those of sons and grandsons exiled to the far South, and several collateral relatives, nephews and cousins, also executed (see CTS 183:3553:1長孫敬). When the Empress pardoned Wu-chi in 674, there remained only a single grandson to carry on his ancestral sacrifices, and the others were pardoned only in 706, in the last Will of the Empress (CTS 7:3078:1). It may be noted that the Liu family, for example, was in desperate straits economically when the pardon came, and Shih's grand-nephew had to beg from Hsüan-tsung the money to bury properly his ancestor. In the same memorial, he pointed out that all five families punished at the time [including, I think, that of Lai Chi, who suffered only exile] were in a similar position. See CTS 77:3334:4.

In 664, the adopted son of the deposed Empress Wang, who was degraded to commoner when tied to the "treason" of Wu-chi and the others, was executed for complicity with Shang-kuan I (TTCLC 39, and CTS 4:3072:4).

(b) In 664, Shang-kuan I, who was a poet of renown as well as scion of an eminent Shan-chou clan, was executed for his part in persuading Kao-tsung to depose the Empress Wu. His only son died with him and the rest of the family was enslaved. I's son had married into the Cheng clan, and it was their daughter Wan-erh, who, after rising from palace slave to private-secretary to the Empress Wu, came to exercise such power in the reign of Chung-tsung and was able then to rehabilitate her grandfather. She, of course, perished in the coup against the Wei faction.

(c) In 681, a small rebellion in Ch'ang-chou (常州), led by Li Lung-tzu (李龍子) was snuffed out, and the leader executed (HTS 3:3640:2). I am unable to establish his lineage.

From 659 until the rebellion of Li Ching-yeh, with the sole exception of the Shang-kuan affair, the régime of the Empress was singularly bloodless, and compares favourably with that of almost any other T'ang ruler. It is difficult not to notice that this was the period in which she sought, above all, consolidation and centralization, when she was wooing the élite of the northeast to the centre.

(d) In the aftermath of Li Ching-yeh's rebellion of 684, the carnage was great. The most prominent of the clans to

fall were those of Li Chi whose own tomb was desecrated, T'ang Chih-ch'i (唐之奇 CTS 85:3348:4), Lo Pin-wang (CTS 190 shang 3581:3), Tu Ch'iu-jen (HTS 106:3924:3). Only Lo Pin-wang was of undistinguished lineage. Of capital officials, the list is much greater; P'ei Yen and the general Ch'eng Wu-t'ing were largely self-made men, but at the height of their influence, while Yang Shen-jang (楊神讓 CTS 190 shang:3581:1), and Yüan Wan-ch'ing (CTS 190 chung:3581:4) were of old and eminent families, the former a maternal relation of the Empress. Several of the other victims (薛仲璋, 韋超, 劉齊賢) are without biographies, but bear surnames appearing in the clan lists and appear in the HTS treatise as members of great clans.

The most interesting aspect of this incident is that with the exception of the Yang-chou ringleaders, officials above the fifth rank suffered the ultimate penalty, while those below that rank were either demoted or exiled with their immediate family. In Yang-chou itself, those below the sixth rank were simply disenrolled (除名). See CTS 190 shang: 3580:2, biography of Liu Yen-yu.

There is no complete list of the victims of the long series of reprisals which followed the suppression, since the evil officials in charge of the investigations "forced every man indicted to implicate tens and hundreds of others. The eminent families (衣冠) trembled in fear. . ." (CTS 186 shang:3565:1).

The persecutions concerned with the uprising ended with the Act of Grace of 690 when all but the ringleaders received a complete pardon (原免), and it is interesting to note that by 801, even Ching-yeh's descendants had flourished and became prominent in the semi-barbarian area to which they were exiled (CTS 87:3314:3). The major reason for the higher recovery rate of the families involved, was the relatively short period before amnesty, and a legal precedent supported by the Empress Wu on a personal plea from the celebrated Censor Hsü Yu-kung (徐有功 CTS 85:3349:1; HTS 113:3939:3). By contending that the penalty of chi-mo (籍沒) which entailed confiscation and registration of household members as chien or unfree in the census registers, could not be applied to the family of a man already dead when the charge was brought, he saved over three hundred families, reducing their punishment to exile. See TT 169, pp. 8940ff., and TFYK 616-17, which both contain several other examples of how Hsü Yu-kung successfully pleaded for clemency before the Empress, and so set several legal precedents. Paradoxically, the law seems to have become more lenient during the terror!

(e) The week-long "Princes' Rebellion" of 688 ended in the wholesale destruction of the T'ang family. At least forty-four princes were executed and over one hundred chia destroyed, with many others barred from holding office (沒官). The sources, with some exaggeration, claim that only a few

children, exiled in the remote south, survived. At the same time, the evil official, Ch'iu Shen-chi (丘神勣 CTS 186 shang:3564:1), seized the opportunity to implicate in the rising, former exiles in Ling-nan, and as commissioner to the area, carried out a brutal massacre, drowning over 1,000 families.

A complete list of casualties is impossible to draw, but we are told that particularly in the two centres of the rebellion, Po-chou (博州) and Yü-chou (豫州), they were great: in the former, over 1,000 families were destroyed, in the latter, 6,700 persons were convicted of complicity (緣坐 --which usually carried a sentence of exile), and 5,000 persons suffered the penalty of chi-mo (CTS 89:3356:2, biography of Ti Jen-chieh). A number of capital officials, including the Empress' own son-in-law, were also executed. TT and TFYK, loc. cit., show that the Empress presided personally over many of the trials at the time, and she appears both competent and just.

(f) In 689, several of the highest capital officials, including the tsai-hsiang Chang Kuang-fu, were executed for conspiracy with the brother of Li Ching-yeh who had escaped his place of exile. Several more, including Wei Yüan-chung, were sentenced to death and amnestied only on the day of execution. There are a number of historiographical problems surrounding the event: see the K'ao-i notice for TCTC 204, p. 6460.

After the declaration of the Chou dynasty and the elimination of the T'ang family, there occurred a respite in the terror, and only in 697 was there another large incident.

(g) In the first month of that year, a provincial prefect, Liu Ssu-li (劉思禮), conspired to rebel, and when word leaked out, was executed with his closest associates. At the time, Lai Chün-ch'en, seeking to regain his lost favour, managed to convince the Empress that numerous high officials in the capital were involved, with the result that over thirty chia were destroyed. CTS 57:3293:2 has a good account of the incident.

I count, during this incident, a total of thirteen high officials executed, among them members of the T'ai-yüan Wang, the Lung-hsi Li, the Yü-wen, and the celebrated genealogist Lu Ching-ch'un. In many ways this event was a turning point in the dynasty: Ssu-ma Kuang remarks that so eminent were the victims that "the whole Empire was angered," and the Empress, of course, destroyed the evil officials later in the same year and almost immediately summoned Chung-tsung back to the capital.

The six incidents cited above account for the majority of the Empress' victims, though the list is by no means complete. The years 690 and 691 saw the execution of eighteen other officials above the fifth rank, several of them tsai-hsiang, and many, members of great families. Most perished

for opposing Wu Ch'eng-ssu's ambition to be named Crown Prince: a most natural cause, and a fine example of the intensification of the tradition which initially had given the élite their status. In almost every case, the penalty of chi-mo was applied to the victim's family, but in several Acts of Grace before her deposition, the Empress specifically amnestied those who for complicity had been exiled or enslaved (長流及城奴). I hope to complete soon a separate study on the recovery of these families.

[71]Appendix II, #59. Interestingly, Li first became vice-president of the Board of Civil Office in 669 when the first major reform of the period was undertaken. Just as Ch'en Shu-ta (#7) was earlier credited with bringing many southern shih to accept capital office, Li is credited with recruiting numerous men from the northeast. In all, he served in the Board for eight years.

[72]As for instance, in the form of census registration. See the standard study by Masamura Hiroshi, "Kohakuseki no shinkenkyu," Toyoshi kenkyu 2:4, pp. 30-44, and the studies cited in note 9 above.

[73]WYYH 462:9a and CTW 95:14b. See also TCTC 203, p. 6435.

[74]On the informers, TCTC 203, pp. 6438-39, and on slaves and convicts, TCTC 205, p. 6507 and THY 86, p. 1569. The last measure inspired a strong protest from Ch'en Tzu-ang. See Ch'en Tzu-ang chi, p. 178ff.

[75]See for instance, CTW 96:4b, 96:6a, and 96:11a.

[76]TLSI 22:3, p. 93ff. The material is arranged in a very convenient chart in T'ao Hsi-sheng, Chung-kuo cheng-chih ssu-hsiang shih (Taipei, 1964), III, pp. 249-51.

[77]The most important recent work on the system has been done by Ikeda On. See his fine summary, "Ritsuryo kansei no kaisei," Sekai Rekishi V (Tokyo, 1970), pp. 277-323. He offers (p. 289) some cogent remarks on the interaction between status and lü-ling systems. See also, in the same volume, Ogata Isamu, "Ryosenshi no tenkai to sono seikaku," pp. 325-64 which offers a tabular presentation (p. 354) of the shift in usage from shu to min.

[78]TTCLC 100:3a, CTW 95:9b, THY 67, p. 1183. For instances of sumptuary regulations directed at merchants and artisans, see THY 31, p. 572 and CTW 96:19b.

[79]TCTC 202, p. 6402.

[80]For the former, CTW 95:12a and TTCLC 114:7b, an edict of 701 forbidding the descendants of Yang Su to hold capital office, and CTShih 5, p. 57 where she speaks of the virtues of her own ancestors. The influence of geography on character was a prevalent idea of the age as we have seen in Liu Fang's essay and Lo Pin-wang's polemic. Pulleyblank, Historians, pp. 135-66 shows that Liu Chih-chi expressed the view in his historical works. Empress Wu exhibited the same feeling on a number of occasions, as for instance in her decree executing Lai Chün-ch'en, and sometimes when she honoured other officials. See CTW 95:11a and HTS 109:3930:2.

This idea may help to account for the popularity of Shantung marriages and the propensity of so many officials to claim native places with which they had only the most remote connection.

[81]Explored in earlier notes, especially note 70 above.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EXAMINATION SYSTEM AND THE BUREAUCRACY

Political developments in the seventh century, although far more richly documented than their social equivalents, present the historian with numerous problems. The first of these, the bias of traditional historiography, has earlier been discussed in some detail but it is in the political realm that it takes on its greatest significance. In the Confucian mind, questions of rule were uppermost, and by the seventh century the values of the historian were set. A good ruler was one who conformed to traditionalism and decorum, who achieved harmony in the hierarchical relationships of heaven, earth and man, as well as between ruler and subject, and who brought peace and prosperity to the Empire. Motivation and causation, objective assessment of success and failure except in the moral realm, are largely absent from the traditional accounts. There is a sameness in all their appraisals of the Empress Wu in her political role. She was unorthodox and undignified, ruthless and pragmatic, cruel and skilfully unscrupulous. The description of her which terms her "licentious but orderly [in administration]" (yin erh pu-luan) in juxtaposition to the Han Empress Lü, has become

proverbial.

A second difficulty lies in the fact that extant sources are concerned almost exclusively with the events and conflicts at court and usually deal only with the ruler and the highest echelons of the bureaucracy. The lower levels of officialdom, provincial administration and the extremely important class of office-holders termed those "outside the current" (liu-wai) are dealt with only indirectly, and the historian must rely on surmisal, later sources, and occasionally the evidence of Tunhuang.[1] The comparatively high degree of centralization in the seventh century, however, makes the problem less serious than in the period following the rebellion of An Lu-shan, and the early T'ang, moreover, was characterized by a phenomenon known as chung-nei ch'ing-wai, "value the centre and esteem lightly the provinces."[2] This meant that the majority both of talented and ambitious men were active at the capital, and that it was there that important political events occurred.

Within the governing class of pre-modern China the conventional conflict perceived by historians has been that between the "inner" (nei) and the "outer" (wai): that is, between the imperial and consort clans, their eunuchs and favourites on the one hand, and the bureaucracy on the other. Throughout history, the ascendancy of a woman had been accompanied almost always by the rise of her family, the wai-ch'i, and by eunuch power. But under the Empress Wu, the

pattern was broken. Never did a eunuch exercise any discernible political influence, and never did any member of the Wu clan advance beyond the status of a tool in such specific policies as the suppression of the upper bureaucracy or the confusion of the succession.[3] Even the military power held by male clan members was minimal,[4] especially in comparison with Empress Lü who came before and set the pattern, and with Empress Wei who later prepared for her attempted coup by first placing as much military force as possible in wai-ch'i hands.

It is therefore one of the most remarkable aspects of Empress Wu's career, that what she did, she did with only minimal aid from her family. There are a number of reasons for this, some of which we have looked at in our discussion of her legitimation. Even more basic, perhaps, is the dislike she conceived for her half-brothers after her father's death with the result that she had them disgraced or destroyed between 666-670. Of the survivors, her nephews Wu Ch'eng-ssu and San-ssu, the sons of Yüan-shuang and Yüan-ch'ing respectively, were summoned to the capital in 674, but were kept out of politics until after Chung-tsung's deposition. As we shall see, both of them eventually reached tsai-hsiang status but held it for a relatively short period of time and principally as a counterweight to such competent and assertive ministers as Ti Jen-chieh.[5] Even the feoffs of maintenance (shih-shih feng) awarded to the Wu clan in the Chou, although

a source of criticism by historians, were not excessive in the context of the times and the real abuse of the privilege belongs to the next reigns.[6] The Empress is said once to have remarked that she desired at all times to have one member of her clan as chief-minister at all times,[7] but it is significant that she was speaking at the time to a maternal relative, and that the Yang's and other relatives-by-marriage were as prominent in her period of power as were the Wu's. Neither, however, became dominant either in the political or military spheres and of no male ruler in the T'ang prior to An Lu-shan's rebellion could the same be said.

The Empress Wu did, however, have a series of favourites whom she used for specific purposes. The best-known of these are Chou Hsing and Lai Chün-ch'en who presided over the terror, Hsüeh Huai-i who was responsible not only for the architecture of the Ming-t'ang and the commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra but served also as a general, and finally the Chang brothers, whose role seems to have been that of friends and confidants of the Empress and whose political interventions were the immediate cause of her deposition.[8] In each case, these men were given enormous power, but in nature, it was chiefly the power of invulnerability, to be answerable to the Empress alone, and not the power to venture into the realm of administrative policy-making. Their effects were felt chiefly in the determined absolutism of the Empress as she used them to counter-balance and dilute the

influence of more talented officials. As a result, they shared in the political success of the Empress.

Was the Empress a success? As we earlier suggested, the majority of traditional historians have said "no", and have cited her massacres along with the decline of Confucian "virtue", the demoralization of a bureaucracy marked by excessive appointment and poor quality, and China's weakness vis-à-vis the barbarians in the Chou, as indices of her failure. The fact remains, however, that she became emperor in a China where it was impossible to do so, and even traditional historiography praises her ability as ruler "to accept remonstrance and know men".[9] More than this, the internal peace and prosperity which marked her reign, and her contributions to the bureaucratization of the great clans, to the development of Buddhism, and as we shall see, to the examination system, are matters of historical record. For the modern scholar, however, these facts are not enough, and must be seen in the context of teleological questions. What precisely were the motivations and the political aims of the Empress, and what factors contributed to their achievement?

The tasks she set for herself were simple yet visionary. First of all, she wanted to see her husband's dynasty consolidated, and in a more general sense, to make a harmonious state, permanently united under a strong central power whose sole, free, and acknowledged head was the emperor. Secondly, and closely related to this, she sought to change

the relationship between ruler and minister, or perhaps more accurately, to create a new type of official who would interact in a specific way with an imperial institution of which she had already a clear definition. If not unique in her time, it was at least a definition in contrast to that of T'ai-tsung, and making it a reality was the mainspring of much of her political policy. Without the support of Kao-tsung, who seems early to have been persuaded to her view, she could have achieved little, and the policy of reducing the tsai-hsiang prerogatives perhaps owes as much to him as to her. However, in the principal focus of this chapter, the development of the examination system, and judging from the form taken both by the curriculum and the process, the hand of the Empress is more easily discernible than that of her husband. We shall therefore speak of the examination policies as hers, bearing in mind of course, that Kao-tsung offered both acquiescence and the legitimation for enforcement, if not the initiative.

The preceding chapter has attempted to show the success of Kao-tsung's early policies to make status dependent on service to the T'ang, to bureaucratize the great clans, especially the exclusivistic northeastern aristocracy. It has suggested further, the new problem which arose partially from the solution to the old. This is to say that the new bureaucracy, especially in its highest echelons was infused with ambition, competence and the kind of self-confidence

which arose from knowledge that its members possessed not only high birth but talent demonstrated either by examination or service. These officials had demands to make on the ruler and ways to weaken his prerogative, and the representatives of their claims were the tsai-hsiang, officials above the third rank and of designated status.[10] Since the reign of T'ai-tsung, the group had been growing in strength until by the 650's, it was able to justify the ancient claim that "no matter of state lay beyond their scope".[11] It had of course been the tsai-hsiang acting as a group who had almost succeeded in blocking the elevation of the Empress Wu, and we have seen how, with her husband's collusion, she succeeded rapidly in destroying the men involved. This had resulted in the intimidation of the group and their replacement with more amenable officials like Hsü Ching-tsung and Li I-fu, but the early opposition of the tsai-hsiang and the attempt in 664 by another of them, Shang-kuan I, to bring about her deposition, were things the rulers seem never to have forgotten.

In politics, a major concern therefore became the definition of relations between emperor and minister, and with her customary thoroughness, the Empress turned first to the examination system. For the next few decades, the imperial view of the institution seems to have been more that it was a tool to achieve certain political and social ends, than a method of choosing the best men to govern the state.

The first indication of concern with selection appears

in 657. In that year, the vice-president of the Chancellery, Liu Hsiang-tao submitted a comprehensive, seven-part critique of the appointment process[12] perhaps inspired by the fact that the notoriously corrupt Li I-fu had recently been given charge of the Board of Civil Office,[13] and was already selling posts on a large scale. At the same time, Liu identifies a number of more generalized faults in the system, and because his criticisms were to be echoed throughout the next decades, it is useful to present them here in a fairly full way.

His first concern was a dual one: that too many appointments were being made and that too high a proportion were men of insufficient qualification. Elaborating on this, he pointed out that less than a third of present appointees were examination graduates while the rest were recruited from minor governmental servants, clerical employees or guards, whom he refers to as the tsa-se-jen or hsü-t'u.[14] There was no reason, he thought, to assume that these men were of virtuous character, and one of the reasons that punishments still existed in the state was that they were so numerous in the administration. His solution was the division of the qualified tsa-se-jen into four groups on the basis of their talents and character, with the best being attached to the Board of Civil Office, the next to the Board of War, and so on. Those who had once committed either a private or public crime should be re-examined, and unless amnestied, should receive no appointment. These measures, he believed, would

purify the bureaucracy and inspire the hsü-t'u to a realization that competence and character were the criteria for appointment.

His second point was closely related to the first. Suggesting that the former practice whereby men "entered the current" of regular bureaucratic appointment only when vacant positions occurred was now disregarded, he pointed out that there existed at the time 13,465 officials "within the current".[15] Considering that the average bureaucratic career was about thirty years in length, he calculated that the appointment of 500 persons per year would be more than sufficient to keep the bureaucracy at a constant level. Yet, the Board of Civil Office at the time was making over 1,400 new appointments a year, and as officials returned from the frontier to find positions in the capital, the numbers were further swollen. This policy, he believed, was short-sighted and dangerous.

Liu's next three points concerned education and examination. Requesting first of all that two-thirds of all appointments within the current be allotted to holders of the ming-ching or chin-shih degrees, he asked also that greater consideration be given to students in the three state schools in appointment and promotion. His point here seems to have been that while the great expansion of Confucian education was highly beneficial to the state, students should have at least equal opportunities for advancement with lower-

ranking officials who currently received promotion even beyond the statutory limitations as a reward for such relatively small achievements as the suggestion of administrative improvements. He recommended further that the hsiu-tsai examination be re-instated.[16]

Finally, Liu criticized the k'ao system of promotion, suggesting that officials rose too rapidly, with the result that many of them kept one eye constantly on their promotions instead of their present duties and that the common people were less inclined to obey them, knowing that their tenure was likely to be short. He concluded by returning in more specific terms to his first point, criticizing the three departments and the twenty-four offices for selecting and promoting their personnel from "outside the current". Officials of demonstrated classical and literary abilities found it shameful to serve in the same office with these inferior men, and the obvious result was that administrative efficiency was decreased. Liu requested that Kao-tsung have these matters fully discussed and issue a decree to clarify the situation. According to one source, the emperor was willing to act, but "the great ministers (ta-ch'en) shrank from reform",[17] so that nothing was done.

As we shall see, Liu's views came increasingly to characterize the upper bureaucracy, particularly from the 680's when the sole ascendancy of the Empress Wu and her search for support in the lower bureaucracy brought her to

[illegible]ivism and Confucian virtue which Liu so [illegible] as necessary attributes of officialdom. Bureaucratic opposition in 657 is more difficult to account for, though the fact that only a small proportion of existing ministers possessed an examination degree, may have been a factor in their reluctance to see the implementation of Liu's proposals.[18] Rapidity of promotion was popular at all levels of officialdom except the very top, and an even more important factor working against change was the existence in the present system of opportunities for influential ministers to build a clientele by appointing friends and relatives from outside the current. For rulers who aspired to a greater absolutism this privilege was a dangerous one, and its possible abuse was undoubtedly one of the reasons Kao-tsung and the Empress turned increasingly to examination as a means of bureaucratic appointment.

To understand this development we must realize first of all, that the T'ang offered technically five means of entry into the nine-ranks of the regular bureaucracy. Of these, the three which accounted for the overwhelming majority of office-holders were promotion from outside the current, possession of hereditary privilege (yin), and success in one of the examinations.[19] Although examination graduates probably accounted for no more than a tenth of T'ang officialdom, they became increasingly prominent in the highest ranks of government, and we find that by the Chou dynasty, for

instance, almost forty per-cent of the tsai-hsiang were graduates of the system, compared with only one of Kao-tsu's fourteen chief ministers and four of T'ai-tsung's twenty-one.[20] It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in the period under discussion at least, examination was becoming an increasingly-favoured path to high office,[21] and because we wish to suggest that this was the result of imperial encouragement and that examination was the single method of recruitment which claimed the special attention of the Empress Wu, we propose to explore in detail the changes in the system.

The mechanics of T'ang examinations are already well-known through the translations of M. Robert des Rotours,[22] but unfortunately, the primary source of his research, the examination treatise of the Hsin T'ang-shu, omits many of the contributions of the Empress to the development of the system.[23] As it existed from 622,[24] the T'ang system consisted of examinations held only at the capital, and divided into three stages. The first of these was the chü[25] which by 657 had come to consist of two main exams, the literary chin-shih and the classical ming-ching, as well as more specialized and less highly-esteemed examinations in mathematics, law, history and calligraphy. These were held on a regular basis and were supplemented by irregular "decree exams" (chih-chü) on specific themes set by the ruler.[26] Success in the chü gave the candidate an eighth or ninth rank "within

the current", with no post nor salary, but the right to apply for the second stage, the hsüan.

The hsüan or selection for a specific post was mandatory for those whose basic rank (san-kuan) was lower than five,[27] and consisted of examination by the Three Selectors (san-ch'üan), usually the president and two vice-presidents of the Board of Civil Office.[28] Under the procedure finalized in 669, the Candidate presented a curriculum (hsüan-chieh), and was then tested on his calligraphy (shu), his judgment of a hypothetical case (p'an), his physical appearance (shen), and his manner of speech (yen).[29] If he were successful, there were three further criteria (san-lei): virtuous conduct (te-hsing), [administrative] ability (tsai), and diligence (lao). In this process, it might be noted that the selectors enjoyed wide powers of discretion. A provisional nomination (ch'ang) was then posted with the candidate having the option of up to three refusals, and a final list (chia) was then submitted to the Chancellery for verification, approval and submission to the emperor. When the appointments were announced, the new official received a tally (fu) and a patent of appointment (kao-shen).[30]

The third stage of the system, the k'ao,[31] was an evaluation of performance for the purposes of promotion. Details of its workings are scarce, but it seems that a report on the administration of each official was submitted annually to the Board of Civil Office which in turn distributed

them to the office concerned. All officials were ranked in one of nine categories, and the rankings technically were to be discussed and revised by a committee with representatives from the Three Departments before they were recorded, conveyed to the emperor, and made public. The ranking was made on a complicated system of "good qualities" (shan) and "perfections" (tsui) and a high score meant an increase of rank and/or salary. A low score meant fine or demotion. It was a complicated and time-consuming process, and since the major responsibility rested with a handful of men within the Board of Civil Office,[32] it could never have been too effectively administered. Two of the few extant descriptions of actual cases in the period suggest laxity of enforcement.[33]

From the preceding summary, two points of great importance emerge. Firstly, the chü and hsüan were different in nature. The chü at its most basic level may be seen as an expression of the pristine purpose of the exams--the recruitment of the most able men into the ruling group. The hsüan, which only appeared in 628 in the T'ang,[34] served as a control, increasingly becoming a means to ensure that unsuitable or socially undesirable men did not hold high posts. Secondly, as office came more and more to be the determinant of status, the desirability of a degree made the examinations an ideal mechanism through which to exercise state control. The curriculum of the chü, for instance, could determine the values and attitudes of much of the bureaucracy while the

criteria for success in the hsüan could control its size and composition, and predict its internal tensions.

The Empress Wu, as we have seen, came to power when the system was still in a formative stage. No major modification had occurred since 628, and neither hsüan nor chü would take their final forms until the years 669 and 681 respectively. Several issues, some of them raised by Liu Hsiang-tao, remained unresolved. How could ability best be measured, and should it take precedence over "suitability"? If the hsüan in particular were to be seen as a means of state control, who represented the state, the ruler or his ministers? And who defined suitability? The Empress had answers to these questions and though she unfolded them in stages, they might have been apparent from her opening move. In 659, a ceremony was held at the palace to honour nine hundred men successful in the chü, and after a quiz on current affairs, the top five were assigned to prestigious special positions.[35] The examination system thus became at a stroke, the approved form of entry into the civil service.

The year 659, it will be recalled, was also the year of the Hsing-shih lu and the second of the T'ang marriage bans. Bureaucratization of the great clans, especially those in the northeast, was the political priority and it is to this end that initial recruitment policies were directed. Thus, in the same month as the ceremony held for examination graduates, control of the Board of Civil Office was taken

from the hands of Kuanchung aristocrats like T'ang Lin and Liu Hsing-tao,[36] and the presidency was granted to Li I-fu who claimed membership in the Shantung aristocracy. For the next three years, he exercised control over the hsüan, and his extraordinarily close identification with the Empress is additional confirmation that she was more concerned with bureaucratic appointment than was her husband.

Although Li I-fu was more noted for corruption than for competence, his appointment was necessary from the point of view of the rulers since the Board of Civil Office had been in the hands of northwestern aristocrats since the beginning of the dynasty. Of the five holders of the top offices under Kao-tsu, for instance, all were from this group.[37] Their influence from the beginning was great since at the time there were too few officials to fill the posts. and appointments were made on the basis of tallies (fu) sent directly to the prefectures designating those who should come to the capital for appointment.[38] With the creation of the hsüan in 628, this practice ended but by that time entrenchment had occurred within the Board. Under T'ai-tsung the only important officeholder not born into the group was Ma Chou, and his appointment came in 645 after he had formed a close relationship with it both through his career and his marriage.[39] The other incumbents of the Board during the period included such celebrated clans as Ch'ang-sun, Liu, Tai , and Wei, whose surnames were all numbered among the

pre-eminent of the northwest.[40] Their monopoly, as we have seen, continued into Kao-tsung's reign.

As a group, they had more in common than their regional and social origins. In the years prior to 659, and counting only the twenty-five men who served as president or vice-president, more than half were related to each other either by blood or by marriage.[41] They seem, moreover, to have shared a certain exclusivist consciousness, with Wei T'ing for example, scornfully incredulous that Ma Chou had reached such high posts in spite of his mean birth.[42] An interest or expertise in status and genealogy may also have been common since the two men chosen by T'ai-tsung to head the compilation of the Shih-tsu chih were plucked directly from their positions in the Board of Civil Office.[43] The collective influence of Board members on the government must also have been great since over forty per-cent enjoyed tsai-hsiang status concurrent with their selection duties, and of these, most were connected with the Chancellery whose role in the selection process was greater than that of the other Departments.[44] Their biographies suggest that some were responsible for the recruitment of thousands to the civil service and that the opportunities for the building of personal bases of support were not neglected. It was probably these men who aborted the reforms suggested by Liu Hsiang-tao in 657. It is worth noting, finally, that only three men who held the top positions in the Board prior to 659 had themselves

taken examinations.[45]

When Li I-fu became president in 659, he was already notorious for the selling of posts, and although his tenure seems to have served the purpose of bringing more northeasterners to the capital,[46] his conduct in office did not change. In 663, he was tried for gross peculation with many members of his family, and sentenced to distant exile (ch'ang liu) from which he never returned.[47] Liu Hsiang-tao, who had been Li I-fu's judge, replaced him as president of the Board, and of the six presidents and vice presidents between that time and 669, three were from Shantung, two of them representatives of the great aristocracy.[48]

In the decade following 659, it seems likely that the Empress believed she had succeeded in achieving the social and regional purposes which had been her first priority in the reform of the recruitment system since in 669, she moved to the second stage. This consisted of systematizing the hsüan, and the man placed in charge was P'ei Hsing-chien.[49] The scion of one of the eminent Shansi clans, P'ei had qualified by yin to enter the state university, had passed the ming-ching examination, and had seemed assured of a brilliant career until his opposition to the elevation of Empress Wu sent him in disfavour to the borders. His administration in the An-hsi Protectorate had established that he was a man of unusual talent and he was recalled to the capital where he became vice-president of the Board of Civil Office, probably

had become an instrument of pre-selection and bias: "when the long list was posted, all knew who would be chosen".[56] Family background was therefore almost certainly a formal consideration in the hsüan and this is wholly consistent with the evolution of the institution and with the spirit of the other provisions of the reform.

The re-organization of 669 was in many respects an affirmation of the status quo, in no sense designed to open the road to advancement to the lower orders. It seems designed rather to bar from office all but those with some prior bureaucratic connection, and it is important to notice that the early prohibition against the candidacy of merchants, artisans, and other despised professions as well as relatives of felons, remained in force.[57] The existing élite--relatives of the imperial clan, possessors of the yin privilege, some holders of honorific rank (hsün-kuan) and members of their immediate family, as well as graduates of the state "universities" remained eligible for the hsüan without prior examination.[58] At the same time, all candidates needed an introduction from a local official, and the signatures of five capital officials as guarantors (pao). One of these was to have personal knowledge of the candidate.[59] In the interview, only those "tall and handsome", whose speech was "judicious and precise", were to be chosen,[60] so that a man of rustic background would have little chance. And finally, the categories of "virtuous conduct", "talent", and "diligence" were

nebulous enough to give the Three Selectors a virtual power of veto. The Board of Civil Office thus retained control of appointment to officialdom.

The Empress Wu must have approved of these measures, for not only did Kao-tsung ratify them, but he left their authors in command of the Board for the next seven years.[61] This is an inconvenient fact for those many scholars who wish to see the Empress fostering a "new class" through the examination system. Their view, of course, gains validity from the 680's onward, but the provisions of 669 should be seen in the context of their time and as measures consistent with her aims and methods. As we have earlier noted, she worked in stages, and the immediate task was to confer prestige upon bureaucratic service and examination as a means of entry. After the ad hoc recruitment methods by which the early T'ang had tried to cope with the shortage of officials and which, by 657, had produced a bureaucracy of very mixed origins, this was crucial. There is ample evidence throughout the century to show that those with social pretensions were reluctant to serve in office with their inferiors.[62] The Empress was conscious of this. As we suggested earlier, she held no enlightened egalitarian views and what is even more important, she had at her disposal a large pool of prospective officials with respectable shih lineages. Only one source notices a decree from the end of 669 which also facilitated the entry to regular officialdom of clerks and minor functionaries in

certain Boards.[63]

The immediate effect of the reform, according to the New T'ang History, was that "from that time those who sought official posts became extremely numerous".[64] The immediate addition of a second vice-president charged specifically with the examination function is one reflection of this and the Board personnel were subsequently to be increased throughout the century.[65] The settling of the hsüan also enabled the Empress to turn her attention to the chü, and from 669, her efforts were devoted to fastening the examination habit on the country. In the next few years, for instance, the centres and opportunities for examination were extended even to the most distant prefectures of the south, special honours like the ta-ch'eng were granted to top graduates, and in 670 a decree was issued to restore the schools and Confucian temples in the countryside.[66] Decree examinations began to occur with greater frequency than before.[67]

Literary evidence will shortly be introduced to show the rapidity of response to the growing imperial patronage of the chü, but it is useful here to introduce the sole statistical source for successful examination candidates in the T'ang. This is Hsü Sung's Teng-k'o chi k'ao, a Ch'ing work based upon a listing in the Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao.[68] As a source, it has been shown to be unreliable in some respects, but there seems to be general agreement that the figures given for chin-shih graduates are accurate.[69] If so, the year 669

appears to have been something of a dividing line. From 664-668 an average of nine men passed each year. In the years 670-74, when the examinations were held only three times, the average was thirty-eight! And if Kao-tsung's reign is divided at 669, we find that prior to that year, the average number of successful candidates was fourteen. After 669, the corresponding figure was forty-eight.[70]

From these figures it seems safe to conclude that during the 670's, examination was gradually becoming the preferred form of entrance into the civil service, at least for those who aspired to the highest ranks. Needless to say, there was resistance. In 674, a memorial complained of the increasing reliance upon literary ability in selection and the frequency of cheating among candidates, going on to say:

> . . . When the Board of Rites [sic.] chooses officials, it relies solely upon literary ability in ranking [the candidates] and thus the shih of the Empire all disregard virtuous conduct and hasten to [practise] the literary arts. There are those who pass an exam in the morning and at night face criminal charges. Although they recite 10,000 words in a [single] day, what relation does this have to governing the state? . . .[71]

In 678, Wei Yüan-chung, a student at one of the state universities, commented on the reasons for recent defeats by the Tibetans, suggesting that

> The important [things] in governing a state are both civil and military. Now those who speak of civil [virtue] consider elegant expression to be first [in importance] and do not attain to moral principles (ching-lun). Those who speak of the military emphasize horsemanship and archery, not strategy and tactics. . . .[72]

Even within the Board of Civil Office there seems to

have been some dissatisfaction, and two years later, an auxiliary secretary, Liu Ssu-li,[73] submitted an extremely important memorial which provided the immediate impulse for change. In it he stated that

> . . . Most [examination candidates] in the ming-ching do no more than copy out fragments on the general meaning [of the classics], and chin-shih candidates only reproduce by rote former dissertations in answer to the questions (ts'e). They are without real talent and the officials concerned [with marking them] accept them without taking into account anything but the number [of candidates] to accept. . . .[74]

These different perspectives of the critics must have represented a wider spectrum of discontent, for the New T'ang History speaks in graphic terms of numerous other abuses current both in chü and hsüan during the period--forgery of fu and kao-shen, impersonation, and rustic unknowns finding guarantors at the capital. It tells how some candidates on the examination day were aided by others inside or outside the halls, and how they often paid someone else to write the examination for them.[75] Partly as a result of corruption, men became qualified for positions which simply were not available, and sometimes waited months or even years for a posting.[76]

To what extent this situation reflects any conscious policy on the part of the Empress is difficult to say. P'ei Hsing-chien and Li Ching-hsüan who were in charge of recruitment through most of the period, were both noted for their enthusiasm in recruiting.[77] The Empress herself, ever since

Kao-tsung had attempted to abdicate in her favour in 675, was bearing an ever greater burden of government, beginning a virtual regency in 675 under the cloud of tacit accusations that she had poisoned Crown Prince Hung. The failure of the ch'ien-feng coinage was obvious by the 670's and to the embryonic economic difficulties this caused, were added the foreign policy reverses which as we shall see, began late in the decade. For these reasons, the examination system could not claim her whole attention. On the other hand, since she was anxious to promote the desirability of examinations, she may have seen laxity of selection as an advantage, and so permitted its continuation. By 681, however, it appears that the effects of corruption were destroying respect for the system, and this she could not permit. Thus in that year, and principally in response to Liu Ssu-li's memorial, the form of the major exams was settled, and there was to be no substantial change until 737.

Since there is some contradiction among the sources, the data describing the reform are presented in tabular form, with the new features of 681 underlined.

Source	Ming-ching	Chin-shih
TTCLC 106: 18ab (dated 681, eighth month)	(a) Successfully respond to 6 out of 10 citations or t'ieh (帖) from the classics.	(a) [Answer citations on one major classic and perhaps others.]
	(b) [Respond orally to 10 questions on the general meaning of the prepared classics? Probably two classics were chosen.]	(b) Write two compositions of different literary forms or tsa-wen (雜文). [These could be, for instance, remonstrances, inscriptions, memorials, or later, poetry.]
	(c) Afterwards, give [3] dissertations in answer to questions on current affairs (策). TTLT 4: 4b indicates that this may have been oral.	(c) Afterwards, write [8] dissertations in answer to questions on current affairs, and on the Tao-te-ching.
HTS 44: 3737:2. [des Rotours, Examens, pp. 152 and 167.]	(a) Same.	(a) Same.
	(b) Same.	(b) Same
	(c) Same.	(c) Only those showing an in-depth knowledge of literary principles (文律) would advance to this stage.
THY 75, pp. 1375-6.	(a) Same	(a) Same.
	(b) Same.	(b) Same.
	(c) Same.	(c) Must have knowledge of literary principles before proceeding.
TT 15, p. 83a.	(a) Same.	(a) Same.
	(b) Same.	(b) Same.
	(c) Same.	(c) Same as above.

Source	Ming-ching	Chin-shih
T'ang Che-yen I, p. 9.	(a) Unmentioned	(a) Reform incorrectly dated and Liu Ssu-li incorrectly identified (b) Those of great literary talent should proceed (文文高者入策). Suggests that the candidate needed to write only one dissertation until 685, when three were required.
CTS 190 chung: 3582: 2.	(a) Reports that Liu Ssu-li was responsible for adding to the number of citations.	(a) Reports that Liu's request added tsa-wen to the chin-shih.

Notes: (i) For the classics on the curriculum for each exam, and the categories into which they were divided, see des Rotours, Examens, pp. 136-38; 142, n. 3; and 147, n. 1.

(ii) The exact number of citations and dissertations varies largely in the different texts, and none of the above are specific as to the number in 681. The number of citations differed as to the number and length of the classics chosen for presentation by the candidate, and in the chin-shih, no source offers a clue to the number at this time. After 737, it was necessary to answer 4 out of 10. In the matter of dissertations, the chin-shih had 5 at the beginning of the dynasty, and in 675, 3 more were added on Lao-tzu. In 737, the Tao-te ching was moved to the t'ieh section. TTLT 4: 4b-5b, is the most complete description of this aspect of the system prior to 737 for both ming-ching and chin-shih. The HTS reproduction of it is faulty.

(iii) In 634, the chin-shih also required a memorized oral recitation (or reading?) (頌) from the classics or histories, and judging by Liu Hsiao's memorial of 674 (note 80), this may still have been in force.

The reforms of 681 are best regarded as a response both to the growing popularity and confusion of the chü and to the ease with which a degree was won. They are, moreover, not entirely a response to criticism for if anything, literary ability became even more necessary. Rather, they express what seems to be an imperial awareness that the time was now ripe to use the examinations to create a particular type of official. The addition of the Tao-te ching to the curriculum in 675, a measure noted earlier, was an obvious first step, and the form given the two major exams in 681 was the second.

In specific terms, the chin-shih now became the most prestigious and desirable of degrees. Hu San-hsing, remarking on the situation in the ninth century, was to say: "In the T'ang, the chin-shih was highly valued while the ming-ching was scorned. A proverb said that while the fragrance of incense celebrated the chin-shih, a screen was erected for the ming-ching."[78]

His view is borne out by numerous anecdotes and contemporary observations from the 680's onward,[79] and it must therefore be understood that the renown which the chin-shih came to enjoy was the creation of the Empress Wu. In the early part of the dynasty, it was the hsiu-tsai whose difficulty led to its abolition in 651,[80] and after 658, the "decree" examination, which seem to have monopolized prestige, and even the ming-ching was considered by the throne to be a more formidable achievement.[81] Judging by the number of

tsai-hsiang who had chosen the ming-ching over the chin-shih prior to 705, the former seems early to have been as important a qualification for high office as the latter.[82] By the reign of Hsüan-tsung, however, only three of his twenty-six tsai-hsiang had opted for the ming-ching, and since almost all of them made their choice of examination after 681, the change in preference was a rapid one.[83]

A number of factors account for the comparative popularity of the chin-shih, most of them stemming from the 681 reform. The exam was now the more difficult of the two, requiring both classical knowledge and literary skill, and before long was marked by a success rate of one to ten compared with the ming-ching.[84] It became an exam, moreover, calculated to appeal to a somewhat lower stratum of the shih class than the ming-ching since the classical training required was less rigorous and therefore less costly, and because scope for corruption and favouritism was much reduced in the chin-shih. The reason for this is that as we have shown, the Board of Civil Office was the preserve of the great aristocracy and in the second and oral stage of the ming-ching, subjective factors were all-important.[85] Finally, the role of imperial patronage was crucial.

The Empress Wu, as we know, was deeply and sincerely devoted to literature. From the appearance of the Northgate Scholars around 666, her closest associates if not particularly distinguished for political talent, all had literary

ability and in the course of her career, she was to turn her hand to most literary genres.[86] Many of her extant edicts reflect the contemporary belief that "the ancient dynasties chose officials for their literary ability (wen), since the origin of [good] literature is conduct (hsing), and conduct is known through words. . . ."[87] Thus, in the tsa-wen section of the chin-shih, she held out the promise of due and lavish reward for those of literary talent, and since the ming-ching required only a "rough command of literary principles" (tsu yu wen-li),[88] it became much less attractive in comparison.

A more cynical interpretation of the Empress' motivation is also possible in the fact that the two exams produced different types of officials. Since both her present role and that which she was destined to play shattered precedent, the de-emphasis of the Confucian classics in the chin-shih could only be an advantage. For a ruler ambitious to be absolute, any division within the upper bureaucracy was to be exploited, and in this, the prestige of the chin-shih relative to other degrees could be a useful instrument.[89]

Finally, we might notice that the chin-shih examination in 681 became pre-eminently a test of literary ability,[90] and as numerous contempories noticed, it produced an official who was articulate and facile, elegant and competent in language, versatile but somehow superficial and lacking in the self-confidence which might arise from a sense of personal

worthiness. The old values of virtue, integrity and right-conduct which theoretically gave the chün-tzu the right to participate in the process of rule were passing, or rather were being surrendered. And in their surrender was the tacit admission that it was the ruler who set the standards by which he would judge his aides. Office, status, and self-image under the Empress Wu came to depend upon an institution which existed through imperial patronage and suffrance and as a result, the relationship between ruler and minister began a transformation which would end in what some scholars term the "Sung despotism". When the Empress wrote her two-volume "Model for a Minister" (Ch'en-kuei) and in 693 made it part of the examination curriculum,[91] she was only carrying the process to its logical conclusion.

There were, as we have said, a number of officials who recognized what was happening and had the courage to speak. Among them was Wei Yüan-t'ung, a chin-shih graduate and in 685, vice-president of the Board of Civil Office.[92] His memorial that year was basically a criticism of the Board of Civil Office and its selection practices, and in providing documentary evidence of the results of recent examination policy, he also isolated the root causes of what he saw as the problems. His critique begins with short history of the recruitment policies of early dynasties, recognizing the novelty of the examination system and characterizing their literary emphasis as "the modern way of power [politics]"

(chin-tai chih ch'üan-tao). He goes on to suggest the inadequacies of the Board of Civil Office, pointing particularly to the restricted number of personnel who had sole charge of a task of great magnitude and importance, and to the ease with which the Board was intimidated by men of influence to appoint their protégés, so that in effect, the state was "buying stolen goods from thieves". He went on to speak of the desirability of office and the plethora of candidates so that even though a thousand chu-se "entered the current" each year, the shortage of vacancies meant that only one in ten actually received an appointment. And so confused was the system that "stones were not divided from jewels": those who did gain office were not always chosen for the right reasons.

His solution to the problem was to return to some degree to earlier practices whereby the task of selection was shared widely among high-ranking officials who knew the characters and talents of their subordinates, while only the top officials were appointed by imperial order (wang-ming). Although Wei avoids the use of the term, he was actually advocating the restoration of the p'i-chao system referred to earlier.[93]

Broadening his argument, he spoke of the necessity of learning (hsüeh) for one who would be an official. Again, the ancient practice whereby young men were schooled in the "six proprieties" and "seven teachings"[94] before entering officialdom was superior to the present way whereby the sons

of the wealthy and influential received posts even before reaching the age of twenty and in most cases were unprepared by education or character-training for their responsibilities. The whole system of education suffered from the fact that these appointments were so lightly made. Moreover, said Wei, appointments from "outside the current" and particularly from the holders of honorific rank (hsün-kuan) and the Guards (san-wei), were not made by their local superiors but by a test of their calligraphy and judgments (shu-p'an).[95] Again this meant that virtue and conduct were denigrated. Even the process of recommendation was badly handled since it was not only officials above the third rank who were so frequently given the privilege, but all officials "within the current", and since the ruler showed little concern with the process, the recommendations were made randomly and excessively. Wei concluded by calling for a division of the selection powers of the Board of Civil Office and a return to the recruitment system of the Chou and the Han.[96]

This memorial, whose sentiments were soon to be echoed by those of other critics like Ch'en Tzu-ang,[97] is an interesting one on several grounds. We find, for instance, that several of the problems isolated thirty years earlier by Liu Hsiang-tao had remained unsolved, and at the same time, that the reforms of 669 and 681 had not been wholly successful in producing the ends for which they were designed. This memorial, moreover, is one of the clearest statements we have

which argues against seeing the examinations as a mechanism of social mobility for the lower orders. The wealthy and influential continued to manipulate the selection process for their own advantage, and birth, Wei indicates, was still of greater importance than talent in gaining office. His perceptions, however, go even deeper than this, for he makes the crucial connection between the form of the examinations and the "modern way of power politics". In this statement lies a recognition that when literary ability was emphasized over virtue and conduct, the self-image and self-respect of the official were under attack, that he was regarded as an instrument or tool of the ruler, rather than as a rightful and deserving aide in government.

His memorial, however, was not well-timed and it elicited no response. The Empress Wu had just deposed Chung-tsung and was ruling through the ineffectual Jui-tsung, attempting at the same time, of course, to bolster her own legitimation. She was not interested therefore in placing barriers on the road to office, and was even less desirous of producing officials of strong character whose "virtue" might lead them to oppose her unorthodox role in government. As we have seen, from 684 onward, she was moving in fact to facilitate bureaucratic entry and accelerate promotion, and more than this, she continued to patronize examination as the favoured path to high office. In 689, she demonstrated publicly what the role of examination was to be in the dynasty

she was soon to declare when "she examined the candidates [herself] at the Lo-yang palace and after [questioning them] several days, she dismissed them [since none met her standards]".[98] In this event are to be found the origins of the famous Palace Examinations (tien-shih) of later centuries, though for the Empress it was simply the capstone of her long policy of conferring prestige upon the system.[99]

The Chou dynasty was to see continued rapid development in the popularity of examination, and in 691, a memorial which again complained of the emphasis on literary ability in selection, graphically told of how at examination time the candidates

> . . . swarm to the [gates of the] offices [in charge]. They request to visit the powerful and wealthy to display their poems, memorials and [other] writings, seeking the benefits of [being able to use] fine words. Packed together, they hope for the favour of support. Therefore people commonly speak of the candidates as mi-chü. The term 'mi' means 'self-seeking' (tzu-ch'iu). . .[100]

The author went on to suggest a greater measure of practicality in the exams, the replacement of "fancy and empty verbiage" by the discussion of practical policies. He suggested further that before permanent appointments were made, candidates hold provisional office for a period so that the selection officials would have time to assess their performance.

The Empress is said specifically to have rejected these suggestions but as we have seen, she was much concerned in the period to bolster her personal support, and if as

seems to be the case, the examinations were still being manipulated by "the powerful and wealthy", her attempts to win popularity among the lower stratum of the shih who were the chief beneficiaries of her examination policy,[101] would be frustrated. It was for this reason that she made another historic innovation, the introduction of the principle of anonymity (hu-ming) into the exams.[102] Although she was forced to abolish the usage in 695,[103] the precedent had been set for later rulers.

The Chou dynasty saw other measures designed to rationalize and extend the examination principle, the most notable of which was the inauguration of the military exam (wu-hsüan) in 702.[104] Criticism continued but it is of great significance that its form now was changed. No longer was the principle itself questioned. Instead, men attacked the failures in administering the system, focussing most often on the various irregular forms of appointment and promotion which the Empress used to supplement it and which resulted in the well-known abuse of the "supernumerary officials" (lan-kuan). Typical of this sort of criticism was a 695 memorial from Wei Ssu-li[105] in which he lamented the decline of classical education arising, he believed, from the fact that appointment to office had come to be based upon carelessness and corruption within the system, upon what he termed "lucky chance" (chiao-hsing). It was still those of the great houses (kuei-men) who obtained positions, and often without examina-

tion or even prior study, so that officialdom, particularly at the local levels, was not only becoming increasingly mediocre, but harsh and self-seeking. He advocated a thoroughgoing reform in education along with a tightening of recruitment procedures.

Implicit in his memorial, of course, is a lingering feeling that character and virtue were too little regarded in appointment, but the greater issue was what was happening to the bureaucracy itself. In a subsequent remonstrance,[106] he made this clear, pointing out that both bureaucratic entry and promotion were carried out in a most careless fashion with the natural result that officials and would-be officials competed against each other and curried favour in a most unseemly fashion. There were no longer enough posts to absorb the overflowing appointments and the establishment of auxiliary or supernumerary (yüan-wai) positions which far outnumbered the regular ones, had failed to solve the problem. Officials were in an uproar as they waited for lengthy periods to receive their appointments, and the revenues of the state were being exhausted for their upkeep. Although Wei Ssu-li was in this case speaking of the situation in 709, he was describing the outcome of the policies of Wu Tse-t'ien.

In short, the Empress Wu had in the space of only a few decades, brought about a significant change in officialdom. On the surface, the change appears circular rather than lineal, for Wei's fears--careless selection and too many

officials, seem exactly to parallel those of Liu Hsiang-tao in 657. There was, however, a crucial difference. The form taken by the Empress' patronage of examinations had now concentrated in the highest ranks, men who had qualified for office both by examination and by birth, so that in the year of Wei's first memorial, for instance, only four of the twelve tsai-hsiang were exceptions to this rule.[107] This meant that the old division of the bureaucracy at the fifth-rank,[108] had in fact hardened under the Empress, and that below it was to be found what we might term in highly-qualified usage, the "newly-rising class"[109] of the later seventh century. And this configuration explains the principal dynamic of the Chou bureaucracy. The upper ranks felt threatened, almost overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of those pressing from below, "unqualified" and "unsuitable" men eager to seize their positions and emoluments. We shall later suggest that the Empress only belatedly realized the existence of this fear, that her attempts to deal with it were ineffective, and that her failure was an important factor in the seeming paradox of 705: the fact that her deposition was the work of officials who owed their own rise to the expanded opportunities she had offered in the examination system.

A complete description of the composition of the lower bureaucracy in this period is very difficult because our sources tend either to be vague or deprecatory in character. Liu Hsiang-tao, it will be recalled, listed a number of posts

in the Departments and the Courts which seemed to have become the preserve of men appointed from "outside the current",[110] and the critics we have thus far mentioned confirm that men of liu-wai origins consistently entered the bureaucracy in great numbers, and perhaps in increasing proportions. Who were these men?

The liu-wai officials, who were often referred to along with an even larger mass of minor governmental employees, by such terms as li, hsü-li, tsa-se-jen, etc., outnumbered officials "inside the current" by at least four or five to one, and were employed both inside and outside the capital in fairly routine clerical or guard positions.[111] At the local level, many of them were appointed directly by the prefect[112] so that the central government had very little control over quality. Certain categories whose responsibilities were greater, as well as those who wished to serve in the capital or possess formal liu-wai status, were compelled after a certain term of office to undergo an examination called the hsiao-hsüan.[113] This exam was administered by a superior secretary (lang-chung) in the Board of Civil Office, and seems not to have been very demanding. After a successful transfer into the current, advancement was possible on the basis of annual merit assessments, though persons who began their career in this way were barred specifically from the so-called "pure" offices[114] and so, were seldom able to reach the fifth-rank without special consideration.

It is difficult to find clues to the social origins of the hsü-li, though one source suggests that under T'ai-tsung they were often chosen from the superior category of household (shang-hu) in each prefecture.[115] Whether or not this remained a consistent policy we cannot be sure, but it seems certain that they were of lower status than most of the central officials in the early T'ang and this would account for the reluctance of the latter to be associated in office with them. We know also that certain offices were reserved for them and that in the Chou, an attempt was made to take away some of these posts and grant them to examination graduates.[116] For some posts, the possession of honorific rank (hsün-kuan) seems to have been a requisite,[117] and this compounded the problem since the bestowal of this privilege was progressively devalued by the Empress Wu.

Honorific office, which was itself considered liu-wai, had originally been granted as a reward for outstanding military service, was limited to nine hundred men, and was considered nominally equivalent to regular offices of high rank with certain privileges like tax and corvée exemption, the right to acquire land, and the right of sons to enter officialdom by hereditary privilege.[118] Its recipients, at least in the early years of the system were from that stratum of society which entered the military, and perhaps the fact that the Hsing-shih lü was christened the Hsün-ko by the aristocracy, suggests a contempt for awards of this sort as early

as 659. Although it is difficult to document the process, evidence from the eighth century would seem to indicate a fairly rapid devaluation of the awards in the late seventh, with lavish conferrals made not only as military activity accelerated, but also for non-military merit and even in return for money payments.[119] By the k'ai-yüan period, the excessive awarding of hsün-kuan was a serious economic problem for the state, but in the seventh century, its significance seems to have lain more in the additional pressures it placed upon the regular bureaucracy, as its recipients or their sons converted the rank to substantive office. One scholar estimates the awards in the seventh century at over 10,000,[120] and since the liu-nei bureaucracy, counting only regular appointments, numbered less than 20,000 even in the eighth century, this pressure was not negligible.

Now in this particular dynamic, as we have attempted to show, the role of the Empress Wu was a critical one. The nature of her search for legitimation was such that she was forced to seek additional bases of support outside the constituency of the higher-level bureaucracy, which continued to be highly aristocratic and Confucian in tone even as examination became more common as a means of entry. Men who began their official careers in the liu-wai bureaucracy were naturally less well-educated and less committed to Confucian strictures against female rule, and particularly because the existing system determined that their career advancement

would be extremely slow,[121] they formed a natural target group in the Empress' search for popularity. We find, therefore, that from the 680's onward, a number of new liu-wai positions were established,[122] and more importantly, that promotion "within the current" seems to have been accelerated. According to Ssu-ma Kuang, the Empress began with the feng-shan sacrifice in 666 to advance officials rapidly within the current on numerous auspicious occasions:

> . . . Prior to this, rank (chieh) was not excessively increased, but awarded by examination of merit (k'ao). [For] advancement to the fifth and to the third rank, [a special procedure of] tsou-ch'ü chin-chih [was followed]. At this time began the practice of excessive award, and in later years the court was thronged with those wearing the purple robes [of high officials]. . . .[123]

Su Mien was to comment in the early ninth century on the "excessive promotions of [imperial] favour" (fan-chieh chih en)[124] in this period, and as we shall see, the historian Liu Chih-chi was to remonstrate frankly about it in the middle of the Chou.

We must bear in mind, however, that complaints of this sort were often exaggerated and represent more accurately a fear of upper-level bureaucrats than a materialized situation. Officials who reached the fifth-rank, after all a group of about 4,000 men, through transfer from liu-wai must have remained very few, and the "pure" offices seem to have remained untainted.[125] The effects of the process seem rather to have been first of all, the growth of widespread support for the Empress in the lower bureaucracy, and secondly, a

strengthening of imperial prerogative as each "promotion of favour" weakened the concept of merit and earned status within officialdom. Within the lower bureaucracy, a good deal of evidence can be adduced to show a certain deterioration of quality and of the idealism of its members.[126] And as these men became increasingly defensive, jealous of their perquisites and ambitious, officials in the clear stream struggled to enforce obstacles to their further rise. The case of Chou Hsing whose early career was hampered because his origins were not of the clear stream is a good example.[127]

His case was not unique, and in the bureaucracy of the Chou and of succeeding periods, intra-bureaucratic strife accelerated and began rapidly to take on characteristics of a different nature from the factionalism of the early T'ang. From the later part of Kao-tsung's reign onward, cohesive groupings among high officials and especially among tsai-hsiang, were often directed against the lower bureaucracy and there are numerous examples of action taken against colleagues whose origins and rise they regarded as unconventional.[128] The tsai-hsiang who had united in 654 against Kao-tsung's choice of the Empress Wu represented perhaps the final assertion in the seventh century of ministerial right to determine the parameters of imperial prerogative. When a parallel situation arose in the Chou over the Empress' designation of a successor, she was able simply to declare it a household matter and to go unchallenged until 698. Even then, the

objection was raised by a single minister, and one whose position in the Empress' trust was unique.[129] As Chapter IX will suggest, her view of selection had been determined consistently by her wider political aims, and in the Chou her attention was to be focused upon the upper bureaucracy as the key group in the achievement of legitimacy. Her attempts to mould them to her purposes, often using the lower bureaucracy as her aides, account for much of the political strife in the period. And the fact remains that by the Chou, the position and the aspirations of the upper bureaucracy had been changed.

To understand this more fully, let us recapitulate some of our earlier findings within the context of developments in the selection system and their ramifications in the more purely political sphere.

The political policy of the Empress unfolded in stages, with the years 654 to 660 devoted chiefly to working out the nuances of her partnership with Kao-tsung, to the elimination of her ministerial enemies and to the weakening of the exclusivistic political control of the remnants of the "Six Garrisons" bloc whose dominance had been so marked both in the Sui and the early T'ang. In 659, she and Kao-tsung put into effect a series of measures designed to complete T'ai-tsung's policy of bringing social status into line with service to the T'ang, and we have suggested, were more successful than he in enticing the aloof aristocracy of the northeast to accept office in the capital. The fact that the Empress Wu

was by that time almost an equal partner in government, and was not a member of the Kuanchung bloc, undoubtedly facilitated the achievement of this aim and an examination of the backgrounds of the tsai-hsiang listed in Appendix One offers empirical evidence that a high degree of success was in fact achieved.

The next decade was devoted to consolidation. A genuine centralization began to take hold, and the rulers felt confident enough of their primary goal, the endurance of the dynasty, to celebrate the great feng-shan sacrifice, to launch their all-out attack on Korea, and to permit the Empress' emergence from behind the screen to an active and open role in politics. In 669, she took the important step of reforming and rationalizing the hsüan, a measure designed not only to fasten more closely the "examination habit" upon the country, but also to create within the existing power structure a greater feeling of security, to reassure its members that no flood of low-born shih would threaten their prerogatives. And the results were largely as anticipated. Applications for examination increased rapidly, and came largely it seems, from a stratum of society not altogether acceptable to the existing elite, so that the reform of the chü in 681 could be justified on the grounds that it combatted this trend. By incorporating a greater degree of difficulty into the exams, it related appointment more closely to the shortage of bureaucratic vacancies. A more genuine

imperial motive, however, was the desire to turn the exams into a bureaucratic control mechanism, and the absence of serious opposition in 681 is something of an accolade to the timing and skill of the Empress' politics.

The death of Kao-tsung and the prospect of a weak successor was a turning point in the sense that the Empress saw her work as incomplete, or at least realized that it could easily be undone. This constitutes the basic explanation for what we have portrayed as the two outstanding political features of the 680's. These were the two processes of bureaucratic change caused by the influx into its lower ranks of officials whose social status was low but whose advancement was rapid, and by the terror, which served almost to decapitate officialdom at the fifth rank. The decade was therefore much more than a preparation for usurpation. It was also the period which saw the severe weakening of the tsai-hsiang and the entire one-tenth of the bureaucracy which made up the "clear stream". Positioned squarely between two pressures, one above and one below, they opted first to defend themselves against those who would replace them, and so mounted no collective action against the terror and were unable to protest in concert against China's sole female usurpation.

This of course constitutes an additional explanation for the relatively bloodless nature of the dynastic change-over to the Chou, and the process of induced bureaucratic

change may therefore be seen within the context of legitimation. The bureaucracy, and especially its high-level élite, had the most immediate role in the definition of legitimacy and so served as the chief target-group of attempts by the Empress not only to win acceptance, but in the Chou, to maintain it. We shall attempt to clarify this process in Chapter IX.

NOTES

(CHAPTER VII)

[1]The uses and limitations of Tunhuang evidence are succintly explored by D.C. Twitchett, "Chinese Social History from the Seventh to the Tenth Centuries," Past and Present 35 (Dec., 1966), pp. 28-53. Saiiki bunka kenkyu: Tonko Tōroban shakai keisai shiryo (Tokyo, 1959-60), contains several excellent studies on the mechanics of provincial administration, fu-ping and tu-hu-fu systems, etc., based on the manuscripts.

[2]The problem was first brought to T'ai-tsung's attention by Ma Chou (#29) in 644, and because no action was taken, appeared again in subsequent reigns. Chao I cites some examples in Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao 17, pp. 328-29 and its manifestations in the Chou are discussed in Chapter IX. The Empress Wu once told a talented minister that she wished to keep him in the capital because the provinces were of lesser importance. TCTC 206, p. 6517.

From t'ien-pao onwards, the situation began to reverse itself, as several scholars have noted. Ch'en, Kuo-shih chiu-wen, II, pp. 13-15 cites the most useful sources on the question.

[3]See Chapter IX. On eunuchs in the T'ang, Rideout, J.K., "The Rise of Eunuchs during the T'ang Dynasty," Asia Major, I (1949-50), pp. 53-72, and III (1952), pp. 42-58, is still useful, and a more generalized view is presented by Mitamura Taisuke, Chinese Eunuchs: The Structure of Intimate Politics (Tuttle, 1970).

[4]Chapter IX. As we shall see, the Empress used various clan members in military positions at the capital during crises, most notably following her usurpation when four of them were given commands in the Yü-lin Guard and other capital units. Considering, however, that seventeen members of the clan were given posts and titles at the time and hence were available for military duty, the proportion was small. Furthermore, as Ching Hui was to comment in 705, the Wu princes were usually posted outside the capital (CTS 183:3553:3) during the Chou, and it would therefore be false to suggest that the Empress needed to concentrate military

power in Wu hands to maintain her position. On several occasions she also gave command of expeditionary armies to relatives or favourites, but only in the case of the final expedition against Mo-ch'o's Turks does there seem to have been any feeling on her part that the loyalty of the troops might have been in doubt. Most striking of all, Wu postings in the Yü-lin Guard were so infrequent in view of this force's history and intimate connection with the T'ang, that they amount almost to bravado.

[5]Chapter IX.

[6]See CTS 183:3553:2, HTS 131:4109:3, and Wan Ssu-t'ung's short essay in Erh-shih-wu shih pu-pien 6, p. 7573 which suggests that the Wu relatives became wealthy, but had little political power.

I am, of course, speaking here of "feoffs of maintenance," a subject upon which the fundamental study is Niida Noboru, "Todai no hoshaku oyobi shokuhosei," Toho gakuho, 10:1 (1939), pp. 1-64. Chao I, in Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao 77, pp. 336-9, was perhaps the first of modern scholars to charge that "as a result of the desire of the Empress Wu to make great her clan, she bestowed the title [and emoluments] of prince upon more than twenty [members of her family], and this was the inception of the cheapening of the title. . . ." This theme is followed and amplified by Tonami, "Boetsu," pp. 165ff., which is the best of recent studies, and contains a most useful bibliography on the subject.

While I agree with Professor Tonami about the magnitude of a problem which was probably directing into private hands the majority of the revenues of the richest areas of the country by the early eighth century, I cannot accept that the Empress Wu was responsible for the development. My own research on the matter is incomplete, but the following points may be made. There was a statutory limit on the number of households assigned to each rank (TRSI, pp. 318-19; THY 90, p. 1642), and for present purposes, the important point is that a prince was limited to one thousand, and a princess to three hundred and fifty. Now the T'ai-p'ing princess, the favourite of her parents, had early exceeded this limit; in the ch'ui-kung period (685-9) receiving the revenues of twelve hundred households, and in sheng-li (698-9), of three thousand (TCTC 204, p. 6466). Tonami believes that the awards of the Wu clan were increased in proportion. There is, in fact, no evidence for this, and I believe that the special role of the princess as the only family member taken fully into the confidence of the Empress Wu, explains the excessive grant. In 690, when seventeen members of the clan received princely rank, only Ch'eng-ssu and San-ssu received the full thousand households, and the two figures mentioned for the more junior members are three and four

hundred. I find no mention of an increase prior to the restoration.

My reading of the biographies of the seventh century, and of the rather misleading list in THY 90, pp. 1638-42, would indicate that awards beyond the limit were made by Kao-tsu to favourite ministers, and that T'ai-tsung was an even worse offender. See, for instance, CTS 55, pp. 3292:4 and 3293:3. The destruction of the very extensive T'ang family and the confiscation of their property and revenues in the late 680's also provided the Empress with an enormous financial "cushion." Considering, for example, that almost all of Kao-tsu's twenty-two sons received the full thousand households, these alone would cover the Wu awards, and it seems perverse to criticize the Empress on these grounds. The genuine abuse arose in the next reign, and should be attributed to Wu San-ssu and the Empress Wei.

There remains a good deal to be said on the matter.

[7]See the biography of Yang Tsai-ssu, #111.

[8]See Chapters IV and IX on these figures.

[9]Chao I, Nien-erh-shih cha-chi 19, p. 258.

[10]Chou Tao-chi's massive if diffuse study, Han-T'ang tsai-hsiang chih-tu (Taipei, 1963) has left little to say on the subject. TT 20, pp. 119-21, gives a succinct evolution of the position from earliest times, and see also, Fonctionnaires, I, pp. 4-11 for a translation with annotation of the HTS treatise.

[11]HTS 46:3739:3. The claim seems first to have been made under Han Wu-ti. See TT 20, p. 1196.

[12]Hsiang-tao, HTS 106:3925:2, was a native of Wei-chou, the son of Lin-fu, who had died in office in 629 after a successful career in which he served three years as vice-president of the Board of Civil Office. With his Chancellery appointment, Hsiang-tao was concurrently made vice-president of the Board of Civil Office in charge of selection. He ended his career in honour, dying in 666 at the age of 71.

The full memorial is found CTW 162, and is abstracted in his biography, in TCTC 200, p. 6308 and TT 17, p. 93a. The discussion in the text follows the arrangement of the latter.

[13]Appendix II, #39. Li, who seems to have possessed a good deal of literary talent as well as an ambitious and ingratiating personality, had risen rapidly in his official career until he offended Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi who used his influence to have him demoted to the provinces. While

attempting to block this order, I-fu discovered that Kao-tsung was seeking support in his campaign to depose Empress Wang, and made himself the first official to urge formally that he do so. Immediately upon the Empress' elevation, he was rewarded with tsai-hsiang status. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 36ff. outlines the remainder of his career.

[14]TT 17, p. 93a. Tu Yu's commentary here outlines the meaning of these terms, and we might note that they were also referred to by such terms as tsa-jen, hsü-li, or chih-chang-jen, and sometimes meant officials "outside the current." It is difficult to know whether Liu is specifically contrasting these men with examination graduates since he speaks of men "educated in the classics and contemporary affairs." Because of the form of the exams, I assume this is his meaning.

[15]The term "liu-nei" referred to the nine ranks of career officials within the current of promotion. By the eighth century, there were approximately 2,500 in the central administration, and another 16,500 or so in the provinces. In the same period, we find about 56,000 "liu-wai" officials, and another 300,000 minor or part-time employees composed of clerks, guards, runners, etc. See Ikeda, "Ritsuryo kansei," pp. 300-303.

[16]On this exam, see des Rotours, R., Le traité des des examens (Paris, 1932), pp. 31 and 128-30. Cited henceforth as Examens. It had been discontinued in 651, largely because of its enormous difficulty.

[17]TCTC 200, p. 6308.

[18]See Appendix II for the tsai-hsiang sample and further discussions in this chapter which suggest that bureaucratic recruitment by examination did not really gain momentum until the 670's.

[19]In addition to these, one could enter on the grounds of a father's or grandfather's noble title or through a special act of imperial favour. The relative importance of examination and yin is discussed by K.A. Wittfogel, "Public Office in the Liao Dynasty and the Chinese Examination System," HJAS, 10 (1947), pp. 23ff. which gives also his calculations for the T'ang. See also the lengthy discussions in Tsukiyama, Todai seiji seido, pp. 139-63 and 195-224 which lists a number of other relevant studies.

[20]See Appendix II and later notes. Literary evidence, some of which is cited later in the chapter, suggests a rough figure of one-tenth and a fairly careful calculation

made in the forthcoming Cambridge History of China, III, estimates that examination graduates accounted for fifteen per-cent at most of the entire T'ang bureaucracy.

[21]By this I mean to suggest not that examination was increasingly the sole form of bureaucratic entry, but rather that it was increasingly used in tandem with hereditary privilege. Examining only the small sample in Appendix II, it is clear that many chief ministers could have entered the bureaucracy on the basis of yin alone, but used examination to better their chances of reaching one of the "pure" posts. The combination of yin and examination gave a man a higher initial rank at the beginning of his career, and seems also to have facilitated promotion. See TRSI, pp. 297-98, Examens, pp. 146-51 and 227-29, TTLT 2:19b. This meant, of course, that the existing élite possessed an enormous institutional advantage in the competition for office.

[22]Note 16, above.

[23]The only innovations explicitly credited to the Empress are her foundation of the military exam, and the ending of the principle of anonymity, a usage, incidentally, which she had herself initiated. HTS 44:3737:2 glosses over developments in the Chou by suggesting that "from the [time of the] disorders of Empress Wu, many of the old ways were upset but Chung-tsung set them again in order."

[24]The precise beginnings of the system in the T'ang are subject to some dispute. The most detailed examination is Fukushima Shigejiro, Chugoku nambokuchoshi kenkyu (Tokyo, 1963), p. 53ff. I follow his dating rather than the more usual 621.

[25]Summarized Examens, pp. 26-36, and Liu Po-chi, T'ang-tai cheng-chiao shih (Taipei, 1964), pp. 128-63.

[26]A full study of the decree exams, the first of which appeared in 658, would be most welcome. These examinations seem to have been held in the palace, sometimes under imperial supervision, and were designed to produce a particular type of official such as one who was "upright and correct" or "sage and good," qualities listed in the examination title. Many sources offer lists of these titles which numbered over seventy in the T'ang, and the Empress Wu employed them often in her reign. Between 688 and 702, they were held nine times, and although the usual practice was to respond with dissertations to a question put by the emperor, some of these seem to have required poems or rhyme-prose. A notice in WHTK 33, p. 311b suggests that the emperor tested the candidates without knowing their identity, rewarded those

who scored well with excellent posts (mei-kuan), and gave the others positions appropriate to their basic rank. The number who passed was usually small, though in 688, thirty candidates succeeded.

See Examens, pp. 205ff. for the HTS description of these examinations, and note the fairly full listing in Chao Yen-wei, Yun-lu man-ch'ao (Shanghai, 1957), 6, pp. 82-86. Contempory anecdotes suggest that these examinations carried a good deal of prestige, and some scholars like Li Chiung-hsiu (#128), Liu Ssu-li, Chang Yüeh and Chang Chiu-ling sat for them several times.

[27]On the hsüan, Examens, pp. 146-51 and 227-79, TRSI, pp. 297-98, TTLT 2:19b. This provision meant that only the sons of princes (wang) were exempted from the hsüan.

[28]Examens, p. 213, TTLT 2:5a.

[29]TTLT 2:5b, Examens, p. 217, TCTC 201, p. 6362.

[30]TTLT 2:6a, Examens, p. 217. M. des Rotours distinguishes the tally from the patent, but Ssu-ma Kuang, TCTC 200, p. 6293, considers them to be the same thing. It seems, incidentally, that the patent had to be rescinded before an official and his family could be punished by the law. See also Niida, Hōritsu bunsho, pp. 793-806.

[31]Examens, pp. 50 and 231ff., TRSI, p. 288, TTLT 2:20b, THY 81, pp. 1500-01.

[32]TTLT 2:10a, Fonctionnaires, I, pp. 59-71. The k'ao was basically the responsibility of the lang-chung assisted by an auxiliary secretary (yüan-wai lang) in the k'ao-kung branch of the Board. They were supervised by two higher officials from the Chancellery and from State Affairs.

[33]Ti Jen-chieh (#93) was raised from B-plus to A-minus by Liu Jen-kuei (#51) who was new at the task and seems to have required direction. THY 81, p. 1501. The second example, from 669, is found TCTC 201, p. 6358. Lu Ch'eng-ch'ing (#46) had placed in the B-minus category an official who had lost an entire cargo of grain being transported to the capital in stormy weather. Lu is said to have been a man who thought highly of his own generosity and when the lower official appeared unaffected by his low rating, he raised him to B. The man now requested an even higher grade, and remarking that he had shown himself unaffected by favour or insult, Lu again raised him to B-plus.

How typical these cases were is difficult to know. Ma Chou complained in 632 that no ratings higher than B-plus had yet been awarded (THY 81, p. 1500), so that the impression

was created that the dynasty lacked good men. A rating of B in four k'ao was required for advancement, and for these reasons, the evaluation tended to become more generous at least until an official reached the fifth-rank. To enter this charmed circle, a man needed a patent from the emperor, granted usually on the recommendation of the chief-ministers who received a list of eligible persons from the Board of Civil Office. TTLT 2:5b and 21aff. Evaluation was probably taken very seriously at this level, and it is evident also that the li-pu and the tsai-hsiang could use this power to block "undesirables". Yang Shu-fan, T'ang-tai cheng-chih shih (Taipei, 1965), pp. 173-74, documents a number of cases where men left the civil service after reaching this threshold of power.

By the Chou, it seems that advancement to the fifth-rank had been greatly accelerated by the Empress' special promotions, and this was undoubtedly a source of dissatisfaction in the upper bureaucracy. In 695, she decreed that before an official could apply for the fifth-rank he must have undergone at least twelve k'ao, have committed no crime, and have occupied one of the "pure" posts above the seventh-rank. Those who applied for third-rank posts should have undergone twenty-five k'ao, though exceptional talent could be exempted from these regulations. TFYK 629:20b.

[34]Examens, pp. 239-40, THY 75, p. 1355. HTS 45: 3738:3 points out that prior to that time there were too few officials to fill the posts and as a result the central government simply sent out tallies to designate those who should come to the capital for appointment. Once prospective officials had become more numerous, it was decided to make the selection more careful and the hsüan was created at the suggestion of Liu Lin-fu, the father of Hsiang-tao. On conditions early in the dynasty, see Fukushima, Nambokuchoshi, pp. 71ff.

[35]THY 26, p. 507. The five successful candidates were appointed to the Hung-wen kuan to deal with imperial decrees and in turn, to come to the palace and draft them on alternate days. This was an unprecedented honour for inexperienced men. Hsü Ching-tsung, incidentally, had earlier been attached to the same body for similar purposes, and it seems that this college, established in 626 with places for twenty students, had become by now an advisory body to the throne. It was perhaps an inspiration for the creation of the "North-gate scholars."

[36]On T'ang Lin see CTS 85:3348:2 and HTS 113:3939:1 and on Hsiang-tao, note 12 above. T'ang Lin's native-place is given as Ch'ang-an though the family was originally from the north and had held office from the Chou onwards. Lin's

uncle, executed in the Sui, had deprived the clan of privileged status, and he was largely a self-made man, rising through military ability.

Although the Liu clan claimed a native place in Hopei, Lin-fu had been one of the earliest servants of the T'ang and T'ai-stung's first li-pu vice-president, probably residing in the capital and certainly identified with the Kuanchung group. For contemporary evidence of capital residence by the great clans, see TT 17, p. 96c.

[37]These were Li Kang (CTS 62:3303:1, HTS 99:3910:3), Yin K'ai-shan (CTS 58:3295:2, HTS 90:3896:2), Yang Shih-tao (#24), Yang Kung-jen (#8), and Feng Te-i (#9).

[38]Note 34 above.

[39]Appendix II, #29. He was married into the clan of Tai Chou (#22).

[40]For their tenure in the Board of Civil Office, see Yen Keng-wang, T'ang p'u-shang ch'eng-lang piao, 4 vols. (Taipei, 1956), III, pp. 81-90.

[41]Those related by blood were Yang Shih-tao (#24), Yang Tsuan, and Yang Kung-jen (#8); Tu Yen (#13) and Tu Ju-hui (#17); Liu Lin-fu and Liu Hsiang-tao; T'ang Lin and T'ang Chiao. Related by marriage were Kao Chien (#15), Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi (#14), Liu Shih (#35), and Ch'u Sui-liang (#15). A number of more distant marriage relationships also existed.

Taking the group as a whole from 618 to 705, I find a total of seventy-seven men, of whom I am unable to find information on eight. Of the remainder, thirty-three were related in the same very close fashion described above, and the high incidence of father-son, uncle-nephew relationships gives the Board almost an hereditary cast for the entire century. In the T'ang, seven direct descendants of Liu Lin-fu held li-pu positions (CTS 81:3342:1).

After 659, there seems to have been little dilution of the aristocratic character of the body, but the regional balance improved rapidly and even before the Chou, three of the "four surnames" of Shantung were represented. Tsukiyama, Seiji seido, pp. 74-84 has some rather scattered remarks on the li-pu at this time.

[42]CTS 77:3333:2. Ma Chou is referred to as han-shih.

[43]Chapter VI, note 44. Kao Chien was president of the li-pu and Wei T'ing had just been transferred to the Chancellery.

[44]The tsai-hsiang connection became less pronounced

after 659, but for the period 618-705, twenty-three were concurrently tsai-hsiang and six more had held the status before their li-pu posting. It is also of note that the majority were president or vice-president of the Chancellery when awarded tsai-hsiang status, and that evidence could be adduced to show a greater concentration of aristocrats there than in the other two Departments until about the end of Kao-tsung's reign. The role of the Chancellery in the hsüan was the most important of the Departments. Examens, p. 218 and Fonctionnaires, I, pp. 137ff. Acting with the li-pu, it could genuinely control the awarding of posts.

[45]These were Yang Tsuan, Lai Chi (#38), and Tu Ju-hui (#17).

[46]See Chapter VII.

[47]His fall is outlined TCTC 201, pp. 6334-5. This category of punishment was exempted from the 666 amnesty which followed the feng-shan sacrifice, and Li is said to have been so disappointed, he took sick and died.

[48]The two ssu-hsing representatives were Lu Ch'eng-ch'ing (#40) and Li An-ch'i (#56). Chao Jen-pen (#53) was also from the northwest. The others, Hao Ch'u-chün (#60) and Yang Hung-wu (#54) represented the south and northwest respectively.

[49]Biographies CTS 84:3347:2, HTS 108:3929:2, Examens, p. 243. In the fourth month of 669, and as a result of Pei's reform, a second vice-president was added to the li-pu, and P'ei himself took the post. TFYK 629:3a. He therefore had no experience in the Board before drafting his reforms.

[50]Feng-shih wen-chien chi 3, pp. 27-28.

[51]HTS 45:3738:3. "At this time, candidates were very numerous and [even] ignorant and mediocre men applied. Some forged their tallies (fu-kao) and falsely claimed to have been appointed while others used someone else's name to gain appointment. Some from far-off regions had no relatives but still found guarantors. On the examination day, some found others to use their name [and take the examination for them], and some cheated by using the answers of those near them or by seeking help [from friends] outside the hall. Therefore, many [appointees] had no real talent. . . ."

As early as 627, T'ai-tsung had complained that candidates were falsifying their credentials. TCTC 192, p. 6031.

[52]Appendix II, #59.

[53]Examens, p. 243, CTS 84:3347:3, HTS 108:3929:2, THY 75, p. 1347.

[54]See Examens, p. 243. Ch'en Teng-yüan, Kuo-shih chiu-wen, II, p. 116, connects it to a list of retiring officials.

[55]See CTS 84:3347:3, TT 15, p. 84c, TFYK 629:18b, TCTC 101, p. 6362. Both HTS 45:3738:3 and THY 75, p. 1347 use the shorter form and Feng-shih wen-chien chi 3, p. 28 suggests that this was the common abbreviation. The notices also reveal that the same year, Chang Jen-wei composed a hsing-li which des Rotours calls a "catalogue des noms de famille," but this does not seem to give the connotation of li. See Feng-shih 5, p. 53, on the tzu-li. We know that in the first stage of the examinations a man had to submit documents showing his ancestry and native place (Examens, p. 147 and 184) and this was true also for the hsüan (note 51 above). I believe that these were checked against the hsing-li to be certain of a candidate's eligibility. If so, the hsing-li was a permanent list similar to the national status registers, but concerned solely with official postings. Candidates for the hsüan were checked against it and a "long list" of successful candidates with their clan's bureaucratic record was posted together with the number and nature of the expected vacancies for the coming year. When the usage was discontinued because "everyone knew who would be appointed" (see next), it must have been because family influence was clear to see in the list. The paucity of specific information about the list renders any interpretation speculative, but this view seems consistent with the class-conscious and exclusivistic character of the other measures of 669. The list seems to have been designed to prevent the entry of undesirables, and see also Ts'ui Jung's memorial of 680, THY 74, p. 1335.

[56]Feng-shih wen-chien chi 3, p. 28. The passage goes on to say that the bias of the vice-president of the li-pu who drew up the list resulted in such lively protest that he was demoted to the provinces.

[57]HTS 45:3738:2. See also Examens, p. 180.

[58]That is to say, all those whose basic rank was above nine; listed Examens, pp. 227-8. On the "universities," by which I mean the Kuo-tzu hsüeh, the T'ai-hsüeh and the Ssu-men hsüeh which were administered by the Kuo-tzu chien and had a combined student body of perhaps 350 at this time, see Liu Po-chi, Cheng-chiao shih, pp. 92-98. Only the Ssu-men hsüeh admitted commoners.

[59]Examens, p. 215, TT 15, p. 84b.

[60]TCTC 201, p. 6362, TFYK 629:19a; and see TRSI, p. 285 for other references.

[61]The presidency was left vacant from 669-74 and 676-84 perhaps since the vice-presidents in 670, had been given the whole task of selection. Li Ching-hsüan was raised from vice-president to president in 674 and remained there until raised to State Affairs in late 676. P'ei Hsing-chien remained as vice-president until mid-679.

[62]This was first noted in Liu Hsiang-tao's memorial of 657 (note 12 above) and several other examples appear in later notes. See also the remarks of Ch'u Sui-liang in the biography of Wei Ssu-ch'ien (#79). This attitude was to be of importance in the dynamics of the Chou bureaucracy.

[63]TFYK 629:19a. According to this decree, the chu-se from the Boards of Civil Office and War who had undergone the requisite number of k'ao, needed to be examined only on one classic and one history before becoming eligible for appointment within the stream.

[64]HTS 45:3738:2. The passage adds that there were sometimes ten persons waiting for a single position.

[65]See THY 58, pp. 1004ff., TT 23, pp. 135ff., and TFYK 629:3aff. The principal increases occurred in 669, 689, and 694.

[66]On the ta-ch'eng, Examens, p. 165 and on the restoration of the schools, TFYK 550:4b and CTW 11:20b. Fukushima, Nambokuchoshi, pp. 129ff. examines the decline of the provincial schools showing a correlation with the numbers who presented themselves for examination. For educational policy in the reign of Kao-tsung, see Taga Akigoro, Todai kyoiku no kenkyu (Tokyo, 1953), pp. 94ff.

[67]Note 26 above.

[68]WHTK 29, pp. 276-80. The list is derived from the Teng-k'o lu of the Sung scholar Yüeh Shih, and is exhaustively discussed by Fukushima, Nambokuchoshi, pp. 77ff. Lin T'ein-wei, Sui-T'ang shih hsin-pien, pp. 202-264 reprints the list with some annotation. The origins of this sort of compilation are discussed Nambokuchoshi, pp. 159ff., and Yu-hai 115:19bff. lists a number of indices of graduates, usually compiled by a single clan. These began to outstrip genealogical compilations in the later T'ang. See Nambokuchoshi, pp. 194-201.

[69]Fukushima, Nambokuchōshi, p. 78.

[70]No examinations were held in 669. The figures are as follows:

664 - 3	670 - 54
665 - all failed	671 - no examinations held
666 - 2	672 - no examinations held
667 - 5	673 - 79
668 - 26	674 - 57

These years seem to be the high point of success for chin-shih candidates in the dynasty, and when fifty-five succeeded in 682, a re-examination, which only fifteen passed, was held. In the k'ai-yüan period, an annual upper limit of twenty-five was set, but seems not to have been enforced since by my calculation, the average for Hsüan-tsung's reign was twenty-seven. The numbers changed little after that, and Ma Tuan-lin's remark that at its most flourishing period the chin-shih never produced more than fifty graduates (WHTK 29, p. 280) refers to this period.

Again working from chin-shih figures in the Index, the examination's development in the T'ang may be shown:

	Graduates	Times Held	Average per Time
Kao-tsu	26	5	5+
T'ai-tsung	205	20	10+
Kao-tsung to 669	208	15	14-
Kao-tsung 670-684	430	9	48-
Empress Wu	532	21	25+

[71]TCTC 202, pp. 6374-75. The memorial came from Liu Hsiao about whom no further information exists.

[72]TCTC 202, pp. 6386-87.

[73]Biography CTS 190 chung:3582:2.

[74]See Examens, pp. 166-67 for the numerous sources in which the memorial is abstracted. I follow des Rotours' translation.

[75]HTS 45:3738:3. I have found this passage nowhere else.

[76]HTS 45:3738:4. I find few other references to this problem prior to 705, and it seems to have become serious only in the reign of Chung-tsung. See TCTC 209, pp. 6633 and 6635.

[77]See their biographies cited earlier. Li's biography points that while his ability and carefulness were praised,

and while he could remember the names of all his appointees, he brought "more than 10,000" men into the administration in one year. This figure, of course, is a conventional approximation. He was dismissed in 676 because of Kao-tsung's displeasure with the manner in which he built a large clientele in the upper bureaucracy through his appointments and his three marriages into the pre-eminent Shantung clans. The T'ang-kuo shih-pu, shang, p. 20, tells how his marriages so confused the generation order of the clans that grandfathers were grandsons and vice-versa.

[78] TCTC 252, I-tsung, hsien-t'ung 14 (873).

[79] See for instance, T'ang-kuo shih-pu, hsia, pp. 55-6, Feng-shih wen-chien chi 3, p. 22, T'ang che-yen 1, p. 3. Chao I gives other examples in Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao 28, p. 583.

[80] Examens, p. 163, TT 15, p. 83a, WHTK 29, p. 271b, Yü-hai 115:11b. The biography of Tu Cheng-lun (CTS 70:3319: 4) tells us that fewer than twenty men attained the degree in the Sui, and prior to 651, only another twenty-eight were successful. In the same period, the chin-shih sometimes produced seventeen graduates in a single year! When the hsiu-tsai was re-established in 736, the TT tells us it was considered less difficult than the chin-shih. Ch'en Teng-yüan, Kuo-shih chiu-wen, II, pp. 117-20 and 125-27 introduces some useful sources on the relative positions of the examinations.

[81] Feng-shih wen-chien chi 3, pp. 24ff. states that the chin-shih was more highly esteemed than decree examinations, but this reference, I think, is to the situation in the eighth century. The HTS treatise (Examens, p. 208) says that those successful in the decree exams received the most illustrious titles, and I find it suggestive that those recorded to have taken both exams in the seventh century, chose usually to take the decree exam first. The ming-ching, as we have seen, conferred a higher point of entry to the bureaucracy than did the chin-shih.

[82] Taking as a sample the graduates among the tsai-hsiang from 664-705, I find that fifteen had chosen the chin-shih, and thirteen the ming-ching.

It is of interest to note that Japanese scholarship seems widely to accept that the aristocracy long favoured the ming-ching over the chin-shih. See for instance, Tsukiyama, Seiji seido, pp. 69 and 139. This is reasonable in view of the greater need for books, tutors, orthodoxy, tradition and discipline to prepare the curriculum, and also in view of the form of the exam which from 737 and possibly from 681, included an oral interview with the aristocratic members of the li-pu. It is difficult, however, to find statistical

evidence.

In the later part of the T'ang, few high officials seem to have entered the bureaucracy via the ming-ching.

[83]See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 194-204. Seven men had chosen the chin-shih, while six passed all the other types.

[84]WHTK 29, p. 271c, Yü-hai 115:15b. The T'ang-che-yen, 1, p. 4, comments that "the chin-shih was founded in the Sui ta-ye [era] and flourished in chen-kuan and yung-wei. If a scholar-official reached the highest of state offices without passing the chin-shih, he was in the end not considered praiseworthy. The candidates before long often numbered no less than eight or nine hundred men. . . . The difficulty [of the exam] was expressed [by saying] thirty is old [to pass the] ming-ching and fifty is young [to pass the] chin-shih.

Ts'en Chung-mien, Sui-T'ang shih, I, pp. 184ff. gives four reasons for the relative popularity of the chin-shih.

[85]Examens, p. 147.

[86]See Chapter II. We cannot be certain, of course, of the actual role of the Empress in the writings issued under her name, but there is ample evidence of her fondness for literature and most sources which comment on the form taken by the chin-shih, attribute the literary emphasis to her interest. In addition, we find several other instances of this. See for instance, TFYK 110:3b which describes a poetry-composing party, and 840:16a which tells how she awarded high office to the author of a fine poem on the Ming T'ang. THY 77, p. 1405 suggests how widespread was private scholarship and literature in her reign, and we are told also that when she dispatched commissioners in 691 to enquire about the state of the provinces, the whole court submitted poems to mark the event. THY 77, p. 1414. The dynastic biographies of noted litterateurs and poets like Sung Chih-wen and Shen Ch'üan-chi (CTS 190 chung:3581:4, HTS 202:4100:4) suggest the importance of her patronage. Other examples are cited by Lin, Hsin-pien, pp. 199-200.

[87]CTS 199:3414:1, the biography of Yang Yen. The occasion was a debate of 763 in which Yen protested the literary emphasis in the exams, and his opponent rebutted his arguments by suggesting that the Hsia dynasty was founded upon sincerity, the Shang upon respect and the Chou on literature which governed men's conduct quite as much as sincerity and respect.

[88]TTLT 4:4b.

[89]There is no evidence that the Empress discriminated on the basis of a man's degree, but her patronage of the chin-shih created the climate which caused high officials to have contempt for those of their colleagues without the degree. See the examples cited earlier and the anecdotes in Yin-hua lu, 3, and T'ang-kuo shih-pu, hsia, pp. 55-56 which outline the honorific vocabulary which grew around the degree.

[90]See the chart in the text and note 87 above. Yang Yen also complained that chin-shih candidates knew neither the classics nor the histories. Other evidence is cited in following notes.

[91]TFYK 639:20a, THY 75, p. 1373, and see Chapter IX.

[92]Appendix II, #70.

[93]Chapter III, note 24.

[94]I am not sure of the precise meaning here.

[95]Discussed passim. Wei might be referring here to the practice whereby sons of honorific officials of the fifth rank or above and high regular officials could enrol their sons as prefectural na-k'o p'in-tzu, or "sons of ranking officials paying a tax." At the age of eighteen, these were attached nominally to the Guards and after thirteen years took what seems to have rather an easy exam to enter the regular bureaucracy.

[96]The memorial is found in full CTW 168:2b and is abstracted THY 74, pp. 1336-7, Examens, p. 247, and TT 17, p. 94a. Fukushima, Nambokuchoshi, pp. 106-21 analyzes it chiefly as a catalogue of abuses growing out of Wei's conviction that Confucian virtue received too little attention in selection, and his belief that the Board of Civil Office had grown too powerful.

[97]THY 74, p. 1337

[98]TT 15, p. 83a. See also THY 76, p. 1390, WHTK 29, p. 2720, TFYK 639:20a. The latter text uses only the term pi, "finish," not suggesting that the candidates all failed.

[99]The important steps in the process were the inauguration of decree exams in 658 and the settlement of their basic form in 683 (THY 75, p. 1376), the ceremony of 659, the creation of the ta-ch'eng in 675, the reforms of 681, and of course, the ongoing process of raising more and more graduates to the highest posts.

[100]WHTK 29, p. 272a. The full text is found CTW 281: 10b, and it was submitted by Hsüeh Ch'ien-kuang whose biography is found CTS 101:3383:2. See also, TT 17, p. 94c.

[101]Chapter VI.

[102]Examens, pp. 247-8, TT 14, p. 85b, WHTK 37, p. 348c. The TT says the Empress believed the li-pu often failed to select the right men and so decreed that examinations be written anonymously and that the same regulation apply to the k'ao.

No source offers a dating for this event, but Yü-hai 115:25b suggests that she ordered a decree exam of 689 to be administered anonymously. The notice is rather puzzling because it goes on to say that Chang Yüeh, after a re-examination, was placed first. In other sources we are told that Chang Chien-chih (#133) topped over a thousand candidates, and the Yü-hai also mentions this event, 115:24ab. The Teng-k'o chi-k'ao puts Chang Yüeh's examination in the preceding year, and I am therefore suspicious of the first notice. Even if it is reliable, we cannot be sure that the principle was extended to other exams. However, since it is the earliest mention of the hu-ming, we might assume that the practice began about this time.

[103]Chapter IX, note 87.

[104]Examens, pp. 209-212, TFYK 639:20b, THY 59, p. 1030, TCTC 207, p. 6558. There was a corresponding hsüan. See Examens, p. 222, note 1.

[105]Appendix II, #131. The full text is CTW 236:3b and the memorial is discussed in Chapter IX.

[106]CTW 236:5a. It was submitted in 709 and is abstracted in his biography and TCTC 209, p. 6634. The conditions described are for the reign of Chung-tsung, and are a good deal worse than those of the Chou.

[107]These were Li Yüan-su (#101), Wei Chü-yüan (#105), Tou-lu Ch'in-wang (#107) and Wang Hsiao-chieh (#109).

[108]Japanese scholarship has demonstrated the existence of this division even in the chung-cheng system. See Miyazaki, Kanjinho, pp. 233-43. We have earlier suggested several of its applications in the T'ang and might recall that the fifth-rank was the standard for inclusion in the Hsing-shih-lu and that for all her innovations in recruitment, the Empress never objected that entry into the fifth-rank was possible only by imperial decree. Fukushima, Nambokuchoshi, p. 152ff. collects other data on the division.

[109]The term used by Ch'en Yin-k'o (see Chapter VI) and fairly standard in Japanese scholarship.

[110]Note 14 above.

[111]See TT 40, pp. 229ff., TRSI, pp. 114ff. and CTS 42:3253:3 which provides a full list of titles.

One of the greatest lacunae in T'ang studies prior to the rebellion of An Lu-chan lies in the area of study of the liu-wai officialdom. Since this group was extremely important, especially in the provinces where it formed the closest link between government and people, our perception of T'ang administration remains somewhat blurred. Tsukiyama, Seiji seido, pp. 437ff. looks at the hsü-li, who were not strictly speaking liu-wai but often grouped with them, under the five headings of function, entry into the current, restrictions placed upon them, provincial abuses, and the various attempts made to reduce their number. His treatment is useful, but not too coherent.

It is useful perhaps to have some concept of the size of the group and Ikeda's figures, "Ritsuryō kansei," pp. 300-303, suggest for instance that in the three Departments at the capital there were a total of 241 liu-nei officials and 1498 liu-wai distributed as follows:

	liu-nei	liu-wai
State Affairs	159	1,135
Chancellery	40	176
Secretariat	42	187

On a wider level, TCTC 214, k'ai-yüan 21 (733) gives a total of 17,686 liu-nei officials and 57,416 liu-wai in the whole administration. TT 40, p. 230b, speaking of a slightly later period, gives a grand total of 368,668, so that the hsü-li must have numbered almost 300,000. The figure is further divided into 18,805 liu-nei and 349,863 liu-wai. In addition to these, there was a large number of minor employees recruited on a part-time basis.

As suggested earlier, memorialists tended to group together all those who were not liu-nei in their complaints.

[112]TTLT 30:23a.

[113]TTLT 2:31a, and CTS 43:3245:1. This minor exam was held annually, and consisted of tests in writing, mathematics and contemporary affairs though the last was not important. They underwent an annual k'ao and had to take the minor exam after three k'ao in order to advance, although the constant complaints suggest that enforcement of the promotion rate was lax. See also Fonctionnaires, pp. 67ff.

[114]As Miyazaki, Kanjinhō makes clear, the distinction between "pure" and "muddy" posts was a very old one, and in the T'ang the key capital appointments, perhaps five hundred or so, were reserved for men of good birth and scholarly attainment usually demonstrated by examination. See TTLT 2:24aff.

[115]TT 35, p. 200c. The passage remarks the establishment of 7,000 hsü-shih chosen from the superior households.

[116]THY 67, p. 1183. The full text is TTCLC 100:3a and CTW 95:9b.

[117]TTLT 2:31a and Tsukiyama, Seiji seido, p. 443.

[118]On the question of honorific rank, see Fonctionnaires, pp. 50-59, THY 81, pp. 1491-92 and the useful secondary study by Matsunaga Masao, "Todai no 'hsün-kuan' ni tsuite," Nishi Nippon shigaku 12 (Oct., 1952), pp. 28-47.

[119]The sale of honorific rank is mentioned in the Act of Grace of 684, CTW 96:15a, and there is a good deal of Tunhuang evidence to show that the government was concerned with fraudulent claims.

According to Tu Yu (TT 48, p. 773), the real cheapening of honorific rank occurred in the k'ai-yüan period, but Prof. Matsunaga's work indicates that from the mid-670's and perhaps from the rationalization of the system in 674 (THY 81, p. 1491), awards became increasingly free. Liu Jen-kuei complained in 664 (TCTC 201, pp. 6340-41) that military rewards were not being distributed, and in 688, we hear that honorific rank was being given for special corvée duty, for instance in the construction of the Ming T'ang. See CTW 96:19a. Matsunaga (p. 36) shows that land grants often accompanied these awards so that the economic ramifications were quite serious.

[120]Fukushima, Nambokuchōshi, p. 119.

[121]Note 113 above. Liu-wai officials could advance only one grade every three years, and once they entered the regular bureaucracy and became subject to the k'ao system there, every four years. Since the bottom ranks contained six grades, it would take twenty-four years to reach the seventh rank! Although liu-wai officials could expect their bureaucratic careers to be longer than the twenty to thirty years which seems to have been average for high officials, they could not expect to come anywhere near the fifth rank in the normal course of events.

[122]Chapters V and IX.

[123]TCTC 201, p. 6346.

[124]THY 81, pp. 1493-94.

[125]Tonami, "Bōetsu," pp. 172ff., Tsukiyama, Seiji seido, pp. 444-52.

[126]See for instance, the remarks of Tsukiyama, Seiji seido, pp. 453-64.

[127]TCTC 204, p. 6460. Kao-tsung, it seems, had planned to promote Chou Hsing to a "pure" post until he found out that he was ineligible. Hsing is said to have gone frequently to the audience-hall to await the announcement of his appointment, and this embarrassing experience may help to account for the revenge he ultimately took on the "pure" officials.

[128]Chapter IX. The most striking instance is their opposition to the Chang brothers and the large faction which grew up around them. See also Tonami, "Kizokusei no hōkai," pp. 47ff. on the form of factionalism after Empress Wu.

[129]This was Ti Jen-chieh, and the question is fully discussed in Chapter IX.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CHINESE ARMS AND FOREIGN POLICY TO 684

The middle decades of the seventh century marked the zenith of the Chinese empire. Never before and never again would the Son of Heaven lay claim to so great an area outside the Wall and exact from it at least a nominal allegiance. Seldom would the arms of a purely-Chinese dynasty venture so far afield to win the impressive if ephemeral victories that were so frequent in the period. It was a time of confidence and expansionism, a time when uncounted "barbarians" were incorporated into the Middle Kingdom and when tribute reached Ch'ang-an from as far away as India and Indo-China, from Persia and the oasis-states of Central Asia, from Japan and the Korean peninsula. And with the tribute came requests for state marriages and alliances, for instruction in classical learning, Confucian statescraft and Buddhist theology. Ch'ang-an and Lo-yang reflected what seems to have been a more generalized cosmoplitanism and self-confidence in the visual arts, in music and manners, and even in styles of clothing,[1] and the vigour and richness of foreign influence was seldom to be re-captured in later ages. It was time also of great generals, men like Su Ting-fang, Li Chi, and P'ei Hsing-chien,

whose proud armies covered distances and endured hardships which stagger the imagination, and whose triumphal processions were almost a matter of course in the capital in the 660's and 670's. It is not surprising that the Empress Wu was able to boast in 684 of how Kao-tsung, and by implication herself, had expanded the Empire (ch'an-yü) and had brought to submission areas beyond the reach even of the legendary Yü and T'ang.[2]

Necessarily, these achievements did not belong to the "Two Sages" alone, but were erected upon the acknowledged foundations laid by T'ai-tsung. And necessarily, there was a less attractive side to the picture. From the time Empress Wu came to power scarcely a year went by without military action in some sector of the empire and for the peasantry, military corvée and troop levies were an unpleasant and unavoidable fact of life. When, in the last decades of the century, the state proved unable to sustain the costs of empire, the raids of rebellious former "subjects" took an enormous toll in lives and property and agriculture was seriously disrupted as more and more men were taken from the land to serve as expeditionary troops or garrison forces. The last half of the seventh century therefore represents a cycle, a progression from expansive ambition to defensive insecurity. The Chou, we shall suggest, saw the beginnings not only of a defined and coherent pacifism at court, but a more generalized contempt for the military arts and a distaste

for service among the people--phenomena reflected for instance, in the establishment of military examinations in 702 and in the growing incidence of vagrancy in the period.[3]

This seeming paradox is not difficult to explain, and rests chiefly upon weaknesses inherent in the T'ang system of military recruitment and "colonial" administration. What generally goes unrecognized, however, is that the foreign policy of Kao-tsung and the Empress Wu was not by choice an expansionist one. In this chapter, we shall attempt to show that it was in fact responsive, the result both of internal and external challenge; and that it was carried out not to validate any grand "imperialistic" vision, but rather on an ad hoc basis which made it ultimately clumsy and short-sighted.

To understand this more clearly, we must realize first of all that the "imperialism" of the T'ang was the creation of T'ai-tsung. The reasons for several of his policies, including the great swing to the West, still await explanation but scholars tend to agree that T'ai-tsung was a ruler conscious of, if not obsessed by the glories of the Han Empire, and a man who realized that one of the surest ways to validate the T'ang possession of the Mandate after so long a period of disunion, was to replicate Han achievements.[4] He thus became one of the great conquerors of Chinese history and from him Kao-tsung inherited not only the glories but the burdens of empire. In mid-century, these latter consisted chiefly of a

tradition of intervention in a restive, tripartite Korean peninsula, and on the northern and western frontiers, the nascent threat of a dissatisfied Tibetan tributary and a belligerent and rebellious Turkish confederation.[5] As the third-generation ruler of the T'ang, Kao-tsung's principal task, we have suggested, was that of dynastic consolidation, the demonstration that the T'ang would endure beyond the point where so many preceding dynasties had fallen. He could not afford, therefore, to relinquish what his father had won.

A second factor in the formulation of his foreign policy was his own character. As a child of rather delicate health and the youngest of T'ai-tsung's legitimate sons, he had become Crown Prince only at the age of fifteen, and in the five years prior to his accession had received, as far as we can tell, little or no military training. His father's exploits, of course, were already legendary and this seems to have produced in him a certain envy and insecurity, a need to prove himself. He is recorded, for instance, to have wept when refused permission to accompany his father against Koguryŏ and to have cherished thereafter the desire to lead personally one of his own expeditions.[6] He must have been aware, moreover, that he would be subject always to comparison with his father, and one of the first communications he received from a barbarian state was a warning and a reminder from the tsan-p'u of Tibet: "If, when a Son of Heaven first comes to the throne, there exist disloyal subjects, he must

raise troops, go to that state and punish and exterminate them."[7] The commentator adds here that because the Tibetans knew that T'ai-tsung was dead, they adopted a posture of contempt for China.[8]

A more tangible and more dangerous reaction to his death was the rebellion of A-sha-na Ho-lu, who proclaimed himself Sha-po-lo Khan, re-united the Western Turks, and set out on a series of raids which soon gave him control of the entire Tarim Basin.[9] By mid-year he had crossed into China and invaded Ting-chou with a force of 100,000. Faced with this external threat, Kao-tsung had little choice but to respond and sent against him an army of 30,000, supplemented by 50,000 Uighur cavalry. Fortunately it seems that even the ill-fated Korean expeditions of his father had not too seriously depleted China's military resources, for he had no need to call special levies and was able to rely solely on fu-ping troops drawn from several chün-fu near Ch'ang-an.[10]

The Chinese achieved a rapid though temporary victory,[11] and as far as we can tell, made no effort to press their advantage. Kao-tsung seems at this stage to have had no intention of enlarging on T'ai-tsung's conquests, but it is clear that at the same time he had no intention of abdicating from the position the T'ang had come to enjoy in East Asia. In late 651 he expressed his view in a reprimand to the King of Paekche in which he referred to himself as "lord of all the world" (wan-kuo chih chü) and demanded that Paekche cease

formenting trouble with its neighbour states of Silla and Koguryŏ or face punishment from China.[12] It is difficult to know whether or not he could have carried out this threat, for his father's last testament had explicitly called for the end of Korean intervention and his own tsai-hsiang seem to have been universally opposed to any more activity in the peninsula.[12a] What is important, however, is that Kao-tsung had shown himself ready to act in an area where both Sui Yang-ti and T'ai-tsung had been unsuccessful, and he thus prepared the way for the later assaults on Paekche and Koguryŏ which were to be the central feature of his foreign policy.

The first expedition to the Korean peninsula was dispatched in early 655, in the very midst of the crisis which arose over the elevation of Empress Wu.[13] It is tempting to see her hand in the decision not only because the renewed involvement in Korea provided a convenient distraction from events at court and enabled Kao-tsung to assert his will over that of his chief-ministers, but also because the Empress was herself no stranger to military matters. We have seen that the foundation of her father's career was military and she might have been familiar with his work on strategy and tactics. Her association with T'ai-tsung probably made her conscious of how much his fame rested on military prowess and how necessary it was for Kao-tsung to prove himself in this respect. She was later to point out that what T'ai-tsung had failed to do, she and her husband had accomplished![14] Finally,

we might recall that certain aspects of her character and aspirations might help to explain the upsurge of expansionist military activity which coincided with her rise. She was determined, as we have seen, to make her reign unique. She possessed an exalted view of the position of Son of Heaven and an encompassing world-view demonstrated for instance, in her inclusion of barbarians in the Hsing-shih lu. Above all, she was a woman whose political role was soon to exceed the accepted norm, and as a result she could offer her court enemies no sign of weakness, no opening for attack on the basis of her "womanly" qualities. By force of circumstance, the Empress Wu had to adopt a strong posture vis-à-vis the barbarians both while Kao-tsung lived and also in her own dynasty.

These attitudes of the two rulers are of great importance since as we have seen, their first two decades were marked by minimal opposition to their policies on the part of a weakened and intimidated ministerial body. In contrast to T'ai-tsung whose foreign policy was highly collegial in nature until his last years, theirs was individual, and in fact, there is no recorded opposition to their foreign policy decisions until the year 678![15] By that time, China was too deeply involved to withdraw with impunity from "pacified" areas, and the approaching usurpation crisis was about to trigger a new upsurge of barbarian activity which would be all the more serious since two decades of close Chinese contact

had given Turk, Tibetan, and Korean the sophistication of military and administrative technique to constitute a greater threat than before.

To return to narrative: the punitive expedition sent against Koguryŏ in 655 achieved its objective, the promise to end raids on Silla, even before reaching the Yalu River, and was immediately halted.[16] It is unlikely that the Emperor had any illusions about the continued quiescence of Koguryŏ,[17] but he did have a sense of priorities and the wisdom to avoid simultaneous action on two fronts. A last-ditch effort to solve by diplomacy the earlier problem of the Western Turks had just failed,[18] and the presence of Su Ting-fang,[19] the leader of the Korean expedition was required to deal with their mounting threat. The sources record no specific instructions to Su from the court, but we are told that by early 657, he had completed a re-organization of the northwestern army and substantially augmented it with Uighurs, Sogdians and other native troops.[20] This, plus the fact that the original force was constituted partially of mu-ping, special levies or conscripts, suggests that Kao-tsung was determined to settle the issue and perhaps envisaged a long campaign.[21] During the year 657, Su engaged in a series of battles with Sha-po-lo, and though sometimes outnumbered ten to one, inflicted one defeat after another, driving him back to the Ili River where the power of the Turks was finally broken. The khan barely escaped with his life to Tashkent (Shih-kuo) where he was

betrayed to the Chinese, and with his capture, two decades of peace came to China's northwestern borders.[22]

Before turning to the administrative settlement of the area, we might notice some aspects of the campaign typical of warfare in the period and illustrative of the problems which later arose from it. First of all the court, after naming a field-commander or tsung-kuan of an expeditionary force (hsing-chün) usually left the entire operation in his hands. In this case, intervention occurred only to thwart an attempt by some of Su's subordinates to undermine him and to grant him permission to use surrendered Turks in his army. A court censor was attached to report afterwards on the campaign, but with the distances and communication difficulties as great as they were, he was not to interfere in its conduct.[23] The difficulty here, of course, was that the court might easily be confronted with a fait accompli, a punitive expedition turned by an ambitious or too-successful general into an imperialist venture. Secondly, most armies from this time on seem to have been composed of a combination of fu-ping, mu-ping or mu-shih, and i-cheng or "volunteers".[24] This combination is a significant one since the original character of the fu-ping was defensive and for reasons adequately dealt with elsewhere,[25] it was an institution unsuited for long campaigns outside the Wall. About the method of mu-ping conscription, we have little detailed information though we know that service was compulsory for those designated by a

central official called the ping-mu, and that the conscripts were supplied and equipped by the prefecture.[26] For this reason, it was a far more expensive proposition than a levy of the self-supplied fu-ping, and as Japanese scholarship has shown, conscripts came to make up an increasing proportion of the armies.[27] Moreover, there is at least one contemporary report as early as 664, that the length of foreign campaigns and the lack of rewards and recognition had sapped the morale both of conscripts and volunteers and that the recruitment system had been already corrupted by the rich and influential who bribed officials to escape service.[28] As we shall see, other evidence supports the conclusion that the quality of T'ang soldiery declined through the second half of the century and as a result, the acquisition of empire was easier than its maintenance. Finally, we might notice the extensive use of barbarian troops in the expeditionary armies, and very often in high command positions.[29] There can be no doubt that they played an important role in the victories in the west and in Korea, but because their contribution was so difficult to gauge, the effect of their participation may well have been to create a sense of over-confidence at court, a false sense of the strength and range of Chinese arms.

These considerations are admittedly speculative, but judging from the administrative arrangements following Su Ting-fang's victory, reflect a degree of accuracy. The conquered territory was first organized into the two protectorates

of Meng-ch'ih and K'un-ling with native khans as protectors-general (tu-hu), and the scion of one of the great Shan-tung clans, Lu Ch'eng-ch'ing[30] sent out to rank and organize the tribes and to appoint prefects and other subordinate officials over them.[31] In the fifth month of the next year, the An Hsi protectorate was moved to the west from Hsi-chou (Kao-ch'ang), and established at Kucha (Kuei-tzu) where it administered sixteen tu-tu-fu or governments-general and one hundred and six prefectures.[32] As control was extended over the various peoples of Sinkiang, Russian Turkestan and the Oxus Valley, the Chinese empire reached the very borders of Persia, controlling more of Central Asia than had ever before been the case.[33]

In view of these moves which one scholar terms the expression of "an excess of power",[34] it seems reasonable to conclude that in a few short years the cautious realism of T'ai-tsung had been replaced by ambition. If further proof were needed, it was provided within a month of the An Hsi foundation when Kao-tsung sent a force against Koguryŏ who had profited from Chinese involvement in the west to escalate her raids upon Silla.[35] For the first time since the chen-kuan period, Chinese troops were now active in peninsular affairs and over the next year clashed on more than one occasion in the Liaotung area while Paekche took advantage of the situation to carry out a number of largely-successful raids against Silla to the south. In 660, faced with anxious

Sillan calls for aid, Kao-tsung decided to settle the issue, and dispatched Su Ting-fang and a force of 100,000 by sea to attack Paekche from the west.[36]

For the next two decades, the Korean question formed the focal point of China's external affairs. Because it was either the greatest folly or the greatest triumph of the rulers, and because its internal ramifications were great, it deserves special attention.

Since the first Chinese conquest of the peninsula in 108 B.C., a special relationship had been created. For almost four hundred years thereafter, most of the north and the southeast of the peninsula had been under direct Chinese administration, but with the gradual development of the kingdoms of Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla, a desire for independence had begun to appear. The disastrous Sui campaigns were basically an attempt to re-assert control over an area with a long history of Chinese rule, and the T'ang seem to have regarded the territory in the same light. Kao-tsu, on one occasion, refused to receive an envoy from Koguryŏ on the grounds that the state had betrayed its allegiance as a subject (ch'en) of the Sui and was likely to cause him trouble. He relented, however, when two of his ministers pointed out that from Chou through Han, Wei and Chin, the state had been a tributary (feng-nei) and so could not now be degraded from that status (pu-k'o i chiang).[37] The patents (ts'e) he conferred on the rulers of all three states in 624 seemed to

confirm recognition of a special relationship.[38]

Although subsequent years saw a good deal of internecine strife in the area, the T'ang refrained from intervention until 643 when the throne of Koguryŏ was usurped with great brutality by Yon'gae Somun.[39] Not only did this act cut off the valuable annual tribute from all three states but threatened the basis of the imperial system since, as T'ai-tsung declared, the act of murdering one's sovereign to seize the throne could not be tolerated.[40] Whether or not this was simply a convenient excuse for his costly and unfortunate expeditions against the state is difficult to know, but the fact remains that neither his failure nor his deathbed injunctions could erase the traditional view of the peninsula. Kao-tsung was to point out in 668, ". . . The people (pai-hsing) of Koguryo are also my people,"[41] and this conviction, expressed in the post-conquest administration, was to result in the loss of the peninsula to Sillan domination before the century was out.

The attempt by Kao-tsung and the Empress Wu to achieve what Yang-ti and T'ai-tsung had failed to do, was therefore a result both of tradition and of their own particular ambitions. In formulating their strategy, they took full advantage of the existing strife in the peninsula, choosing Silla, the least populous and most distant of the three states as their ally. This choice, however, was a natural one since Silla was also the most Sinicized of the states, and especially

after the formalization of the 650 treaty of peace with China, had rapidly turned itself into a miniature T'ang. The best source for the period, the Samguk Sagi, tells how closely the structure of both central and provincial government, of tax and corvée systems, and even of court robes, resembled the Chinese model.[42] Silla had its own National Academy, and the "Ode to Peace" (T'ai-p'ing sung) in which Queen Chindok framed her appeal for Chinese aid in 649, is said to show a mastery of classical style.[43] Institutionally, Silla seems to have been in advance of her neighbours, and had succeeded in combining her borrowed sophistication with native institutions like the Hwabaek and the Hwarangto,[44] which, as expressions of the national spirit, served to equip her for later hegemony in the peninsula. The Chinese, in choosing to ally themselves with Silla, showed no signs that they sensed a potential rivalry, nor indeed that they were aware of any ambitions Silla might herself have.

In retrospect, Sillan ambitions seem clear enough, becoming overt by 654 when the new king, Muyŏl, seized from Paekche the entire valley of the Han River, an area which had been held by Paekche for thirty years, but was claimed by all three states.[45] It is not surprising that the Chinese misread the situation, for conflicting reports had been reaching the court for a long time, and since Yŏn'gai Sŏmun's usurpation, the Chinese had tended to accept the Sillan version of events, and there is even some evidence that the strategy of the

expedition of 660 was planned as much by King Muyŏl as by Kao-tsung and his advisors.[46] In the course of the ensuing war, the Sillans played a much greater part than Chinese sources indicate, and as we shall see, Chinese policies ultimately served better the interests of Silla than their own.

In late 660, the great fleet of Su Ting-fang reached the mouth of the Kum River (Chin-ho) and began to move on the Paekchean capital of Ungjin. Even before his arrival, however, the flower of Paekche's resistance, an army of 50,000 volunteers, had been utterly routed by the famed Sillan general, Kim Yusin, and his Hwarang vanguard.[47] Su, meanwhile, defeated another force led by King Uija, and with "over 10,000" of his men slain, the king fled north with his eldest son. Shortly thereafter, the capital was betrayed to the invaders,[48] and in a campaign which lasted only a week, the kingdom of Paekche with a history it traced back 700 years, was extinguished. At its fall, it was a state of 200 cities and a population of 760,000 households.[49]

The Chinese accounts make no mention of the Sillan contribution to the victory, and the sources of neither side record, except obliquely, the rift which must have occurred at this juncture. From all we can gather, Silla received no reward for her efforts and all of Paekche, including even the Han River valley which Silla had so recently regained, was organized into five tu-tu-fu--a precise recollection of the Han colonial venture! The posts of governor-general and

prefect went to local chieftains of the defeated state.[50] Since the organization was meant to be temporary, no protectorate was yet created and Su Ting-fang returned to Lo-yang for congratulations and instructions for the projected assault on Koguryŏ who was now isolated from any ally. With him, he took most of the Paekchean royalty and over 12,000 other captives, presumably of the upper classes, in order to forestall any nationalistic restoration movement which might arise against the relatively small garrison of 10,000 which remained.[51] This wholesale transportation of people is a strong indication of Chinese plans to incorporate as much of the peninsula as possible into the empire.

By the end of 660, preparations for the expedition against Koguryŏ were well underway. Four of China's most distinguished and experienced generals were given charge of an army of 44,000, levied from sixty-seven prefectures in Ho-pei and Ho-nan, the same hard-pressed areas which had supported the Korean expeditions from the Sui onwards.[52] There is reason to assume that the campaign was not a popular one in the northeast,[53] but its dispatch seems to have represented a calculated risk for the rulers, who balanced the dissatisfaction of the area against their projection of a rapid and definitive success. By the time the force set out in the fourth month of 661, it had been supplemented by Uighurs, Sogdians and Hsi to form an impressive thirty-five chün, and the plan was to squeeze Koguryŏ between its advance

from the north and an assault by the Sillans and Chinese garrison troops from the south. Kao-tsung was dissuaded from personal leadership only by the last-minute intervention of the Empress.[54]

From the outset, however, the two-pronged strategy went awry. A Chinese fleet carrying supplies and reinforcements for the Ungjin garrison was wrecked at sea, and inspired by this happening a fierce restoration movement led by a certain general, Poksin, broke out in Paekche.[55] Before long, he had rallied his whole people and won support from Japan. When the Sillans, already disaffected by their treatment a year earlier and by the high-handed actions of the garrison commander, Liu Jen-yüan, conveniently ran out of supplies and retired, the Chinese garrison found itself in an impossible position.[56] In the north, the two major armies of Su Ting-fang and Ch'i-pi Ho-li were unable to effect a junction even by the fall of 662, and Su's troops, who had already endured one winter at the walls of Pyŏngyang, were restive.[57] At court, Kao-tsung had suffered a relapse of what was becoming a chronic illness, had just been forced to send more troops to put down a Uighur rebellion, and was so conscious of the exhaustion of the northeast from the supply needs of the Korean forces, that he had had to cancel the feng-shan sacrifice already announced for 662.[58] There seemed no alternative but retreat, and Ch'i-pi was ordered home while Liu Jen-kuei, who had assumed charge of the Paekche garrison, was

ordered to withdraw into Silla and if unwelcome there, to embark for China.[59] It is of interest to note that the court was by now aware of Sillan dissatisfaction but was unable to make any positive response to it and seems to have been still unwilling to abandon its plans to rule the entire peninsula. In mid-661, Silla's finest king of the century, and a man with firsthand experience of China, a man called Munmu, had come to the throne; yet in the third month of 662, China had unilaterally decreased his status by declaring him governor-general (ta-tu-tu) of Kyerim, the old Han name for his state.[60]

The direct assumption of the conduct of the war by the poorly-informed court in the fall of 662 almost proved disastrous. Fortunately for China, however, Liu Jen-kuei disregarded his instructions, broke out of the siege, regained several lost positions and managed to coax from the reluctant court an additional 7,000 troops hastily levied in Ho-pei.[61] But this was as far as Kao-tsung would go. The next year he issued a remarkable decree apologizing for the hardship and death inflicted in the Korean cause, for the high taxes and onerous ship-building corvées, and he sent commissioners to ten provinces to assess the effects of the war, correct the administration and offer relief to the people.[62] In the meantime, however, the resistance movement of Paekche had exhausted itself in internal strife and Jen-kuei was quick to take advantage of the situation. Only days after Kao-

tsung's decree, he won one of China's greatest victories near the mouth of the Kum River, destroying not only the Paekchean army, but also a supporting armada from Japan under Azumi no Hirabu no Muraji.[63] As four hundred ships burned, "the heavens dark with smoke and the sea red with blood", Chinese arms were vindicated. The court rejoiced but took no immediate steps to complete the conquest of Koguryŏ.

The major reasons for hesitation were undoubtedly the sad domestic results of the campaign and the reception of a detailed report from Jen-kuei which outlined his deficiencies in weapons and supplies, the extremely low morale of his troops, and their desire to return home.[64] The year 664, moreover, was a tense year in the capital, with Liu's report arriving in the midst of Shang-kuan I's attempt to depose the Empress and amid accusations that he was himself planning to use his peninsular troops to engineer a coup.[65] It was decided therefore to freeze the situation. The former Crown Prince of Paekche was sent back to his state as governor-general and Silla was forced the next year to conclude with him a pact of everlasting friendship.[66]

This last action proved to be one of great ineptitude. Silla had once again been deprived of the fruits of victory and Munmu objected strongly to a treaty drafted wholly by the Chinese and to the pressure exerted by Liu Jen-kuei, a mere tu-tu, to compel him to sign.[67] This protest may have been responsible for the immediate re-call of Jen-kuei from the

peninsula,[68] but this could hardly have satisfied the Sillan king, who nonetheless sent his representatives along with Liu to assist at the feng and shan. There, the only notable barbarian absence was Koguryŏ.

Only a month after the sacrifice, Kao-tsung announced what was to prove China's seventh and final expedition against Koguryŏ in the century. Its ostensible purpose was the settlement of the disputed succession which followed Sŏmun's death,[69] but the preparations made clear that China's aim was much greater, and that this time she would be satisfied only with the destruction of the troublesome state. The experienced general Ch'i-pi Ho-li was immediately dispatched to Liaotung with an advance force, and the prestigious veteran Li Chi, probably about eighty at the time, was re-called from semi-retirement as supreme commander. He was seconded by Hsüeh Jen-kuei who had yet to be defeated in battle, and the revenues (tsu-fu) of every prefecture in Ho-pei were directed to Liaotung for the support of the troops.[70]

In the autumn of 667, Li Chi crossed the Liao and in the course of the following year engaged in a series of bloody but inconclusive battles. Not until the ninth lunar month of 668, and after a month-long siege did Pyŏngyang fall to the combined Chinese forces.[71] The city was burned to the ground, destroying all the records of the 705 year-old kingdom, and with the incorporation of its population of perhaps four million persons into direct rule by China,[72] the T'ang

empire reached its greatest extent.

The burning of the capital, which seems to have been an unnecessary action,[73] proved also to be a blunder. Although reconstruction began almost immediately and the new city became the centre of the An-tung protectorate,[74] the possibility of reconciliation, of the salving of national pride, was substantially diminished by it. To the inhabitants of the peninsula it must have appeared as one more instance of Chinese insensitivity, a feeling intensified by the post-conquest administration. The country was divided in the old manner into tu-tu-fu, chou, and hsien, with a dual administration of Chinese and Koreans; purely-Chinese rank was awarded to the pretender to the Korean throne, and the defender of Pyŏngyang, a national hero, was exiled to the remote south of China.[75] These provisions, the natural culmination of Chinese plans for the peninsula, were soon to prove of great benefit to Silla.

We have suggested earlier that the accounts of the peninsular war as they appear in Chinese and Sillan sources differ in several respects. Even in this final campaign, the Chinese see their allies as dilatory and unreliable, pointing out that General Kim Yusin's army of 30,000 men arrived at Pyŏngyang only in time to share in its fall.[76] The preceding account of events is drawn in general from Chinese sources, and it is time now to introduce the Sillan perspective. This is best done, perhaps, by reproducing a document addressed by

King Munmu to the Chinese general, Hsüeh Jen-kuei, in 671, at a time when the estrangement of the two states was almost complete. The text is preserved only in the Samguk Sagi and represents Munmu's response to an ultimatum that within two days he either signify repentance for "crimes" against China, or suffer the condign punishment of the two Chinese armies poised to strike.[77] In his reply, the king recants, but not without listing fully his grievances and calling for the redress. His letter throws much light on Chinese policy in the peninsula and is important for the understanding of subsequent events. It is quoted in detail below.

> . . . In the twenty-second year of chen-kuan [648], my late father went to the court of China and received from the Emperor T'ai-tsung a gracious decree [which said]: "We now attack Koguryo for no other reason than our compassion for Silla, harassed by the two states [of Paekche and Koguryo]. Yearly you are invaded, enjoying no time without trouble. We have no desire for land, nor for treasure or men and women [as subjects]. When we pacify the two states, [all] the land south of Pyongyang and the territory of Paekche shall both be granted to Silla, and peace shall reign forever.". . .[78]
>
> Before the great task was completed, T'ai-tsung died and the present emperor succeeded him, continuing to show us the kindness of before. [Munmu here praises Kao-tsung elaborately and protests his loyalty to him.]
>
> In the fifth year of hsien-ch'ing [660], the Emperor saw that his father's wish had not been carried out . . . and sent a great fleet and troops. My father was old and weak and he could not take the field . . . [so] he ordered me to take command. . . . Even before the [Chinese] fleet entered the river mouth, we had already defeated the great Paekchean force and the two armies advanced together to the capital. Together we pacified one [opposing] state, and afterwards, my father agreed with Su [Ting-fang] that a Chinese garrison of 10,000 be left, and we sent my younger brother with 7,000 troops to join the Ungjin garrison.
>
> After the great [Chinese] army had returned, the bandit Poksin rebelled west of the river [in Paekche] . . .

[He besieged the garrison, totally cutting it off from aid and] I personally led a relief force there . . . and saved 10,000 Chinese troops from the tiger's jaws. . . .[79]

In the sixth year of hsien-ch'ing, Poksin's followers increased and invaded [us] seizing land east of the river. A thousand Chinese from Ungjin were sent against them but were defeated with not a single man escaping.[80] After this defeat, the Ungjin garrison begged us day and night for reinforcements, [but] in Silla there were many epidemics and we could not raise troops and horses. The sad requests were difficult to refuse and we did send many troops who surrounded the city of Chou-liu.[81] The bandits knew our forces were small and attacked us, killing many and forcing a retreat. The cities of the south then all rose together and joined the rebellion of Poksin who again surrounded the garrison. The road was cut off [but Silla managed to get supplies to the garrison] . . .

In the sixth month, my father died and my mourning duties prevented me from taking the field [to rescue the garrison]. China ordered me to lead troops to the north . . . and also to send supplies to [the Chinese forces at] Pyongyang. At this time, the Ungjin garrison sent a man to advise that the garrison was isolated and in danger. . . . [Here follows a long explanation of why Silla gave priority to Pyŏngyang, and a report of how those finally sent to the aid of Ungjin were destroyed].

In the second year of lung-shuo [662], the first month, the Chinese commander Liu [Te-min][82] together with our commander Kim Yusin and others set out to provision the Pyŏngyang troops. At that time, rain, wind, snow and the most extreme cold made men and horses freeze to death, and the men and provisions could not win through. The great army at Pyŏngyang then wanted to go back, and the Sillan troops with their provisions also came back suffering from hunger and cold, their hands and feet frozen, and countless dead littering the roadway. [Here follows a description of how they were attacked en route by the Koreans] . . . In less than a month [after the disaster] the Ungjin garrison demanded still more grain. We had in total already sent tens of thousands of bushels in the south to them, and in the north to Pyŏngyang, so that the strength of the people in our small state was exhausted and our livestock had died [of starvation]. Agriculture was disrupted and the year's barvest gone . . . [so that] the people could not find grass and roots sufficient to keep themselves alive. But the Ungjin garrison had an excess . . . [Here the king explains how clothing was next sent to the garrison] . . .

When your protector-general, Liu Jen-yüan,[83] was thus defending his distant and isolated city, surrounded by bandits and constantly attacked by Paekche, it is Silla

who rescued him. For four years we fed and clothed 10,000 Chinese troops. . . . Our loyalty and toil is great, and worthy of commiseration.

In the third year of lung-shuo [663] the commander Sun Jen-shih[84] brought troops to relieve the garrison and we sent troops along [to help him]. They reached Chou-liu and at this time the Japanese fleet was there to help Paekche with 1,000 warships and their position was guarded by Paekchean cavalry on the shore. It was our cavalry acting as the Chinese vanguard which first defeated the troops on the shore. Chou-liu fell and then after its submission, the south was pacified. [Here follows an explanation of why Silla did not agree to sign a treaty with Paekche at this time] . . .

In the first year of lin-te [664] we received a decree from China blaming us for failure to conclude a treaty [with Paekche] and we sent men to Ungling to swear the oath at an altar built there.[85] The place we swore the oath became the border between our two states. Although the contents of the treaty were not what we wanted, we dared not disobey an imperial decree. [The treaty was formalized and the borders permanently fixed] . . .

In the second year of ch'ien-feng [667] we were told that the supreme commander, Li Chi, had invaded Liaotung and I went to Hansŏng, assembling my troops at the border. [An explanation of how Silla finally advanced toward Pyŏngyang at Li Chi's instruction, but were left in a bad position by his withdrawal and retreated][86] . . . The next year we sent an envoy by sea to discover Li Chi's movements and he received instructions that we should advance and assemble at Pyŏngyang. In the fifth month, the Minister of the Right, Liu [Jen-yüan] arrived, dispatched the Sillan troops, and we advanced to Pyŏngyang. I went to Hansŏng to take [temporary] charge of our troops and when the combined forces were at 虵水[87] [the Korean king] Namgun, sent out troops for a decisive battle. Our troops alone formed the vanguard and we defeated his great force, destroying the morale of the Pyŏngyang defenders. Afterwards, Li Chi chose five hundred of our cavalry to spearhead the assault on the city gates. Then, Pyŏngyang fell.[88]

. . . Our troops all complained then that for nine years they had been in the field and finally had pacified the two states [but] the people were totally exhausted. . . . [They felt that] the people [of Silla] should be rewarded for their effort but Li Chi let it be known [that he felt] that Silla had failed to come when she was most needed and that this must be considered.[89] When our troops heard this, their uneasiness grew. Also, our meritorious generals, whose names are all recorded at our

court, had already reached the capital and said that Silla had been deprived of honour. When the troops returned [and were demobilized?] the common people also found their fear and uneasiness increased.

Also, the cities which once were ours but were seized over thirty years ago by Koguryŏ, we regained in this campaign and we moved people into them, setting up officials to guard them. And [the Chinese] took these cities and gave them back to Koguryŏ. From the time Paekche was pacified . . . Silla has been wholly loyal and has exerted great effort. We know not what is our crime. . . .

In the first year of tsung-chang [668], Paekche moved the boundary markers from where they had been fixed by the treaty. They seized our land and stole our slaves. [Some of] our people they deceived, hiding them in their land and they came often with false demands, refusing to leave. Also, their envoy told us they were rebuilding their fleet [only] in order to attack Japan, but really [we know] they want to attack us. When the people heard of it they were alarmed.[90] [Here an abortive plot initiated by the Paekchean wife of a Sillan tu-tu is described] . . .

In the sixth month of the first year of hsien-heng [670], Koguryŏ plotted rebellion and sought to kill the Chinese officials. We wanted to send troops then, and first we sent to Ungjin saying that since Koguryŏ had rebelled, we had to send troops, and since both of us are imperial subjects, we should co-operate in suppressing the rebels. . . . They sent their ssu-ma to sign a treaty with us saying that lest we suspect each other after the campaign, hostages should be exchanged. . . . Although Paekche agreed to the exchange, she assembled troops in the city [where it was to be carried out] and at night launched a [surprise] attack on us.[91]

In the seventh month, we sent envoys to China to settle the border question, and after examining the maps, we were ordered to restore all of Paekche's old territory. Before long, over the next three or four years, one [state] gave and one took [even more land]. Our people have all lost their original hope and they say that for generations Silla and Paekche have been bitter enemies. Now they see that Paekche is being restored and must again become an independent state. In a hundred years our sons and grandsons must be swallowed up. Silla is a prefecture of the Empire [kuo-chia chih chou][92] and it cannot be divided into two states. We want to be one family, enduring without later calamity.

In the ninth month of last year we sent envoys to explain [this situation] but they were shipwrecked and their replacements also failed to reach China. Afterwards,

> the wind, cold, and waves made it impossible to report. [But] Paekche sent messengers who reported that we were planning to rebel. . . . Afterwards, because of Paekche's slander, advance or retreat was seen as a fault and we have not yet been heard. . . .
>
> When your messenger brought your letter, I was astounded that Your Excellency [Hsüeh Jen-kuei] should have braved the storms and come so far from across the sea. I should have met you with proper protocol and offerings of wine and cattle at the border. Living so far in a different city, I failed to carry out the ceremonial and there was no time to welcome you. I request that you do not consider I am to be blamed.
>
> I have read the message you sent which considers that Silla has already rebelled but this is not our intent. . . .
>
> Now, I have explained my grievances, recording them all without rebelliousness. China has not sent an envoy nor heard my reasons [for my actions]. [Instead] she sent an army of several tens of thousands . . . and towering ships which fill the sea and anchor at the mouth of the [Kum] river. You reprimand Paekche but attack Silla. Alas! when the two states [of Paekche and Koguryŏ] were not yet pacified, we were ordered to attack them. Now that the game has been slaughtered, it is we who are thrown into the cooking-pot! . . .
>
> I write to protest our innocence, to ask you to consider the matter and report it. . . .[93]

Although a number of Munmu's allegations, in default of collaborating evidence, must remain just that, certain of his grievances seem to be well-founded. If T'ai-tsung had indeed promised to increase Sillan territory, the promise had not been honoured, and twenty years of Chinese intervention had brought little but hardship to the area. The king seems to acknowledge, moreover, that China's initial concern lay with the internecine strife in the peninsula. Yet, in the administrative dispositions after each major victory, a clear progression in Chinese ambition is discernible. From 663, Silla was recognized by China only as the tu-tu-fu of Kyerim,[94]

and after the fall of Koguryŏ, the establishment of the An-tung protectorate put Hsüeh Jen-kuei and his garrison of 20,000 in overall charge of peninsular affairs.[95]

On the other hand, Munmu's letter reveals the ambition of his own state, and it is difficult to avoid the impression that Silla's alliance with the T'ang was a tactical one from the beginning. From the time of the Sui expeditions against Koguryŏ, the evidence shows that Silla had initiated a good deal of the peninsular unrest,[96] and some of Munmu's protestations about Sillan participation in the campaign ring hollow. He makes no mention of the "illness" of Kim Yusin which prevented the troops of the great general from reaching Pyŏngyang until immediately before its fall,[97] and Chinese sources have nothing to say of Sillan contributions to the taking of the city. It is possible to see the king's policy as a double one. The Chinese were to exhaust themselves in the fighting and be cast more and more in the role of imperialists while he awaited his chance, allowing his countrymen to see the advantages of Sillan rather than Chinese hegemony. The standard interpretations which see the emergence of Sillan ambition only with the fall of Koguryŏ[98] are perhaps therefore misleading.

Whatever the case, it is clear that within a few short years of her triumph, China had significantly advanced the Sillan cause. Hsüeh Jen-kuei proved to be a stern administrator, and instead of attempting with leniency to reduce

anti-Chinese feeling, he had rigidly enforced the sometimes ill-advised policies of the distant court. The most damaging of these was a decree in the summer of 669, issued according to the Mirror, because rebellious feeling remained strong among the Koreans.

> A decree ordered that 38,200 [Korean] households be transported to the underpopulated areas south of the Yangtze and Huai rivers as well as to prefectures in Shan-nan and Ching-hsi. The impoverished and weak were to remain to support the An-tung protectorate.[99]

Thus, almost four per-cent of the Korean population, representing probably the entire ruling class, was removed forcibly from the country.[100]

Among those who escaped, however, was a close relative of the deposed king, a man called Ansŏng who immediately made himself a symbol of resistance and raised the standard of rebellion in 670. With great perspicacity, Munmu used his position as the only remaining king in the peninsula, to give Ansŏng a patent of kingship and grant him asylum with his 20,000 followers in Silla.[101] The T'ang considered both these Sillan actions to be rebellious and it was when Munmu was charged with "betraying the Mandate of Heaven and repudiating your father's instructions"[102] that he wrote the letter quoted extensively above. Though his apology was accepted in 671, he was by no means sincere, and from 671 to 675 he initiated several forays into Paekche and engaged in numerous battles with the Chinese who found allies only among the unreliable Mulguls. In this period, the Sillan source grows

increasingly boastful, and even though the king once more made formal apology in 675, China was almost certainly on the defensive.[103] Evidence is abundant of disaffected "nationalist" elements from Paekche and Koguryŏ deserting to Silla in these years.[104]

By 677, Sillan power was entrenched all along the Taedŏng River and Hsüeh Jen-kuei who had suffered serious defeats in 676, was in despair.[105] Since accepting Munmu's apology and re-confirming his position in 675, the court had sent no reinforcements and it was clear that none would be forthcoming. As suggested earlier, the year 675 offered the first hints of Empress Wu's usurpation and domestic politics took precedence. The entire northeast was exhausted by drought and by the constant drain on its manpower, and in 670, the rising power of the Tibetans had driven so deeply into China that a projected feng sacrifice for that year had to be cancelled.[106] When the Tibetans annihilated one of the greatest armies China had yet raised two years later, the court was plunged into turmoil and the immediate imperative became the prevention of a Turco-Tibetan alliance.[107] For these reasons, China's last intervention in the peninsula was no more than a face-saving attempt at compromise.

In 677, the deposed king of Koguryŏ and the son of the last king of Paekche, along with many of their transported countrymen were sent back to their country in the hope that they could rally their people and check the Sillans.[108] Both

received a curious combination of titles--Chinese court rank, a governor-generalship, and a patent making them kings of two chün called Ch'ao-hsien and Tai-fang.[109] This seems to have been an innovation in barbarian administration, an attempt with kingly titles to assauge nationalist feeling while the kings were subject as governors-general to the Chinese protector. Predictably, it failed. King Pojang of Koguryŏ was engaged in a conspiracy with the Mulguls from the moment he crossed the Liao, and when he was re-called to China, died on the way. Puyolŏng of Paekche was too frightened both of Silla and of his own people ever to take up residence in his own state. The next year, Silla set up a northern capital on the Taedŏng, and the seat of the T'ang protectorate abandoned its advance back to Pyŏngyang and remained at Hsin-ch'eng in Manchuria.[110] The entire peninsula south of the thirty-ninth parallel became the preserve of Silla.

On his death in 681, King Munmu could well express both his satisfaction that the borders were settled, and his confident wish that "weapons be melted down for agricultural implements".[111] His successors, Sinmun (681-92), Hyoso (692-702) and Sŏngdŏk (702-37) sent tribute regularly to China, received confirmation in return, and only in the great Khitan rebellion of 696-98 were there any signs of strained relations.[112]

In retrospect, the Korean policy of Kao-tsung and the Empress Wu is best seen as a progression from necessity

to ambition to realism. The theoretical basis of traditional Chinese foreign policy was the creation and maintenance of an external order which mirrored the same relationship between ruler and subject as that which existed inside the Wall. Harmonious interdependence of "inner" and "outer" was especially important in the case of a new emperor and the early recalcitrance of Koguryŏ could therefore not remain unchallenged. It was principally the special position of the Empress Wu in government which created the ambition to succeed where T'ai-tsung had failed. For this, the conquest of Koguryŏ was sufficient, but the attempt to incorporate the entire peninsula was too much. Realization of this fact was belated but it came in time to prevent further bloodshed, and the strategic withdrawal of 677 salvaged at least some of China's prestige. It was too late, however, to prevent the virtual destruction of the fu-ping system in the northeast and the economic depression which characterized the area in the succeeding decades.[113] Finally, it failed to impress upon the court the futility of attempting to impose the tu-hu-fu system upon a people with administrative sophistication and national aspirations of their own. In 678, the Empress as de facto regent was dissuaded from a further attack upon Silla only by the dramatic death-bed plea of Chang Wen-kuan: "Now the Tibetans have invaded and we are about to send troops to the west to punish them. Silla, although she claims she will not be coerced (pu-shun), has yet to violate our borders.

. . ."[114] The Empress apparently agreed that so long as Silla observed the forms of her tributary relationship, she could be permitted to exist in peace.

From the year 678, China's whole foreign policy was turned to the west and to the north. From this period, we might regard it as increasingly responsive and, in the widest sense, defensive.

The Tibetans, a people whose first recorded tribute mission reached China in 634, had been rapidly extending their power in Central Asia since about 650, and in 670 initiated a series of large-scale and generally successful raids on the Chinese border.[115] In the autumn of 678, having enticed an incompetent Chinese commander and his force of 180,000 men to Kokonor (Ch'ing-hai), they inflicted upon him a crushing defeat which seems to have had the effect of reducing substantially the military resources of the northwest.[116] It also made the Tibetans an extremely formidable and confident foe, with Ssu-ma Kuang remarking, "Of all the barbarians who have flourished, no others could compare to them."[117] The court, which seems to have suffered some difficulty in raising such a large force, was dismayed, and Kao-tsung convened his first recorded policy debate, a meeting which produced only the time-worn alternatives:

> . . . some wished to conclude a peace and give rest to the people. Others wished to strengthen [the borders] to prepare [for a great attack]. . . . Still others favoured an invincible army to destroy them.[118]

The emperor, probably disappointed that no decision was reached, rewarded and dismissed the participants.

A slightly more original point of view, though one which still illustrates the impoverishment of policy, came from a student in the Kuo-tzu chien, Wei Yüan-chung, who was later to become a controversial chief-minister. Perceiving that the nature of the military was becoming less and less suited to victory, he enumerated its faults--its amateurism, its hereditary quality, its unattractiveness as a career. He pointed out the mediocre quality of leadership, suggesting that generals were chosen for "daring and strength" rather than intelligence or knowledge of strategy and tactics, or simply because they were descendants of generals or military families. He spoke of the sinking level of morale among the soldiery arising because "since Su Ting-fang fought in Liao-tung and Li Chi destroyed Pyŏngyang rewards have not been distributed at all", and because the officials responsible for this, and the generals responsible for recent humiliating defeats had gone unpunished.[119] His solutions were not novel, since Liu Jen-kuei had suggested the same things in 664--that the quality of military leadership be raised and the system of rewards and discipline be properly administered. His memorial does, however, show that Liu's proposals had been ignored, and in looking at the basic causes of military weakness, points up the most serious flaw in T'ang "imperialism".

The T'ang empire was founded upon an essentially

defensive military organization whose training was less than professional, and which was essentially self-supporting and self-equipped.[120] The burden of fu-ping service thus imposed upon the peasantry resident in the more than 600 chün-fu was an onerous one, and a large part of the vagrancy problem which arose in the Chou can be traced to fugitives from the areas where the system was enforced.[121] Recent research has shown that the supplies a soldier was expected to provide for himself exceeded in value the tax remission he received and the land allotted to him was less than he could expect to receive in the normal course of equal-field distribution.[122] The crucial importance of special rewards is therefore clear and as we have seen, generals and officials became increasingly lax and corrupt in this regard as time went on. Moreover, as campaigns became more frequent and of longer duration, the resources of the fu-ping became inadequate and from the Korean campaigns onward, an ever-greater proportion of the hsing-chün or expeditionary armies came to be made up of special levies.[123] In these forces also, and especially because they were constituted technically only for the duration of a given campaign but often found themselves used as garrisons, the question of incentive was crucial. Thus when Wei Yuan-chung criticized the failure to bestow honorific rank and other rewards on meritorious troops, he was condemning the short-sightedness of a court which had yet to realize that it was making the fu-ping obsolete and that the hsing-chün represented

not an expediency, but the transition to the future. In the Chou dynasty, other developments would bring about that realization and pave the way for the creation of a more "professional" military organization under Hsüan-tsung.

In the last years of Kao-tsung, the failings of the system became painfully obvious. The Tibetan victory of 678 enabled them not only to effect an alliance with the Western Turks,[124] but also to consolidate their control over the scattered tribes of the West who had been steadily defecting to them since their seizure of the Four Garrisons in 670.[125] Only the succession of an eight year-old tsan-p'u in 679 gave the T'ang a respite from Tibetan attack, and though the Empress wished to exploit the situation with a massive expedition, P'ei Hsing-chien spoke convincingly enough of the exhaustion of China's western provinces to dissuade her. His subsequent diplomatic manoeuvres broke the Turco-Tibetan alliance and restored Chinese control to a good deal of the lost territory.[126]

P'ei's intervention was well-timed, for in the tenth lunar month of 679, yet another threat loomed in the great rebellion of the Northern Turks. Under A-shih-na Ni-shu-fu and A-shih-te Wen-fu, they rapidly seized all the twenty-four prefectures established in the Shan-yü protectorate in 650, and persuaded both the Khitan and Hsi to join them.[127] Once again the troop levies began, and P'ei Hsing-chien led a force of 180,000 to the north. His inspired leadership won

a resounding if temporary victory, and by Kao-tsung's death the Turks had regained control of much of the Shan-yü area and the Tibetans had resumed their raids.[128] Sadly for China, the succession crisis and the internal rebellions of the next few years left her with little opportunity to confront the border question, and the Empress Wu in the Chou was never able fully to repair the damages caused by the neglect of 683-690. The halcyon days of the T'ang empire were already past.

As we shall see, historians in general are not favourable to the foreign policy of the Empress Wu, regarding her as responsible for the decline of Chinese prestige in Central Asia and for the deterioration of China's own border defenses. In this judgment and particularly as it applies to the Chou, there is a certain validity, but the interpretation is nonetheless facile. It is true that the Empress' deepest concerns, even in Kao-tsung's lifetime, were political and dynastic, and that her greatest care was domestic stability. Foreign affairs never received the same priority and were always related to the above concerns, with the result that the creativity and vigilance so prominent inside the Wall were less conspicuous outside. And of course, neither Kao-tsung nor his wife had any firsthand military experience.

At the same time, foreign policy failures must be placed in the peculiar perspective of the time. The constraints both of tradition and of circumstance imposed upon

the Empress operated with their greatest force in the realm of military and foreign affairs. She knew that to be accounted great, conquest, or more accurately, "pacification" of the barbarians was necessary, but as a woman she could have no very clear perception of the soldier's life, nor could she take the field at the head of her troops. This may help to account for the decline of the fu-ping.

It may also be the case that a concept of empire radically different from that of T'ai-tsung shaped the foreign policy of the period. As we have pointed out, she and her husband were not responsible for the great swing to the West nor for the intervention in Korea which marked the reign of their pre-decessor, and as we shall see, in the Chou, Chinese troops only once were active outside the Wall. Kao-tsung and the Empress came to power, however, at a time when the commitment had been made and when any sign of weakness would have been detrimental certainly to dynastic interests, and possibly to the Empress' own position and political policies. We must repeat that it is unlikely she ever saw military endeavour in any terms other than as an extension of domestic policy. To her, results on the home front were what mattered, and these demanded that T'ai-tsung's achievements be equalled or surpassed.

The Korean experience, we have suggested, was the formative one. It revealed not only the rewards of success but also its cost. From the time the peninsula was lost to

direct control, foreign policy became increasingly responsive. The Empress seems to have decided to hold if possible what China already possessed, but to acquire no more. It was chiefly for this reason that to meet the invasions of the Chou dynasty, she was able year after year to call upon truly amazing reserves of manpower, armies which sometimes reached half a million. While her people enjoyed domestic peace, they would fight more readily to preserve it than to extend the glory and prestige of the empire.

What Korea failed to teach, or rather what the Empress failed to learn was that the two bases of T'ang foreign policy, the fu-ping and tu-hu-fu systems were incompatible. The latter aimed to "transform" the barbarians, and succeeded usually in bettering their administrative skills and technical sophistication. All the while, and even while providing for a good deal of self-government, it insisted on deference and subordination with the result that it fuelled ambitions of a proto-nationalistic sort. Neither the fu-ping nor the hsing-chün made provision for the establishment of foreign garrisons, and so could not provide the requisite enforcement of semi-colonial rule. In the Chou, the Empress was often forced to rely on undignified expedients in dealing with the barbarians, and while they were successful in the short-run, they left her successors with problems greater than she had herself to face.

By 684, it was the shortcomings rather than the

successes of the foreign policy of the previous two decades which were most obvious, and they held promise of a greater realism in foreign affairs which the Chou was at least partially to realize.

NOTES

(CHAPTER VIII)

[1]See for instance, Scott, H.D., The Golden Age of Chinese Art: The Lively T'ang Dynasty (Tuttle, 1967), Mahler, J.G., The Westerners among the Figurines of the T'ang Dynasty in China (Rome, 1959), and Reischauer, E.O., Ennin's Travels in T'ang China (New York, 1955).

[2]CTW 96:11b, from the Act of Grace changing the reign title to kuang-chai.

[3]See Chapter IX.

[4]See Wright, "T'ai-tsung and Buddhism," Perspectives, pp. 250ff. for a discussion of what the author calls T'ai-tsung's "Han Wu-ti syndrome," and Wechsler, "Mirror," pp. 101-105 with the sources cited there. Other indications are found TCTC 196, p. 6173, 198, p. 6226, and 198, p. 6247.

[5]See CTS 194 shang:3596:2, 194 hsia:3599:2, 196 shang: 3603:4, and 199 shang:3615:1, and the succinct summary of T'ai-tsung's reign by H. Wechsler in the forthcoming Cambridge History of China, Vol. III.

[6]TCTC 197, p. 6218, and 200, p. 6323 for his intention personally to attack Korea. Other indications are found TFYK 124:8b and 543:7a. The latter notice is an interesting memorial dissuading him from going to Korea.

[7]TCTC 199, pp. 6269-70. CTS 196 shang:3604:2 points out that since the warning was accompanied with precious objects for T'ai-tsung's tomb, Kao-tsung was able to put a favourable interpretation on it, exchanging gifts and bestowing on the Tibetan ruler an additional title.

[8]TCTC, loc. cit.

[9]TCTC 199, p. 6273, CTS 194 hsia:3600:1. The best secondary accounts are Ise Sentaro, Chugoku seiiki keieishi kenkyū (Tokyo, 1968), pp. 196ff. and Ts'en Chung-mien, T'u-chüeh chi-shih (Shanghai, 1959), pp. 269-74. I am in agreement with Prof. Ise that the rising was inspired not by any

Chinese action, but by internecine strife among the Western Turks which can be traced back to 646 and to Ho-lu's rapid success which led him to believe that Chinese arms were weakened by T'ai-tsung's death.

[10] TCTC 199, p. 6274. HTS 215 hsia:4134:1 says there were only 20,000 Chinese troops while CTS and TT 199 are silent on the matter.

The troops were levied in the chün-fu of Ch'in, Ch'eng, Ch'i and Yung, all of which lie just west of Ch'ang-an and are located in Ku Chi-kuang, Fu-ping, p. 155. In Yung (Ching-chao), there were 131 chün-fu with an average of about 1,000 men each, so that I think the higher figure is the more likely one.

On the fu-ping system, there are few studies of note since Pulleyblank reviewed the literature in 1955 (An Lu-shan, p. 140) aside from Ku's excellent if tendentious work cited above. Kikuchi Hideo had published some fine articles, and his "Fuhei seido no tenkai," Sekai Rekishi V, pp. 407-439, is perhaps the best available introduction to the subject. See also, his "Tō setsushōfu no bunpu ni kansuru ichi kaishaku," Tōyōshi kenkyū 27:2 (1968) which settles, I think, a number of outstanding questions on the distribution of the units and their relationship to earlier military systems.

Because of the necessity to make contrast with expeditions later in the century, the form of Kao-tsung's first major army is worth a closer look. Generally speaking, the emperor, on the advice of the Board of war chose one or more generals who were designated as tsung-kuan for the area in which the expeditionary army or hsing-chün was to engage. At the time they and their deputy-commanders were chosen, each was allotted a specific number of troops, called cheng-hsing-jen who were usually chosen from fu-ping units in specified chün-fu. The troops, which provided their own clothing and equipment, etc., were told how long the expedition was to last (TCTC 201, pp. 6340-1) and as far as we can tell, were to be replaced when their tour was complete, usually after one year. The government had a pool of perhaps 500,000 troops to draw upon, minus about 100,000 who acted in rotation as capital guards and another 50-100,000 stationed at the borders. The establishment of these border garrisons remains something of a puzzle. See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 147-49. Empress Wu increased the fu-ping just prior to her usurpation.

[11] TCTC 199, p. 6277.

[12] CTW 15:3b, and see also TCTC 199, p. 6277. For reasons shortly to be suggested, it is difficult to know which of the states began the hostilities which inspired Kao-tsung's rebuke. I tend to believe the Sillan account that

Paekche was emboldened by T'ai-tsung's death to violate the Sillan border and seize seven fortresses, since she had been formally allied with Koguryo since 643 and both had designs on Sillan territory. Silla, however, had retaliated even before sending Kim Chunchu, the future King Muyŏl, to China in 649.

A second embassy arrived in 650 bearing the plea for aid from the Sillan Queen Chindok and Kao-tsung seems to have responded with a "mutual security" treaty. See Hulbert's History of Korea, C.N. Weems ed. (New York, 1962), p. ED105.

There are few satisfactory studies of Sino-Korean relations in this period and most of my remarks on the subject are drawn from Kim Pusik's Samguk Sagi of 1145 supplemented of course by the Chinese sources. The best secondary study is Ikeuchi Hiroshi, Man-Senshi no kenkyū (Tokyo, 1960) and also useful is Nishijima Sadao, "Roku-hachi seiki no Tōa," Nippon Rekishi: kodai II (Iwanami, Tokyo, 1962), pp. 230-78.

[12a] T'ai-tsung's will is found TTCLC 11:2b and CTW 9: 8b, and on tsai-hsiang opposition to the attack on Korea, Wechsler, "Factionalism," Perspectives, p. 95. Of Kao-tsung's tsai-hsiang only Li Chi had been in favour, and Ch'u Sui-liang had been a most outspoken opponent.

[13] TCTC 199, p. 6287.

[14] CTS 93:3366:2. After the recovery of the Four Garrisons in 692.

[15] TCTC 202, p. 6385. Discussed passim.

[16] TCTC 199, pp. 6287-8, CTS 199 shang:3615:2. See also Ikeuchi, Man-Senshi I, pp. 308ff. on the campaign. It might be noted that this first campaign caused great hardship in Shantung, a fact called to Kao-tsung's attention in early 656 by Lai Chi (#38). See TCTC 200, pp. 6296-97.

[17] Discussed passim.

[18] TCTC 200, pp. 6295-96 which describes an attempt to set up rival khans in order to detach Ho-lu's followers. See also TCTC 200, pp. 6301-2 and note the lengthy review of T'ang-Turkic relations in the K'ao-i notice.

[19] Biographies CTS 83:3344:3, HTS 111:3934:2. Su's background was typical of the northeastern hao-chieh. The son of a man who never held office but was able to lead thousands of men into the fray at the collapse of the Sui, he gained early experience against the Turks under T'ai-tsung and thenceforth pursued a career of uninterrupted military success. He

won noble titles without ever holding significant civil office, and was praised at his death in 667, as the conqueror of three states. His biography gives an account of the ensuing campaign.

[20] TCTC 200, p. 6305.

[21] On the mu-ping, Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 146-47.

[22] The best short account is TCTC 200, pp. 6306-8, and see also CTS 194 hsia:3600:2.

[23] This practice of attaching a censor to expeditionary forces seems to have discontinued sometime before 687 when the Empress was petitioned to re-instate it. She refused on the grounds that generals required freedom of action. THY 62, p. 1086 and TCTC 204, pp. 6446-7. On central control of the military, see Kikuchi, "Tenkai," pp. 421ff.

[24] On these terms, note 21 above, and Kikuchi Hideo, "Tōdai no fubo no seikaku to meishō to ni tsuite," Shien 67-68 (1956). Under this system, a central official called the ping-mu was sent to an area usually chosen for its military reputation, large population or absence of fu-ping units, and there chose a suitable number of troops from households with a number of sons. Service was compulsory, and troops of this sort were equipped and supplied by the prefecture, so that it was a much more expensive proposition for the state than a levy of fu-ping units alone. Kikuchi shows that from the beginning, the wealthy and influential managed to avoid service and that troops of this sort tended to be used often as occupying forces, not being demobilized so rapidly as the fu-ping. Liu Jen-kuei's 664 memorial cited earlier (CTS 84: 3346:3) is a good indication of this.

[25] See note 10 above.

[26] Note 24 above.

[27] Note 24 above and subsequent discussion in the text.

[28] Note 24 above.

[29] The T'ang use of barbarians is well-known, and Chao I comments on it Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao 17, p. 327 following his discussion of the amazing success of T'ang arms.

[30] On the early organization of the area, see Ōtani Shōshin's study of the An-hsi protectorate in Toyōshi ronso, ed. by Ikeuchi Hiroshi (Tokyo, 1925), pp. 271-92. On Lu Ch'eng-ch'ing, Appendix II, #46. Lu had made his reputation

by compiling for T'ai-tsung a complete census of China's population from earliest times, but was in mild disgrace at this time because of his close relationship to Ch'u Sui-liang. He had much administrative ability and pursued a successful career in the Board of Finance until his dismissal for erroneous estimates of expenditure.

[31] TCTC 200, p. 6307, CTS 81:3341:3.

[32] TCTC 200, pp. 6307 and 6317-18. See also Lin T'ien-wei, Hsin-pien, p. 366.

[33] A recent and eloquent appreciation of the T'ang empire, is Miyasaki Ichisada, Dai To teikoku (Tokyo, 1968), especially pp. 319ff.

[34] Ise, Seiiki, p. 204.

[35] This was the sixth month of 658. The troops were mostly those of Ch'eng Ming-chen (CTS 199 shang:3615:2) presumably raised in Liao-tung, though the famed general Hsüeh Jen-kuei (CTS 83:3345:1, HTS 111:3934:4) was dispatched as his deputy. In the major battle of the campaign, the Chinese were victorious against a force estimated at 30,000 but the victory was facilitated by the rebellion of the Koreans' Khitan allies.

Events in the peninsula are discussed passim in the text.

[36] TCTC 200, p. 6320. China later justified this attack in the treaty she forced Silla and Paekche to conclude in 665. Samguk Sagi (henceforth cited SS) 6, p. 68. Claiming that Paekche had thrown of its allegiance to China, formented discord with Silla, and formed alliances with Koguryŏ and Japan, the emperor had given the state a chance to recant, attacking only when it "considered its position impregnable because of the great distance and was contemptuous of our will. . . ."

A caution about sources might here be inserted. Since the records of Koguryŏ perished in the pack of Pyŏngyang in 668, the Samguk Sagi and Samguk Yusa offer no more than an abridgement of the Chinese histories in writing about the state. As a result, an unbiased view of peninsular strife in the period is almost impossible.

[37] HTS 220:4147:4. See also CTS 61:3300:3, biography of Wen Yen-po (#21). On China's early relations with the peninsula, rapid summaries are found in Hatada Takashi, A History of Korea, trans. and ed. by W.W. Smith and B.H. Hazard (Santa Barbara, 1969), pp. 3-24, and Henthorn, W.E., A History of Korea (New York, 1971), pp. 18-54.

[38]TCTC 190, p. 5976, HTS 220:4194:1 and 3. The kings of the three states received patents calling them chün-wang and using the names of the Han commanderies. They also received the Chinese titles of chu-kuo or shang-chu-kuo (CTS 1:3065:4), the highest in the system of honorific rank. Nishijima, "Roku-hachi seiki," p. 255, notices the ambiguous nature of these conferrals.

Mori Miyao, "Zui-To to Chiuruku kokka," Kōdaishi kōza, 10 (Tokyo, 1964), pp. 83-116, summarizes a paradigm widely used in Japanese scholarship, in which China's foreign relationships are divided into several types: father-son, father-in-law-son-in-law, ruler-subject, patent and seal, direct control, and enemy state, roughly in their order of chronological evolution. The relationship with the Korean states was a highly advanced one.

[39]CTS 199 shang:3615:2, TCTC 197, p. 6202, and SS 49, pp. 486ff. for his biography. The latter source tells us that after murdering over a hundred high officials at a banquet, he killed the king and installed a puppet ruler from a cadet branch of the royal house. He was himself the real ruler, and one of great cruelty and severity. "No one dared [even] to look upon his face and when he mounted or dismounted from his horse, nobles and generals prostrated themselves on the earth. . . ."

[40]CTS 199 shang:3615:2.

[41]TCTC 201, p. 6355. See also THY 43, p. 766. The occasion was the sighting of a comet which Hsü Ching-tsung interpreted as an omen of Koguryŏ's fall. Kao-tsung disagreed.

[42]SS 4, pp. 56ff. Although the process had been going on for some time, it became wholly conscious in 649 when Silla changed her calendar to that of the T'ang and began to use Chinese era-names. See also Nishijima, "Roku-hachi seiki," pp. 258ff.

[43]Text, CTS 199 shang:3617:1 and SS 5, p. 57. It is of the five-word line style, and consists of praise for the T'ang with an appeal for aid.

[44]The Hwabaek was the ancient Sillan Council of State and continued to exist above the Sinicized administration, deciding the most important state matters. The Hwarangto, which might be translated as "Company of Knights of the Flower," was inaugurated in the middle of the sixth century and aimed to develop carefully chosen young men into military and societal leaders. It rapidly built a tradition of patriotism and loyalty, high culture and leadership, and under Kim Yusin, the Hwarang became the flower of the Sillan

army. The only English treatment of the subject is Rutt, R., "The Flower Boys of Silla," Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 38 (1961).

[45]SS 5, p. 58. Muyol (r. 654-661) was a nephew of Queen Chindok, not as the CTS suggests, her brother.

[46]His son Munmu was to make the claim in the document quoted extensively in the text.

[47]SS 28, pp. 276-77 from the annals of Paekche is probably the best account of the events and agrees in general outline with the Sillan record, SS 5, pp. 59-63. It was apparently Yusin's victory which prevented Paekche from fortifying the mouth of the White River and so blocking the passage of the Chinese fleet. The Chinese accounts, for instance, TCTC 200, p. 6321, make no mention of the Sillan contribution.

[48]SS 28, p. 277. When King Uija and the Crown Prince fled, the king's second son declared himself ruler and invested the capital. His nephew, son of the Crown Prince, judged this to be usurpation and surrendered to Su Ting-fang with the majority of the capital residents. On the fall of the city, Uija gave himself up and died of illness shortly thereafter.

[49]CTS 199 shang:3616:2, SS 28, p. 277. Overall authority was vested, however, in a Chinese tu-tu, a post soon given to Liu Jen-yüan.

[50]CTS 199 shang:3616:2, SS 28, p. 277.

[51]SS 28, p. 277 specifies that those transported consisted of ". . . eighty-eight persons of the royal family, great generals and ministers, and 12,807 of the people. . . ." We know very little of this resettlement, but the much greater movement of people at the fall of Koguryo has been studied in detail by Hino Kaisaburo, "Sho Kokuli koku no kenkyu," Shien 60 and 61 (1956), pp. 29-45 and 19-41. Hino points out that as early as 643, T'ai-tsung had settled inside the Wall about 3,500 of Korea's best soldiers in order to weaken resistance in the state, providing a precedent for the transportation. Later, it was hoped that by removing the leaders of society movements of national liberation could be forestalled. In all likelihood, the same motive was present in 660 and suggests that the Chinese planned to incorporate the peninsula.

Prof. Hatada (Korea, p. 25) is convinced that the Paekcheans were enslaved, but I find no evidence of this. The Koreans, we are told, were later settled in underpopulated areas of the northwest, so that the need for labour was a

motive in their placement, but we are also told they took with them their chariots, horses and cattle, and this seems to suggest quite the opposite. Prof. Hino makes no suggestion.

[52]TCTC 200, pp. 6322-23. In the three areas mentioned, there existed nineteen prefectures which had fu-ping units, and according to the figures of Ku Chi-kuang and Kikuchi, these yielded on paper, about 130,000 troops. The fact that only a third of this total was produced by what seems to have been a full levy, and that at least a portion of these were probably conscripts and volunteers, would seem to suggest that the effective strength of the system had been substantially reduced by 660.

[53]With the exception of Ch'i-pi Ho-li, the other three commanders were all prominent members of the Shantung hao-chieh, and this coupled with the fact that the expedition was launched from Lo-yang, suggests a special effort to persuade the northeast.

[54]TCTC 200, p. 6324. The year 660 was that of Kao-tsung's first serious illness. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, p. 59, speculates on the Empress' reasons for opposing her husband's participation, and see also THY 95, p. 1708 for other opposition.

[55]SS 28, pp. 278-9, TCTC 200, pp. 6323-4. Poksin set up as ruler, a son of the former king who had been a hostage in Japan. These two, aided by a Buddhist monk called Tochim, managed to rally the populace and put the garrison of Li Jen-yüan (HTS 220:4148:4) under severe pressure.

[56]SS 5, p. 62 and 28, p. 278 both record engagements in which Silla was bested and this may be the real reason she retired. The Sillan king Muyol, who was to die in mid-661, seems to have left state affairs in the hands of his son Munmu, and as we shall later suggest, he was playing a double game at the time.

Liu Jen-kuei, given the task of relieving the garrison is said to have remarked that he wanted to pacify once and for all (sao-p'ing) the Eastern barbarians--a remark hardly calculated to defuse the situation. TCTC 200, p. 6324.

[57]TCTC 200, pp. 6325-27. Su, in fact, was already at the walls of Pyongyang by the seventh month of 661. On Ch'i-pi, see CTS 109:3400:2, HTS 110:3932:2.

[58]On the Uighur rebellion, which in three months had also gained the support of 100,000 Mulguls, see TCTC 200, pp. 6326-29. Five generals were sent against them and though

the heroism of Hsüeh Jen-kuei resolved the incident with relatively little bloodshed, 13,000 Chinese were lost in a fruitless pursuit of the Uighurs. In early 663, two new protectorates were set up in the area.

On Kao-tsung's illness, see TCTC 200, p. 6329, and on the cancellation of the sacrifice, TCTC 201, p. 6332.

[59]TCTC 201, pp. 6336ff. The full text of these instructions is found CTW 14:3a.

[60]SS 6, p. 67. Munmu had been Sillan ambassador to China in 650.

[61]SS 28, p. 279. Jen-kuei was able to do this when the restoration leaders killed each other off, leaving prince Pung in command. See also Jen-kuei's biography, CTS 84:3346:1, HTS 108:3928:3, and for the troops, all levied in Ho-pei, TCTC 200, p. 6330.

[62]TCTC 201, p. 6337, dates the decree found CTW 12:10a in the eighth month of 663.

[63]TCTC 201, pp. 6336-37, SS 28, p. 278 and 6, p. 67. The Sillan source claims that the state had twenty-eight generals in the field, and that they were responsible for taking the capital. The only Chinese source to acknowledge Sillan aid is CTS 199 shang:3616:3. Ikeuchi, Man-Senshi, II, pp. 72-246 offers the fullest account of the campaign.

The remnants of the Japanese are said to have surrendered and SS 42, p. 436 preserves a severe reprimand delivered to them by King Munmu.

[64]TCTC 201, pp. 6340-42, and a fuller version CTS 84:3346:3.

[65]TCTC 201, p. 6342, CTS 84:3346:4. Liu had powerful enemies at court, of whom Li Ching-hsüan was the most notable. See note 107 below.

[66]SS 6, p. 68, and CTS 199 shang:3616:3 for the text. The pact which is discussed later in the text, was sealed with the slaughter of a white horse, a ritual seemingly sufficient to guarantee its sacredness. In it, Silla is praised as a model of barbarian submission and the claim is made that Silla requested the treaty. Munmu was later to claim that it was imposed on him.

[67]Munmu's position was that of ta-tu-tu, a post he considered superior to that of Jen-kuei. Hino, "Sho kokuli koku," 2, p. 32 suggests that it was the practice to have a Chinese tu-tu supervise native rulers even if their ranks

were superior. Munmu was also disgruntled because Uija's son had been given the same rank as he. SS 28, p. 279.

[68]Liu returned ostensibly to participate in the feng-shan and seems never to have returned to the peninsula. In 668 he was appointed general against Koguryo, but almost immediately removed for "loitering" in the prosecution of the attack. TCTC 201, p. 6355.

[69]TCTC 201, p. 6347. In the fifth month of 666, Somun's heir requested aid against a challenge from his younger brothers. The final campaign is described by Ikeuchi, II, pp. 276-418.

[70]TCTC 201, p. 6351.

[71]SS 6, pp. 70-71, TCTC 201, pp. 6352ff., TFYK 986: 9aff. The biographies of the various commanders also offer details.

TCTC 201, p. 6354 preserves a very interesting conversation between Kao-tsung and Chia Yen-chung, a censor who had been attached to the army, and was able to explain why this campaign would succeed where the others had failed.

[72]TCTC 201, p. 6356 estimates the population at 697,000 households and Hino, pointing out that this is probably a low figure puts the population at about four million.

[73]The siege lasted only two months and was betrayed by a monk so that it was taken with little bloodshed. The burning seems therefore to have been less a reprisal than an expression of Chinese to pacify the country permanently. It should be seen in the context of the re-settlement of 150,000 Koreans.

[74]CTS 199 shang:3616:1. Nishijima, "Roku-hachi seiki," pp. 263-4 suggests some of the implications of the organization, and we might note especially the appointment of King Pojang to the presidency of the Board of Works. Appended to his title was the term yüan-wai t'ung-cheng which Hu San-hsing (TCTC 201, p. 6356) explains as a supernumerary appointment with all the emoluments of the regular holder of the post. This was essentially a sinecure, awarded only once before and for a much lower post, in 654. It was to become increasingly frequent and as one of the Empress' irregular forms of appointment, was to contribute to the serious economic problems of the end of her reign.

[75]CTS 199 shang:3616:1.

[76]The major accounts, CTS 199 shang:3616:1, HTS 220:

4148:4, and TCTC, make no mention of Sillan participation. The Sillan accout suggests that their troops engaged the Koreans once, in the seventh month of 668, and reached Pyongyang two months later. This was almost twenty months after the campaign was initiated, and a few days before the city fell. Munmu, on two occasions refused to meet either Li Chi or Hsüeh Jen-kuei, each time sending a subordinate to represent him.

The attitude of the Chinese in these circumstances seems understandable, and we might notice here a remark in CTS 199 shang:3617:1: "In the fifth year of hsien-ching [660] . . . [Paekche was extinguished]. From this time, Silla gradually seized the territory of Koguryo and Paekche and greatly expanded her borders, in the west even to the sea." Curiously, the other sources have no parallel passage and if it represents more than the historian's hindsight, it could explain, for instance, why Munmu was demoted to tu-tu in 663 and why China determined to incorporate the peninsula.

[77] SS 5, pp. 77-81. There exist many lacunae in the early part of the account and a number of errors in the text so that the background is not altogether clear. It seems, however, that in the sixth month of 671, Silla had badly defeated a combined Chinese and Paekchean force, inflicting over 5,000 casualties. The next month, she received a severe reprimand from Hsüeh Jen-kuei which gave Munmu two days to decide whether he would repent for his recent "crimes" or face attack by two Chinese armies.

[78] There is no Chinese record of any such promise.

[79] An event unmentioned in Chinese sources, but attested SS 28, p. 278 and 5, p. 62, the annals both of Paekche and Silla. Neither mentions Munmu's leadership.

[80] Unmentioned in any text.

[81] SS 5, p. 62 verifies the Sillan defeat which occurred in the fourth month. During the first part of the year, Silla was also meeting an invasion of Koreans and Mulguls and was unable to repel them until mid-year. SS 42, p. 434, the biography of Kim Yusin, gives details. I find no other mention of an epidemic, but if Munmu's statement is true, Silla was indeed hard-pressed at the time.

[82] The name Te-min, found in Yusin's biography, seems to have been a reference to Jen-kuei though it is not mentioned in his biography.

[83] The text refers to Jen-yüan as tsung-kuan rather than tu-tu which was his actual rank while heading the garrison.

[84]No information is available on Sun.

[85]I have not been able to pinpoint the exact location of Ungling. If, as seems likely, it was near Ungjin and Ungchon, Silla did quite well in the settlement. See map.

[86]SS 6, p. 70 relates that at this time, the tenth month of 667, Li Chi was two hundred li north of Pyongyang. The king sent him a message by fast Khitan cavalry, and was told to advance. He had scarcely done so when he heard that Li Chi had retreated, so he also withdrew.

Chinese sources offer little enlightenment on the matter except to suggest that Li was busy re-provisioning the fleet which had lost its supplies before effecting a junction with his troops. This, combined with the severe winter, may have prevented him from moving. The next engagement recorded took place in the second month of 668. It is interesting to note that no sooner had Munmu withdrawn than he received an imperial command transmitted by Liu Jen-yüan that he "aid in the subjection of Koguryo." Receiving orders from two sources must have caused confusion.

[87]I cannot identify the site mentioned.

[88]SS 6, p. 71 records a Sillan victory in the seventh month and this is probably the one to which Munmu refers. Coming two months before the fall of Pyongyang, it is difficult to say what effect it had. The Sillan annals, incidentally, make no mention of their cavalry leading the assault on the city and I suspect exaggeration here.

[89]The Chinese sources make no mention of reward to the Sillans and the Sillan annals detail only the rewards bestowed by their own state. SS 42, p. 433 records that in 660 Su Ting-fang offered Kum Yusin and some other generals, feoffdoms to be carved from the conquered territory. Yusin refused on the grounds that China had rescued his country from peril, but the refusal has a ring of insincerity and the text continues, ". . . the T'ang troops had extinguished Paekche . . . and secretly plotted to invade Silla. Our king knew of this and asked his ministers and generals what should be done . . . [preparations were made and] the spies of the Chinese learned we were ready . . . [and the attack was aborted]." There is no confirmation in other sources, but as an explanation for the strained relations which followed, it seems feasible.

In 668, SS 43, p. 438 records that gold and silk were bestowed by the Chinese upon those who had assisted in the campaign and an imperial commendation awarded to Yusin. In view of Munmu's claim and in view of the fact that Yusin is recorded to have been absent at Pyongyang, this report seems

contradictory. The Chinese, furthermore, had never before rewarded the Sillans in this fashion and I am inclined to reject the report.

[90]There is no record elsewhere that Paekche re-initiated hostilities, and the Sillan annals mention no fighting until early 670.

[91]The reference here is to the episode of Ansong, discussed passim in text. See SS 6, p. 73. Munmu's version seems reliable since the Sillans had repulsed a large Korean invasion only two months earlier and so considered Koguryo the greater threat.

[92]I am not sure of Munmu's meaning here.

[93]SS 7, pp. 77-82.

[94]SS 6, p. 67. The text says ta-tu-tu-fu.

[95]TCTC 201, pp. 6356-57. An-tung consisted technically only of the nine tu-tu-fu and forty-two chou into which Koguryo had been divided. Both Paekche and Silla were presumably subordinate to the protector-general.

[96]Ikeuchi, Man-Senshi, I, pp. 84-87 provides in tabular form, a summation of relations among the peninsular states, and the annals of Paekche and Silla, while often contradictory, at least present a chronicle of aggression and reprisal from which Silla emerges no better than her neighbours.

[97]Yusin's biography makes no mention of his illness, but SS 6, p. 71 remarks that when Munmu was summoned to join Li Chi in the sixth month he "remained in the capital because of Yusin's illness." Munmu arrived in the minth month and without Yusin. The latter's biography says simply, "Our great king Munmu and the Duke of Ying [Li Chi] defeated Pyongyang." SS 43, p. 438.

[98]For instance, Hatada, Korea, p. 24 sees the beginnings of Sillan ambition only with the fall of Koguryo. I have tried to demonstrate its evidence a decade earlier.

[99]TCTC 201, p. 6359. Every other source gives the figure 28,000. See for instance TFYK 486:12a.

[100]See note 51. The transportation of so many Koreans is an index, I think, of the ferocious anti-T'ang feeling which must have been present among the Koreans. Their relocation in underpopulated sectors of the northwest

was designed probably to separate them as completely as possible from their homeland since as a group, they were not really farmers and since depopulation was equally serious in the northeast. Hino, "Sho Kokuli koku," 2, p. 25, points out that the settlers were taken from every part of the defeated state and their removal thus caused widespread disturbance.

This measure was perhaps the single most important factor in Silla's later unification of the peninsula. The re-settled clans were precisely those who had constituted the greatest opposition to her in previous years and their removal left Koguryo substantially weakened and her people so angered they either turned on China or fled to Silla.

[101] SS 6, pp. 73-74, TCTC 201, pp. 6363-64 where the rebel is incorrectly called An Shun. The uprising was not, in fact, initiated by Ansong who appears as rather an unsuitable leader, killing his colleague and fleeing to Silla at the appearance of the Chinese troops. Munmu provided the rebels with supplies early in the rising, and in the eighth month of 670, bestowed upon Ansong a patent making him King of Koguryo. The patent, itself a usurpation of imperial prerogative, contained some inflammatory phrases, among them the statement that Koguryo must not be extinguished, its royal line cut off, and its people left leaderless. After their flight, Ansong and his followers were given Sillan bone-rank and settled in territory seized from Paekche.

[102] SS 7, p. 76.

[103] Hulbert's History of Korea, p. 114ff. contains an account of Silla's aggrandizement in the period. On Munmu's apology, SS 7, p. 84.

[104] SS 7, pp. 82-83.

[105] SS 7, pp. 84-85. In 675, Silla claimed eighteen successive victories "large and small" and in an amphibious engagement of 676 claimed to have killed more than 4,000 of Hsüeh's troops. In the second month of 676, Hsüeh was forced to move the seat of the protectorate back to the old city of Liao-tung (THY 73, p. 1318, TCTC 202, p. 6378). The K'ao-i, loc. cit. reproduces a shih-lu notice saying the move was made in 670, but Ssu-ma Kuang rejects this, following the Hui-yao.

[106] TCTC 202, p. 6379. This would have been an unprecedented event.

[107] TCTC 202, p. 6385 and the biography of Li Ching-hsüan, #59. The affair reflects badly on Liu Jen-kuei who

knew that Li had long been his enemy at court, and knowing also that he had no military ability, recommended him to pacify the Tibetans. Li's protests were to no avail since Liu's prestige was so great.

The Western Turks were flirting with the Tibetans and a brief alliance did occur in mid-676. TCTC 202, pp. 6390-91.

[108] CTS 199 shang:3616:1, HTS 220:4149:1, TCTC 202, pp. 6382-83, TFYK 710:6a. Hino, "Sho Kokuli koku," 2, pp. 28ff. gives a good secondary account.

Sillan successes in the 670's and the demonstrated unreliability of the Mulguls probably account for the king's return, though the immediate cause was another rising in Koguryo in 676 which showed that even the highly-praised administration of Hsüeh Jen-kuei could not pacify the area. The hope of the court was that the return of the transported Koreans would bolster Pojang's authority and perhaps constitute a barrier to further Sillan expansion. The king's betrayal aborted the project and it seems that most of the Koreans remained in the Liao-tung area.

[109] Among the several sources cited in the preceding note are a number of contradictions. TCTC is alone in using wang instead of chün-wang, and in the matter of the tu-tu position, CTS, HTS and THY 95, p. 1709 give Liao-tung, TFYK gives Liao-chou, and TCTC gives Liao-tung chou. All term Paekche, Hsiung-chin. The use of Ch'ao-hsien and Tai-fang with its overtones of the Han colonial venture strikes me as rather inept and perhaps reflects the unwillingness of the court to admit the failure of so costly a conquest.

[110] The return of Pojang had been accompanied by the movement of the protectorate forward from Liao-tung to Hsin-ch'eng. The latter was an admirable defensive position and when the venture failed, the Chinese remained there. It is interesting to note that in 676 when the protectorate had been moved back to the Liao, the Chinese had relied principally on native officials (TCTC 202, p. 6379) and the same procedure was probably followed at this time. The Chinese awareness of the need for self-government was slow in coming.

After Pojang's death, his position was inherited by his son under whom most of the area between Hsin-ch'eng and the Taedong River became virtually independent and is often termed Lesser Koguryo. In 698, the Empress ended the fiction of Chinese rule there by creating a much smaller An-tung protectorate. THY 73, p. 1318 points out that most of the Koreans joined the Turks or Mulguls and the royal line died out.

[111] SS 7, p. 86.

[112]The relations are outlined SS 8 and 9 and THY 95, pp. 1712-13. See also Ikeuchi, Man-Senshi I, pp. 325-87.

[113]See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 75-81, and Ku Chi-kuang, Fu-ping, pp. 261-70 which emphasizes the strains placed on the system by the Korean wars and the An-tung administration. He suggests that the important change there was the melding of conscript and garrison forces.

I am in sympathy with this view, but would date the development rather earlier than Professor Ku, possibly from 663 when Kao-tsung lowered to fifty-eight the age when service was ended (TT 6, p. 33). I have tried to suggest the initial inadquacy of the northeastern units for the prosecution of the Korean wars, and the gradually decreasing reliance of the Court upon them. Chapter IX will attempt to show their inability to cope with the Khitan and Turkish invasions. The argument against this interpretation would point to new units established by the Empress Wu in 690, but my view is precisely that their location was largely a recognition that in Hopei the system was no longer viable. Kikuchi, "Todai fuhei seido ni kan suru ichi gimon" (
), Shien, 58 (1953), pp. 95-115, shows that most of the new units were placed in Ho-nan near the new capital, and the only two Ho-pei locations were Wei-chou ( ) and Huai-chou ( ). The first was on the Ho-nan border, and the second, adjacent to what was to be the northern capital. It seems fair to assume that had the Empress deemed it practicable, she would have taken this opportunity to correct the northeast-northwest imbalance which had existed since the inauguration of the system, and particularly with her capital at Lo-yang, set up units to protect it from the north instead of restricting herself mostly to Ho-nan. The following chapter will point out that the new military dispositions she eventually made in Ho-pei were a pointed denial of the continuing validity of the fu-ping system.

[114]TCTC 201, p. 6385. On Chang, see #57.

[115]T'ang relations with the Tibetans are conveniently summarized in THY 97; CTS 196 shang; HTS 216, shang, and TFYK 970. The best secondary treatment of the years under discussion is Ise, Seiiki keiei, pp. 315ff.

Their first recorded tribute mission to the T'ang arrived in 634, and by 638, they could send an army estimated at 200,000 to press upon T'ai-tsung their demand for a marriage. In 641, the Wen-ch'eng princess, who may have been an inmate of the harem rather than a daughter of the Emperor (HTS 83:3883 and 3884), was married to the Tibetan ruler. She seems to have hastened the process of Sinification in the area, and to have played an important role in fostering the harmonious "in-law" relationship of the next decade.

The death of the ruler in 650 and the seizure of power by Lu Tung-tsan brought about a change. Lu and his five sons succeeded not only in strengthening the internal power of their people, but also in bringing under their sway many of the surrounding tribes. The most notable of these were the T'u-yü-hun whose three-hundred-year history of independence ended when they became Tibetan vassals in 663. See CTS 198:3612:3. Tribute to China, often in the form of Buddhist statues and other golden artifacts, continued until 665, but after 667 when numerous of the Western Turks joined them, the Tibetans took up a hostile stance and in the summer of 670, they burst into eighteen prefectures in the Western Regions and seized the Four Garrisons (TCTC 201, p. 6363). Henceforth their raids became an annual threat.

[116]TCTC 202, pp. 6385-88. The force sent against the Tibetans whose power was now at its height, was perhaps the largest of the century. In the spring of 677, an army under twelve commanders was levied from large western prefectures like Feng and Hsing, some of which had no fu-ping units whatsoever. The force must therefore have been composed largely of conscripts and volunteers, and two of Kao-tsung's sons were given nominal command. In the twelfth month, a statewide call for more troops went out (TCTC 202, p. 6384), and in addition to calling up troops in Shan-nan and Chien-nan where there had never been many fu-ping units, commissioners were sent through Ho-nan and Ho-pei to "recruit brave soldiers without enquiring into their background and official position." See also CTW 14:5a.

It seems fairly clear from the constitution of this force that the available pool of fu-ping troops was largely exhausted and if Ku Chi-kuang is correct in suggesting that exemption from expeditions was granted to all those slated for garrison duty in a given year and that this left a pool of only 100,000 (Fu-ping, p. 174), this is understandable. The recruitment of the lower classes suggests a certain desperation on the part of the court, and it seems incredible that an attack on Silla could be considered at the same time.

The Tibetan force must have been formidable since they could draw on the resources of an Empire which the CTS describes as continuous to China in the east, touching upon northern India in the south, encompassing the Four Garrisons and reaching in the north to the territory of the Turks. CTS 196 shang:3604:2.

[117]TCTC 202, p. 6396.

[118]TCTC 202, p. 6386.

[119]On Wei, see #121. The memorial is abstracted TCTC 202, p. 6387.

[120]See Ku, Fu-ping, pp. 165-97, and Fonctionnaires, II, pp. 763-69. I simplify greatly here because Ku's treatment is so thorough and because the mechanics of the fu-ping are beyond the scope of this discussion. It is necessary to notice, however, the connection between the fu-ping and the lure of the Empire. The fu-ping made T'ang imperialism possible, but only at the cost of the institution itself, and ultimately of the centralization it had early promoted so successfully.

[121]Chapters V and IX.

[122]Ku, Fu-ping, pp. 192-97.

[123]See earlier notes and Chapter IX.

[124]TCTC 202, p. 6390. On the resurgence of the Western Turks under the Khan of the Shih-hsing tribe, see Chavannes, E., Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux (Paris, n.d.), pp. 74ff.

[125]The vagaries of the foundation and control of the Four Garrisons of Kucha (Kuei-tzu), Kashgar (Shu-lei), Tokmak (Sui-yeh) and Khotan (Yü-t'ien) are studied in detail by Ise, Seiiki keiei, pp. 190ff. Chavannes, Documents, pp. 114-28, translates the CTS notice on each.

[126]P'ei was vice-president of the Board of Civil Office at the time, but as noted earlier, had had a good deal of experience on the western frontiers. His discussion centred on the recent defeats by the Tibetans and suggested that since the king of Persia had recently died and his son was a hostage at Ch'ang-an, an embassy should be sent to install him on the throne and while crossing the territory of the Turks, take the opportunity to detach them from their Tibetan alliance. P'ei was given charge of the affair and his biography recounts a brave saga of near starvation on the desert before an ingenious strategem enabled to take prisoner the Khans, and bring them back to the capital, so defusing a dangerous situation.

The subsequent administration of the area is best outlined in the biography of Wang Fang-i, CTS 185 shang:3561:1, HTS 111:3934:1.

[127]TCTC 202, pp. 6392-93, CTS 5:3074:3, THY 94, pp. 1690-91. Ts'en Chung-mien, T'u-ch'üeh, pp. 289-92 examines the full range of sources. The Turks and their allies advanced to the area of modern Peking before retreating to the northwest as P'ei's armies advanced. The decisive battle took place at Hei-shan, north of Feng-chou, where the combined Chinese forces are estimated by CTS at 450,000.

[128]This is not to say there was no follow-up to the victory. The great Korean general Hei-ch'ih Ch'ang-chih made viable the defenses of the entire Ho-yüan area (TCTC 202, p. 6395, CTS 109:3400:3), and by mid-682, Wnag Fang-i could report the final pacification of the Western Turks (TCTC 203, p. 6409). The same year, Hsüeh Jen-kuei, re-called from his second disgrace over the Korean debacle, administered another defeat to the restive Turks, taking over 200,000 captives. TCTC 203, p. 6412.

At Kao-tsung's death, the Tibetans were recuperating from eight successive defeats at the hands of Lou Shih-te (#104) and there were troops in the field pursuing recent Turkish invaders. These returned two months after his burial. The Tibetan campaign was not renewed until 687.

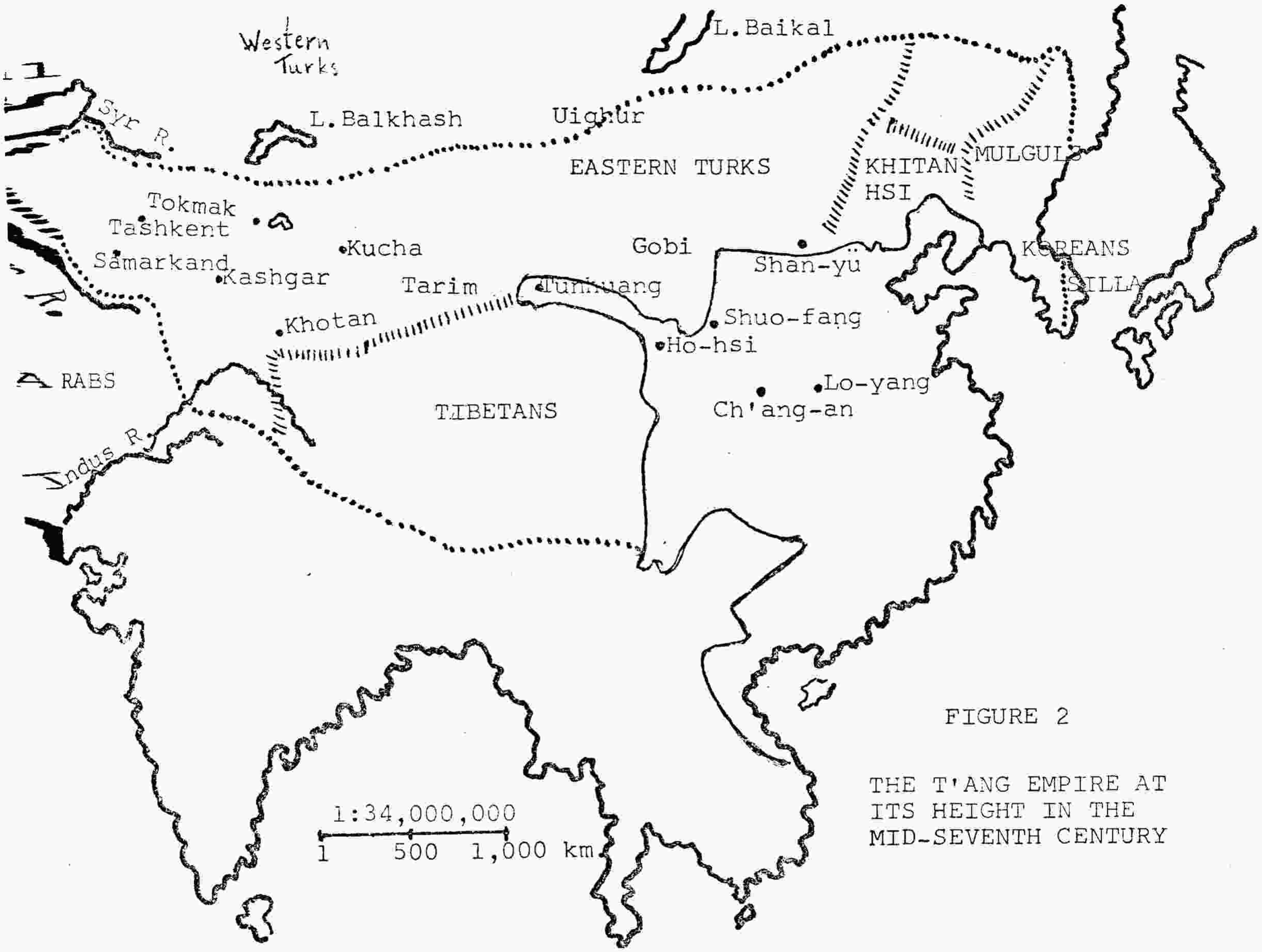


FIGURE 2

THE T'ANG EMPIRE AT ITS HEIGHT IN THE MID-SEVENTH CENTURY

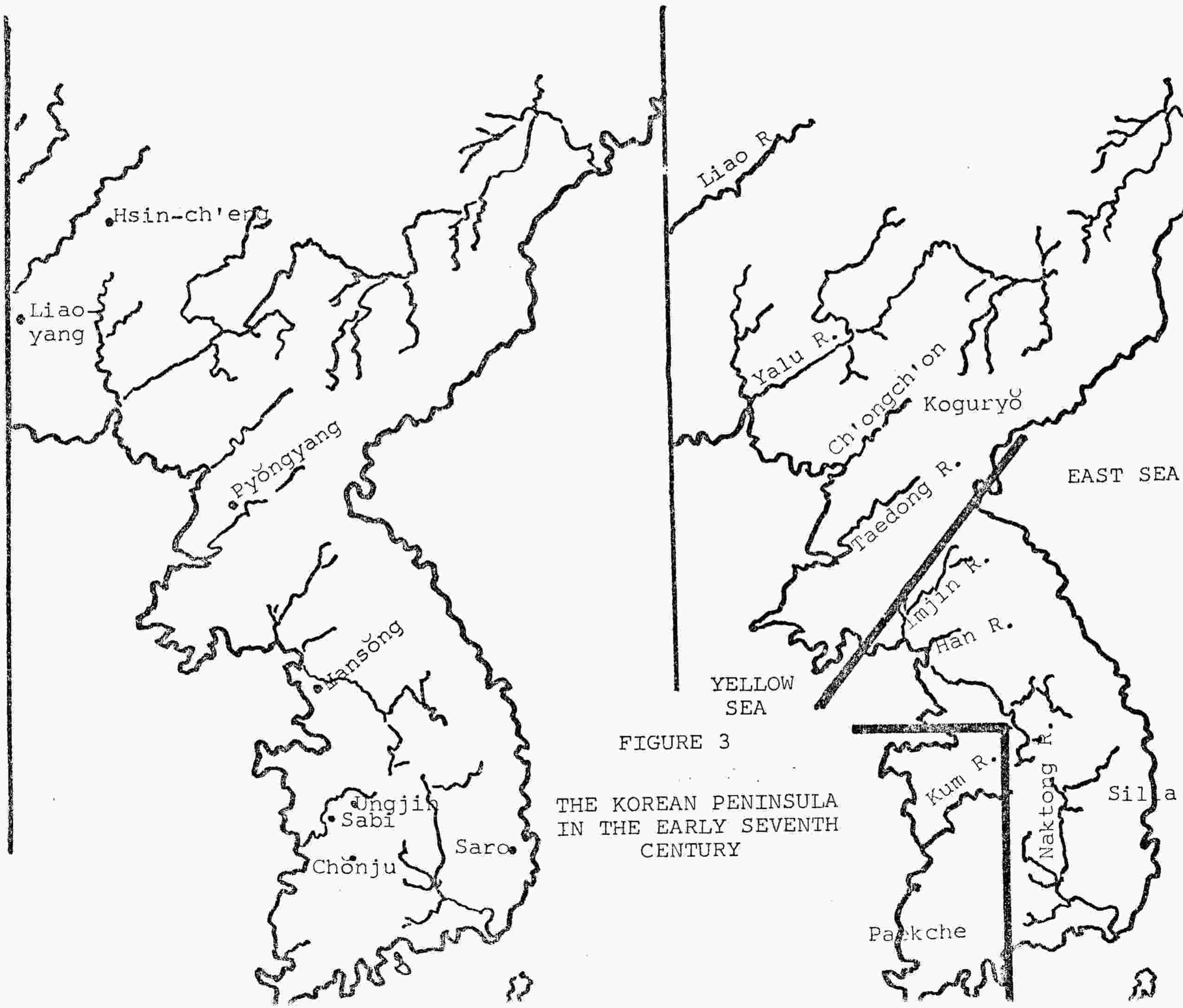


FIGURE 3

THE KOREAN PENINSULA IN THE EARLY SEVENTH CENTURY

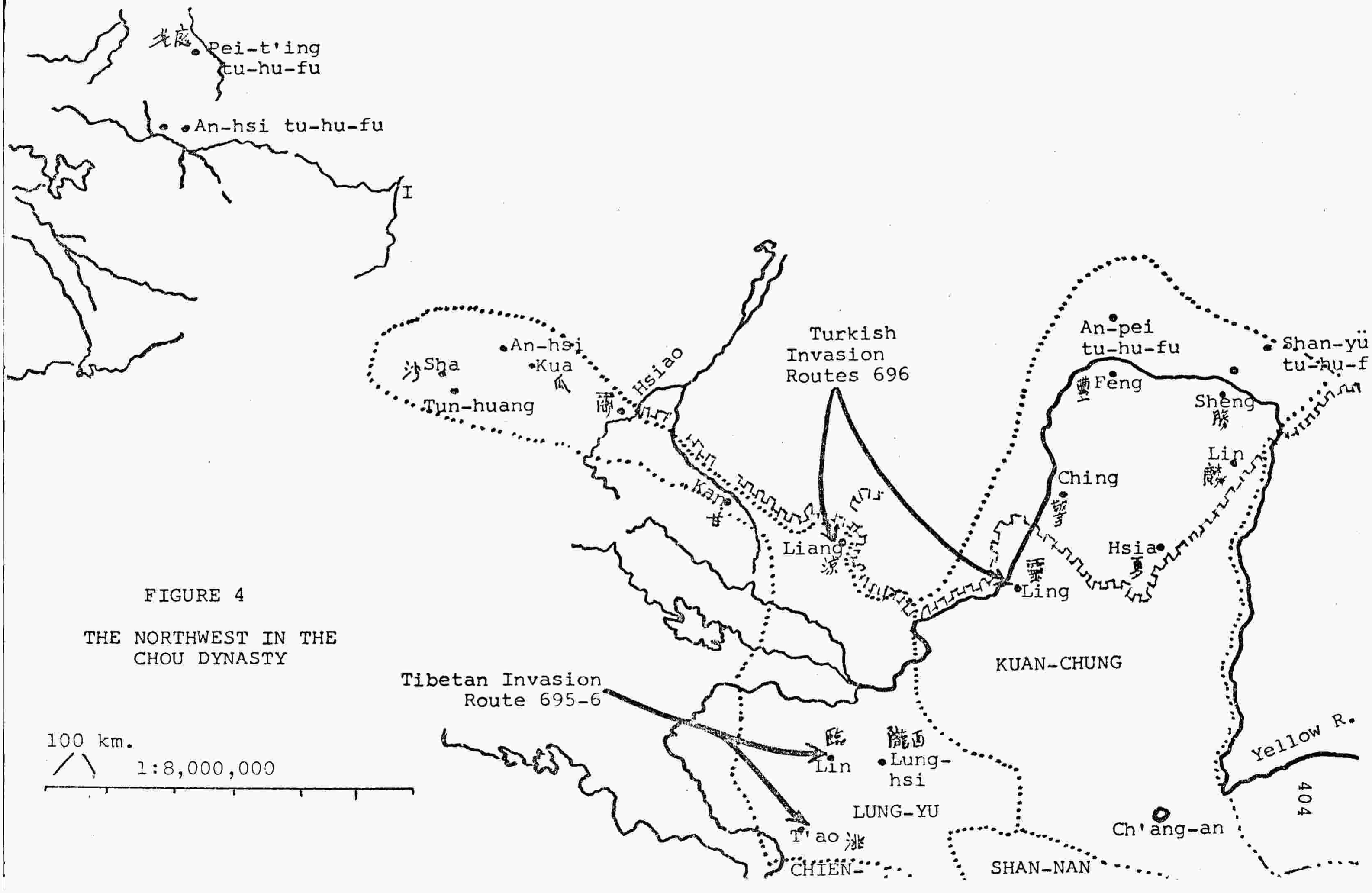
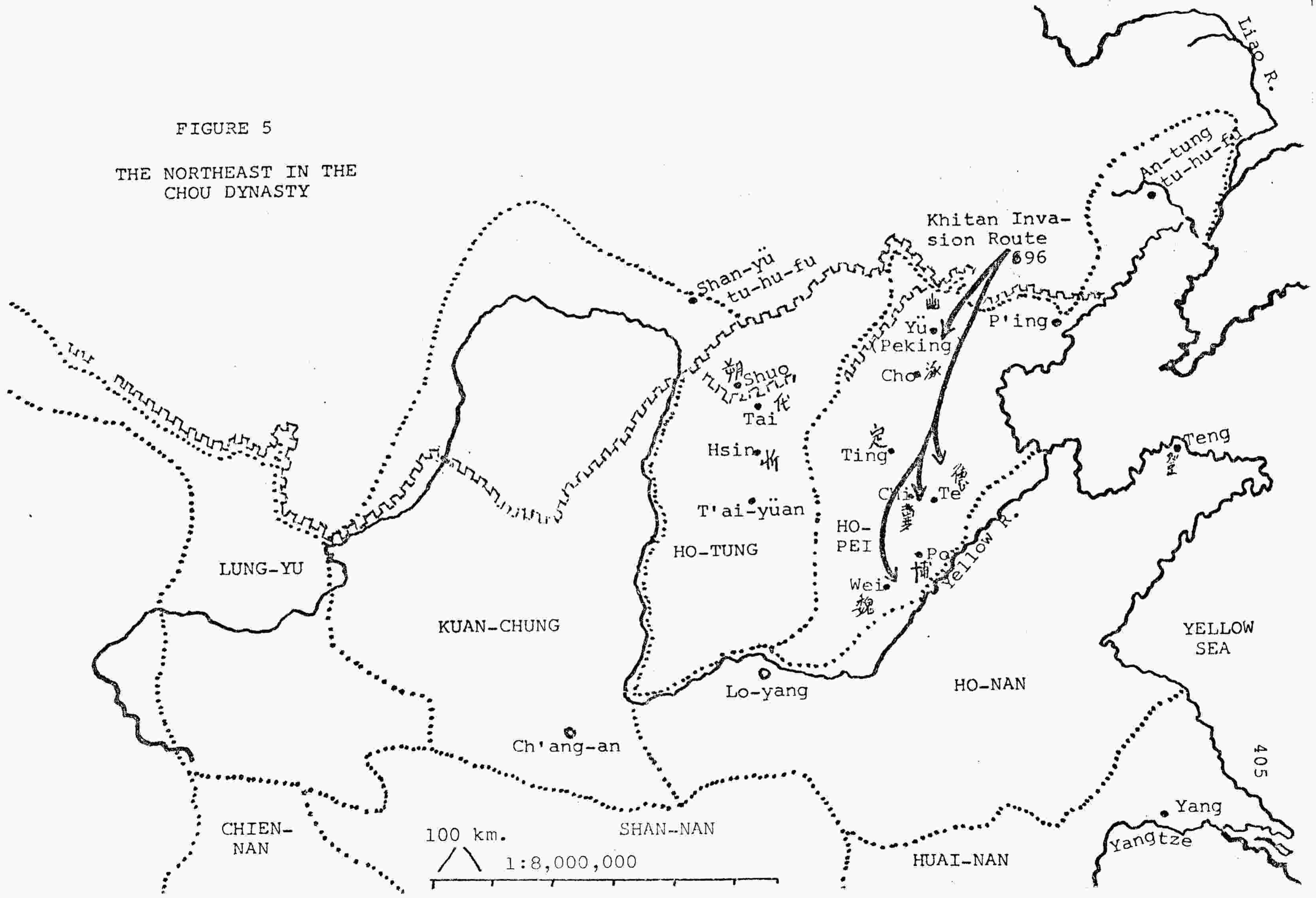


FIGURE 4

THE NORTHWEST IN THE
CHOU DYNASTY

FIGURE 5

THE NORTHEAST IN THE
CHOU DYNASTY



CHAPTER NINE

THE CHOU DYNASTY

The Chou dynasty, which lasted from October, 690, to February, 705, was one of the shortest in Chinese history. The restoration of the T'ang, moreover, occurred not with the death of the Empress Wu but with her deposition. In these two facts we are presented with the intriguing problem of why Wu Tse-t'ien, after her startling success in effecting China's unique female usurpation ended her career in failure; and before turning to the developments of the Chou, we might attempt to provide some perspective on this question.

Was the Empress, first of all, attempting to establish a dynasty which would endure for the conventional "myriad generations"? In all likelihood, it seems not. We have earlier suggested that her loyalty to the T'ang, or at least to its aims and achievements, was genuine, and that her regency and possibly her usurpation were undertaken in response to perceived crisis situations. Beyond this, she seems to have given signs at the dynastic changeover that the T'ang were not to be deprived permanently of the Empire, and that her aim was to legitimate her own reign rather than to found a dynasty which the Wu clan would continue. These signs were

both symbolic and substantive, and the first of them appeared at the very moment of the founding since there is no evidence that Jui-tsung formally abdicated. Since the third century A.D., dynastic founders had invariably used ritual abdication for the transfer of power,[1] and thus from the beginning, the source of the Chou Mandate was questionable. In substantive terms, it is important to note further that Jui-tsung was immediately declared his mother's successor, and although his title was huang-ssu rather than t'ai-tzu,[2] and although he had adopted the Wu surname, he held his position until 698, and then it was his elder brother, Chung-tsung who replaced him.[3] Although the latter also accepted the Wu surname, contemporaries must have seen this as simple expediency, and the important fact is that throughout the Chou the succession never left the hands of the Li. The ambitions of certain members of the Wu clan were to make the question the most acrimonious and bloody of the period, but as we shall suggest, the Empress considered only briefly the possibility of a Wu nephew as successor. She may in fact, have anticipated both the struggle and its form, since even prior to the restoration she began to construct a close web of familial relationship between the Wu and Li clans,[4] and was to continue to do so in subsequent years. In 699, she formalized this policy by having the leading members of both clans swear an oath of concord at the Ming T'ang.[5]

A second important sign which suggested throughout

the dynasty the likelihood of a T'ang restoration was the lack of genuine innovation by the Empress. In this, she broke the well-defined pattern both of conquering dynastic founders like Han Kao-tsu, and usurpers who planned an enduring dynasty like Sui Wen-ti. We find, for instance, no new law code, the foundation of no institutions of lasting importance, and no attempt at widespread social reform. With few exceptions, even the ritual coloration of the Chou varied little from the T'ang, and though red banners replaced the yellow of T'ang,[6] and "Wu" replaced "T'ang" in place-names throughout the Empire, court dress and ceremonial, official titles and office names remained largely unchanged after 690. In view of the Empress' demonstrated concern with ritual and nomenclature, it is particularly striking that she seems never to have chosen a "virtue and element" (te-yün) for the Chou.[7] Chung-tsung, as we have noted, could remark at the restoration that the Empress "did not disregard the old things", and on grounds like these it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Chou is best seen as a "care-taker" regime, and indeed, was regarded in this way by the Empress Wu.

We are not suggesting, of course, that this constitutes a full explanation for what seems the relative inactivity of the Empress during the Chou in comparison with the decades prior to 690. Other factors were certainly present, the most important being the growing inflexibility of the central

government as the T'ang gained greater security, and also the relative success of its gradualist approach to the paramount state concerns of centralization, the aristocracy, and the consolidation of imperial authority. We have earlier attempted to show how closely the Empress identified herself with these policies.

In addition, we must recognize that throughout the Chou, the position of the Empress remained a rather tenuous one. She must have been aware that the acceptance of her claim to be "emperor" was based chiefly on personal or charismatic factors, but that at the same time, a female Son of Heaven was a semantic and cultural violation of the Confucian tradition to which the élite among her subjects, the group through whom she had to work, gave perhaps their deepest loyalty. For this reason, her freedom of action was restricted and she found herself more subject to the wishes of the bureaucracy than might have been the case with a male ruler of similarly absolutist temperament. Her political defeats, which ranged from matters like a planned re-organization of the provinces in the mid-690's to her inability to protect her favourites, were more numerous than is generally recognized, and although she was able to continue the trend toward dilution of ministerial power, it is of great importance to recognize that without the presence of her husband or son on the throne, she was less effective in government than she had been prior to 690.

These considerations, although suggestive, still do not throw much light on our earlier question of how the Empress was able to endure even for fifteen years in her anomolous position, and how eventually she invalidated her claim. As we shall point out, her sensitivity to bureaucratic loyalties and her skillful manipulation of the succession were factors in the maintenance of her position, but for a wider explanation we might turn to a traditional source. The HTS, commenting on her success vis-à-vis the failure of Empress Wei, says, ". . . reward and punishment came from her alone and she did not borrow [the authority of] ministers. She usurped above but governed well below (chien yü shang erh chih yü hsia), and so could rule the Empire."[8] If this is case, we might suggest that the Empress used the same combination of political acumen and popular support to which she owed her rise as the basis of rule in the Chou, and as we shall see, it was only in her last years, when she divided her rule with unworthy favourites, permitted corruption, and neglected the state, that she was forced to retire.

In considering her deposition, it is difficult to know whether or not she lost popular support, though what evidence there is would suggest not.[9] It is equally difficult to judge with certainty whether any but the very small number of ministers actually involved in the coup of 705 would have participated in it had they been offered the chance. The possibility exists, therefore, of a very simple explanation

for the deposition--superior planning on the part of a small number of alienated bureaucrats. Still, the absence of identifiable support for the Empress at the end would seem to indicate that one of our earlier suggestions remains valid. The source of her legitimacy was personal, not normative, and her occupancy of the throne was an aberration accepted partially because it was seen to be temporary. The level of her performance was therefore subject to a scrutiny more rigorous than might be the case early in more conventional dynasties, and only while she continued to fulfill successfully the well-defined role of emperor[10] were her claims actually to be emperor accepted.

In sum, Wu Tse-t'ien was emperor by suffrance, her authority deriving not from ritual abdication, and therefore not in the fullest sense, from Heaven. Undoubtedly, certain of her ministers continued to regard her as a usurper, or at best as a self-proclaimed regent. In these circumstances she needed constantly to demonstrate that the "young prince" was unready for rule, and/or that she was more capable than he and was preserving rather than changing his heritage. In these circumstances, there also existed ample precedent for ministers, or for the young prince himself, to decide that the regency should be brought to an end. What the de facto ruler in this situation might consider treason, could be regarded from the opposite perspective as an act of Confucian loyalty, and indeed, of ministerial duty.

Against this background, the developments of the Chou may perhaps be more readily understood.

In spite of its short duration, the Chou might be divided for analytical purposes into four stages which seem to conform, admittedly with some artificiality, to the traditional rhythm of the dynastic cycle. The division between periods is not always clear-cut, but certain turning-points may be identified, and using this form of analysis we might suggest that the first five years made up the great days of the dynasty. In this period, the state was prosperous, expansive and confident, and the court was characterized by administrative efficiency. In 696, however, a downturn began, and from China's massive defeat by the Tibetans early that year, serious problems of a financial and military nature arose and were not arrested until late 697 with the gradual suppression of the barbarian threat and the rise to ministerial hegemony of Ti Jen-chieh. The recovery gave the dynasty a second period of at least superficial prosperity, but from Ti's death in 700 and the unbridled supremacy of the Chang faction, corruption began to run rife and a decline set in which even the removal of the Empress in 705 was unable to stem. Throughout the period, and as counterpoints to this rhythm, there were also to be seen the general continuation of T'ang policies upon which we have already commented, and the gradual decline of the Empress' health and capabilities especially in the final period as she approached her eightieth

birthday. Let us elaborate.

The Chou began, as might be expected, with a number of arrangements designed to emphasize the transfer of the Mandate. These consisted chiefly of such symbolic measures as the re-arrangement of ancestral temples and sacrifices,[11] the changing of the banners to red, the substitution of "Wu" for "T'ang" in place-names, and most importantly, the transfer of the seat of government to Lo-yang which had become the "Sanctified Capital" in 684. The declaration of a new capital was, of course, an act redolent with the traditional symbolism of imperial pre-rogative, and we have earlier commented how in economic terms, Lo-yang was a logical capital site.[12] At this time, practical motives of a different sort were also present, for it is likely that the Empress was attempting to dissociate herself from the T'ang capital and from the loyalist clans who had been drawn by official posts to settle there. As an extra measure of insurance, at least a hundred thousand households from seven chou surrounding Ch'ang-an were re-settled near Lo-yang to strengthen the new centre, and it is probably more than coincidence that they were chosen from areas where the concentration of fu-ping units was highest.[13] Ch'ang-an remained the western capital, and was immediately placed in the charge of one of the Wu princes.[14]

It is tempting also to see in this eastward shift of the capital a replication of the pattern of the Han "restora-

tion", or even to suggest that Lo-yang's Buddhist associations and the prophecy of the Great Cloud Commentary played a part. Whatever her motives, however, the Empress rapidly set about turning Lo-yang into a worthy rival to Ch'ang-an, beginning the enormous task of walling the city in 692,[15] and continuing her earlier programme of temples, monuments and public works. The Ming T'ang complex became larger and more elaborate, and in early 695 she completed the "Pivot of Heaven" (t'ien-shu), a pillar of iron and bronze over a hundred feet high erected at the south gate of the forbidden city to commemorate the ten thousand virtues of the Great Chou.[16] These constructions were enormously expensive, the cost of the pillar, for instance, said to be beyond estimation;[17] but at the same time, their symbolic value was great. They constituted a demonstration of self-confidence by the Empress, contributed to the "imperial air" (wang-ch'i) of her capital, and in a more concrete sense, were often measures of patronage of the type we have seen to be so important in the creation of state ideology.

We have suggested earlier that this was true particularly in the case of Buddhism, and fine examples of financial patronage are found not only in the expansion of the Ming T'ang complex, but also in the fabrication of the "seven treasures" (sapta ratna) in 693 after Hsüeh Huai-i presented a second sutra, that of the "Precious Rain" (Pao-yü ching), which depicted the Empress as a cakravartin.[18] The Buddhist

Church, we have also suggested, was to benefit in numerous other ways in the early Chou--in its precedence over Taoism, the long ban on the butchering of animals, and the stiffening of penalties for crimes against Church property, but it is a measure of the Empress' experience and skill that she did not forget Confucian sensitivites during this early period. As we shall soon see, her substantive concern with education, examination and appointment continued at least superficially to grow, and at the same time she demonstrated her favour in symbolic ways. It is interesting to notice, for example, that in the same ten-day period in which she founded the Great Cloud temples, she conferred a new honorific on Confucius, and later in the dynasty was similarly to honour his favourite disciples.[19] She modestly refused early requests to magnify her own titles, and hesitated when it was suggested in 691 that she perform the feng and shan at Mount Sung in Ho-nan.[20] When she eventually performed the rite in early 695, it was immediately after carrying out the great sacrifices to Heaven and Earth at the southern suburb, and was followed by the declaration of a year's freedom from the tsu tax for the entire Empire![21]

A second major way in which the Empress appealed to Confucian sentiment was in her treatment of the few surviving members of the T'ang clan. There were well-established precendents, though too often honoured in the breach, whereby a former imperial house was permitted by its successor to exist

in dignity, though usually under surveillance. In the early Chou, Jui-tsung and his immediate family seem to have lived under virtual house arrest,[22] but as early as 691 the Empress began to confer princely rank on her grandsons, beginning with the sons of the former Crown Prince Hsien, and later extending the privilege to the five sons of Jui-tsung.[23] Because various members of the Wu clan also bore princely rank, this created a situation unprecedented at least since the Sui re-unification, but considering the strength of T'ang loyalism, it was clearly a politic move to permit the existence of two "imperial" clans.

In measures like these, it seems clear that the Empress was concerned early in the new regime principally to reinforce her credentials to rule, and that she not only made provision for her own support and security, but was careful simultaneously to balance measures which emphasized dynastic change with others which could be construed as indications that the change was not necessarily permanent. Her purpose, of course, was to broaden her appeal among the literati class who might therefore be invited to serve the Chou in the belief that they were protecting the T'ang heritage. As a further enticement, she moved very quickly to alleviate the "terror" which had been the greatest source of bureaucratic alienation since its initiation in 684.

The Chou, for instance, was scarcely six months old when Chou Hsing, the leader of the so-called evil officials

was brought down. Charged with treasonous complicity and threatened with a torture of his own devising, he was found guilty and murdered on the road to exile.[24] According to one source, he had been responsible for several thousand deaths,[25] and though we might expect a certain exaggeration in the figure, it does not seem unreasonable when we consider that an upright censor permitted to investigate in mid-692, found no fewer than 850 miscarriages of justice.[26] The Empress, of course, had been long aware of this danger, but prior to the usurpation had shown little scruple about using it to her advantage. Now, however, while she permitted Lai Chün-ch'en to take over Chou Hsing's apparatus of denunciation and punishment, she responded to criticism of her harshness by the appointment of good and courageous judicial officers to balance the bad, and by herself taking a personal interest in important cases.

Most famous of the good censors was Hsü Yu-kung, a man she appointed in spite of his fearful refusals immediately after the dynastic change,[27] and she soon added to the censorate men like Yen Shan-ssu, Chu Ching-tse, and Chou Chü[28] who spoke with such conviction against the system of delation that from mid-691, the Mirror suggests, punishments began to diminish.[29] In that same year, when Lai accused seven high officials of rebellious conspiracy and managed to extract false confessions, the Empress listened to the plea of a ten-year-old boy, and then released them from prison to conduct

their defense before her and prove themselves innocent.[30]

The question which must be asked here is why the Empress permitted Lai Chün-ch'en to remain in office and continue his activities after his dishonesty had been exposed. We have earlier offered several conjectures about the reasons for her initiation of and support for the terror in general, and so long as a woman occupied the throne, most of these remained valid. At this time, however, a more concrete reason existed in the appearance in late-691 of a campaign advocating the establishment of Wu Ch'eng-ssu as Crown Prince.[31] The Empress had initially showed herself cool to the proposal, but seems at the same time to have flirted briefly with the idea, since she permitted open representations to be made, and when the expected storm of ministerial opposition arose, Ch'eng-ssu allied himself with Lai to eliminate the most inflexible of his opponents. In subsequent months a number of "plots" were discovered, and numerous officials were exiled or executed. It is all too likely that the Empress was not really deceived and permitted the destruction of so many persons principally to reduce the influence of T'ang loyalism and to see whether the court could be intimidated into the support of Wu claims. She was conscious, however, that she could not go too far, and so balanced the influence of the Lai-Wu faction by conferring a virtual invulnerability on their most prominent enemy, Li Chao-te.

Chao-te was a ming-ching graduate, the member of a

family of office-holders, and vice-president of the Secretariat in 691. As a Confucian and as an official he was uncompromising and outspoken, and though unpopular with his colleagues, he was to be paramount minister for two years from the time of his elevation to tsai-hsiang status in mid-692.[32] He was strongly opposed to a Wu succession, and shortly after the matter arose he told the Empress, ". . . From ancient times, I have never heard that a nephew became Son of Heaven and [then] set up ancestral temples for his aunt. Your Majesty, moreover, received the guardianship (ku-t'o) [of the Empire] from Kao-tsung and if you give it to Ch'eng-ssu, then he will be without ancestral sacrifices!"[33] A few months later, he cleverly convinced the Empress that Ch'eng-ssu was a threat to her own power, and seemingly without investigation, she dismissed her nephew along with his relatives and supporters from their high posts, necessitating the governmental re-organization which left Chao-te and his adherents supreme.[34] Ch'eng-ssu was never again to hold tsai-hsiang status except for a month in 697, and thus we are faced with one of the most remarkable differences between Wu Tse-t'ien and other female power-holders in China. Although she frequently appointed Wu princes to positions of command in expeditionary armies and the Yü-lin Guard, she cannot be said in other ways to have used male relatives to support or maintain her political power.[35]

The career of Li Chao-te was to come to an unfortunate

end, but in the early Chou, it is interesting in two respects. Firstly, he continued to serve as a vigilant foil to Lai Chün-ch'en, curbing his excesses and even frustrating his attempts to marry into the great Shantung aristocracy,[36] and the Empress clearly saw this as his role. When Lai was exiled for corruption in late 694, she acted simultaneously on complaints about Chao-te's excessive power and arbitrary nature to send him also from the capital,[37] and in 697, she had both men executed on the same day even though Chao-te was probably innocent of any capital crime.[38] Secondly, because Chao-te was the most prominent defender of T'ang interests in the succession dispute, his treatment reveals the manner in which the Empress manipulated the question to foster factionalism and uncertainty at court, and provides a convenient starting point for a closer look at the matter.

Chao-te's victory in expelling the Wu clan from their powerful positions in 692 was a real one, and there are indications that the Empress feared that it would lead the court to regard the succession as settled and so deprive her of a valuable political weapon. Thus, she began the year 693 with a magnificent ceremonial which was remarkable not so much because she personally composed the music for the 900 dancers, but because she chose her two nephews to make the secondary offerings, excluding Jui-tsung from the proceedings.[39] Shortly after this she secretly had Jui-tsung's two favourite consorts executed on charges of sorcery laid by a slave-girl.

Jui-tsung was either too cowardly or too diplomatic even to raise the matter, but since one of the consorts was the mother of the future Hsüan-tsung, the incident undoubtedly had its effect on his later attitude toward his grandmother.[40] As Heir Apparent, Jui-tsung was in the delicate position of the most likely focus of restoration plots, and the Empress seems to have emphasized deliberately the ambiguity of his position two months later when she first changed the princely titles of his five sons, and then publicly executed two officials who had paid him a secret visit.[41] On this occasion, he himself was denounced as a traitor, and for a brief period, T'ang prospects hung by a very thin thread. He was saved, however, when one of his retainers, in the midst of Lai Chün-ch'en's interrogation, attempted to cut out his own heart to show his master's loyalty. The Empress is said to have sighed at her inability to know her own son when she heard of it, and halted the proceedings so that as the Mirror remarks, "Jui-tsung, from this [time] was safe (te-mien)".[42] The Empress seems at this time to have decided definitively in favour of a Li succession, and she did not allow any further discussion of the matter until 698 when Chung-tsung's appointment was being considered.

We have suggested earlier an element of artificiality in the dispute, contending that the posture of the Empress was determined not by any serious intent to have a nephew succeed her, but rather by her desire to attain certain

political ends. Among these, the most important was undoubtedly the continued expansion of imperial prerogative vis-à-vis that of the tsai-hsiang group. This becomes abundantly clear when we place the succession dispute within the context of other measures directed toward the same purpose.

Scholars have for some time recognized that in Sui and early T'ang a key problem of the imperial house was the reduction of the pretensions and the actual power of the great houses who had not only monopolized governmental authority but had also so often usurped the throne during the period of disunion. In an earlier chapter, we discussed at length some of the ramifications of this problem and suggested that the T'ang solution lay essentially in the dilution of the local power of the great clans, and that a chief tactic of the throne was the encouragement of "bureaucratization". T'ai-tsung, as we have seen, attempted to establish the principle that status was dependent upon service to the T'ang and as a result, the highest posts in his bureaucracy were filled largely with men of aristocratic or at least office-holding background. Particularly in the case of his tsai-hsiang, men of proud genealogy were predominant, but because of his unique talents, the collegial-style government which marked most of his reign was highly successful. Inevitably, however, the chief-ministers had developed a sense of initiative and group consciousness which Kao-tsung and Empress Wu seem to have regarded as highly dangerous, and as we have

suggested, their bloc opposition to her rise led to the destruction of their leadership and a period of over two decades when they were regarded by the throne as rivals rather than partners in government. Only in the last years of Kao-tsung, and under P'ei Yen's competent leadership,[43] did signs of coalescence and assertion of prerogative begin to re-appear. It seems possible that had Chung-tsung supported the aspirations of this group and allied himself with them against his mother, he might have avoided deposition. Instead, he alienated Yen by threatening to restore the familiar pattern of emperor-consort family government, and thus enabled Empress Wu to borrow tsai-hsiang authority in her seizure of power in 684. Yen's role in the deposition seems to have had for the Empress, the unwelcome effect of re-inforcing the prestige and ambitions of the chief ministers, and as we have suggested, this may have played a role in his downfall. His successor as paramount minister, Liu Wei-chih, perished in 687 largely because he disputed with the Empress the limitation of imperial versus ministerial prerogative.[44] Until the rise of Li Chao-te, no definable leader emerged in the group, and with the single exception of Ti Jen-chieh, this was to be the case throughout the Chou. Given our earlier assertion regarding the tenuous nature of the Empress' legitimation, we must attempt to explain how this happened.

The manner in which the Empress weakened ministerial power was not original, nor indeed did it create an irrever-

sible trend, for Hsüan-tsung's government, at least in its early years, bore greater resemblance to that of T'ai-tsung than to that of the Empress.[45] This is not surprising in view of our earlier remarks on the general lack of innovation in the Chou but it should also be noted that the nature of the Empress' legitimation dictated that she work as closely as possible within the traditional framework. For this reason, what change occurred in the balance of power at the top was almost imperceptible, but it was far-reaching enough that the administration virtually dissolved when her two immediate successors proved unable to fill the role she had created for them. The HTS "judgment" earlier quoted demonstrates that her methods did not go unnoticed by the dynastic historians.

Her chief tactic was the manner in which she used her unquestioned right of appointment and dismissal. To begin with, she expanded the number of ministers holding tsai-hsiang status, while at the same time shortening their tenure. Thus we find that in the late 690's as many as sixteen men held the rank, in contrast to a previous high of ten,[45] and in contrast to a much lower average. The highest estimate for T'ai-tsung's reign is twenty-nine tsai-hsiang in twenty-one years while the corresponding figure for the years 684-705 is sixty-six.[46] Under T'ai-tsung, the average tenure was seven years and under the Empress, just over two. This contrast is suggestive, of course, of two highly variant political styles and it seems no accident that factionalism was a

much more pronounced phenomenon in the Chou.

Secondly, in the Chou, we find that only a tiny proportion of ministers reached tsai-hsiang rank before the age of sixty and that even then, posts were shifted with such frequency that consolidation and entrenchment were impossible. Lou Shih-te, whose career was remarkable for lengthy tenure of high posts without demotion,[47] held four different positions and was four times sent from the capital on military duty in his six years as tsai-hsiang, and even Ti Jen-chieh, who enjoyed the fullest trust of the Empress, held no fewer than seven different positions in his three years as tsai-hsiang! Furthermore, a fairly large proportion of the appointments were preceded by such terms as "provisional" or "acting" (chien-chiao, shih)[48] so that appointees were openly made conscious of a certain instability in regard to their tenure or qualifications. An astounding eighty per-cent of the tsai-hsiang in the Chou were removed involuntarily from their high honour, some to exile or death and others simply to a lower post. For the reign of T'ai-tsung, the corresponding figure is thirty-three per-cent,[49] and it is interesting to note that among the early writings of the perspicacious historian, Liu Chih-chi, is a fu of 695, which warns of the dangers of aspiring to high office. He entitled it, "Think Carefully" (Ssu-chen fu).[50]

The natural overlap of function and responsibility implicit in the wide scope of tsai-hsiang competence permitted

the Empress to make appointments which by nature would foster dissension and rivalry. This was achieved by simultaneous and/or parallel appointment of political enemies so that Ti Jen-chieh, for instance, was first elevated to tsai-hsiang on the same day as Wu Yu-ning, and when he became chancellery president in mid-698, Wu San-ssu was made his opposite number in the secretariat. Imperial relatives, sycophants, and the occasional mystic whose only ability seems to have lain in a knowledge of Taoist magical practices,[51] were seldom to have lengthy tenure, but they were appointed often to balance the opinions of their better-qualified colleagues, and of course, their very appointment tended to devalue tsai-hsiang status and by contrast, to elevate the imperial institution.

Other traditional control methods were directed to the same end. Special rewards, usually in the form of personal commendations, silks, or official rank for the recipient's sons were conferred with discretion to remind ministers that distinction was earned not merely by passing an exam or gaining high office, but by pleasing the ruler while in office. The acceptance of ministerial remonstrance by the Empress, something for which she is often praised,[52] became similarly a tool; in this case a way of defining prerogative since she distinguished unerringly between criticism directed against her as a person, and that which was designed to limit imperial scope. We find, for instance, that she permitted ministers to ridicule openly her fondness for auspicious omens or her

penchant for excessive appointments,[53] but at the same time, she discouraged the use of precedents in memorials to her, and punished unseemly quarrels which occurred in the imperial presence.[54] Certain questions, like the succession or the role of her favourites, she regarded as "household matters", and refused throughout the Chou to permit ministers to raise them, often on pain of death.[55] This, of course, made non-sense of the ancient tsai-hsiang claim of omnicompetence, but skillfully preserved the appearance of free discussion in the court, undoubtedly enhancing the Empress' popularity among those too far removed to perceive the reality.

Finally, there were times in the Chou when the Empress simply excluded the tsai-hsiang from her counsel, preferring to seek advice from outside their circle. Early in the dynasty, her chief alternative seems to have been a group of non-official advisors, popularly called the "Northgate Scholars" (pei-men hsüeh-shih). Often seen as the predeces-sors of the Hanlin Academy,[56] these men are first mentioned as a group in the year 674, when Ssu-ma Kuang tells us that they began not only to compile the literary works later ascribed to the Empress, but were "secretly ordered to par-ticipate in decisions in order to divide the power of the tsai-hsiang".[57] It is difficult to know how extensively their services were used, though the Empress did turn to them, for instance, when her regular ministers balked at the grandiose nature of her Ming T'ang plans, and she had the group's

leader, Liu Wei-chih, second P'ei Yen in Chung-tsung's deposition.[58] The standard sources make little mention of them in the Chou, and perhaps because many entered the regular bureaucracy, their coherence as a group was destroyed. It is also possible that the Empress found less use for them as she turned more to her own family and favourites, some of whom she realized were not without talent. Wu San-ssu, for instance, came almost to monopolize capital architectural projects, and the princess T'ai-ping and Shang-kuan Wan-erh seem to have served as confidantes and secret advisors.[59] In the last years of the dynasty, the Chang brothers and their many hangers-on played a similar role, enjoying privileged access to the Empress and sometimes refusing admittance even to the tsai-hsiang!

It is important, as we view this process, to recognize two things. In the first place, the Empress enjoyed only a partial success in reducing the prerogatives of her ministers and was forced on occasion to accept defeat in matters as diverse as the curbing of her extravagance and her ultimate admission that the succession concerned not just her household, but the entire Empire.[60] Secondly, although the bureaucracy was progressively weakened and restricted at the top, it continued to expand and develop in the lower levels as both entry and promotion were facilitated.

Early in 692, for instance, when the Empress appointed to lower capital positions a large number of provincials

recommended by special commissioners, and did so "without enquiring [whether they were] worthy or stupid", there was a common saying to the effect that even sawyers and pottery-menders had become officials.[61] In 695, Liu Chih-chi pointed out in a much-admired memorial that the Empress' yearly Acts of Grace with their conferral of promotion and honorific rank meant that in court and countryside official robes and insignia were everywhere encountered, and he went on in the same piece, to compare her "excessive" appointments to gravel in need of sifting.[62] In default of data, it is difficult to estimate except in this impressionistic sense, how greatly the bureaucracy expanded in the Chou, and the task is made even more difficult by the fact that the new men seem to have been absorbed either into menial jobs or through auxiliary appointments, rather than through the creation of new positions.[63] However, in terms of our present consideration it is perhaps sufficient to document the trend. Our point is that below the fifth-rank, the Chou bureaucracy may not have been characterized by quality, but it was becoming a genuine avenue of social mobility, and a huge pool from which those who showed ability might be drawn out and elevated to the charmed circle of fifth-rank officialdom. For approximately one-fifth of the Empress Wu's tsai-hsiang, we have no information whatever on their antecedents or previous career, a fact which suggests that men of obscure origin were at last reaching the highest posts and that some at least, succeeded

in doing so even without formal examination.

This phenomenon, because of the pressure from below which it created among those already occupying high posts, had some important ramifications. It helps to explain, for instance, why the coup which deposed the Empress was the work exclusively of high officials, and it also helps to explain why the Chou saw no further attack in the form of clan-lists or marriage-bans on the great aristocracy. If the tsai-hsiang group in the Chou constitutes a representative sample, it seems clear that the great clans were becoming bureaucratized by the writing of examinations and the acceptance of capital positions, but at the same time, were able to monopolize only a small proportion of pivotal offices.[64] In other words, even if they continued to fight for their own interests, they did so on a field chosen by the throne and for interests which were less regionally-based or exclusivistic than had been the case earlier in the dynasty. Little attempt seems to have been made to balance appointments on a regional basis, and this would suggest that the great aristocracy was coalescing into a more coherent, less divided interest group. Subject to pressures both from above and below in their bureaucratic role, they were clearly on the defensive during the Chou, and sought more to maintain than to advance their position. They were by no means impotent and would experience a revival under Hsüan-tsung,[65] but by the eighth century, power struggles had become more internal-

ized than before, and the role of the throne was different from before. For this, the Empress Wu was largely responsible.

A final ramification of the widening of the road to office was the extremely high quality of those officials who reached the top. The traditional historians who so frequently criticize the Empress are also consistent in their admission that her abilities were great enough to attract into her service men like Ti Jen-chieh, Li Chao-te, Hsü Yu-kung, Wei Yüan-chung, and many others whose talents were hardly inferior to the ministers who surrounded T'ai-tsung. Ssu-ma Kuang, resuming earlier views found in the dynastic histories, says that although the Empress made excessive appointments, she rapidly dismissed or executed the incompetents, and that because of her decisiveness, and her abilities to use reward and punishment and to recognize talent, "the brilliant and worthy of the time were all in rivalry to be employed by her."[66] This is undoubtedly true but the explanation could probably be expanded to suggest that these men recognized the validity and the value of her wider aims and desired to contribute to their achievement.

Perhaps the strongest indication of this fact is that in spite of political uncertainty, factionalism, and the continued existence of the terror, the early Chou was characterized by an efficient if unambitious administration. The sharpest criticism of the government, as we have seen, centred

upon excessive punishment and appointment, and we find no signs whatever of unrest outside the capital. Instead, cases of corruption, even when they involved the Empress' closest supporters were dealt with swiftly.[67] For reasons we shall shortly suggest, demographic shift was beginning to come to the notice of the court, and in this period, attempts were made to tighten the census procedure and to create new administrative units to deal with the growth of population in the Yangtze valley.[68] Both the Boards of Civil Office and War were expanded, presumably to keep pace with their work-load, and decree examinations were held sometimes at the rate of two a year.[69] We find little evidence anywhere of maladministration, but rather that "the minds of the people were made up [in the Empress' favour]",[70] and a sign of her self-confidence is found in the creation of the "Record of Current Politics" (shih-cheng-chi) which recorded her every pronouncement and sent it monthly to the History Office.[71]

In foreign affairs, the Chou was to suffer no setback until 696, and indeed, China's prestige among the barbarians seemed to rival its mid-century height. Tribute missions appeared from Central Asia, India and Indo-China, a new king was invested in Silla in 693,[72] and by 696, over a million barbarians had sought and been granted permission to settle within the Empire. The largest group to enter were 670,000 Western Turks of the Shih-hsing tribe, but large numbers of Ch'iang and Man tribesmen were incorporated in the same

period.[73] In December 692, two of the finest generals of their age, Wang Hsiao-chieh and T'ang Shou-ching,[74] who had earlier persuaded the Empress that the time was ripe for the recovery of the Four Garrisons, inflicted heavy defeats on the Tibetans and re-established the An-hsi protectorate at Kucha after a gap of twenty-two years. It is interesting to note that the Empress seems not to have regarded this as expansionism, for on being informed of the victory, she remarked that the old borders of the chen-kuan era had been restored completely and now were quiet.[75] This was to be the case until early 694 when the Eastern Turks found themselves a brilliant if erratic leader in the new khan, Mo-ch'o (Qapaġan), who was soon to dominate much of Central Asia and was to become the most formidable enemy of the Chou.[76] He wasted no time in testing Chinese border defenses but Chinese arms, even when led by Hsüeh Huai-i or one of the Wu princes were still intimidating, and these early raids were "hit-and-run" episodes which brought Mo-ch'o so little profit that he soon asked to submit, and in the winter of 695 was permitted to do so with a generalship and a ducal title.[77]

Mo-cho's submission in some senses marks the high-water point of the Chou. It was first of all, the last foreign-policy success the dynasty was to boast for quite some time, and was symbolic, moreover, of the success of the generally laissez-faire policy which had characterized domestic administration and with the single exception of the

Four Garrisons, foreign affairs also. In the widest sense, the aim of this policy for the Empress was to secure her legitimation, permitting familiarity and inertia to do their work of reconciling bureaucrat and commoner to the unprecedented rule of a female emperor. In some respects, however, the corollaries of the policy were costly, with bureaucratic expansion, public works and Buddhist patronage accounting for much of the budgetary increase, but with defense costs rapidly mounting as the traditional pattern of barbarian threat in times of internal dissension began to materialize. The Empress had been successful in augmenting the fu-ping system, and in the establishment of some new garrisons especially in the south,[78] but it was rapidly becoming evident that the demands on the state treasury were simply too great. Thus, as early as mid-694, the Empress had tried to assess her officials the equivalent of two months' salary to support the military, but had been forced to withdraw in the face of general opposition.[79] In the same month, the growing shortage of metal was demonstrated when farm implements had to be melted down for the construction of the T'ien-shu.[80]

At about the same time, officials began to identify still other causes of the financial problem, foremost among them the failure of earlier attempts to tighten census registration. In 695, Li Chiao, a censor of distinguished lineage, a chih-shih graduate and a man of recognized literary talent, drew attention to the growing number of vagrant households,

a problem which he suggested had existed for some years.[81] He did not directly blame the central government for the phenomenon, but the indifference of local officials who were lax about identity cards (chien-ch'a), and he pointed out the futility of recent attempts to have local officialdom reform the situation. His own solution was fourfold. First of all, the present law should be clarified and the government should show a tolerant attitude to present offenders. A time limit of one hundred days should be set, during which the squatters could give themselves up and opt either to remain where they were or return to their original homes, in either case receiving amnesty and financial aid to get a new start. The whole reform should be supervised by special censors sent out from the capital.

The Empress is said to have approved this plan and actually to have appointed the censors before she was forced to shelve it because of ministerial objections whose grounds we are not given.[82] There is evidence from Tunhuang that a variation of the plan was implemented about 702-3, but the effect could not have been great since Hsüan-tsung faced the problem in greatly magnified form early in his reign.[83] It seems likely rather, that the Chou continued to suffer from the problems Li Chiao connected with the vagrants--tax evasion, local conflicts, and the too-rapid growth of urban population, but that they were not viewed seriously enough to inspire a concerted effort at reform.

These first signs of economic strain, followed by two successive political defeats, coincided for the Empress with severe personal disappointment and a weakening of prestige caused by Hsüeh Huai-i's burning of the Ming-T'ang complex at the beginning of 695. We have already noticed how this event led to a certain shift in ideological priorities, with the Empress beginning to place relatively less emphasis on Buddhism and more on Confucianism, particularly in symbolic terms.[84] And it seems, moreover, to have fostered an atmosphere of freer speech at court with frank criticism of plans to re-build the Ming T'ang[85] as well as the complaints we have already noted about excessive appointments and rewards, and lax provincial administration. The response of the Empress was varied: compromising with a smaller version of the Ming T'ang, ridding herself of Huai-i and other favourites,[86] and toward the end of the year, abolishing the principle of anonymity (hu-ming) she had herself introduced into the examinations, probably in 690.[87] While her reasons for this are not altogether clear, it seems likely that it was a measure intended to appeal to the entrenched bureaucracy whose friends and relatives might thereby find bureaucratic entry less difficult. Although her response to the problem of vagrancy was a positive one, it seems that in these other areas she was continuing to rely on palliatives rather than taking the positive steps which might have jeopardized her popularity. As we have seen, and in spite of the fiscal

problems so evident in 695, when she offered the feng sacrifice at Sung-shan, at the end of the year, she declared an Empire-wide holiday from that year's tsu tax![88]

What impact this might have had we are not told, for domestic problems were soon overshadowed by the renewal of the barbarian threat, a development marked by the massive defeat sustained by the hitherto invincible Wang Hsiao-chieh, and his deputy, Lou Shih-te at the hands of the Tibetans in April, 696.[89] The underlying causes of this defeat are hard to identify since the sources provide no more than the briefest outline of events among the Tibetans since the accession of the young tsan-p'u in 679. From what we can gather, the young ruler was not a strong one and had permitted state control to fall into the hands of a great clan known as Lun. It was one of them, Ch'in-ching, who was responsible for the victory.[90] Shocked by her first defeat in the Chou, and with the Tibetans only a hundred miles from Ch'ang-an, the Empress had no time for retaliation before a new threat arose on her northern flank. This was the great Khitan rebellion which broke out in early summer.

This event seems to have been totally an unexpected one since the Khitan had been quiescent since 648 when T'ai-tsung had incorporated them into the Ying-chou tu-tu-fu,[91] where they had come to enjoy a good deal of self-government. The two rebel leaders, Li Chin-ch'ung and Sun Wan-jung, had risen to high administrative posts there but as was sometimes

the case, the Khitan had not been fortunate in the Chinese officials over them, and the present governor-general seems to have been a hard and self-willed man who not only treated the chieftains like slaves, but had refused relief during a recent famine.[92] This is seen usually as the immediate cause of the rebellion, but the dissatisfaction with Chinese rule may have run deeper, since within a week, Li and Sun had thousands of rebels under arms. Since the Khitan were a relatively sophisticated enemy and already inside the Wall, official response was both swift and in earnest. Twenty-eight generals at the head of an unspecified force were sent against them, but in the first major battle, near present-day Peking, the imperial troops suffered near annihilation. The disaster was compounded when the Khitan used captured Chinese seals to forge orders which led the relief force into an ambush.[93]

In this desperate situation the Empress' first reaction seems to have been one of similar desperation. Making the unprecedented offer of official rewards to criminals and private slaves who would enrol in the army,[94] she quickly began to transfer all the troops from the northwest as well as from Huai-nan and Shan-nan to Yü-chou, ordering the latter to make the 4,000-li march in a hundred days! Even the grain-transport ships from the Yangtze valley were to be diverted and continue with their present crews to the front.[95] It is difficult to know how much of this was carried out, for in

the same month, June of 696, Mo-cho's Turks drove into Liang-chou, and the Tibetans, still in Lung-hsi, threatened to advance unless Chinese forces were withdrawn from the Four Garrisons.[96] It was at this point, and beset on three sides, that the Empress decided to pause and rely upon the calm expertise of officials like Kuo Yüan-chen and Ch'en Tzu-ang whose experience of the frontiers was firsthand.[97] They rapidly evolved a series of policies which were ultimately to be successful.

Turning first to the Tibetans, and acting on Kuo's perception of serious rivalry between the ruler and Lun Ch'in-ching, she immediately sent envoys to parley about a marriage alliance and an exchange of territory, but with secret instructions to exploit the factional rivalry.[98] Ch'en Tzu-ang had considered both Turks and Tibetans to be a greater threat than the Khitan, and so the Empress turned next to Mo-ch'o, seizing upon his ambition to turn back the invasion. This she was able to do because the Turk seems to have believed that even the Chinese throne was not beyond his grasp, and so had demanded not only that the Turks settled inside the Wall be returned to him, but also that the Empress adopt him as a son and arrange an imperial marriage for his daughter![99] Her response was to temporize while encouraging his hopes, and she promised to consider his requests while meanwhile confirming him as Khan and appointing him an imperial general. These marks of favour coincided with the

death of the Khitan leader, Li Chin-ch'ung, and Mo-ch'o seized the chance to attack the unprotected Khitan base and seize the families of the absent leaders, as a result of which he was granted still more distinctions from the Empress.[100] It may be that the Turk had his own interests at heart in this attack on a rival barbarian power, but whatever his motives, he substantially weakened the Khitan who now had no option but to advance further south, and they rapidly reached Wei-chou, less than two hundred miles from Lo-yang. Here they halted for the winter providing the Empress with a breathing space, but we are told, ominously seeking local support for her deposition and the restoration of Chung-tsung.[101]

The year 697 opened gloomily. Mo-ch'o had become impatient, and he began once more to plunder the border prefectures. At the same time, a well-connected prefect called Liu Ssu-li was persuaded by a fortune-teller that he possessed signs of greatness, and he rapidly began to form a party at court to help him seize the throne. The conspiracy seems to have been well-advanced when it came to the ears of Lai Chün-ch'en who saw in it a chance to regain his lost favour and reported it immediately by the special (shang-pien) procedure to the Empress. Not fully trusting Lai, she put the investigation in the hands of a grand-nephew, Wu I-tsung, but he soon proved to be fully as unscrupulous, forcing the guilty Liu to implicate many innocents, in all probability, those most opposed to the Wu interests. In all, we are told thirty-

six families, "all distinguished shih of the Empire", and over a thousand of their adherents and relatives suffered the penalties of exile or death in this final purge.[102] It also brought Lai back to power, and although the Empress typically elevated his enemy Chi Hsiu, at the same time,[103] his power was great enough to again create a climate of fear and dread in the court, and once again to raise questions about the succession.

The atmosphere of the court became even more confused at precisely the same time because of the meteoric rise of two unknowns, the half-brothers Chang, I-chih and Ch'ang-tsung.[104] These young men, probably in their twenties at the time, were the grandsons of a distinguished minister, Chang Hsing-ch'eng, and the elder had used the yin privilege to take up an official career. He was also "white of complexion, of great beauty and skilled in music and song"; qualities seemingly shared by his younger brother, Ch'ang-tsung, who attracted the attention of the T'ai-p'ing princess and won her recommendation. Taking advantage of his access to the palance to speak to the Empress of his brother, he secured an introduction, and before long both were awarded high rank and showered with brocades, horses, slaves and other gifts. In the popular literature of later times, and indeed even in the contemporary perception, the rise of the brothers was attributed to a sexual liason with the Empress,[105] but the standard sources not only portray them as somewhat effeminate, but

specifically relate that they were castrated (ch'eng p'i-yang chih ch'ung). The Empress, moreover, was seventy at the time, and although she was "skilled with cosmetics", and said to be able to conceal her age,[106] it seems more likely that she favoured the youths because they were diverting company and more particularly, because she believed that Ch'ang-tsung was the re-incarnation of the Taoist immortal Wang Tzu-ch'in.[107] Already she had begun to show the interest in personal immortality which characterized so many rulers late in their lives.[108]

Whatever the reasons for their rise, the Changs were soon the dominant personalities at court with even the various members of the Wu clan waiting at their mansion gate and contending for the privilege of holding their bridles![109] Their relatives were also awarded gifts and honours seemingly without limit, and the court began to take on an almost frivolous cast with the Empress pondering the gilding of her nine recently-cast tripods[110] even as the Khitan smashed an army of 170,000, killed Wang Hsiao-chieh, and occupied Yü-chou with great carnage.[111]

As if this were not enough, Mo-ch'o presented at the same time a virtual ultimatum, threatening rebellion unless he were awarded the entire Shan-yü Protectorate, and unless all the Turks who had previously settled in six prefectures inside the wall were returned to him.[112] The ensuing debate seems to have jolted the court back to reality, and the

Empress inclined first to the "hard line" of Li Chiao and T'ien Kuei-tao,[113] but was finally forced to the side of the appeasers by the magnitude of the Khitan threat. Thus, she returned to Mo-ch'o several thousand tents of settled Turks, along with enormous bribes of textiles, seed-grain, farm implements and iron, as well as the promise of an imperial marriage,[114] hoping this would temporarily satisfy him. As summar approached, she sent two more huge armies, one 200,000 strong, against the Khitan. The source of these troops is unknown, but considering the enormous levies of the past two years, these armies might be seen as one last great effort at national salvation. The overall commander was Wu I-tsung, a grand-nephew of the Empress whose military career was not a distinguished one,[115] and whose appointment suggests that the troops might not have been wholly reliable and that the Empress was now concerned to keep close rein on military power in the Empire.

Fortunately for her, the tide now turned. The Khitan seem to have gained no appreciable success in winning over the Chinese in occupied areas, and so sought an alliance with Mo-ch'o intending later to betray him. The Turk, however, recognized their bad faith and in retaliation, seized their newly-built storehouse and base in Manchuria, taking all the booty they had hitherto gained. It seems unlikely that he planned any direct attack on the Khitan, but when news of his raid reached them, they were engaged in battle with the

Chinese, and fearing attack from the rear, their Hsi allies mutinied and the rest of the army scattered. Sun Wan-jung was killed by his subordinates while in flight and the remnants of the rebellious tribes joined Mo-ch'o.[116] Thus, at an enormous cost in men and money, and in the devastation of much of the northeast, the Khitan rebellion came to an end.

As was often the case with the Empress, success brought a relaxation of the harsher aspects of her rule. Even as this final campaign against the Khitan was on the march, she had moved, albeit unwillingly, against Lai Chün-ch'en and had destroyed him before the final victory. His fall was of his own making, for since his return to favour he had engaged in open disregard of the law, denouncing high officials in order to seize their wives, concubines and possessions, and becoming ever more arrogant and unrestrained. Either because he sought supreme power for himself or because he was by now, demented, he accused the Wu princes of a conspiracy which included Chung-tsung, Jui-tsung and T'ai-p'ing. The latter, whose shrewdness seems almost to have matched her mother's, responded by leading the accused in a counter-suit. Lai's rise had been based, of course, on the fact that among his many false denunciations, he had identified the occasional genuine plot and on the basis of this service to the state, the Empress thought to pardon him. Ironically, it was Chi Hsiu, who had once been accused by Lai, who persuaded her otherwise and she permitted his execution, though as we have seen, she sent his chief enemy, Li Chao-te, to the same

block.[117] Nor did she fail to make political capital from the event, issuing a decree outlining Lai's crimes, and pardoning the numerous officials whom he had intimidated into making false appointments.[118] Later that year, she called together her ministers, and explaining why she had placed such trust in Lai and in Chou Hsing before him, acknowledged that she had been deceived and promised henceforth to eschew such methods.[119]

It is impossible to gauge the sincerity of the Empress' repentance, but it is a fact that in mid-697 the terror came to an end. Contemporaries, moreover, seem to have sensed the change of climate, for when Wu Ch'eng-ssu and San-ssu renewed their succession claims early the next year, the ministerial body united in opposition, showed no fear of remonstration, and were able to speak frankly with impunity. Led by Ti Jen-chieh, who was henceforth to enjoy the complete trust of the Empress,[120] several went so far as to suggest the regularization of the succession by the elevation of Chung-tsung, and Ti disposed of the old argument that the question was a "household matter" by pointing that for a ruler, all within the Empire constituted his household.[121] The Empress took time over her decision and although in Ssu-ma Kuang's judgment, it was Ti who persuaded her definitively against a Wu succession,[122] it was ironically enough, the Chang brothers who successfully urged Chung-tsung upon her.[123] It is unlikely that the initiative for this lay with them, but although they

are seldom credited with any political acumen at all, they at least recognized that their survival would depend on others when their protector died. In the third month of 698, ostensibly for medical reasons, Chung-tsung was brought back to the capital.[124]

These events raise interesting questions about the nature of Wu Tse-t'ien's power, foremost among them perhaps, the question of how important coercion was in its maintenance. The answer seems to be that until the bureaucracy was satisfied that the will of Kao-tsung was carried out and Chung-tsung inherited the throne, "punishments" were an integral part of the Wu régime, as important to its survival as its state ideology or the winning of popular support. If this is so, our earlier suggestions on the highly personal nature of the Empress' legitimation are strengthened, for at the risk of repetition, we must again point out that her rule was one which could produce at best, divided loyalties throughout officialdom. That is to say that on the one hand, most contemporaries recognized that her ability exceeded that of the rightful heir. On the other, they saw themselves as guardians of the defined tradition of the Son of Heaven and all it stood for, so that the Empress, whose whole career was in violation of it, could never be certain which loyalty would be uppermost in her officials' minds. Perhaps more than anything else, it is a measure of the flexibility of T'ang Confucianism that compromise was possible, but since compromise came only

in the second decade of the Empress' de facto rule, and since the compromise was essentially a Confucian victory, it is also a measure of the strength of tradition. With the succession regularized, the Empress would be permitted to remain in power so long as she continued successfully to fulfill the obligations of ruler.

This is not to say, however, that she became a "lame duck", a prisoner of the upper bureaucracy, in the last years of her reign. Typically, for instance, as Ti-Jen-chieh rose to paramount minister, she took care to balance his appointment with that of Wu San-ssu.[125] She stopped short also of proclaiming Chung-tsung immediately as Crown Prince, and as we shall see, she insisted on the invulnerability of the Chang's in spite of their increasingly flagrant corruption. She moved, moreover, to increase her base of support in the lower bureaucracy, putting Li Chiao in charge of the selection system in late 697, where he "began the establishment of several thousand yüan-wai-lang",[126] and permitting the more rapid advancement of lower officials within the bureaucracy.[127] In spite of these measures, however, the effect of the terror's end and the return of Chung-tsung was still enough to produce a greater spirit of coöperation between the Empress and her ministeres, and one which led to happy results, particularly in foreign policy.

The defeat of the Khitan, and the necessity of placating Turks and Tibetans to achieve it, seem to have led to

the rise of a strong and articulate "pacifist" party at court, and one which advocated for the first time, the abandonment of some previously-gained territory. In the winter of 697, Ti Jen-chieh put this case in an erudite memorial[128] which first outlined China's natural barriers against the barbarians, and suggested that the wise rulers of ancient times had recognized that conquest beyond these borders was the use of national wealth to acquire worthless and unproductive land which would yield no revenue. Ambitious rulers like Ch'in Shih-huang-ti and Han Wu-ti, on the other hand, had impoverished the state with their expeditions. Recently, he pointed out, successive campaigns had eaten up enormous sums and still continued to do so, in spite of the fact that "in Kuan-tung there is famine, in Shu and Han, [households] flee their registration, and south of Chiang and Huai, the levies never cease, [so that] people cannot return to their livelihood and one after another, turn to banditry". He suggested that instead of her present policy, the Empress return to that of T'ai-tsung in regard to the north and west,[129] utilizing largely-native administrations, eschewing far-off garrisons and attacking barbarians only if they rebelled. In specific terms, A-shih-na Ho-she-lo[130] should be made khan and placed in charge of the Four Garrisons, while a scion of the old ruling family of Koguryŏ should be given An-tung to hold. Chinese troops should simply guard the borders, store up supplies and be prepared for attack,

while spying on potential enemies. In this way, if Turks and Tibetans raided deeply they would have anxiety about defeat and if their raids were light they would reap little profit.

This viewpoint, according to the Mirror, was in agreement with that of those conversant with barbarian affairs,[131] and although the Empress did not implement Ti's specific recommendations, there was a progressive tendency in the remainder of the Chou to follow the general policy lines he suggested. As early as 698, and judging from memorials which Ch'en Tzu-ang submitted that year, the Empress began to economize, abolishing the T'ung-ch'ang army and the huge annual corvée which transported supplies to the northwestern garrisons, and ending also the levies and corvée in Chien-nan.[132] Even with Mo-ch'o, whose presence had made Ti's specific proposals impossible to grant, the Empress attempted conciliation. Obviously seeing him as a greater threat than the Tibetans whose invasion route she was content to garrison,[133] she made a marriage alliance in the sixth month of 698, unexpectedly sending Wu Yen-hsiu, the second son of Ch'eng-ssu to marry Mo-ch'o's daughter.[134] The dispatch of a prince-of-the-blood to marry a barbarian was wholly unprecedented--a fact quickly pointed out by orthodox officials. The Empress quickly stilled her critics by demoting one of them, Chang Chien-chih, to a remote southern prefecture.[135] He would return in 704 as tsai-hsiang and take charge of the restoration coup.

The sending of a male "bride" to the Turks turned out to be a serious miscalculation, for Mo-ch'o saw immediately that the Empress had no intention of granting his major demands, and must have realized also that the succession was to be Li and not Wu. Thus, he pointed out to the envoy who had accompanied Yen-hsiu that he had wanted his daughter to marry into the Li clan who had always treated his people well, and he threatened to restore the T'ang. Sending forth troops in the eighth month of 698 for that purpose he achieved a number of rapid successes, with one of the three frontier armies upon whom he made a surprise attack submitting voluntarily and without a fight.[136] At the same time, he sent angry missives to the court, listing five grievances against the Empress and threatening to seize Ho-pei for himself.[137]

Her response was to rouse the Empire for yet another great effort, recruiting a quadripartite force estimated at 450,000 men, drawn in all probability from throughout the country.[138] Even an army of this size, however, proved unable to pin down the mobile barbarians, and she was forced to call for even more troops. This time the people balked. In over a month, we are told, no more than 1,000 men responded to the call to arms,[139] and she was forced finally to play her trump card. Acceding to a request from Jui-tsung, she declared Chung-tsung Heir-apparent, and two days later, made him supreme commander (yüan-shih) of the Ho-pei armies, supplanting her grand-nephew, Wu Chung-kuei.[140] The appoint-

ment of Chung-tsung was, in fact, a nominal one with Ti Jen-chieh actually filling the post, but the propaganda value seems to have been great since the sources tell us that before long 50,000 men joined the army.[141] Ti was able to lead an additional 100,000 men into the field, and at this Mo-ch'o seems to have decided that the combined Chinese forces were too strong to fight, and so withdrew to the steppes, leaving behind a death-toll estimated by one source at eighty to ninety thousand persons.[142] His own army had swollen to 400,000 and as the various tribes north of the Wall submitted to him, he became briefly the greatest power in central Asia, almost reconstituting the great T'u-ch'üeh empire of the mid-sixth century, and exhibiting "a highly contemptuous attitude toward China."[143]

The failure of the Empress to complete the subduing of Mo-ch'o is the principal reason traditional historiography tends to regard the Chou as a "weak" dynasty, but in retrospect, this seems unfair. The Turks, after all, were driven from China, and although Mo-ch'o was to return once more, his last raid was in no sense so serious a threat as the invasion of 698. It is unlikely, moreover, that the Empress had either the ability or the inclination to prosecute further hostilities. As we earlier suggested, she faced a strong "peace" party at court, and she also had some doubts about the reliability of her troops when those she did send in pursuit of Mo-ch'o "did not dare to press [him]".[144] The

reluctance of the people, who had never before failed her, to enrol in the army in 698, she undoubtedly saw as a sign of their desire for rest, and always sensitive to their mood, she seems to have decided when Mo-ch'o withdrew that she would henceforth play a waiting game and use diplomacy rather than war to deal with her enemies.

She was fortunate, therefore, in the summer of 699 when her Tibetan policy of formenting internal dissension at last bore fruit. While Lun Ch'in-ching was out of the capital, the young tsan-p'u used subterfuge to escape confinement and struck hard at his enemy, seizing and executing two thousand of his supporters in the capital. He then attacked and routed Ch'in-ching who committed suicide with the result that his followers, including over 7,000 tents of T'u-yü-hun, sought refuge in China.[145] The ruler, perhaps in an attempt to consolidate his position, invaded China the next year but was driven back when the experienced general T'ang Shou-ching bested him in six successive battles.[146] Rather than follow up these victories, the Empress chose to consolidate, putting Kuo Yüan-chen in charge of strategic Liang-chou. Here, his decade of capable administration is said to have made secure the borders, brought prosperity to the area, and won the respect of the Tibetans.[147] In 703, after yet another defeat, they resumed tribute payments to China and requested a marriage alliance.[148] The sources do not record whether or not this was granted, but the accession of a seven-year-old

ruler shortly thereafter ensured that the Tibetans posed no threat for the remainder of the Chou.

Of Mo-ch'o, little was heard in China until he invaded in early 702, sweeping deep into Shensi and reaching the Empress' home prefecture of Ping-chou before halting. Counter-measures were swift with the immediate constitution of the "Shan-tung Defense Army", made up entirely of north-eastern troops earlier established for just such an eventuality,[149] and shortly thereafter, by the levy of a larger force nominally headed by Jui-tsung, who received the title of Supreme Commander. Although the Turks again could not be pinned down, the rapidity of the Chinese response seems to have impressed Mo-ch'o who retired without engaging in a major battle, and in the sixth month of 703, he sent an envoy to request that his daughter be married to a son of Chung-tsung.[150] The sources are not specific on whether or not his request was granted, but a marriage of some sort was certainly arranged since Mo-ch'o sent a message of gratitude at the end of the year.[151] He remained active outside the Wall as evidenced by certain administrative changes on the frontier,[152] but after a final great victory at Ming-sha near Tun-huang in 706, he caused no further trouble in China. He was assassinated by a rival in 716.[153]

In view of these facts, the later stages of the Empress Wu's foreign policy should be seen neither as unrealistic, over-ambitious, nor as a failure.

The diminution of the barbarian threat from 699 onward should perhaps, have brought about an attempt to solve some of the long-standing internal problems, but this was not the case. Part of the reason lies, of course, in the age of the Empress. Although in early 699, she is said to have grown new eyebrows,[154] she shortly afterwards suffered her first recorded illness while visiting Sung-shan, the site in Taoist legend, of a miraculous ascent to the land of the immortals by Wang Tzu-chin in the sixth-century B.C.[155] Although she recovered slightly, she suffered a relapse the next year, again improving when she took an elixir of long life fabricated by a Buddhist monk.[156] Her health, henceforth, seems gradually to have declined, and with it her extraordinary administrative abilities. She may have felt, additionally, that the time for relaxation had come, that she was at last secure in her legitimation. Indicative of this is the fact that immediately after her second bout of illness, she divested herself of the last of her grandiose titles.[157]

A second reason for the administrative decline which characterized the last years of the Chou is the death of Ti Jen-chieh in the autumn of 700. As the Empress acknowledged, his death left the court empty[158] and though she lamented his absence each time an important decision was called for, she was to find no replacement. It was partially for this reason that she made perhaps the worst decision of her

career, turning more and more to the Chang brothers for company and for stimulation.

At the beginning of 699, and probably in response to complaints that the Changs did nothing to deserve their favour, she had established for them the new office of the K'ung-hao fu or Crane Institute, the crane being a symbol of longevity and the means by which Taoist immortals were conveyed to heaven.[159] Its purpose, ostensibly, was that of literary compilation and not only were a number of competent scholars appointed to it, but in 701, its members produced at least one large and important work.[160] In mid-700 the name of the institute was changed to the Feng-ch'en fu or the Office of Imperial Attendants, but already by that time it had acquired a rather unsavoury reputation as the site of evenings of drinking, gambling, and other unseemly and undignified activities, in which the Empress herself and high officials who wished to curry favour with the Changs often participated. Needless to say, this gave rise to scandalous rumours, and the CTS tells us that the Empress went so far as to order that handsome youths be recruited as attendants, an act which caused one official to remonstrate:

> . . . Your Majesty has already granted intimate favour (nei-ch'ung) to Hsüeh Huai-i and to Chang I-chih and Ch'ang-tsung. Surely this should be enough. Recently, I heard that a head of the Servants of the Imperial Apartments, called Liu Mu, himself claimed that his son Liang-pin was white and pure, beautiful in beard and eyebrow. The chief administrator of the Gate Guard of the Left, Hou Hsiang, said that his virility (yang-tao) and robustness surpassed that of Hsüeh Huai-i, and unassisted,

> he wanted to recommend himself as fit for membership in the Office of Imperial Attendants. . . .[161]

It seems clear therefore, that in the popular perception the Office was viewed as something akin to a male harem, and the reputation of the Empress of course suffered. In response to the blunt memorial quoted, she is said to have rewarded its author, and remarked that had it not been for his plain speaking, she would not have known the situation existed.[162] In all likelihood this was true, for the attraction of the Empress to the Changs seems to have been more than anything else their youth, and her belief that Ch'ang-tsung, whom she dressed in feathers and mounted on a wooden crane, was the re-incarnation of Wang Tzu-chin,[163] and hence in possession of the secret of longevity. When we re-call that even the great T'ai-tsung, who seems to have been far less superstitious than many of his contemporaries was not immune from the lure of immortality, her infatuation becomes more comprehensible.

These activities of the Changs, aside from the fact that they distracted the Empress from more important concerns and lowered somewhat her prestige, were relatively harmless, and there is no record of Ti Jen-chieh, for instance, offering any protest. Much less harmless, however, was their growing tendency to interfere in politics and to indulge in corruption on a grand scale, this latter activity apparent almost from the beginning of their careers at court. In fairness,

it must be acknowledged that the two favourites were less guilty than other members of their parvenue clan, with Chang Ch'ang-i, for instance, selling posts lavishly and on one occasion when he forgot the given name of a client, having all sixty persons of the same surname on his lists appointed to office![164] When he was tried for corruption with two other brothers in 704, the three were found guilty of accepting over four million ch'ien in bribes, and throughout the period, a number of Chang protégés took part in the same activity.[165]

None of the Changs, it seems, possessed any degree of political talent or literary ability, and even in relatively unimportant provincial postings were notable failures.[166] The CTS explicitly remarks that when Ch'ang-tsung was vice-president of the Board of Rites, he had to have documents "ghost-written" for him.[167] In spite of this though, the two favourites had no qualms about intervening in state affairs, and the Empress, says one source, often entrusted political matters to them.[168] Thus, in late 701, they were responsible for a domestic tragedy with wide ramifications when they denounced Chung-tsung's son and daughter along with her husband, a Wu prince, for criticizing the favour they enjoyed. The Empress, unreasonably angry, ordered all three to commit suicide, thus leaving Chung-tsung without an heir whose presence might have been instrumental in preventing the intrigue and bloodshed which marred the next two reigns.[169] The Changs,

moreover, allied themselves closely with the shrewd Wu San-ssu, himself playing a double game by this time,[170] and this formidable alliance so intimidated even the Li clan that in 702, Chung-tsung, Jui-tsung and T'ai-p'ing joined together in the sycophantic request that Ch'ang-tsung be granted princely rank![171] Most of the ministers, needless to say, feared to raise their voices against the favourites, with the single exception of Wei Yüan-chung, an outspoken and upright man, who had four times endured disgrace at the hands of the unworthy officials, but whose integrity and military ability had brought him gradually to the somewhat diminished position of paramount minister after the death of Ti Jen-chieh.[172] He had twice indirectly attacked the favourites before he openly warned the Empress about the "inferior men" (hsiao-jen) with whom she surrounded herself, and this brought upon him their accusation of treason, and in 703 a famous trial in which much of the court was involved.[173]

The details of these proceedings need not detain us here,[174] but its outcome offers an important illustration of how high the Changs had risen and the effect of their rise on the court. Although in the course of the trial it became clear that Yüan-chung was innocent, and although the Empress was warned that her character was changing to the degree that good men "slapped their thighs at home and gagged their mouths at court"[175] in fear of opposing the Changs, she knowingly over-rode justice for the first time in her career,

exiling Yüan-chung to a low provincial posting in the far south. Even in the face of a concerted effort by ministers to have the verdict reversed,[176] she insisted it be carried out, and in so-doing, gave stimulus to those forces who believed she was no longer competent to rule. And as we have frequently suggested, her unorthodox and highly personal legitimation depended on performance.

In certain other areas, now, deficiencies were being noticed, and as problems went unsolved, the support of certain constituencies began to dissipate. Needless to say, the first to defect were the upper bureaucracy, already somewhat alienated by her appointment policies and her support of unworthy favourites. We have pointed out earlier that the Empress was highly successful in the first years of the dynasty in minimizing their opposition by her Confucian patronage, but by the late 690's, it was becoming widely recognized that her support had been more apparent than real. In 699, for instance, one of the grand secretaries, Wei Ssu-li,[177] memorialized on the state of education, inspired according to the Mirror, by the fact that the Empress often used unscholarly (fei ju-shih) members of her own clan and relatives by marriage in administrative and teaching positions in the imperial schools, and supplemented them with their own poorly-trained students who gained their positions as rewards for assisting her in ceremonials.[178] Largely for this reason, Wei contended, the youth of the Empire had come to have con-

tempt for those charged with Confucian learning over the past two decades, and as a result, shunned it. This made little difference to the scions of powerful clans (kuei-men) who still won easy appointment through favouritism, but the poorer people were unable to rise, and the bureaucracy was thus riddled with unworthy and incompetent officials. From the time of Chung-tsung's deposition, the bureaucracy had expanded rapidly and at the same time, evil officials had risen to intimidate or execute those honest officials who remained. Corruption in the selection system and the avarice of local officials aggravated a bad situation. Wei's solution was to expand the school system and order the sons of the nobility and upper classes to enrol, ensuring that they would gain office by no other method. At school, they should be required to obey the rules, to venerate Confucianism, and assist at the lectures of virtuous and erudite men. As a practical inducement to the adoption of his plan, Wei pointed out that this would provide a high-quality officialdom at all levels, and instead of the present situation where "more than half the Empire's households have fled their registration, the tsu and tiao [taxes] shrink, and our budget is insufficient", the state would be prosperous and happy.[180]

There is probably an element of exaggeration in Wei's case, but evidence from other sources tends to confirm his views on the level of corruption in the selection system and the declining standards of provincial administration.[181] The

nature of our sources does not permit the examination of appointments to the capital schools, but Wei is probably identifying correctly a trend, since as we have seen, the literary emphasis in the examinations was regarded by some as detrimental to a more substantive Confucianism, and the several "decree" examinations of the Chou seem also to have been literary in bias.[182] For these reasons, the last years of the Empress seem to have seen the beginnings of a progressive failure of the Confucian component of her state ideology, and although she shortly made Wei Ssu-li rector of the state university, the imbalance continued, and was the more serious as she turned progressively to the mystical comforts of Taoism and Buddhism.

Recent scholarship has shown that quite aside from her activities with the Chang's, and her visits to Sung-shan, the Empress seems to have developed a greater interest both in Taoist festivals and literature in her last years, and she bestowed her patronage on both.[183] Even more evident and more unpopular with Confucians, however, were the fruits of her long support of Buddhism, a patronage of whose dangers, we have tried to suggest, she was consistently aware. Nonetheless, by the year 700, officials could complain of how Buddhist foundations surpassed even the imperial palaces in magnificence, and of how monks squeezed the people and disregarded their Law.[184] There were signs that from this time the Empress sought to compensate--ending the ban on butchery,

and attempting to tax the clergy rather than the people at large for new images she wished to erect,[185] but these were palliatives and as we have seen, she remained intensely Buddhistic until the end of her life. The effect of her moderate withdrawal of support may, however, have weakened her position, raising doubts in the Church about the reliability of her support. Certainly, the report of a miraculous apparition of the Buddha immediately after the ending of the butchery ban suggests an attempt perhaps by opportunistic Buddhists, to confirm her Buddhist loyalties.[186] If this is the case, we might see as a major theme of the last years of the Chou, the attempt to hold together, or perhaps even to restore, a crumbling ideology.

Closely related to this was the return of the court to Ch'ang-an in November, 701, the first time in twenty years the Empress had been in the T'ang capital.[187] She was to remain there for almost exactly two years, and although it is sometimes suggested she made the move for reasons of health, it is far more likely that her motives were political and ideological. Just prior to the move, she had ordered the suicide of Chung-tsung's children and in that same month, there had appeared the first open suggestion that she abdicate, in the form of a memorial from an otherwise unknown scholar, Su An-heng. Su pointed out that she had held the Empire in trust for over twenty years and that since Chung-tsung had shown himself to be both respectful and mature, it

was time the throne be returned to him. She had, moreover, more than twenty grandsons who should occupy princely rank in the stead of the Wu clan, thus ending the anomolous situation of having two imperial clans and avoiding trouble in the future.[188] While the Empress failed to act on his suggestion, she rewarded rather than punished him, thus showing a clear recognition that his viewpoint was not an isolated one. The return to the T'ang capital, accompanied by the proclamation of the new era-name of "ch'ang-an", was designed therefore both to reduce political pressures and to show the sincerity of her Confucianism, for like the Duke of Chou she was preparing now to "hand over the throne to the respectful prince".

Although at Ch'ang-an, the principal concern of the court was how to deal with Mo-ch'o, the Empress was able also to make some repairs in her ideological policy and to tighten somewhat the administration. Here, for instance, she extended the examination principle to its logical conclusion by the establishment of the military examination,[189] and she declared an absolute moratorium on punishments concerned with the early rebellions against her while ordering a re-investigation of Lai Chün-ch'en's cases, an action which resulted in the rehabilitation of many of his victims.[190] A number of popular appointments like Li Chiao and Wei An-shih were made: Wei Ssu-li was put in charge of the state university (kuo-tzu chien), and a new type of censor was established.[191] The

order for the composition of a national history in 703[192] was a Confucian act, and the placing of Wu San-ssu at the head of the compilers, may also have confirmed that the Empress was about to withdraw and wished to determine her place in history before doing so.

Unfortunately, any restoration of popularity among her ministers which might have accrued to her from these measures and the successful resolution of the barbarian problem was dissipated by her actions in the aforementioned trial of Wei Yüan-chung, and when she returned to Lo-yang immediately after it, she deemed it prudent to leave her grand-nephew, Wu Yu-i, in charge of (liu-shou) Ch'ang-an.[193]

At Lo-yang, and with an energy and competence surprising in a beleaguered and ailing woman nearing her eightieth birthday, the Empress at last confronted some of the long-standing problems of her dynasty. Acting probably on the suggestions of Li Chiao, who had regained tsai-hsiang status in 703, she sent special commissioners throughout the Empire to examine the standards of provincial administration on the basis of the six categories (liu-t'iao) used by the Han, and perhaps to deal directly with the vagrancy problem.[194] Shortly afterwards, she held a discussion on the problem of local administration, and informed by Li Chiao and T'ang Shou-ching that she was largely at fault for using demotion to the provinces as a punishment for unworthy capital officials with the result that officials "all value capital posts and have

contempt for provincial posts", she decided to act. Twenty experienced and able capital officials were concurrently appointed prefects. According to Ssu-ma Kuang, the experiment was a failure,[195] but it demonstrated the Empress' consistent concern for the people and her willingness to attempt unusual tactics to better their lot. It was on these grounds too, that she was dissuaded from completing an enormous image of the Buddha in mid-704,[196] and perhaps because of measures of this sort, we find a good deal of evidence to suggest that to the very end, she retained her great popularity among the masses.[197]

The same cannot be said, however, of the feelings of her bureaucrats, and here the policies of her last years seem to have been counter-productive. Although her staff increase in the second "university" (kuo-tzu chien) at Lo-yang in early 704,[198] and the amnesty and rehabilitation of all the earlier victims of Chou Hsing and Lai Chün-ch'en at the beginning of 705[199] were undoubtedly popular, the existence of the fifth-rank division within the bureaucracy still frustrated all her efforts to win their united support. As we earlier suggested, the Empress had always seen as one of her tasks, the reduction of ministerial power vis-à-vis that of the throne. Her so-called "excessive" appointments and rapid promotions in the lower bureaucracy had been a useful weapon in this conflict and there had been numerous protests from the high-ranking officials. With the rise of the Chang's, however, and the

death of Ti Jen-chieh who seems to have served as a kind of "buffer", there are signs that the Empress changed her policy. In 701, for instance, the promotion process (k'ao) was tightened.[200] Acts of Grace, of which there had been eleven in the preceding eleven years, ceased, and when new posts were established as in the case of the provincial censors, the number of personnel was specified.[201] At the end of 704, she abolished all the new posts established since 701.[202] It is unlikely that economic motives were behind this decision, for she could still contemplate Buddhist statues and build new palaces.[203] Rather, the policy seems to represent an attempt, belated though it was, to woo the upper bureaucracy. In so-doing, of course, she risked the alienation of their counterparts below the fifth-rank, and it is perhaps no coincidence that she found no support among them at her deposition.

In retrospect, any attempt at this stage to win over her ministers would seem to have been impossible for the simple reason that they could not be reconciled to the role of the Changs at court. To the Empress, of course, her favourites were a solace and a diversion, not to be taken seriously. The perspective of her ministers, however, was different. To them, the brothers were dangerous. They had been responsible already for more than one miscarriage of justice, and for the spread of corruption and scandalous rumours which diminished the prestige both of the Empress and

those whose duty it was to remonstrate with her. They were, moreover, dangerous in a more direct way, for their party of hangers-on was large, their association with the shrewd and ambitious Wu San-ssu was close, and increasingly, they alone determined who should have access to the Empress.[204] In the event of her sudden death, it was not impossible they could yet overturn the succession. It seemed imperative to certain ministers that action be taken quickly.

In the end, it was the continuing attempt of the Empress to conciliate her great ministers which brought about her downfall, though without returning to a policy of terror, it is difficult to know what other course she could have taken. In mid-704, she permitted the trial of three lesser members of the Chang clan for corruption, and unwisely suggested that I-chih and Ch'ang-tsung be investigated at the same time. She was probably of the opinion that they were not directly involved in their kinsmen's bribery and that by permitting the conviction of lesser members of the clan, she would demonstrate her impartiality and disarm the critics of the favourites. The tribunal found these men guilty, and also that Ch'ang-tsung had illegally occupied someone else's land, and imposed upon him a light fine which the Empress was happy to confirm. When it went further, and pointed out that the law demanded he be dismissed from all posts because of his brothers' proven crimes, she balked. Securing the agreement of one of her tsai-hsiang that Ch'ang-tsung "had merit-

course, was a capital charge, and taking no chances, the Empress appointed a tribunal of three, two of whom could be expected to vote for acquittal.[210] As was also expected, the third judge, Sung Ching,[211] dissented and as the court rallied around him, she used her former tactic of appointing him as a provincial commissioner in order to eliminate his opposition. His courageous response was to point out that the commission was improper for one of his rank, and when the Empress, returning to her customary respect for the law, permitted him to remain in the capital, Ch'ang-tsung's case was lost.

As Sung Ching continued to press his suit, he was joined by others, most notably Huan Yen-fan, and even by a genuine supporter of the Empress, Ts'ui Yüan-wei.[212] Both attempted to convince her that it was in her own interest, and indeed, necessary for her survival to let the law take its course, and reluctantly, she sent Ch'ang-tsung to be tried once more by Sung Ching at the Censorate. In mid-trial, however, she changed her mind, and dispatched a messenger with an extraordinary pardon, freeing Ch'ang-tsung and thus making him immune from further prosecution.

This act convinced the court that the ascendancy of the favourites was complete, and as the Empress returned to seclusion in a remote section of the palace (ch'ang-sheng yüan) where the Changs alone were permitted to see her, they determined to act. According to most sources, Chang Chien-chih, who was now tsai-hsiang and Chief Imperial Librarian,

had determined to restore the T'ang during his provincial exile,[213] and now he set about recruiting a party to destroy the Changs by force. Easily persuading Ts'ui Yüan-wei and Huan Yen-fan to join him, he added the Censor and prominent opponent of both Chang and Wu parties, Ching Hui,[214] as well as Yüan Shu-chi, who had formerly served in Chung-tsung's household and was currently a member of Jui-tsung's staff.[215] His presence was necessary, in all likelihood, to associate the princes with the conspiracy, and it was he who gave Chung-tsung what little advance warning of the coup he received.

All that remained now, was to muster sufficient force, and Chien-chih turned naturally to the Yü-lin Guard, suborning the General of the Right, Li To-tso, who some twenty years earlier had aided the Empress in Chung-tsung's deposition, and seems to have been motivated on both occasions by concern for the welfare of the state.[216] Chien-chih also insinuated Huan Yen-fan, Ching Hui, and Li Chan, the son of Li I-fu, into positions of command in the Yü-lin Guard, almost "tipping his hand", for the Changs immediately countered by having Wu Yu-i re-appointed as general.[217] This move is more than anything else, a measure of the skill of the Wu interests. Since "several tens" of officials were later to be disgraced as adherents of the Changs,[218] they could well have chosen another of their supporters for the post instead of a member of the Wu clan which had already demonstrated its unreliability

as an ally. The appointment smacks of manipulation by Wu San-ssu who had already assured his own future through a clandestine relationship with Chung-tsung's wife and the marriage of his nephew to the Heir Apparent's favourite daughter.[219] In any case, Wu Yu-i seems to have remained inactive as the coup unfolded.

Their preparations complete, the conspirators moved quickly. On the night of February 20, 705, they gathered at the Hsüan-wu Gate, a force of just over five hundred men, and sent for Chung-tsung. Although he had earlier approved the plan, he now lost his nerve, suggesting that while the Changs should be destroyed, he did not wish to alarm his sick mother.[220] Li Chan, thinking quickly, persuaded him that only his presence could now postpone the action, and thus he accompanied the conspirators to the northern gate. Catching sight of him, the others smashed the gate and swept into the palace grounds. Reaching the western pavilion where the Empress slept, they met the startled Changs in the courtyard and decapitated them on the spot. Awakened by the clamour, the Empress confronted the plotters and must immediately have recognized that the coup was a success. After addressing words of scorn to her son and certain others of the plotters,[221] she returned to bed, her half-century of power at an end.

The next day, Chung-tsung took charge of the state and sent commissioners through the provinces to announce the restoration. On the twenty-second of the month he became

emperor once more, though seemingly without a formal ceremony of abdication, and granted his mother the title Tse-t'ien ta-sheng huang-ti.[222] She was transferred to the Shang-yang palace west of the city, where for the next year, she remained an ill but honoured political spectator, receiving bi-monthly homage from the court. There is ample testimony, as we earlier suggested, that she remained popular among the people, and it seems, even with some ministers who remained at court;[223] and it must have been with a sardonic amusement that she saw Wu San-ssu so rapidly manoeuvre himself into a commanding position in government, re-enact some of her old provisions, and render the five chief conspirators against her impotent.[224] It was probably with relief that she saw the Li and Wu clans, far from engaging in strife, join in close alliance to impose their will on court and Empire. On December 16, 705, when she died quietly at about the age of eighty, she could afford magnanimously to renounce the title of emperor she had held so long, and finally to forgive her earliest enemies, those who had stood in her way so long ago, when by becoming the Empress of Kao-tsung, she began the climb which would end on heights greater than any other woman in China would ever scale.

NOTES

(CHAPTER IX)

[1]The question of ritual abdication is discussed by Carl Leban in a paper titled "The Accession of Ssu-ma Yen, A.D. 265: Legitimation by Ritual Replication" (Asilomar, 1975). In the case of the Chou, it is important to notice that the annals of the Empress in both T'ang histories state simply that she "raised her title" to emperor, and Ssu-ma Kuang records that "the Empress-dowager accepted (k'o) the request of the Emperor and the ministerial body . . . and elevated her title to sheng-shen huang-ti." TCTC 204, p. 6467. Jui-tsung does not seem to have signed the petition which requested the foundation of the Chou, but rather to have asked simply that his surname be changed from Li to Wu. TCTC, loc. cit.

In 705, the three sources use the term ch'uan-wei, "transmit the throne" for Chung-tsung's reassumption of the position of emperor.

[2]CTS 6:3076:1, HTS 4:3641:3, TCTC 204, p. 6467. Jui-tsung's heir was at the same time made huang-sun.

[3]Notes 124 and 140 below.

[4]Some of these relationships are outlined, Ch'en, "Hun-yin," and Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, p. 147. See also TCTC 204, pp. 6466-67 for T'ai-p'ing's marriage to the Empress' nephew and the conferral of the Wu surname on the Ch'ien-chin princess in 690 just prior to the usurpation.

[5]TCTC 206, p. 6540.

[6]HTS 4:3641:1, TCTC 204, p. 6470.

[7]Prof. Hok-lan Chan of University of Washington has recently pointed out to me that the T'ang did not formally adopt the earth power until 750. Since this is the case, we might assume that the Empress had no need to choose formally an element for her dynasty. On the other hand, the tradition of doing so had become well-established in the period of division, and in the early T'ang there were extensive debates on the matter in which Wang Po (648-75) proposed the scheme

which was eventually adopted. See Lü Ssu-mien, Liang-Chin Nan-pei ch'ao shih (Shanghai, 1948), pp. 1469-72.

[8]HTS 76:3869:2.

[9]See, for instance, Kuo Mo-jo, Wu Tse-t'ien, pp. 135-37 and 154-55 which outline the findings of an academic expedition to the old Li-chou area, which discovered epigraphical evidence of her popularity and also the existence of an agricultural festival said to be held in commemoration of her birthday. See also TCTC 208, p. 6587 for Ts'ui Chiao's secret memorial to Chung-tsung pointing out that the hearts of the people still adhered to the Empress.

[10]For a recent and succinct discussion of the importance of role in legitimation, see J.D. Langlois Jr., "Ritual and Law in the Legitimation of the Ming Dynasty" (Asilomar, 1975).

[11]TCTC 204, pp. 6467-68. A.F. Wright, in his recent paper on the formal procedures by which Sui Wen-ti sought legitimation, has emphasized the importance of the foundation of ancestral temples. For examples of the substitution of "Wu" for "T'ang" in place-names, see THY 70, p. 1257 and 71, p. 1261.

[12]Chapter IV, note 92, Chapter VI, and note also Twitchett's remarks, Financial Administration, pp. 84ff. A northern capital was founded in 692, TCTC 205, p. 6487.

[13]TCTC 204, p. 6473, TFYK 486:336, THY 84, p. 1553, CTS 6:3076:1. This occurred in the seventh month of 691 with the households from such chou as Yung, T'ung, and Ch'in where the concentration of fu-ping units was high. There are some source contradictions, with CTS and TCTC saying that those resettled were drawn exclusively from Kuan-nei while the others say Kuan-wai. TCTC limits the number transported to 100,000, and CTS goes on to say that Yung-chou was divided immediately into four parts.

The basic motives, it seems, were to provide a larger base of support for the new capital and the official class concentrated there, and to weaken the old Ch'ang-an area.

[14]TCTC 204, p. 6473. Wu Yu-i in fact became liu-shou prior to the movement of the households.

[15]TCTC 205, pp. 6478-79. Li Chao-te (#99) was charged with the project.

[16]TCTC 205, pp. 6496 and 6502-3. Jao Tsung-i in an excellent study, "Tsung shih-k'o lun Wu-hou chih tsung-chiao

hsin-yang," CYYY 45:3 (1975), pp. 397-413, convincingly connects the t'ien-shu with Manicheanism.

[17]TCTC 205, p. 6496. Note also Ssu-ma Kuang's comments, p. 6498, suggesting that the treasuries were emptied to pay for the construction of the Ming T'ang complex.

[18]TCTC 205, p. 6493 which describes these treasures, and also Chapter IV.

[19]THY 35, p. 637.

[20]TCTC 204, p. 6471. The petitions appeared in early 691, and that suggesting the feng sacrifice included 2800 names.

[21]TCTC 205, p. 6503. See also CTS 6:3076:2, and Jao Tsung-i, "Tsung-chiao," pp. 402-405. On the forms and purposes of the suburban sacrifice, THY 9a, pp. 141ff.

[22]TCTC 204, p. 6473. The sons of the ex-Crown Prince, Hsien, were given the Wu surname and imprisoned with Jui-tsung's family.

[23]TCTC 204, p. 6473 and 6489.

[24]TCTC 204, p. 6472, CTS 186 shang:3564:4.

[25]CTS, loc. cit. See also TCTC 205, p. 6485 for Ssu-ma Kuang's estimate of the toll taken by the so-called "evil officials."

[26]TCTC 205, p. 6485. While the diction is not altogether clear, there seem to have been 850 false accusations at that time alone.

[27]On Hsü, Chapter V, note 87. His early refusal of office is found TCTC 204, pp. 6469-70.

[28]For examples of the activities of these, TCTC 205, pp. 6485-86. It is of interest to note that in mid-692, Chu acknowledged in a memorial that "the minds of the people are already made up" (chung-hsin i-ting), presumably in favour of the Chou.

[29]TCTC 205, p. 6486.

[30]Details are found TCTC 205, pp. 6479ff. and Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 138-40.

[31]CTS 183:3553:2, TCTC 204, pp. 6474-75. See also

CTS 87:3352:4.

[32]On Li, see #99. He is depicted as a courageous official, opposing, for instance, the attempt of Lai Chün-ch'en and his cohorts of marry into the T'ai-yüan Wang and Chao-chün Li clans (CTS 87:3352:4), and once having one of the most powerful of the "evil officials" flogged to death, estansibly for a violation of the sumptuary regulations (TCTC 205, p. 6491). In the matter of the succession, he rapidly showed his position by having Ch'eng-ssu's spokesman beaten to death. TCTC 204, p. 6475.

[33]TCTC 204, p. 6476.

[34]TCTC 205, pp. 6483-4. Three others, Ts'ui Shen-chi (#97), Yao Shou (#100) and Li Yüan-su (#101), were all raised to tsai-hsiang status with Chao-te on this occasion, and so might be identified as his adherents. All were eventually disgraced or executed.

[35]On the posts of the Wu clan, CTS 183. After 695, with the fall of Hsüeh Huai-i, the use of family and favourites in military posts was very rare, the only exceptions being Wu I-tsung and Wu Yu-i. This is discussed passim in text.

I do not suggest, however, that the Wu clan became a negligible factor in the political equation. The Empress used them on subsequent occasions to further political aims, so that for instance, Ch'eng-ssu and San-ssu assisted her in the New Year's ceremony of 693 while Jui-tsung was barred from participation (TCTC 205, p. 6488, HTS 76:3867:4). Her aim was the confusion of the advocates of a T'ang restoration.

[36]See note 32 above.

[37]TCTC 205, p. 6496.

[38]TCTC 206, p. 6519.

[39]Note 35 above.

[40]TCTC 205, p. 6488. Hsüan-tsung's mother, the Virtuous Concubine, was the great granddaughter of Tou K'ang (#6).

[41]CTS 186 shang:3564:3, TCTC 205, pp. 6489 and 6490. Ssu-ma Kuang remarks that "from that time, none of the nobles or ministers were able to see him."

[42]TCTC 205, p. 6490.

[43]See Chapter V, note 7 ct. seq.

[44]Chapter V, note 78.

[45]See Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 48ff., and more particularly, Chou, Tsai-hsiang, pp. 373ff.

[46]By my calculations, ten men held tsai-hsiang rank in 645.

[47]The totals vary according to source, and although my own are different, I am here following the figures given THY 1, pp. 3-4. Those for the reign of Kao-tsung, divided to correspond with the expansion of Empress Wu's power, are as follows:

Period	Appointments	Tenure
650-659 (4th month)	14	4.5 years
659-664 (12th month)	4	2.2 years
664-684	25	5.5 years
Total	43	3.1 years

[47]See Appendix II, #104, and notice TCTC 206, p. 6541 which comments on his remarkable longevity in spite of the terror and the confused politics of the time.

[48]While I have made no exact count, I have found that virtually every sort of irregular appointment occurred within the tsai-hsiang group in the Chou. The terms used to designate this type of position are several: chien-chiao or "acting," shih or "probationary," shou or "temporary," and she or provisional. We find also a large number of concurrent (chien) appointments, supervisory duties (p'an) and those appointed to one post but designated to fill the function (chih) of another. This led not only to uncertainty of tenure among the tsai-hsiang but severely restricted their freedom of action and created an atmosphere of distrust in the highest ranks of officialdom.

[49]My calculation. See Appendix II.

[50]TCTC 205, p. 6501.

[51]On these appointments, see for instance, TCTC 206, p. 6533 and 205, pp. 6496-95, and 6499-6500.

[52]See Chapter I, note 42, and CTS 6:3077:1.

[53]For instance, TCTC 205, p. 6484 and p. 6478 respectively.

[54]See the biography of Chi Hsiu (#120) and TCTC 206, p. 6544.

[55]On the question of the succession as a "household matter," see TCTC 206, p. 6526. Criticism of the Changs brought death in 701 to the son and daughter of Chung-tsung and the son of Wu Ch'eng-ssu. TCTC 207, pp. 6556-57, CTS 86: 3350:4. Other examples of both are cited in the text.

[56]Chou, Tsai-hsiang, pp. 506ff.

[57]TCTC 202, p. 6376. Judging by the dates of the literary works for which they were responsible, and by a TFYK notice, 550:2b, the group seems to have existed prior to 674, perhaps as early as 667. Most of those whose names are preserved, Liu Wei-chih (#72), Fan Li-ping (#85), Yüan Wan-ch'ing (CTS 190b:3581:4), Mao Shen-k'o (CTS, loc. cit.) and Hu Ch'u-pin (CTS 190b:3582:1) received their first capital appointment at about this time. TCTC 204, p. 6447, a notice of 688, is the last mention of the group.

[58]TCTC 203, p. 6417.

[59]TCTC 204, p. 6466. On Wan-erh, CTS 51:3279:4.

[60]TCTC 206, p. 6526.

[61]TCTC 205, pp. 6477-78. See also THY 67, pp. 1180-81 which says that 132 appointments were made at this time. The highest posts, acting grand secretaries of the Secretariat, were of the fifth-rank, first-grade, and the lowest were clerks of the ninth-rank, third-grade.

[62]See TCTC 205, pp. 6500-01, and THY 40, pp. 728-29.

[63]See Chapter VII. The bureaucratic expansion in the early Chou seems to have equalled that in the period just prior to the usurpation. Although we are offered no estimates so specific as Wei Yüan-t'ung's 685 statement that over 1,000 chu-se entered the current each year (THY 74, p. 1336), we are told, for instance in 692, that vast numbers had their selection rescinded. THY 74, p. 1345 and T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi 185:5a. It is possible that some of the excess was absorbed in the expansion of military administration: eighty-six new fu-ping units were created in 690 (WYYH 464:1b) and later, new positions set up in existing units (Yü-hai 138:4a). As we shall see, the Empress had to respond to pressures for bureaucratic reduction toward the end of the Chou.

[64]Taking once again our tsai-hsiang sample from the Chou, and excluding those who rose as family or favourites of

the Empress, we find that of 59 chief ministers, at least 33 came from clans which were either aristocratic in background or had a tradition of office-holding. Of these, however, only 14 were from clans specifically regarded as pre-eminent. This means that less than a quarter of the tsai-hsiang in the Chou came from the great clans.

[65]Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 47-60, and Tonami, "Chūsei kizokusei."

[66]TCTC 205, p. 6478.

[67]See for instance, the case of Tsung Ch'ü-k'o (CTS 92:3365:4, HTS 109:3930:4) who had not only a marriage connection with the Empress, but whose brother had been one of her firmest supporters in the usurpation, and is said to have invented her new characters. Their first demotion occurred in the tenth month of 690, TCTC 204, p. 6468. A relative of Lai Chün-ch'en lost his position in the Yü-lin Guard in late 692. TCTC 205, p. 6487.

[68]THY 85, p. 1555, TFYK 486:12a.

[69]On the decree examinations, Lin T'ien-wei, Hsin-pien, pp. 210-211, and on the Board increases, THY 58, p. 1006 and 59, p. 1030.

[70]TCTC 205, p. 6485, from a memorial of 692.

[71]TCTC 205, p. 6489, THY 63, p. 1104, Yü-hai 48:32a.

[72]See for instance, the list of tributary missions, TFYK 970:17aff., and the investiture of the Sillan king, TFYK 964:10a.

[73]My own calculation. When the Shih-hsing sought refuge in China in 690, it was after five years of constant attack by the Eastern Turks. Their leader, Hu-she-lo Khan, was made a general (TCTC 204, p. 6469). THY 98, p. 1756 remarks the settlement of the Ch'iang, and TCTC 205, p. 6494, the Man.

[74]On Wang, see CTS 93:3366:2, HTS 111:3935:3, and on T'ang, CTS 93:3366:3, HTS 111:3935:4. Wang had been captured by the Tibetans at Hsüeh Jen-kuei's defeat at Ta-fei ch'uan in 670, and after living among them for a decade, returned to become China's greatest expert on the western regions. T'ang came from a family whose military tradition went back to the Northern Chou, but which had chosen the wrong side at the T'ang foundation so that to establish himself, Shou-ching had taken the ming-ching degree. His early experience was against the Turks.

[75]CTS 93:3366:2. The campaign is outlined in the biographies above and discussed in some detail in Ise, Seiiki keiei, pp. 197ff. See also Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 144-45.

[76]TCTC 205, p. 6493. On Mo-ch'o, CTS 184a:3598:1, HTS 140a:4132:1, THY 94, pp. 1691ff. Ts'en, T'u-ch'üeh, pp. 324ff. outlines Mo-ch'o's raids from 689, even before he became Khan. In Western languages, see Giraud, R., L'empire des turcs célestes (Paris, 1960), pp. 49ff. and Grousset, R., L'empire des steppes (Paris, 1948), pp. 155ff.

Mo-ch'o was the brother or half-brother of the Khan Ku-ch'u-lu, usurped the leadership on his death in late 693, and immediately invaded Ling-chou.

[77]TCTC 205, p. 6503. The request to submit may have been in response to the fact that Wang Hsiao-chieh had just been sent against him with a large force.

[78]Note 63 above, and TFYK 532:14a. It is interesting to note also a decree of 694 (THY 78, p. 1438) whereby each of the major provincial officials, governors, prefects and garrison commanders, were required to leave one son in the capital guard. It seems unlikely that any new posts were created for this, but rather, that a hostage system was being established.

[79]TCTC 205, pp. 6495-96.

[80]TCTC 205, p. 6496. It is of interest to note that no protest is recorded.

[81]On Li Chiao, see #123, and on his memorial Chapter V, note 37 and THY 85, pp. 1560-61. The memorial along with others relating to the problem are translated by E. Balazs in "Beiträge Zur Wirtschaftgeschichte der T'ang-Zeit," MSOS 34 (1931).

[82]CTS 94:3368:2.

[83]See Tonami, "Kakko," and Pulleyblank, An Lu-shan, pp. 27ff. On the Tunhuang evidence, see T'ang Ch'ang-ju, "Kuan-yü Wu Tse-t'ien T'ung-chih mo-nien ti fo-t'ao-hu," Li-shih yen-chiu 6:12 (1961), pp. 90-95.

[84]Most notably, the construction of the nine tripods (TCTC 205, p. 6499), on whose Confucian associations, see Tz'u-yüan, p. 58a. The era-name of teng-sheng ["enter aryathood?], declared when the Empress assumed the last of her Buddhist titles, was shortly changed, and the re-constructed Ming T'ang was without the enormous Buddhist images

present in the earlier complex.

[85]TCTC 205, p. 6500, THY 11, pp. 278-79.

[86]On the reconstruction, see THY 11, pp. 279-80, TFYK 564:7a, TCTC 205, p. 6505. The new building was called the T'ung-t'ien t'ang, and was smaller in all dimensions than the original. On the death of Huai-i, TCTC 205, p. 6502, CTS 183: 3554:4, and note the contradictions pointed out in the K'ao-i notice. The nun who ran a house of ill-fame was enslaved with all her followers. TCTC 205, pp. 6499-6500.

[87]The hu-ming principle was abolished in the tenth month of 695. THY 75, p. 1358. The full decree is found CTW 96:6a, but offers little enlightenment on the reason for ending the practice. The Empress acknowledges that she initiated the principle of anonymity so that her officials could be chosen from as many sources as possible, and then goes on to characterize the practice as contrary to principle and call for its end in the name of efficiency and good government. The reason I suggest for the change is conjectural.

[88]TCTC 205, p. 6503.

[89]The best account of this campaign is found in the biography of Lou (#104). See also TFYK 443:5a, and TCTC 205, pp. 6504-5. The Empress was extremely angry, demoting Wang to a commoner and Lou to a low provincial posting.

[90]On the history of Sino-Tibetan relations, Chapter VIII, note 115.

[91]See CTS 199b:3618:3, and TCTC 198, 6252-3. The details of early Khitan history are extremely sketchy, and since the Sillan annals in the Samguk Sagi make fairly frequent reference to them, the lost annals of Koguryŏ would probably have been our best source. TCTC 205, p. 6505, K'ao-i gives a brief administrative history of Ying-chou.

[92]TCTC 205, p. 6505. The rebel leaders were descended from tribal chieftains, and one had won the imperial surname for dynastic service. They were related by marriage and held the positions of governor (tu-tu) and prefect at the time of the rising.

[93]TCTC 205, pp. 6506-7, CTS 199b:3618:4, HTS 219:4145: 4.

[94]TCTC 205, p. 6507.

[95]The only full description of the Empress' actions

are contained in a memorial from Ch'en Tzu-ang, abstracted TCTC loc. cit. and found in full in Ch'en Tzu-ang chi, pp. 178-82.

Ch'en's basic purpose in the memorial was to protest the levy, regarding it as unnecessary, dangerous, and an affront to the national dignity. He took the opportunity, however, to raise a number of other matters, both general and specific. Pointing out that the Khitan ambush was unfortunate and had created a very serious problem, he begged the Empress to remain calm, and to keep in mind that the Tibetans and Mo-cho's Turks posed a more serious threat than the Khitan. To send troops from the northern and western frontiers to meet the latter, was folly. Ch'en was critical of the standard of ministerial advice which the Empress received, particularly that which permitted the barbarization of the armies, and suggested she seek out the many competent men who had been neglected in appointment to high office. He spoke of self-seeking and timid ministers and conflicts between civil and military officers which the Empress should no longer tolerate.

Turning to the situation at hand, he suggested that the troops levied from Shan-nan and Huai-nan be given a more reasonable length of time to reach the frontier, and not be threatened with the death penalty for tardiness. The diversion of grain to the front, he believed, would not only cause enormous hardship and resentment among the carriers for whom no special reward seems to have been arranged, but would cause a great price rise in Shantung and general confusion. The actual situation at the front, he pointed out, was not even known!

Finally, and perhaps with some regional jealousy, Ch'en pointed out that because Shantung supplied the armies, its people were not conscripted. He had recently heard that in their arrogance and rudeness, they had claimed that the government could not compel them to serve, and this was being discussed everywhere. Furthermore, the area had recently found itself plagued by a growing number of bands composed of the lawless and unemployed. Central officials should be sent out immediately to conscript them into the forces, thus augmenting the national strength and ensuring that their relatives remain loyal to the state. He ended with a plea that the court be more generous with incentives and rewards for military service lest the task of recruitment become impossible. The common people of Shantung were exhausted.

From this memorial, submitted less than a month after the defeat, it would seem that the neglect of the military had reached serious proportions. Ho-pei had suffered only two minor invasions since 679, the Turkish raids of 683 and 687 (TCTC 203, p. 6413, and 204, p. 6443), and when Ch'en mentions the "magnates and roving warriors who have become bandits, the jobless drifters, the wealthy families and

strong clans," he is commenting also on the military potential of the area which we have noticed earlier. This seems to verify our suggestion that the fu-ping declined earliest there, and it might be reasonable to suggest that the dissident elements were deserters, or men who might otherwise have found their niche in the system.

Two additional facts support this view. In 696, the Empress set up in the frontier areas of Shantung, special units called wu-chi t'uan-ping, and the next year these were extended throughout Ho-nan and Ho-pei to defend against Mo-ch'o. In these units, 150 households provided 15 soldiers and one horse among them. THY 78, p. 1438, TCTC 205, p. 6507. See also Hamaguchi, "Shinpeisei," II, pp. 1466ff. Almost certainly the prototypes of the later t'uan-chieh, their creation seems to reflect a concession to regional feeling, and an alternative to fu-ping service. Secondly, in Chang Yüeh's report on Wu I-tsung's 697 Hopei campaign (WYYH 647: 8a), we find the names of those "mentioned in dispatch." Twenty-two men are mentioned, and the origin of their units may be tabulated as follows:

Ho-pei	7	Chiang-nan	1
Ho-tung	5	Chien-nan	1
Kuan-nei	4	Ho-nan	1
Lung-yu	3		

The data suggests that the fu-ping in Ho-pei was weak, especially in view of the fact that of the northeastern units mentioned, only one was among the 86 established in 690 when the Empress augmented the forces there. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that these new units were not viable from the start.

We need not, however, read too much into these facts for they seem to say little about the oft-mentioned "separatism" of the area. They suggest more, I think, that because Shantung had borne the brunt of the T'ang's early imperialism, the inappropriateness of the fu-ping was revealed there first. The response of the area to alternative service and its refusal to respond to Khitan and Turkish calls to dethrone the Empress support this view.

[96] TCTC 205, pp. 6507-9.

[97] On Ch'en's background see Chapter V, and on Kuo, CTS 97:3373:2, HTS 122:3957:1. The latter, a chin-shih graduate of undistinguished lineage, had just returned from personal negotiations with Lun Ch'in-ching and seems to have been familiar with the situation among the Tibetans since it was he who conceived the plan adopted by the Empress.

[98] TCTC 205, pp. 6508-9. The K'ao-i reproduces a

notice from the Yü-shih-t'ai chi outlining subsequent events.

[99] TCTC 205, pp. 6509-10.

[100] TCTC, loc. cit.

[101] The Khitan call for Chung-tsung's restoration seems to have been made in early 697, and judging from the K'ao-i notices, TCTC 206, pp. 6526-28, the source of the report is the Ch'ao-yeh ch'ien-tsai. Collaboration is lacking, but in view of the harmony of Khitan relations with T'ai-tsung and Kao-tsung, it seems perfectly reasonable.

There seems to have been a certain amount of collaboration with the enemy in the area, since we are told that Wu I-tsung executed a number of guilty persons (TCTC 206, p. 6522) before Ti Jen-chieh's pleas for clemency were heeded. Ti's statement (CTS 89:3356:4) mentions both those who were coerced and those who joined willingly with the Khitan, but points out that the area suffered from economic depression and the unreasonable demands of harsh officials, so that under the circumstances, it had been highly loyal. See also TCTC 206, pp. 6535-36. His remarks were made in late 698 after Mo-ch'o had withdrawn, and refer both to Turkish and Khitan invasions.

[102] On this affair, see TCTC 206, pp. 6512-13, Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 152-3, and Chapter VI above, note 81(f).

[103] Lai had gone so far as to accuse Chi Hsiu, the man who had brought the conspiracy to his notice, of being implicated in it. After Chi Hsiu had cleared himself, he of course hated Lai and the Empress used their hatred once again to balance her appointments. On Chi Hsiu, see #120.

[104] TCTC 106, p. 6517. These two figures about whom we would like to know a good deal more, have biographies CTS 78:3337:1, HTS 104:3921:4; and for their ancestry, see Appendix II, #34. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 163ff. outlines their careers in some detail.

[105] See, for instance, Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, p. 163 for his suggestion that the terminology of HTS and TCTC is such to indicate that both became the lovers of the Empress. For contemporary evidence, see passim, note 161.

[106] TCTC 205, p. 6487. A notice of the ninth month of 692 when the Empress grew some new teeth and changed the era-name to ch'ang-shou or "long life."

[107] TCTC 206, p. 6546, CTS 78:3337:2. It was for this

reason probably that the literary institute founded in 699 (TCTC 206, p. 6538) to provide a sinecure for the Changs, was called the Crane Institute (k'ung-hao fu). Wang Tzu-chin (6th century B.C.) also known as Wang Ch'iao, ascended to the immortals on the back of a white crane, and so became a symbol of longevity. See also the remark of Yang Tsai-ssu, TCTC 207, p. 6572, suggesting that Ch'ang-tsung had made for the Empress an elixir of immortality (shen-tan).

[108]Note 107 above. See also TCTC 206, p. 6517 for the account of a man who won lavish rewards from the Empress for claiming that he dreamt she lived forever. Jao Tsung-i, "Tsung-chiao," pp. 402-5 discusses the question in some detail.

[109]TCTC 206, p. 6514, CTS 78:3337:2.

[110]TCTC 206, p. 6514. See also the biography of Yao Shou (#100) who dissuaded the Empress from the project. The verses said to be written by the Empress for the erection of the tripods are found CTShih 5:1a. These tripods, incidentally, are said to have been cast from eight hundred tons of bronze.

[111]TCTC 206, p. 6514. The Chinese forces numbered 170,000.

[112]CTS 185a:3560:1, TCTC 206, pp. 6515-16. In the early 670's, many of the Western Turks and the Tu-yü-hun had submitted to China (TCTC 201, p. 6363, and 202, pp. 6371-72) and had been settled in the six prefectures of Feng, Sheng, Ling, Hsia, Shuo, and Tai. To send these back to Mo-ch'o would weaken the entire north. Ts'en, T'u-ch'üeh, pp. 333-39 offers a good examination of the events of this year.

[113]On Li Chiao, #123 and on T'ien Kuei-tao, CTS 185a: 3560:1, HTS 197:4088:3. Their position was that the Turks were covetous and lacking in good faith, and that granting their demands was an invitation to invasion. Their opponents were Yang Tsai-ssu (#111) and Yao Shou (#100).

[114]TCTC 206, p. 6416, THY 94, p. 1691. The latter remarks "from this, Mo-ch'o grew even stronger."

[115]On I-tsung, CTS 183:3554:1, HTS 206:4110:1.

[116]TCTC 206, pp. 6520-22.

[117]On Lai's activities at this time and his fall, see CTS 186a:3564:3 and TCTC 206, pp. 6518-19.

[118]See CTW 95:8b for the edict of punishment, and TCTC 206, p. 6520.

[119]TCTC 206, p. 6523.

[120]On Ti, see #93, and TCTC 207, pp. 6550-1. Ti was the most famous and perhaps the greatest of the Empress' ministers and is the subject of a large secondary literature. A man of uncompromising integrity and enormous subtlety, he won the complete trust of the Empress, and "although he was fond of arguing with her [in court], she accepted it and followed his advice." She is said to have called him the "old man of the state" (kuo-lao), and in one incident recounted TCTC, loc. cit., to have valued his safety more than that of the Crown Prince. She was disconsolate on his death in 700.

It must be acknowledged, however, that Ti's power was never total, partly because Wu San-ssu usually occupied a parallel position in the hierarchy, and partly because the Empress seems to have insisted on the invulnerability of the Changs. Probably because of their relative harmlessness, Ti never sought a confrontation. His biography suggests a different reason for this, pointing out that he recommended "several tens" of T'ang loyalists for high posts, so that these were in a position to carry on his work when he died. Most notable among them were three leaders of the restoration coup, Chang Chien-chih, Huan Yen-fan and Ching Hui. See also TCTC 207, pp. 6551-52. THY 75, p. 1357 says he recommended all five leaders of the coup.

[121]TCTC 206, p. 6526.

[122]TCTC 206, p. 6526. "From this [remonstrance], the Empress-dowager had no intention of establishing Ch'eng-ssu or San-ssu."

[123]TCTC 206, pp. 6526-27.

[124]TCTC 206, p. 6537, and see the lengthy examination of the event in the K'ao-i notice.

[125]TCTC 206, p. 6532.

[126]TCTC 206, p. 6525. As we earlier pointed out, it was Li Chiao who first requested the reduction of yüan-wai officialdom in the next reign.

[127]See Chapter VII. See also TFYK 629:20b-21a for a decree of 696 which recognizes that advancement "within the current" has been much too rapid.

[128]The full text is CTW 169:2b, and the memorial is

abstracted THY 73, pp. 1326-27, TCTC 206, pp. 6524-25.

[129]For Ti's reference here, see TCTC 195, p. 6148.

[130]I cannot identify this figure.

[131]TCTC 206, p. 6525.

[132]Ch'en Tzu-ang chi, pp. 173-78. Ch'en approved in general of the demobilization but warned the Empress that the self-seeking officials in the prefectures of Sung and Mao, deprived of the profit they reaped from the supply of the military, might falsely stir up trouble with the Ch'iang in order to restore their fortunes. He spoke also of 30,000 vagrant households who had fled to the west from the Szechwan region, attributing their migration to the harshness of officials there and requested administrative reform. Finally, since he saw the necessity for keeping the T'ung-kuei Army stationed in Sung-chou active, he suggested a much less costly and onerous means of keeping them supplied.

Ch'en, perhaps because he was a westerner, was more conscious than most, of the Tibetan threat. The fact that even he advocated a relatively passive stance vis-à-vis the barbarians suggests that the attitude was becoming widespread in officialdom.

[133]Note 132 above and TCTC 206, p. 6530. Lou Shih-te was appointed commissioner to assess the garrisons in the area.

[134]TCTC 206, pp. 6530-31, CTS 183:3553:4. Yen-hsiu, the second son of Ch'eng-ssu, reached his destination in the eighth month of 698. He did not return until 704, and in 708 married princess An-lo.

[135]See #133 and TCTC 206, p. 6530.

[136]TCTC 206, pp. 6530-32, CTS 194a:3598:2, TFYK 964: 10b and 998:8b.

[137]Note 136 above.

[138]TCTC 206, p. 6533 and Ts'en, T'u-ch'üeh, pp. 339-50 which offers a full examination of the events of this year, introducing two inscriptions which contradict the standard account. We have no details on the constitution of the force, but since the three commanders were designated as tsung-kuan of the east, west, and central provinces, it seems likely the troops were raised throughout the Empire.

[139]TCTC 206, p. 6534. It is difficult to know

whether or not this is true. The dynastic histories reproduce the story only in Ti's biography, and there as a claim he makes rather than as fact. It is found also in Ta-T'ang hsin-yü 1:11a. I am prepared to believe that Chung-tsung's appointment increased the levies, but the story still seems too contrived in detail for absolute credibility.

[140]TCTC, loc. cit. It is important to note that the new volunteers came from Ho-pei since it is a strong indication that the area was not "separatist" or disloyal to the T'ang. The other possibility, of course, is Wu I-tsung's cruel swoop through the province in 697 punishing those suspected of collaboration with the Khitan, and acting so harshly that inhabitants composed a bitter proverb about him. TCTC 206, p. 6522. Undoubtedly, the popularity of the Empress suffered.

[141]TCTC 206, p. 6534. It is interesting to note that while Ti Jen-chieh led the new army against Mo-ch'o, the Empress placed command of the remaining troops (t'un-ping) at the capital in the hands of Wu I-tsung and Wu Yu-kuei, the first sign that she was concerned about her security. TCTC 206, p. 6535.

[142]CTS 194a:3598:2. Ssu-ma Kuang uses the conventional term "over ten-thousand," but adds that casualties in the region from Mo-cho's five invasions were countless.

[143]TCTC 206, p. 6535. See also Grousset, Steppes, pp. 150ff.

[144]TCTC 206, p. 6535.

[145]TCTC 206, pp. 6539-40, CTS 196a:3604:2.

[146]CTS 93:3366:3, TCTC 207, p. 6549.

[147]On Kuo, CTS 97:3373:2, HTS 122:3957:1, and TCTC 207, pp. 6557-58.

[148]CTS 196a:3604:2, TCTC 207, p. 6562.

[149]See TCTC 207, p. 6558 and 206, p. 6539. Also note 95 above.

[150]TCTC 207, p. 6562.

[151]TCTC 207, p. 6568. CTS 194a:3598:2 says the Empress brought two of her grandsons, Ch'ung-chün and Ch'ung-ming into the audience-hall to show them as prospective bridegrooms to the Turkish envoy. Ch'ung-chün was shortly to

be active at court, and no source mentions that Chung-tsung had a son called Ch'ung-ming. Perhaps Mo-ch'o's new son-in-law was not a prince at all.

[152]See TCTC 207, pp. 6562-63. This incident in fact involved only the Western Turks, but according to CTS 194b: 3600:3, the An-pei protectorate was set up at this time at T'ing-chou.

[153]CTS 194a:3598:2, Grousset, Steppes, pp. 157-58.

[154]TCTC 206, p. 6539.

[155]TCTC 206, p. 6539.

[156]TCTC 206, p. 6546. The elixir was a costly one and had taken three years to synthesize.

[157]TCTC 206, p. 6546, CTS 6:3076:4. In celebration of the event, she changed the era-name to chiu-shih, "everlasting youth," from the phrase ch'ang-sheng chiu-shih in the Tao-te ching.

[158]TCTC 207, p. 6551.

[159]TCTC 206, p. 6538, CTS 78:3337:2. Among the best-known scholars appointed to the institute were Li Chiung-hsiu (#128), Chi Hsiu (#120), T'ien Kuei-tao and Yüan Pan-ch'ien. The latter, disgusted at the unprecedented nature of the office and the quality of its incumbents, immediately resigned and was demoted for his presumption. See CTS 190b:3582:2.

[160]THY 36, p. 657, TCTC 206, p. 6546. This was the San-chiao chu-ying and probably marks the first time Buddhism was officially classified as a teaching equal to Confucianism and Taoism.

[161]CTS 78:3337:2. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, p. 167 seems to put a different interpretation on the matter. The memorial is abstracted, TCTC 206, p. 6546.

[162]TCTC 206, p. 6547.

[163]TCTC 206, p. 6546, CTS 78:3337:2.

[164]It is difficult to get a complete picture of the Chang clan, but since the principals were referred to as "fifth and sixth master," they must have had a number of brothers. Two elder and one younger are mentioned in the histories, all of them involved in corruption. On the case of bribery in the hsüan see TCTC 206, p. 6547.

[165]TCTC 207, p. 6572. Both Li Chiung-hsiu (#128) and Chang Hsi (#124) who were otherwise reputable officials seem to have fallen into the same ways.

[166]See for instance, TCTC 207, p. 6563.

[167]CTS 78:3337:2.

[168]TCTC 207, p. 6556.

[169]TCTC 207, pp. 6556-57, and CTS 78:3337:2. Under Chung-tsung, the Crown Prince of necessity, was his son by a concubine, and Empress Wei is said to have been so unhappy with this situation that she sought to have her daughter, An-lo, replace him. Her actions goaded the Crown Prince, Ch'ung-chün, into an attempted coup in the summer of 707, initiating a period of unremitting palace intrigue which ceased only with Hsüan-tsung's accession.

[170]On San-ssu see #118. He is said at this time to have formed a liaison with Empress Wei in preparation for her husband's succession.

[171]TCTC 207, p. 6559. The Empress refused, awarding instead dukedoms with revenues of 300 households to both brothers. The TCTC notice is somewhat misleading here since the titles were a reward for literary compilation. CTS 78: 3337:2.

[172]On Wei, see #121.

[173]TCTC 207, pp. 6563-66.

[174]See Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, pp. 173-77 which follows closely the TCTC account.

[175]TCTC 207, p. 6565.

[176]TCTC 207, pp. 6565-66.

[177]TFYK 604:4a, TCTC 206, p. 6542, and the full text, CTW 236:3b.. On Wei, see #131.

[178]TCTC 206, p. 6542.

[179]Omitted.

[180]CTW 236:3b.ff.

[181]See for instance, TCTC 207, p. 6557 on selection. The problem of provincial administration is discussed passim.

[182]See Chapter VII.

[183]Jao Tsung-i, "Tsung-chiao," pp. 403-405.

[184]See TCTC 207, pp. 6549-50, and my remarks in Chapter IV.

[185]Chapter IV. On the clerical tax, TCTC 207, p. 6571.

[186]TCTC 207, p. 6554 and see the K'ao-i notice.

[187]CTS 6:3076:4, TCTC 207, p. 6557. It may be significant that Jui-tsung was given command of the Yü-lin Guard immediately before the Empress' departure.

[188]TCTC 207, p. 6556. Su memorialized again on the same subject the next year. See TCTC 207, p. 6559. Also TFYK 544:6b.

[189]Chapter VII. See Examens, pp. 36 and 209-212.

[190]TCTC 207, pp. 6560-61. It was not until 704, however, that complete rehabilitation occurred and the road to office was re-opened to those whose relatives had been found guilty of crime. TCTC 207, p. 6574.

[191]On the appointments of Li and Wei to tsai-hsiang rank, TCTC 207, p. 6571. Wei An-shih (#125) was already well-known as an opponent of the Changs. Wei Ssu-li (#131) held his position in the university until the twelfth month of 704, and in view of his concern with education was probably a successful administrator. On the new censors, THY 60, p. 1053, and TFYK 512:6a.

[192]TFYK 554:17a, THY 63, p. 1094.

[193]TCTC 207, p. 6567.

[194]The concern arose perhaps from a disturbance in the far south in the eleventh month of 703. TCTC 207, pp. 6568-69. I have been unable to define the "six categories" of the Han.

[195]TCTC 207, p. 6570, THY 68, pp. 1198-99. Some of the best-known officials assigned to the task were Wei Ssu-li, Hsüeh Ch'ien-kuang and Yang Tsai-ssu. In some cases at least, the officials retained their current posts and became only acting prefects so that the experiment was perhaps not a wholehearted one.

[196]TCTC 207, p. 6571.

[197]Note 9 above.

[198]THY 66, p. 1157, Yu-hai 59:38b.

[199]TCTC 207, p. 6578.

[200]TFYK 629:22a, THY 75, p. 1359.

[201]THY 60, p. 1053, TFYK 512:6a.

[202]TCTC 207, p. 6574.

[203]See for instance, on the palaces, THY 30, p. 557 and TCTC 207, p. 6569.

[204]TCTC 207, p. 6575 points out that for several months the Empress saw only the Changs, receiving neither chief ministers nor her own sons. The large number of demotions at the restoration give some idea of the size of the Chang faction.

[205]CTS 78:3337:2, TFYK 515:9a, TCTC 207, pp. 6572-73. Fitzgerald, Empress Wu, p. 182 construes "meritorious service" as a possible double-entendre.

[206]TCTC 207, p. 6576.

[207]On Huan, CTS 91:3360:4, HTS 120:3951:3. He was the scion of an official clan from Huai-nan, obtaining his first post through the yin privilege. Much admired by Ti Jen-chieh, he rose to high positions in the Censorate where he was responsible for the restoration of the political rights of the victims of Lai Chün-ch'en and Chou Hsing. At Ch'ang-tsung's treason trial, his was the strongest call for punishment, and his biography contains the fullest account of the coup.

[208]On Chang, see #133.

[209]TCTC 207, pp. 6574ff. Fitzgerald's account is found Empress Wu, pp. 184-88.

[210]The "tame" judges were Wei Ch'eng-ch'ing (#135) and Ts'ui Shen-ch'ing, CTS 77:3335:3, HTS 109:3930:3.

[211]On Sung, see CTS 96:3372:1, HTS 124:3960:1.

[212]See #132. Ts'ui was in many ways typical of the Shantung ssu-hsing. After passing the ming-ching, his mother who was a member of the eminent Lu clan, instructed him on the integrity necessary to an official calling, and it was

his incorruptibility while charged with the examination system which brought him to the personal notice of the Empress. His biography suggests that he was one of the Empress' most sincere supporters, never suggesting abdication. It was the complete lack of alternatives which brought him into the conspiracy.

[213]See TCTC 207, p. 6579.

[214]CTS 91:3361:3, HTS 120:3952:2. Ching was one of the "new" officials prominent in the Chou, a member of a family with no tradition of office, a ming-ching graduate and a man whose reputation had been made in the provinces. His opposition to the Wu interests, carried into the next reign, precipitated the destruction of himself and his four co-conspirators by Wu San-ssu.

[215]CTS 91:3362:3, HTS 120:3951:3. Yüan was another of the "new" type of official. A northeasterner, his early career is nowhere documented and we know only of his capital postings. He may have had some military experience since during the actual coup, he was in charge of the Southern Guard whose task was to deal with unforeseen resistance.

[216]TCTC 207, pp. 6578-79. Li found himself on the losing side in 707 when he joined the Crown Prince in an attempted coup against Empress Wei.

[217]TCTC 207, p. 6579.

[218]CTS 78:3337:2. These included Li Chiao, Ts'ui Shen-ch'ing, Ts'ui Jung, Sung Chih-wen, Shen Ch'uan-chi and several others who not only held high posts, but were among the best-known figures of their time. Their connection with the Changs shows how influential the faction had become.

[219]CTS 193:3553:4. Wu Yen-hsiu had returned to the capital in 704 and although he was not married to An-lo until later, their relationship seems to have existed from this time.

[220]TCTC 207, p. 6580. He was persuaded by Li Chan, the son of Li I-fu.

[221]TCTC 207, pp. 6580-81. The Empress had special scorn for Chung-tsung whom she thought perhaps to intimidate, for Li Chan whose father had been her earliest supporter, and for Ts'ui Yüan-wei, who had been her personal and independent choice for high office. Ts'ui, perhaps with some sadness, could attribute his presence only to "Your Majesty's great virtue."

[222]CTS 6:3077:1, TCTC 207, p. 6581.

[223]See for instance, TCTC 208, p. 6587, and 207, p. 6582 for T'ien Kuei-tao's refusal to co-operate with the conspirators.

[224]TCTC 208, p. 6596.

CHAPTER TEN

RETROSPECT

In the highly polarized historiography concerned with the regime of Wu Tse-t'ien, there are to be found, perhaps, only two areas of general agreement. Both her Confucian critics and her modern apologists see her personal achievement as an improbable one, and the age over which she presided as one of significant historical change. These perceptions are accurate ones, but in their juxtaposition there is a certain danger. The temptation is strong to credit too greatly the prescience of the Empress, to see in her overwhelming strength of character the chief cause for the social and political developments of the late seventh century. We have attempted to suggest, however, that insofar as these were a result of imperial policy, Kao-tsung played a greater role than is generally realized and that it was while her husband and son formally occupied the throne that the achievements of the Empress were most marked. It has been a recurrent theme of this study that the Empress was a woman of her times: that she held no advanced social or judicial views and that her politics differed from those of her predecessors chiefly in their greater pragmatism and ruthlessness. The success of

her usurpation and the longevity of her power were in fact the result of borrowed legitimation, and the result also of her ability to identify herself more closely than earlier Sui-T'ang rulers with the mass of her subjects, those among whom she had been born and had spent her early life.

In this sense, the career of the Empress Wu is a story of power, not only of its attainment, maintenance, and the sometimes unintended results of its exercise, but of power used both inside and outside its structural context. In her career is illustrated the tendency of power to seek its own maximization and in so doing, to collide in this case with a tradition of only limited flexibility. Though the Confucian system denied the throne to a woman, it was willing to compromise that prohibition, but it remained firm in its determination that no woman should found an enduring dynasty. The Empress' treatment of the succession problem suggests a full awareness of this, and when on her deathbed she renounced the imperial name, it must have been in the knowledge that history would call her a usurper. Since she was a woman much concerned with historical reputation, her seizure of the throne thus becomes an act not of simple ambition but one reflecting also a perceived necessity on her part.

History, on the whole, has been very reluctant to acknowledge this and it goes unremarked even in modern studies. For this reason, we have made much of the loyalty of the

Empress to the T'ang. It was in the course of her very fruitful partnership with Kao-tsung that T'ai-tsung's work of consolidation and centralization was brought to fruition, and the T'ang enabled to embark upon a successful and expansive third generation, thus setting itself off from the ephemeral followers of the Han, and most particularly from the Sui, whose rapid fall had seemed to validate the pattern even for a dynasty which ruled all China. By Kao-tsung's death, the T'ang throne seems to have been made secure, or more accurately, to have won the enduring support of the masses, as the failure of Li Ching-yeh's rebellion was to demonstrate. Although Li claimed to be rising on behalf of the T'ang, it was clearly the Empress Wu who was seen as the guardian of dynastic and national interests.

In 684, she must have felt a justifiable pride. Together with Kao-tsung, she had almost completed the task of dynastic legitimation, winning the allegiance, or at least the acquiescence of the aloof northeastern aristocracy, claiming foreign policy successes greater than any dynasty since the Han, performing the awesome <u>feng</u> and <u>shan</u>, and establishing firmly a system seen in the middle and lower levels of the <u>shih</u> class as a road to the perquisites of high office and the concomitant enhancement of status. In essence, her policies of dynastic legitimation had been constructed from the bottom upward and from the outer to the inner so that in 684, the threat she perceived was at the

centre and the top. An ambitious consort clan or an over-powerful minister could still undo the work of decades.

It was perhaps for this reason rather than for the purposes of eventual usurpation, that she seized the regency in 684, and if we choose to regard the terror which followed from this perspective, it becomes a much wider policy than one designed simply to eliminate bureaucratic opposition to her rule. In specific terms, it can be seen as the essential component of a plan to free the imperial institution from bureaucratic domination, a phenomenon which was itself the logical culmination of the T'ang policy of disarming potential rivalry in the great aristocracy by inviting its bureaucratization. Proclaiming herself emperor six years later was the most audacious way of all for the Empress Wu to test her success.

A number of objections, of course, could be raised to this interpretation. The most important of them is that it is a view which credits the Empress with too much foresight, vision and subtlety, and with a peculiar altruism, while conversely ignoring her demonstrated ambition and ruthlessness. The answer may lie simply in the fact that after three decades of supreme power, she had come to identify her own interests with those of the monarchy, and to see that as an institution in the process of evolving away from the constraints of self-seeking aristocrats (and more recently, of factious bureaucrats), it had united China and brought to her

people the greatest peace and prosperity they had known for centuries. The Empress therefore saw her goal as a laudable one, perhaps as one necessary to her people's welfare, and when we recall her deep faith in the supernatural, it seems reasonable to believe that she was convinced by the Pao-t'u and the Great Cloud Sutra of Heaven's approval. In this peculiar sort of pride, she decided to risk the opprobrium of history.

In the Chou, we have suggested, continuity was the rule and the watchword. Only in her Buddhist patronage did the Empress depart widely from T'ang precedent, and this, too, was a measure of consolidation, for if Taoist Messianism were by no means a spent force, it was less relevant in mid-dynasty than at its foundation and relative to Buddhism, a far less effective legitimizing device among the masses. Real innovation and real conflict in the Chou was political, and was restricted chiefly to the upper bureaucracy. It was here as we have seen, that both the fate of the Empress and her historical reputation were determined. But it was here also that we find her most immediate, if not her most durable achievement.

A new bureaucracy, operating in a new relationship with the ruler, was able not only to see the dynasty through the tragic leadership of the next two reigns, but under Hsüan-tsung to create what might justly be termed a golden age of Chinese civilization.

APPENDIX I

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE EMPRESS WU

The following five examples, drawn from early in the career of the Empress Wu, are intended chiefly to demonstrate the process of historical selection operative in the three sources most influential in shaping subsequent historical opinion, the two dynastic histories and the Comprehensive Mirror. In each case, the difficulty of factual certainty is apparent, and with it, the basis of prejudice for the historian's choice of interpretation. Comparison of the three sources provides a gauge to the relative hostility of each, and makes clear the overwhelming importance to each, of Wu Ching's Shih-lu as a primary source.

(a) CTS 6: 3075:3. 初則天年十四時．太宗聞其美．
容止召入宮．立為才人．

HTS 76: 3867:1. 文德皇后崩．久之．太宗聞士彠女美．
召為才人．方十四．

TCTC 195, p. 6134 (貞觀). 故荆州都督武士彠女
年十四．上聞其美．召入後宮．為才人．

The TCTC notice says: "The daughter of the former tu-tu of Ching-chou, Wu Shih-huo, was fourteen years old. The Emperor [T'ai-tsung] heard of her beauty and summoned her into his harem where she was given the rank of tsai-jen." The two earlier sources are similar to the TCTC in diction and detail,

although the HTS adds the information that T'ai-tsung had been a widower "for a long time." [His wife died in mid-634, so that he waited, at the longest, a year-and-a-half before adding to the harem!]

The degree of similarity is explained in the K'ao-i notice: "The Annals of Tse-t'ien in the CTS say she died at the age of eighty-three, but the T'ang-li (唐曆), the T'ang-ch'ao nien-tai chi (唐朝年代記) by Chiao Lu (焦璐), the T'ung-chi (統紀), the T'ang-nien hsiao-lu (唐年小錄) by Ma Tsung (馬總), the Sheng-yün t'u (聖運圖), and the Hui-yao (會要) all say she died at the age of eighty-one. The T'ang-lu (唐錄) and the Hui-yao say she entered the harem in the thirteenth [not the eleventh] year of chen-kuan. [However] since she entered the harem at the age of fourteen, and because the Shih-lu of Wu Ching says she died at the age of eighty-two, I place her introduction into the harem in this [eleventh] year."

In this account, two points are striking. Ssu-ma Kuang, first of all, is willing to accept the authority of the Shih-lu on the age of the Empress over contradictory sources which are far more numerous and in the case of the CTS, equally authoritative, since Wu Ching made a primary contribution to both. Secondly, the Shih-lu obviously makes no reference to the entry of Empress Wu into T'ai-tsung's harem, showing that this uncomfortable fact was successfully expunged from contemporary, official history through the influence of

the Empress. The event is noted and dated only in the T'ang-lu and the Hui-yao, sources no longer extant. The corresponding THY passage, chüan 3, p. 23, runs 文德皇后崩·太宗聞武士彠女有才貌·召入宮·以為才人, and since this probably is based on Su Mien's Hui-yao [completed 804], the latter may have provided the basis for all three notices. The diction is too close to be coincidental.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Empress Wu attempted deliberately to conceal her age, along with such politically harmful facts as her incest with T'ai-tsung. I can suggest no reason beyond vanity.

(b) CTS 51: 3279:3. [王]后懼不自安. 密與母柳氏求巫祝厭勝. 事發帝大怒.

HTS 76: 3866:4. 昭儀詭險郎誣后與母挾媚道蠱. 上帝信之.

TCTC 199, p. 6288. 武昭儀誣王后與母魏國夫人柳氏. 為厭勝.

The disparity among sources here is marked. The CTS suggests that the Empress Wang and her mother actually engaged in sorcery and therefore angered Kao-tsung, while the other two sources regard them as innocent, seeing the sorcery charge as a calumny fabricated by Wu Chao-i. Ssu-ma Kuang explains in the K'ao-i: "The CTS biography of the Empress Wang says she was frightened and ill-at-ease so that she and her mother secretly sought out a witch and engaged in black magic. When this became known she was degraded. Now I accept what is written in

the Shih-lu."

The CTS view is clearly dependent upon a source other than the Shih-lu, and one more favourable to the Empress Wu, since the charge of sorcery would be sufficient grounds for Kao-tsung to depose Empress Wang. Other extant sources offer no collaboration of either interpretation, although the frequent use of the T'ang-li by the CTS will be suggested later. The TFYK, 333:5a records that Liu Shih (柳奭), uncle of the Empress Wang, was demoted to the provinces when his sister, the Empress' mother was "punished by being forbidden entry to the palace," and his subsequent demotion was for "revealing palace secrets" (禁中語). The reference here is almost certainly to the sorcery charge, and it is to be expected that Liu Shih told his side of the story. See TCTC, 199, p. 6288.

On the other hand, it may be argued that in the relatively complete account of the debate surrounding the elevation of the Empress Wu, the above incident is unmentioned. Kao-tsung, even when challenged by Ch'u Sui-liang to show that the conduct of Empress Wang was anything but blameless, seems to have remained silent. I am not convinced that this is conclusive since Kao-tsung similarly forbears mention of the alleged murder of Wu Chao-i's daughter by the Empress Wang, and the whole debate may have been severely edited to show the latter in a favourable light. The TCTC, 199, pp. 6286-7 does admit that the two rivals "exchanged slanders and accusa-

tions," so that Ssu-ma Kuang's decision here to rely on the Shih-lu rather than the CTS is probably more a reflection of bias than of conviction.

In general, the machinations of the inner palace were never very clear to contemporary historians since there existed no mechanism for obtaining reliable information. For this reason, the T'ang-li, a work in forty chüan by Liu Fang (柳芳), is particularly valuable. His biography, CTS, 149: 3479:2, HTS, 132: 3975:3, records that much of the information therein was based on his conversations with the famous eunuch, Kao Li-shih (高力士) whose sources of information for events within the harem might be more accurate than those available to the official historians. In the example above, for instance, I suspect that the CTS notice follows the T'ang-li, and is the proper interpretation. The Empress Wu, after all, is known to have had a network of palace spies charged with reporting on her rival, and given the prevalence of witchcraft at the time, almost certainly had grounds for her accusation. She herself had to answer the same charge in 664.

The varying versions of the incident also demonstrate a greater hostility to the Empress Wu on the part of the HTS and the TCTC than on the part of the CTS. This is a consistent tendency.

(c) CTS 6: 6075:3. 進號宸妃.

HTS 76: 3867:1. [高宗] 欲進號宸妃. 侍中韓瑗, 中書令來濟言妃嬪有數. 今別立號不可.

TCTC 199, p. 6288. [六月] 上欲特置宸妃. 以武昭儀為六 . 韓瑗來濟諫以為故事無之. 乃止 .

The source dispute here, although parallel to (b), is different in that it concerns a public event about which the historian could be expected to have certain knowledge. The HTS and TCTC suggest that the remonstrance of Han Yüan and Lai Chi prevented Kao-tsung from creating a new category of concubine to be awarded to Wu Chao-i, while the CTS maintains that she was actually granted the title. The K'ao-i says: "The T'ang-li dates this event in the fourth month, but now I follow the Shih-lu. Han Yüan and Lai Chi had not reached the posts of shih-chung and chung-shu-ling [respectively] by the fourth month [of 655]. The T'ang-li also says their remonstrance was unsuccessful, but the decree which established the [new] Empress refers to her as [the] Chao-i [concubine]. If this is the case, she was never granted the title of Ch'en concubine. I now follow the Hui-yao."

Ssu-ma Kuang is on firm ground here. The appointment of Han and Lai in the fifth month to the posts mentioned can be verified even in the CTS Annals of Kao-tsung, and no other source suggests that the Ch'en-fei title was ever awarded. It is of interest that the Shih-lu seems to have noted the event but not the outcome, since the K'ao-i cites the Hui-yao

as its authority. Wu Chao-i's reception of the title must have been at least a tradition of the palace since the CTS is here clearly reproducing the T'ang-li. Several other examples could be drawn to show how highly the authors of the CTS regarded the T'ang-li as a source, and how they often preferred it to the Shih-lu. Ssu-ma Kuang's view is, of course, different. See (d).

My own reading of the T'ang-li notices concerned with the Empress Wu and preserved in the K'ao-i make clear the vast difference between official and non-official history. A separate study would not be amiss.

(d) CTS 65:3310:3 [biography of Wu-chi]. [上] 曰：武昭儀有令德. 朕欲立為皇后. 卿等以為如何. 無忌曰：自貞觀二十三年後先朝付託遂良. 望陛下問其可否.

CTS 80: 3340:4 [biography of Sui-liang]. 高宗. . . 再三顧 無忌曰: 皇后無亂息. 昭儀有子. 今欲立為皇后. 公等以為如何. 遂良曰: 皇后出自名家. . .

HTS 105: 3922:3 [biography of Wu-chi]. [上] 言后無忌. 昭儀有子. 必欲立之者. 無忌已數諫. 郎曰: 先帝付託遂良. 願陛下訪之. 遂良極道不可.

HTS 105: 3923:3 [biography of Sui-liang]. 帝曰. . . 皇后無子. 今欲立昭儀. 謂何. 遂良對曰: 皇后名家. . .

TCTC, 199, pp. 6289-90. 上顧謂無忌曰：皇后無子，武昭儀有子．今欲立昭儀為后，何如. 遂良對曰：皇后名家．．．

This episode, in which Kao-tsung solicits the support of the four most prestigeous of his ministers for the plan to elevate Wu Chao-i to Empress, is one of the best-known of the century. It will be noted that the two dynastic histories are in perfect agreement while Ssu-ma Kuang glosses the salient point. His K'ao-i notice says: "The T'ang-li records that when Wu-chi and the others were about to enter [the audience hall] Sui-liang said that [Kao-tsung] was going to ask about the Empress, and asked whether he should remonstrate. Wu-chi told him that however strongly he did so, he would himself support him. When they went in, the Emperor looked at Wu-chi and said, 'The greatest of all crimes is to be prevented from continuing one's line. Now, my Empress is barren and I want to depose her and establish in her place the daughter of Wu Shih-huo. What is your opinion?' Wu-chi said, 'Ever since the twenty-third year of chen-kuan, your [late] father placed his trust in Sui-liang. I would rather you asked him.' If this story is true, then Wu-chi betrayed Sui-liang. I do not accept it."

This is one of the very few instances in the K'ao-i in which Ssu-ma Kuang relies solely on his own judgment and offers no supporting evidence. It may be that the Shih-lu fails to mention the incident, but in view of its centrality

to the crisis I find this hard to accept, and reluctantly conclude that Ssu-ma Kuang suppressed it. Support for this view comes from the fact that the CTS passages above actually elaborate on the T'ang-li story and so must have had an additional source, and also from the fact of Ssu-ma Kuang's extraordinary fondness for Wu-chi. Note his remarks TCTC, 199, p. 6267, in connection with T'ai-tsung's dying words to Wu-chi, and more particularly, his treatment of Wu-chi's complicity in, or instigation of, the charges which brought death to the innocent Li K'o (吳王李恪). See TCTC, 199, p. 6280.

The historical significance of the controversy lies in the fact that if Wu-chi is seen to be an opportunist, his opposition to the Empress Wu may have been less disinterested than is usually portrayed, and her later actions against him therefore justified. Even in the case of her so-called revenge, there is some room for doubt. See (e).

(e) CTS 65: 3310:3. 許敬宗遣人上封事，稱監察御史李巢，與無忌，交通謀反．

HTS 105: 3922:4. 敬宗揣后指，陰使洛陽人李奉節上無忌變事．

TCTC 200, p. 6312. 敬宗因誣奏 [韋]季方欲與無忌構陷忠臣近戚，使權歸無忌，伺隙謀反，今事覺，故自殺.

Although the details differ in each account, the sources agree that Hsü Ching-tsung fabricated a charge of

treason against Wu-chi by having someone send a secret denunciation to Kao-tsung. The K'ao-i notice is extremely long, quoting extensively from the Shih-lu, mentioning contradictions with the CTS, and protesting Wu-chi's innocence. It then continues: "The Shih-lu, in recording the incident is careless (鹵莽), and discrepancies are found from beginning to end so that the whole truth cannot be known. Thus, I abbreviate, giving the general significance, and that is all. . . . The Shih-lu, [however], compared to the CTS biography is earlier and more detailed; and since the biography is later and more brief, it is less worthy of reliance."

In this passage, we see most clearly the reason for the TCTC tendency to rely wherever possible on the Shih-lu, and to favour its interpretation over that of the dynastic histories in spite of Ssu-ma Kuang's equation of the two in his T'ung-chien shih-li (通鑑釋例), 1:3-4a. Several additional examples of the process are adduced in Li Shu-t'ung (李樹桐), T'ang-shih k'ao-pan (唐史考辨), pp. 238-9. In view of the hostile posture of the Shih-lu, especially when compared to the T'ang-li, and in view of the enormous prestige of the TCTC, it is not surprising that the Empress Wu has fared badly in traditional historiography.

While in the example above, the point of dispute is a matter of detail rather than interpretation, it should be noted that the CTS is supported by the T'ang-li, the Shih-

t'ung, and in some areas, by the Shih-lu itself! And the CTS, unlike the HTS and TCTC, nowhere mentions that Hsü Ching-tsung was acting directly under the orders of the Empress Wu. His reasons for the destruction of Wu-chi were easily as strong as her own, and it is entirely possible that he acted on his own initiative. Ssu-ma Kuang (TCTC, loc. cit.) as much as admits the speculatory nature of his judgment with the unsupported statement, "The Empress ordered Ching-tsung to await his chance and entrap him [Wu-chi]," and one wonders how he knew even this much. If the K'ao-i reproduces the full Shih-lu report, there is no mention there of the influence of the Empress Wu.

APPENDIX II

THE TSAI-HSIANG 618-705

The following list is an attempt to provide in tabular form a brief biographical sketch of every man who held chief ministerial, or tsai-hsiang status from the beginning of the T'ang to the deposition of the Empress Wu. The principal source of information is HTS 61: 3774:1, the table of chief ministers, but because of errors and omissions in it, the data is supplemented with evidence from the annals and biographies of the CTS and from later studies like TCTC, and principally, from the Nien-i-shih ssu-p'u (廿一史四譜), chüan 33. Yen Keng-wang (嚴耕望), in T'ang p'u-shang ch'eng-lang piao (唐僕尚丞郎表), provides some information not found elsewhere. Where the actuality of appointment is disputed, I usually include the man in question so that the list may be as comprehensive as possible.

The names are arranged in chronological order based on the date when tsai-hsiang status was first awarded, and the key to data is as follows:

(a) Dates (age given in Chinese style).

(b) Native place followed with the T'ang province to which it belonged.

(c) Ancestry.

(d) Examination.

(e) First official post mentioned in the biography in the dynastic history.

(f) Recommendation (by whom).

(g) Year and lunar month when tsai-hsiang status was first awarded.

(h) Length of tenure of tsai-hsiang status.

(i) Descendants.

(j) Remarks, and Western language sources in which more information may be found. For the latter, the three abbreviations used are:

(1) Examens - Le traité des examens by R. des Rotours.

(2) Fonctionnaires - Le traité des fonctionnaires et de l'armée, by the same author.

(3) Eberhard - Das Toba-Reich Nordchinas by W. Eberhard.

For the sake of brevity, some phrases which may require explanation frequently occur. "Family extinguished" (家口籍沒) refers to the punishment elaborated in the text whereby the immediate family of a criminal is either executed, or exiled and deprived of political rights. In many cases, it will be noted, rehabilitation occurred before the deposition of the Empress Wu. "Executed by the Empress Wu" simply means that the event occurred between 684-705, and "in exile" means that the man in question had either been demoted to a provincial post or exiled to Ling-nan before his death. The length of tenure (h) is based entirely on my own calculations. In many cases, a chief minister was given a particular commission

outside the capital during his tenure. Unless there is specific mention that he was at the same time deprived of tsai-hsiang status, I include this period in his tenure although he could scarcely exercise his Court functions. This is done chiefly to permit consistency of analysis since the actual time consumed by special assignments is invariably vague.

Although much of the data is analyzed in the text, specific points of interest are cited in notes following the presentation of data.

1. Li Shih-min (李世民) = T'ai-tsung (太宗).

2. P'ei Chi (裴寂) CTS, 57: 3292:3, HTS, 88: 3893:1.
   (a) ca. 571-630.
   (b) P'u-chou (蒲州) in Ho-tung.
   (c) Father and grandfather office-holders. Lineage praised by Kao-tsu, but family poor.
   (d) No exam.
   (e) Pu-chou chu-pu (補州主簿).
   (f) None mentioned. Early friendship with Kao-tsu.
   (g) 618: cheng.
   (h) 8 years.
   (i) Son marries a daughter of Kao-tsu, grandson official career under Empress Wu, but executed by her.
   (j) The most favoured of Kao-tsu's ministers.

3. Hsiao Yü (蕭瑀) CTS, 63: 3304:3, HTS, 101: 3915:1.
   (a) 575-648.
   (b) Eberhard, p. 40, #32.
   (c) Imperial family of Liang, married to Sui family.
   (d) No exam.
   (e) Min-pu shang-shu (民部尚書).
   (f) None.
   (g) 618: cheng.
   (h) 9 years.
   (i) Son marries a daughter of T'ai-tsung and has official career.
   (j) A prominent Buddhist. Several quarrels with T'ai-tsung and once disenrolled.

4. Liu Wen-ching (劉文靜) CTS, 57: 3293:1, HTS, 88: 3892:3.
   (a) d. 620 at age 52.
   (b) Claimed P'eng-ch'eng (彭城) but family had lived at Ching-chao (京兆) for generations.
   (c) Grandfather an office-holder, father dies in battle, and Wen-ching succeeds to his posthumous position.
   (d) No exam.
   (e) Chin-yang ling (晉陽令).
   (f) Close friend of P'ei Chi who introduces him to Kao-tsu.
   (g) 618:6.
   (h) 2 months, then disenrolled for treason.
   (i) When family rehabilitated, two sons have official career, and one marries princess.
   (j) Cf. Eberhard, p. 54, #54 for clan claimed by Wen-ching.

5. Tou Wei (竇威) CTS, 61: 3301:1, HTS, 95: 3904:3.

(a) d. 618.
(b) See #6. Uncle of K'ang.
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) Appointed 618:6, but dies same month.
(i) Son has official career.

6. Tou K'ang (竇抗) CTS, 61: 3301:3, HTS, 95: 3904:3.

(a) d. 621
(b) Fu-feng (扶風) in Kuan-chung.
(c) Eminent clan. Consort family of Sui, and K'ang is son of Wen-ti's daughter Wan-an (萬安).
(d) No exam.
(e) High honorary positions in Sui.
(f) Youthful friendship with Kao-tsu.
(g) 618:6.
(h) 2 months, then made general.
(i) Two sons, primarily military careers.
(j) In early T'ang, this clan produced 7 officials above the third rank, 5 above the fourth, more than 10 above the fifth, and three times married princesses as well as placing several of their daughters in the harem. An unparalleled achievement according to CTS. Cf. Eberhard, p. 383, #69.

7. Ch'en Shu-ta (陳叔達) CTS, 61: 3301:1, HTS, 100: 3912:3.

(a) d. 635.
(b) Below.
(c) Imperial family of Ch'en dynasty, 16th son of Hsüan-ti (宣帝).
(d) No exam.
(e) Nei-shih she-jen (內史舍人).
(f) Early allegiance to T'ang.
(g) 619:cheng.
(h) 7 years, 10 months.
(i) No children mentioned.
(j) A poet and scholar who left works in 15 chüan.

8. Yang Kung-jen (楊恭仁) CTS, 62: 3302:4, HTS, 100: 3912:3.

(a) d. 639.
(b) Hua-yin (華陰) in Kuan-chung.
(c) Imperial family of Sui dynasty.
(d) No exam.
(e) Prefect of Kan-chou (甘州).

(f) Captured by Kao-tsu's troops early in rebellion and persuaded to join T'ang.
(g) 619:10.
(h) 6 years, 9 months.
(i) Son and grandson have official career. Brother, nephew, niece, great-grandson all marry into T'ang family. Also the clan of the mother of the Empress Wu.
(j) Eberhard, p. 73, #87.

9. Feng Te-i (封德彝) CTS, 63: 3304:2, HTS, 100: 3912:4.

(a) d. 627 at age 60.
(b) Kuan-chou (觀州) in Ho-nan.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders. Marriage relation to eminent Lu clan of Fan-yang.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Hsing-chün chi-shih (行軍記室) in army of Yang Su.
(f) Surrendered territory to T'ang.
(g) 620:2.
(h) 7 years, 4 months.
(i) Son marries daughter of Kao-tsu. Has official career. Nephew also an official.
(j) Possibly connected with Feng clan of Eberhard, p. 36, #21. Also known as Feng Lun (封倫).

10. P'ei Chü (裴矩) SS, 67: 2507:1, PS, 38: 2869:4, CTS, 63: 3305:3, HTS, 100: 3913:1.

(a) d. 627 at age over 80.
(b) Ho-tung (河東).
(c) Eminent clan, father and grandfather office-holders.
(d) No exam.
(e) Secretary-tutor to Ch'i prince (高平王文學).
(f) Deserts Tou Chien-te to join T'ang.
(g) 624:12.
(h) 1 year.
(i) Son has official career under Kao-tsung.
(j) Barbarian expert and map-maker of Western regions. Long experience makes him something of elder-statesman in reign of Kao-tsu.

11. Yü-wen Shi-chi (宇文士及) CTS, 63: 3305:4, HTS, 100: 3913:3.

(a) d. 642.
(b) Ch'ang-an (長安).
(c) Imperial family of Chou, marriage to Sui and T'ang families.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Shang-nien feng-yü (尚輦奉御).

(f) Close friend of Kao-tsu.
(g) 625:12.
(h) 1 year, 9 months.
(i) Son has official career.
(j) Friendship with T'ai-tsung.

12. Li Yüan-chi (李元吉).

(a) Killed in T'ai-tsung's coup of 626.
(b) Fourth son of Kao-tsu (b. 609).
(c) T'ang imperial family.
(d) No exam.
(e) T'ai-yüan-chün shou (太原郡守).
(f) None.
(g) 625:12.
(h) 6 months.
(i) 5 sons, all executed by T'ai-tsung.
(j) His concubine of the Yang clan, later taken by T'ai-tsung probably introduced the Empress Wu into the harem.

13. Tu Yen (杜淹) CTS, 66: 3312:2, HTS, 96: 3905:4.

(a) d. 628.
(b) See #17.
(c) Uncle of Ju-hui.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Ch'eng-feng lang (承奉郎).
(f) Yes (高孝基)
(g) 627:9.
(h) 11 months.
(i) Son inherits title. See above.
(j) Above.

14. Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi (長孫無忌) CTS, 65: 3309:3, HTS, 105: 3922:2.

(a) d. 659.
(b) Lo-yang (洛陽).
(c) A t'o-pa clan, offices and titles for seven generations, Wu-chi's sister married to T'ai-tsung.
(d) No exam.
(e) After military posts in T'ang conquest, Pi-pu lang-chung (比部郎中).
(f) A close friend of T'ai-tsung from youth.
(g) 627:7.
(h) Total almost 16 years.
(i) Family extinguished in 659-60.
(j) See text.

15. Kao Chien (高儉) CTS, 65: 3309:1, HTS, 95: 3903:3.

(a) d. 647, aged 71.
(b) Po-hai (渤海) in Ho-nan.
(c) Eminent clan, Imperial family of Ch'i, married into Ch'ang-sun and T'ang families.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Chih-li lang (治禮郎).
(f) Probably received first Sui post by recommendation.
(f) 626:7.
(h) 8 years, 1 month.
(i) Son marries daughter of T'ai-tsung, holds high posts, destroyed by Empress Wu because of relationship with Chang-sun Wu-chi.
(j) Also called Kao Shih-lien (高士廉). Cf. Eberhard, p. 42, #39.

16. Fang Hsüan-ling (房玄齡) CTS, 66: 3310:4, HTS, 95: 3905:1.

(a) d. 648 at age 70.
(b) Ch'i-chou (齊州) in Ho-nan; moved to capital in Sui.
(c) Ancestors held office since Wei.
(d) Chin-shih at age 18.
(e) Yu-ch'i wei (羽騎尉).
(f) Yes (溫彥博 et al.)
(g) 626:7.
(h) Total almost 30 years.
(i) Two sons, one married to daughter of T'ai-tsung, have official career, conspire to rebel, family reduced to commoner status early in reign of Kao-tsung.
(j) With the exception of Wei Cheng, probably the most important of T'ai-tsung's ministers.

17. Tu Ju-hui (杜如晦) CTS, 66: 3311:4, HTS, 96: 3905:3.

(a) d. 630 at age 46.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆) i.e. Ch'ang-an.
(c) Office-holders in Chou and Sui, son marries into T'ang family.
(d) First to pass the hsüan in Sui.
(e) Kan-yang Wei (淦陽尉).
(f) Yes (高孝基 and 房玄齡).
(g) 628:cheng.
(h) 2 years. Resigns because of illness.
(i) Son and grandson have official careers.
(j) Cf. Examens, p. 241. He was nephew of Tu Yen [q.v.].

18. Li Ching (李靖) CTS, 67: 3312:3, HTS, 93: 3900:3.

(a) d. 649 at age 79.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州) in Kuan-chung [Ch'ang-an].
(c) Father and grandfather held office in Sui and Wei.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Ch'ang-an-hsien kung-ts'ao (長安縣功曹)
(f) Yes (楊素, 牛弘).
(g) 628:cheng.
(h) 6 years, 11 months.
(i) Son and younger brother have official career.
(j) Career primarily military. See Fonctionnaires, p. 6.

19. Wang Kuei (王珪) CTS, 98: 3318:2, HTS, 312: 3909:3.

(a) d. 639 at age 69.
(b) T'ai-yüan (太原) in Ho-tung.
(c) Ancestors held posts in Liang and Ch'i, but had declined to impoverishment before Kuei was orphaned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Leng-li-lang (奉禮郎).
(f) Yes (李綱).
(g) 628:12.
(h) 4 years, 4 months.
(i) Two sons have official career, and the younger marries a princess.

20. Wei Cheng (魏徵) PS, 56: 2932:2, CTS, 71: 3320:1, HTS, 97: 3906:3.

(a) d. 643 at age 63.
(b) Chü-lu (鉅鹿) in Ho-pei.
(c) Father held low office in Ch'i. Cheng early orphaned and impoverished.
(d) No exam.
(e) Clerical staff of rebel Li Mi; T'ang Mi-shu ch'eng (密書丞)
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 629.
(h) 13 years, 6 months.
(i) Four sons have official career, one executed by Empress Wu.
(j) Examens, p. 242. An unpublished thesis by H. J. Wechsler (Yale, 1970), offers a full treatment of Cheng's career.

21. Wen Yen-po (溫彥博) CTS, 61: 3300:3, HTS, 100: 3912:1.

(a) d. 637 at age 64.
(b) T'ai-yüan (太原) in Ho-tung.

(c) Father office-holder in Ch'i and Sui.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Wen-lin lang (文林郎).
(f) Yes (秦孝王俊).
(g) 630:2.
(h) 7 years, 4 months.
(i) Son marries daughter of Kao-tsu, has official career. Numerous relatives hold high posts.
(j) Considered one of the most successful families of early T'ang.

22. Tai Chou (戴胄). See #55.
(a) d. 633.
(b) Hsiang-chou (相州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned, biography says family poor.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Men-hsia lu-shih (門下錄事).
(f) Yes (蘇威, 裴矩). Captured by T'ai-tsung.
(g) 630:2.
(h) 3 years, 4 months.
(i) No sons. Adopts nephew Chih-te, q.v. #55.
(j) No formal education. Noted for repression of literature while in charge of exam system.

23. Hou Chün-chi (侯君集) CTS, 69: 3316:2, HTS, 94: 3902:2.
(a) Executed for treason, 643.
(b) Pin-chou (豳州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors menticned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Military posts with T'ai-tsung early in conquest.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 630:11.
(h) 10 years, 2 months [nominally. Often out of capital.]
(i) Sons exiled to Ling-nan.
(j) Military career.

24. Yang Shih-tao (楊師道) CTS, 62: 3307:1, HTS, 100: 3912:4.
(a) d. 647.
(b) See #8.
(c) Younger brother of Kung-jen.
(d) No exam.
(e) Honorary posts in early T'ang.
(f) None mentioned. T'ai-tsung impressed by his calligraphy.
(g) 636:6.

(h) 7 years, 6 months. Demoted 645 for connection with Korean failure.
(i) Son has official career, married to T'ai-tsung's niece, executed for conspiracy.
(j) Noted for devotion to talent over birth and for suppression of aristocracy while in charge of exam system.

25. Liu Po (劉泊) CTS, 74: 3326:4, HTS, 99: 3911:4.

(a) Ordered to suicide 645.
(b) Ching-chou (荆州) in Shan-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Huang-men shih-lang (黃門侍郎) under rebel Hsiao Hsien.
(f) None mentioned, though wide military reputation.
(g) 639:11.
(h) 5 years, 1 month.
(i) Son has official career and has Empress Wu rehabilitate father.

26. Ts'en Wen-pen (岑文本) CTS, 70: 3319:1, HTS, 102: 3916:3.

(a) d. 645 at age 51.
(b) Nan-yang (南陽) in Shan-nan.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders.
(d) Hsiu-tsai.
(e) Chung-shu shih-lang (中書侍郎) under rebel Hsiao Hsien.
(f) Yes (李靖).
(g) 642:cheng.
(h) 3 years, 4 months.
(i) Nephew reaches tsai-hsiang status under Empress Wu, and is executed for opposition to Wu Ch'eng-ssu. #69.

27. Li Chi (李勣) CTS, 67: 3313:2, HTS, 93: 3901:2.

(a) d. 669 at age 76.
(b) Ts'ao-chou (曹州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned, poor family.
(d) No exam.
(e) Bandit, joins Li Mi, becomes general of Kao-tsu.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 643:4.
(h) 6 years, 8 months.
(i) Son has official career, but family extinguished after grandson's rebellion.
(j) See text and Fonctionnaires, p. 7.

(c) Office-holders in Wei and Sui.
(d) No exam.
(e) Chih-chou tsung-kuan-fu hu-ts'an-chün (陟州總管府户參軍)
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 645:2 (disputed appointment). More likely 649:9.
(h) 4 years, 3 months.
(i) Son has official career, but exiled to South in 664 because of connection with Shang-kuan I.

32. Yü Chih-ning (于志寧) CTS, 77: 3335:4, HTS, 104: 3920:4.
(a) d. 665 at age 78.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州) in capital area.
(c) Office-holders in Chou and Sui.
(d) No exam.
(e) Sui Kuan-shih-hsien ch'ang-shih (冠氏縣長史).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 649:5.
(h) 8 years, 4 months. Resigns 659 because of age.
(i) Son and grandson have official career.
(j) Famed for erudition and for outspokenness.

33. Ts'ui Jen-shih (崔仁師) CTS, 74: 3328:1, HTS, 99: 3912:1
(a) d. ca. 650-1 at age over 60.
(b) Ting-chou (定州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Decree exam at beginning of wu-te.
(e) Kuan-chou lu-shih ts'an-chün (管州錄事參軍).
(f) Yes (陳叔達).
(g) 648:cheng.
(h) 1 month.
(i) Son and grandson have official career serving together under Chung-tsung. The latter (崔湜) reaches tsai-hsiang status.

34. Chang Hsing-ch'eng (張行成) CTS 78: 3336:4, HTS, 104: 3921:4.
(a) d. 659 at age 67.
(b) Ting-chou (定州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Decree examination in early T'ang.
(e) Sui Yeh-che-t'ai san-ts'ung yüan-wai-lang (謁者台散從員外郎).
(f) Famous tutor, and recommended by a Sui ch'a-hsiao lien (察孝廉). Possibly also by Fang Hsüan-ling.
(g) 650:cheng.
(h) 2 years, 9 months.
(i) Son has official career after succeeding to father's post. His collateral grandsons were the two notorious

favourites of the Empress Wu.
(j) Noted for close association with the young Kao-tsung, for his opposition to T'ai-tsung's regional bias, and for bringing many north-easterners into the government.

35. Liu Shih (柳奭) CTS, 77: 3334:3, HTS, 112: 3938:3.
(a) d. 659 in exile.
(b) P'u-chou (蒲州) in Ho-tung.
(c) Office-holders since the Wei, married into Tou clan and his niece was Kao-tsung's Empress.
(d) No exam.
(e) Chung-shu she-jen (中書舍人).
(f) None mentioned. Rapid rise when niece married to Kao-tsung.
(g) 651:cheng.
(h) 3 years, 6 months. Resigns as Empress Wu rises.
(i) Family extinguished. Grandson holds posts in k'ai-yüan.
(j) Biography stresses his innocence, is very hostile to Empress Wu.

36. Yü-wen Chieh (宇文節) No biography.
(a) d. 653 at age 67.
(b) --
(c) Possible relation #11?
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 651:cheng.
(h) 2 years, 3 months.
(i) --

37. Han Yüan (韓瑗) CTS, 80: 3340:4, HTS, 105: 3923:3.
(a) d. 659 at age 54 in exile.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州).
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ping-pu shih-lang (兵部侍郎).
(f) Inherits dukedom.
(g) 652:3.
(h) 3 years, 10 months. Demoted 657-8 for opposition to Empress Wu.
(i) Family extinguished.

38. Lai Chi (來濟) CTS, 80: 3341:1, HTS, 105: 3923:4.
    (a) d. 662 at age 53 in battle with Turks.
    (b) Yang-chou (揚州) in Huai-nan.
    (c) Father a famous Sui general killed by Yü-wen Hua-chi.
    (d) Chin-shih.
    (e) T'ung-shih shih-jen (通士舍人).
    (f) None mentioned.
    (g) 652:9.
    (h) 3 years, 4 months. Demoted 657-8 for opposition to Empress Wu.
    (i) No descendants mentioned.

39. Li I-fu (李義府) CTS, 82: 3343:2, HTS, 223 shang: 4163:3.
    (a) d. 667 at age 53, in exile.
    (b) Ying-chou (瀛州) in Ho-nan, but claimed membership in the much more prestigeous Chao-chün (趙郡) Li clan.
    (c) Grandfather held low office.
    (d) No exam.
    (e) Provincial commissioner in 634 (劒南道巡察大使).
    (f) Yes (李大亮, 劉洎, 馬周).
    (g) 655:7.
    (h) 7 years, 9 months.
    (i) Son (李湛) receives many posts and honours. Assists in coup which deposes Empress Wu.
    (j) With Hsü Ching-tsung [q.v.], the most important of the Empress' early supporters. A byword for cunning and opportunism, his biographies are a source for much historiographical hostility to the Empress Wu. See also Fonctionnaires, p. 158.

40. Ts'ui Tun-li (崔敦禮) CTS, 81: 3341:3, HTS, 106: 3925:1.
    (a) d. ca. 656 at over 60.
    (b) Yung-chou (雍州) near capital.
    (c) Grandfather president of Board of Rites in Sui. An eminent Shan-tung clan who moved to Kuan-chung at end of Wei.
    (d) No exam.
    (e) T'ung-shih she-jen (通士舍人).
    (f) None mentioned.
    (g) 653:1.
    (h) 2 years, 9 months.
    (i) Son and grandson have career; like their father, mostly in Board of War.

41. Tu Cheng-lun (杜正倫) CTS, 70: 3319:4, HTS, 106: 3924:2.
    (a) d. in exile in 658 after disagreement with Li I-fu.

(b) Hsiang-chou (相州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Hsiu-tsai (with his two brothers, numbered among about ten who succeeded in this exam in the Sui).
(e) Sui Yü-ch'i-wei (羽騎尉).
(f) Yes (魏徵).
(g) 656:3.
(h) 2 years, 8 months.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

42. Hsü Ching-tsung (許敬宗) CTS, 82: 3342:4, HTS, 223: 4163:1.
(a) d. 672 at age 81.
(b) Hang-chou (杭州), and considered an eminent Chiang-tso family.
(c) Father a Board president in Sui.
(d) Hsiu-tsai.
(e) Huai-yang-chün ssu-fa shu-tso (淮陽郡司法書佐).
(f) Yes.
(g) 657:3.
(h) 13 years.
(i) Grandson has good career. Son probably also an official.
(j) Fonctionnaires, p. 158. Probably the single most important minister during the first decade of the Empress' power. Great importance in the historiography of the century. See text.

43. Hsin Mao-chiang (辛茂將) No biography.
(a) d. 659:11.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 658:11.
(h) 1 year.

44. Hsü Yü-shih (許圉師) CTS, 59: 3297:2, HTS, 90: 3896:4.
(a) d. 679.
(b) Kao-yang (高陽) in Ho-pei.
(c) Remotely a southern family, office-holders since the Liang.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Huang-men shih-lang (黃門侍郎) in 657.
(f) None mentioned but father important general under Kao-tsu.

(g) 659:4.
(h) 3 years, 7 months. Demoted 662 for quarrel with Li I-fu.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Seven members of family active in seventh century.

45. Jen Ya-hsiang (任雅相) No biography.

(a) Sole mention of Jen is in the CTS biography of Turks. He was Su Ting-fang's deputy in the expedition of 657.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 659:5.
(h) 2 years, 9 months. Dies in 662:2.

46. Lu Ch'eng-ch'ing (盧承慶) CTS, 81: 3341:3, HTS, 106: 3925:2.

(a) d. 670 at age 76.
(b) Fan-yang (范陽).
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders. Eminent Shantung clan.
(d) No exam.
(e) After service in military posts at beginning of chen-kuan, became K'ao-kung yüan-wai-lang (考功員外郎).
(f) Succeeds to father's dukedom.
(g) 659:5.
(h) 1 year, 2 months. Dismissed for incompetence.
(i) No direct descendants mentioned as active in government, but 3 brothers all have posts in seventh century.

47. Shang-kuan I (上官儀) CTS, 80: 3341:2, HTS, 105: 3924:1.

(a) Executed 664 as moving spirit in attempt to depose Empress Wu.
(b) Shan-chou (陝州), but lived at Chiang-tu (江都).
(c) Father held office in Sui.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Hung-wen-kuan chih hsüeh-shih (弘文館直學士).
(f) Yes (楊恭仁). Took vows of Buddhist monk.
(g) 662:9.
(h) 2 years, 3 months.
(i) Family extinguished. Grand-daughter advances from palace slave to private secretary of Empress Wu. In reign of Chung-tsung becomes important figure, a noted literary patron and is in charge of the examination

system.
(j) A poet of renown who has given his name to a concise yet ornamental style of composition sometimes called "five-word" (五言) poetry.

48. Tou Te-hsüan (竇德玄) CTS, nil, HTS, 183: 3904:4.
(a) d. 666 at age 69.
(b) Ch'i-chou (岐州).
(c) Grandfather married to Chou family, father inherited his title. Te-hsüan is grand-nephew of Wei. See #5 and 6.
(d) No exam.
(e) Served on Kao-tsu's staff in conquest.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 664:8.
(h) 2 years.
(i) Above.
(j) Biography recounts incident of 664 in which Kao-tsung personally and ceremonially appoints 10 men to tsai-hsiang status to show his reverence for the institution.

49. Yüeh Yen-wei (樂彥瑋) CTS, 81: 3342:3, HTS, 99: 3912:1.
(a) d. 676.
(b) Ch'ang-an.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Chi-shih-chung (給事中).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 664:12.
(h) 4 months.
(i) Son gains high position. Executed in Chou.

50. Sun Ch'u-yao (孫處約) CTS, 81: 3342:3, HTS, 106: 3926:2.
(a) d. ca. 660.
(b) Ju-chou (汝州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ch'i-wang yu-chi (齊王祐記).
(f) Makes personal impression on T'ai-tsung.
(g) 664:12.
(h) 4 months. Dismissed for misdemeanor.
(i) Son a general in reign of Jui-tsung. Killed by Khitan.

51. Liu Jen-kuei (劉仁軌) CTS, 84: 3346:1, HTS, 108: 3928:3.
(a) d. 685 at age 84.

(b) Pien-chou (汴州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Hsi-chou ts'an-chün (息州參軍).
(f) Yes (張任瓘). Reputation in Korea.
(g) 665:10.
(h) Though some appointments disputed, probably about 19 years.
(i) Son office-holder, executed in early Chou with immediate family. One grandson official under Hsüan-tsung.
(j) One of the heroes of his age.

52. Chiang K'o (姜恪) No biography.

(a) d. 672.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 665:3.
(h) 6 years, 11 months.

53. Chao Jen-pen (趙仁本) CTS, 81: 3342:3, HTS, nil.

(a) d. 670.
(b) Shan-chou (陝州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Tien-chung yü-shih (殿中御史) under T'ai-tsung.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 667:6.
(h) Disputed. Probably 3 years, 4 months. Dismissed because of quarrel with Hsu Ching-tsung.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Once punished for making his own copy of secret edicts.

54. Yang Hung-wu (楊弘武) CTS, 77: 3333:4, HTS, 106: 3925:1.

(a) d. 668.
(b) Hua-chou (華州) in Kuan-chung.
(c) Office-holders. Collateral branch of Sui family. See #8.
(d) No exam.
(e) Tso-ch'ien-niu pei-shen (左千牛備身).
(f) Yes, (Mother of Empress Wu).
(g) 667:6.
(h) 10 months.

(i) 3 sons all have official careers before the Empress Wu bans all descendants of Yang Su (楊素) from holding capital office. All sent to provinces, returning only after restoration.

55. Tai Chih-te (戴至德) CTS, 70: 3319:1, HTS, 99: 3911:3.

(a) d. 679.
(b) Hsiang-chou (相州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Nephew of Tai Chou and adopted by him. See #22.
(d) No exam.
(e) Hsi-t'ai shih-lang (西台侍郎) is first post noted.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 667:6.
(h) Disputed appointments. Probably 11 years, 7 months.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

56. Li An-ch'i (李安期) CTS, 72: 3323:4, HTS, 102: 3917:3.

(a) d. 670.
(b) Ting-chou (定州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Father and grandfather high officials.
(d) No exam.
(e) Fu-hsi lang (符璽郎).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 667:6.
(h) 3 months.
(i) Grandson has career.
(j) An-ch'i much praised for handling of selection system, and as the third generation of his family to hold high Court office and draft edicts, etc.

57. Chang Wen-kuan (張文瓘) CTS, 85: 3348:4, HTS, 113: 3939:2.

(a) d. 677 at age 73.
(b) Pei-chou (貝州) in Ho-pei. Moved to Wei-chou (魏州) at end of Sui.
(c) No ancestors mentioned. Orphaned.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) Ping-chou ts'an-chün (并州參軍).
(f) Yes (李勣).
(g) 667:6.
(h) 13 years, 3 months.
(i) No sons mentioned. Brother and uncle have official career.
(j) Prevented the last attack on Silla. Uncle of Li Chiao [q.v.], Fonctionnaires, p. 10.

58. Yen Li-pen (閻立本) CTS, 77: 3334:2, HTS, 100: 3914:2.

(a) d. 673.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州) from Sui period.
(c) Father held Sui posts. A family of artisans and builders.
(d) No exam. Primarily a painter.
(e) First post mentioned is chiang-tso ta-chiang (將作大匠).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 668:12 (provisional).
(h) 4 years, 11 months.
(i) Sons mentioned but seem not to have entered public life.
(j) Considered by contemporaries to be an incompetent administrator.

59. Li Ching-hsüan (李敬玄) CTS, 81: 3342:1, HTS, 106: 3925:4.

(a) d. 682 at age 68.
(b) Po-chou (亳州) in Huai-nan but claimed Chao-chün.
(c) Father held office.
(d) No exam.
(e) Tutor of Kao-tsung.
(f) Yes (馬周, 許敬宗).
(g) 669:2.
(h) 10 years, 6 months. Demoted after defeat by T'u-fan.
(i) Son has good career, but executed when Empress Wei falls.
(j) Examens, p. 245. Famed for his administration of the examination system when he reputedly recruited "over 10,000 men" each year, including many of his own clan and friends. Married three times into the most eminent Shantung clans. The great personal following he enjoyed coupled with a quarrel with Liu Jen-kuei [q.v.] led to his downfall.

60. Hao Ch'u-chün (郝處俊) CTS, 84: 3347:1, HTS, 115: 3942:1.

(a) d. 681 at age 75.
(b) An-chou (安州) in Huai-nan.
(c) Father an early supporter of T'ang, but dies when Ch'u-chün is 10. Inherits title of hsien-kung.
(d) Chin-shih in 628.
(e) Chu-tso tso-lang (著作佐郎).
(f) Yes (高士廉).
(g) 669:3.
(h) About 12 years.
(i) Grandson executed by Empress Wu. By publicly cursing her on the way to execution, begins custom of gagging

prisoners. Family stripped of honours.
(j) With Hsü Hu-shih [q.v.], responsible for bringing many southerners, especially from his own area into government.

61. Hsüeh Yüan-ch'ao (薛元超) CTS, 73: 3325:1, HTS, 98: 3909:1.

(a) d. 683 at age 62.
(b) P'u-chou (蒲州) in Ho-tung.
(c) Father and grandfather held office, succeeds to title of nan (男), marries into T'ang family.
(d) No exam.
(e) T'ai-tzu she-jen (太子舍人).
(f) T'ai-tsung personally impressed with his erudition.
(g) 676:3.
(h) 7 years, 4 months. Resigns because of illness.

62. Lai Heng (来恆) See #38.

(a) d. 678.
(b) Elder brother of Lai Chi by different mother.
(c) Above.
(d) No exam.
(e) No information.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 676:3.
(h) 2 years, 8 months.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

63. Li I-yen (李義琰) CTS, 81: 3342:2, HTS, 105: 3924:1.

(a) d. 688.
(b) Wei-chou (魏州), but part of eminent Lung-hsi Li clan with which T'ang family claimed connection.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) T'ai-yüan wei (太原尉) is first specific office mentioned.
(f) Yes (李勣).
(g) 676:4.
(h) 6 years, 11 months. Offends Emperor and resigns in fear.
(i) Younger brother and four grandsons have official career.

64. Kao Chih-chou (高智周) CTS, 185 shang: 3559:4, HTS, 106: 3924:4.

(a) d. 683 at age 82.

(b) Ch'ang-chou (常州) in Chiang-nan.
(c) No arcestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Fei-hsien ling (費縣令).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 676:6.
(h) 3 years, 5 months.
(i) No sons, but marries daughter to son of close friend and sponsors his career.

65. Chang Ta-an (張大安) CTS, 68: 3316:1, HTS, 89: 3895:1.

(a) d. 684.
(b) Wei-chou (魏州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Father a general and close friend of T'ai-tsung. Older brother high official.
(d) No exam.
(e) Not noted.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 677:4.
(h) 3 years. Demoted when Crown Prince Hsien falls in 680.
(i) Son has official career.
(j) Associated with Hsien's commentary on Hou Han-shu.

66. Ts'ui Chih-wen (崔知溫) CTS, 185: 3559:4, HTS, 106: 3924:3.

(a) d. 683 at age 57.
(b) Hsü-chou (許州) in Ho-nan.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ling-chou tu-tu-fu ssu-ma (靈州都督府司馬).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 679:4.
(h) 3 years, 11 months.
(i) Two sons, as well as his elder brother, have official career.

67. P'ei Yen (裴炎) CTS, 87: 3351:3, HTS, 117: 3945:2.

(a) Executed 684, supposedly conspiring to assassinate Empress Wu.
(b) Chiang-chou (絳州) in Ho-tung.
(c) No ancestors mentioned, but student in Hung-wen kuan.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) P'u-chou ssu-ts'ang ts'an-chün (濮州司倉參軍).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 679:4.
(h) 5 years, 6 months.
(i) Two sons have official career.
(j) Fonctionnaires, p. 12. Biographies assume Yen's innocence of treason.

68. Kuo Cheng-i (郭正一) CTS 190 chung: 3581:4, HTS, 106: 3924:4.

(a) Executed 689 at age 82.
(b) Ting-chou (定州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Chung-shu she-jen (中書舍人).
(f) Yes (薛元超).
(g) 682:4.
(h) 1 year, 8 months. Dismissed when Chung-tsung deposed.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

69. Ts'en Ch'ang-ch'ien (岑長倩) CTS, 70: 3319:3, HTS, 102: 3917:1.

(a) Executed 691.
(b) Chi-yang (棘陽) in Ho-nan.
(c) Nephew of Ts'en Wen-pen who adopted him. See #26.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ping-pu shih-lang (兵部侍郎).
(f) None.
(g) 682:4.
(h) 9 years, 1 month. Opposed elevation of Wu Ch'eng-ssu to Crown Prince.
(i) Son has career, executed shortly after his father, and the tombs of his ancestors desecrated. A grandson is appointed to high office by Empress Wu in the ch'ang-an period, an act signalling the restoration of political rights for the descendants of many of her victims.

70. Wei Hsüan-t'ung (魏玄同) CTS, 87: 3352:1, HTS, 117: 3945:4.

(a) Ordered to suicide in 689 at age 73.
(b) Ting-chou (定州).
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Ssu-lieh ta-fu (司列大夫).
(f) Yes (李審禮).
(g) 682:4.
(h) 7 years, 5 months.
(i) Third son an official of Hsüan-tsung.
(j) Examens, p. 247. Well-known memorial on examination system.

71. Wei Hung-min (韋弘敏) No biography.

(a) dates unknown.
(b) --

(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 684:cheng.
(h) 10 months. Demoted because of connection with P'ei Yen.

72. Liu Wei-chih (劉禕文) CTS, 87: 3351:4, HTS, 117: 3945:3.

(a) Ordered to suicide in 687 at age 57.
(b) Ch'ang-chou (常州) in Chiang-nan.
(c) Grandfather a Ch'en prince, father holds high office in Sui and T'ang.
(d) No exam.
(e) Reputation for literature, appointed to Chao-wen-kuan (昭文館).
(f) Probably (柳顧言, 李伯藥). Northgate scholar.
(g) 684:2.
(h) 3 years, 5 months.
(i) No sons mentioned. Elder brother held high posts.
(j) Paramount minister while he held tsai-hsiang status.

73. Wu Ch'eng-ssu (武承嗣) CTS, 183: 3553:1, HTS, 206: 4109:2.

(a) d. 698 reputedly of chagrin.
(b) T'ai-yüan (太原).
(c) Son of Wu Yüan-shuang (武元爽), half-brother of the Empress Wu.
(d) No exam.
(e) Shang-i feng-yü (尚衣奉御).
(f) Called from exile to be heir to Empress Wu's father.
(g) 684:5.
(h) 8 years, 9 months.
(i) One son forced to suicide by Empress after offending the Chang brothers, another active in the reign of Chung-tsung until the coup against San-ssu.
(j) See text.

74. Li Ching-ch'en (李景諶) No biography.

(a) --
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 684:10.
(h) 1 month. Transferred to lower post.

75. Shen Chün-liang (沈君諒) No biography.

(a) --
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 684:10.
(h) 4 months. Transferred.

76. Ch'ien Wei-tao (騫味道) No biography.

(a) Executed 688, probably in connection with Princes' Rebellion.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) Decree exam in 675.
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 684:10 (Disputed. Second appointment 688).
(h) 9 months.

77. Ts'ui Tzu (崔訾) No biography.

(a) --
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 684:10
(h) 5 months. Sent as commissioner to Ho-pei.

78. Wei Fang-chih (韋方質) CTS, nil, HTS, 103: 3919:4.

(a) Executed in early Chou for opposition to Wu Ch'eng-ssu.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆).
(c) Grandfather was ming-ching and office-holder in Sui.
(d) No exam.
(e) Not noted.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 684:11.
(h) Disputed. Probably 5 years, 3 months.
(i) Family extinguished.

79. Wei Ssu-ch'ien (韋思謙) CTS, 88: 3353:2, HTS, 116: 3943:2.

(a) d. 689.
(b) Cheng-chou (鄭州), but remotely from Ch'ang-an area.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.

(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Ying-ch'eng ling (應城令).
(f) Yes (高季輔, 皇甫公義).
(g) 685:2.
(h) 2 years, 1 month. Resigns due to age.
(i) Two sons both reach tsai-hsiang status. See below.
(j) An admirable and uncompromising official.

80. P'ei Chü-tao (裴居道) CTS, 86: 3350:3, HTS, nil.

(a) Dies in prison in 690.
(b) Chiang-chou (絳州) in Ho-tung.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders, his daughter married to Crown Prince Hung. Eminent clan.
(d) No exam.
(e) First post mentioned in na-yen (納言).
(f) 685:2.
(g) 5 years, 6 months. Slandered by evil officials.
(h) No sons mentioned.

81. Su Liang-ssu (蘇良嗣) CTS, 75: 3329:1, HTS, 103: 3919:2.

(a) d. 690 at age 85.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州).
(c) Father and grandfather held office in Chou and Wei, and father also has successful career in Sui and T'ang.
(d) No exam.
(e) Chou-wang-fu ssu-ma (周王府司馬).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 685:5.
(h) 4 years, 9 months.
(i) Son has career but exiled to Ling-nan in Chou, causing erasure of family honours. Grandson regains dukedom at restoration.
(j) An example of an innocent man charged by evil officials and saved by intervention of the Empress Wu.

82. Wei Tai-chia (韋待價) CTS, 77: 3333:3, HTS, 98: 3910:2.

(a) d. in exile ca. 690.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州).
(c) Grandfather high Sui office, father, Wei T'ing (韋挺), high office and noble title in early T'ang. Married into T'ang family.
(d) No exam.
(e) Tso-ch'ien-niu (左千牛).
(f) None mentioned. Military renown.
(g) 685:6.
(h) 3 years, 11 months. Exiled for defeat by T'u-fan.

(i) Younger brother has successful career. Son awarded fifth rank because of father's early military success. Cousin to Wei An-shih [q.v.].
(j) Little talent in civil realm. An object of scorn when he was placed in charge of exam system.

83. Chang Kuang-fu (張光輔) CTS, 90: 3360:3, HTS, nil.

(a) Executed 689 for sorcery and possible treason.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆).
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ssu-nung shao-ch'ing (司農少卿).
(f) None mentioned. Gained merit in Princes' Rebellion.
(g) 687:5.
(h) 2 years, 3 months.
(i) Family extinguished.

84. Wang Pen-li (王本立) No biography.

(a) Dates unknown.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 688:9.
(h) 1 year, 5 months.

85. Fan Li-ping (范履冰) CTS, 170 chung: 3581:4, HTS, 201: 4100:3.

(a) Executed 690 for collusion in treason.
(b) Huai-chou (懷州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Chou-wang-fu hu-ts'an (周王府户參).
(f) Northgate Scholar.
(g) 689:1.
(h) 6 months.
(i) No sons mentioned.

86. Hsing Wen-wei (邢文偉) CTS, 189 hsia: 3576:4, HTS, 106: 3926:2.

(a) Suicide in exile 690-1. Demotion to provinces for graft.
(b) Ch'u-chou (滁州) in Huai-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.

(e) T'ai-tzu tien-shan ch'eng (太子典膳丞).
(f) None mentioned, but early fame as scholar.
(g) 689:10.
(h) 1 year. Demoted.
(i) No sons mentioned.

87. Wu Yu-ning (武攸寧) CTS, 183: 3553:3, HTS, 206: 4109:3.

Cousin (從父兄弟) of the Empress Wu. See text.
(g) 690:2.
(h) Disputed. Probably 3 years, 3 months.

88. Shih Wu-tzu (史務滋) CTS, 90: 3360:3, HTS, 114: 3941:1.

(a) Suicided in 691.
(b) Hsüan-chou (宣州) in Chiang-nan.
(c) Father office-holder.
(d) No exam.
(e) No information.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 690:9.
(h) 4 months. Slandered by Lai Chün-ch'en.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

89. Fu Yu-i (傅遊藝) CTS, 186 shang: 3564:4, HTS, 223 shang: 4163:4.

(a) Suicide in prison 691.
(b) Wei-chou (偉州).
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ho-Kung chu-pu (合宮主簿).
(f) Rises by flattering Express Wu, claiming to have seen favourable omen for usurpation.
(g) 690:9.
(h) 11 months. Probably planning treason.
(i) Sons and grandsons imprisoned for some crime between 705-707.
(j) Called the "Minister of the Four Seasons" from the various colours of his robes when he received four promotions in one year. Responsible for the notorious massacres in Ling-nan of the exiled families of the victims of the terror.

90. Ko Fu-yüan (格輔元) CTS, 70: 3319:4, HTS, 102: 3917:1.

(a) Executed 691:10. Opposition to Wu Ch'eng-ssu.
(b) Pien-chou (汴州).

(c) Uncle a Sui official.
(d) Ming-ching, and famed for literary attainments.
(e) Yü-shih ta-fu (御史大夫) is first office mentioned.
(f) None mentioned. Elder brother an official of Kao-tsung.
(g) 691:6.
(h) 4 months.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

91. Jen Chih-ku (任知古) No biography.

(a) No dates.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 691:6.
(h) 7 months. Demoted to provincial post.

92. Yüeh Ssu-hui (樂思晦) See #54.

(a) Executed 691:10. Opposition to Wu Ch'eng-ssu.
(b) Son of Yüeh Yen-wei.
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 691:6.
(h) 4 months.

93. Ti Jen-chieh (狄仁傑) CTS, 89: 3356:1, HTS, 115: 3941:2.

(a) 630-700.
(b) Ping-chou (并州). Same native place as Empress Wu.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) Pien-chou p'an-tso (汴州判佐).
(f) Yes (閻立本).
(g) 691:8 for 4 months. Re-appointed 697:8.
(h) 2 years, 10 months.
(i) Sons and grandsons office-holders. Two sons known as bad officials.
(j) The most famed official of the Chou, and only one who enjoyed the whole trust of the Empress Wu. See text.

94. Ou-yang T'ung (歐陽通) CTS, 189 shang: 3575:3, HTS, 198: 4090:4.

(a) Executed 691 for opposition to Wu Ch'eng-ssu.
(b) T'an-chou (潭州) in Chiang-nan.
(c) Three generations of office-holders from Ch'en dynasty.
(d) No exam, but early fame as scholar.
(e) First post mentioned is Chung-shu she-jen (中書舍人
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 691:8.
(h) 2 months.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

95. P'ei Hsing-pen (裴行本) No biography.

(a) No dates.
(b) Possibly brother of P'ei Hsing-chien.
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 691:9.
(h) 4 months. Exiled to Ling-nan.

96. Li Yu-tao (李游道) CTS, nil, HTS, 197: 4088:1.

(a) No information.
(b) Chao-chou (趙州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Grandfather and nephews office-holders.
(d) No exam.
(e) Not mentioned.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 692:1.
(h) 8 months. Exiled to Ling-nan.
(i) No sons mentioned.

97. Ts'ui Shen-chi (崔神基) CTS, 77: 3335:3, HTS, 109: 3930:2.

(a) Died in reign of Chung-tsung.
(b) Pei-chou (貝州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Father a military career, and as early partisan of Empress Wu, recipient of title to which Shen-chi succeeds.
(d) No exam, though younger brother is ming-ching.
(e) Ssu-pin ch'ing (司賓卿).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 692:2.
(h) 7 months. Exiled to Ling-nan.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

98. Yüan Chih-hung (袁智弘) No biography.
(a) No dates.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 692:2.
(h) 7 months. Exiled to Ling-nan.

99. Li Chao-te (李昭德). CTS, 87: 3352:3, HTS, 117: 3936:1.
(a) Executed 697 after being slandered by Lai Chün-ch'en.
(b) Chang-an (長安).
(c) Father a censor and prefect under T'ai-tsung, but dies in disgrace.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) First office mentioned is Feng-k'o shih-lang (鳳閣侍郎).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 692:8.
(h) 1 year, 5 months. Posted to Turkish army.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Dominant minister during period of tsai-hsiang tenure. Too uncompromising to be popular and his dismissal a result of his having too much power.

100. Yao Shou (姚璹) CTS, 89: 3358:1, HTS, 102: 3918:1.
(a) d. 705 at age 74.
(b) Wan-nien (萬年) near Chang-an.
(c) Grandfather office-holder, orphaned while young.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) First post mentioned is T'ai-tzu-kung men-lang (太子宮門郎).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 692:8.
(h) 3 years, 1 month. Transferred to provincial posting.
(i) Younger brother passes ming-ching, has rapid rise, holds many of same posts as brother.
(j) A wholly good minister. Expert on Ming-t'ang and ritual generally. Responsible for creation of office of chih-cheng-chi (時政記). Fonctionnaires, p. 159.

101. Li Yüan-su (李元素) CTS, nil, HTS, 106: 3925:4.
(a) Executed 697.
(b) Younger brother of Li Ching-hsüan. See above #59.
(c) Above.

(d) No exam.
(e) Wu-te ling (武德令).
(f) None mentioned. Probably aided by brother.
(g) 692:8.
(h) 4 years, 5 months. Charged with treason.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

102. Ts'ui Yüan-tsung (崔元綜) CTS, 90: 3360:3, HTS, 114: 3941:1.

(a) d. age over 90 in reign of Chung-tsung.
(b) Cheng-chou (鄭州), in Ho-nan.
(c) Grandfather an office-holder under Kao-tsu.
(d) No exam.
(e) Ch'iu-kuan shih-lang (秋官侍郎) is first post noted.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 692:8.
(h) 2 years. Exiled to Chen-chou (振州) because of enmity of other officials.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Known as a harsh official.

103. Wang Hsüan (王瑄) No biography.

(a) Dates unknown.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 692:8.
(h) 1-month. Exiled to Ling-nan.

104. Lou Shih-te (婁師德) CTS, 93: 3366:2, HTS, 108: 3929:4.

(a) d. 699 at age 74.
(b) Cheng-chou (鄭州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-shih before the age of 20.
(e) Chiang-tu wei (江都尉).
(f) Yes (盧承業).
(g) 693:2 [disputed].
(h) 6 years, 2 months.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) A rare combination of civil and military talent, serving the state in high posts for over 30 years.

105. Wei Chü-yüan (韋巨源) CTS, 92: 3364:4, HTS, 123: 3958:4.

(a) Killed 710 at age 80 in coup.
(b) Third cousin of Wei An-shih. Related to Empress Wei. See #125.
(c) #125.
(d) No exam.
(e) First post mentioned is ssu-pin shao-ch'ing (司賓少卿).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 693:9.
(h) Disputed. Probably 1 year, 10 months in all.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Rise due to connections, but a highly competent official.

106. Lu Yüan-fang (陸元方) CTS, 88: 3354:4, HTS, 116: 3944:4.

(a) d. 701, shortly after demotion.
(b) Su-chou (蘇州) in Chiang-nan.
(c) Eminent clan. Offices since Ch'en, but father unmentioned.
(d) Ming-ching and decree exam (八科).
(e) Chien-ch'a yü-shih (監察御史) is first post mentioned.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 693:9.
(h) Disputed. Probably 2 years, 2 months. Demoted for arrogance about tsai-hsiang prerogative.
(i) Son rises to tsai-hsiang under Chung-tsung.
(j) Regarded as incorruptible. Consulted by Empress Wu on all promotions and demotions.

107. Tou-lu Ch'in-wang (豆盧欽望) CTS, 90:3360:2, HTS, 114: 3941:1.

(a) d. 709 at age over 80.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆).
(c) Three generations of office-holders, marriage into both Sui and T'ang families.
(d) No exam.
(e) First post mentioned is ssu-pin-ch'ing (司賓卿).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 693:9.
(h) 2 years, 4 months. Transferred [no reason given].
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Considered an expert in political survival.

108. Su Wei-tao (蘇味道) CTS, 94: 3368:1, HTS, 114: 3940:1.

(a) d. 706 at age 58.
(b) Chao-chou (趙州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-shih before the age of 20.
(e) First post mentioned is Hsien-yang wei (咸陽尉).
(f) Yes (裴行儉).
(g) 694:3.
(h) 6 years, 7 months. Dismissed for over-burdening the common people when he moved father's tomb.
(i) No sons mentioned. Younger brother has career.
(j) Criticized for failure to innovate in his long tenure of high posts. Known as the "fence-sitter."

109. Wang Hsiao-chieh (王孝傑) CTS, 93: 3366:2, HTS, 111: 3935:3.

(a) Killed 696 in Khitan rebellion.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆).
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Military career. T'u-fan expert.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 694:4.
(h) 1 year, 11 months. Dismissed because of defeat.
(i) Son has career, becoming general for Hsüan-tsung.

110. Wu Shih-fang (武什方) No biography.

(a) Dates unknown.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 694:7.
(h) 1 month. Retires to search for magic elixir.

111. Yang Tsai-ssu (楊再思) CTS, 90: 3360:1, HTS, 109: 3930:3.

(a) d. 709.
(b) Cheng-chou (鄭州).
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) Hsüan-wu wei (玄武尉).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 694:8.
(h) 5 years, 4 months. Transferred to become censor.
(i) Younger brother and grandson have career.
(j) Known as a flatterer, sycophant to Chang brothers and expert in survival.

112. Chou Yün-yüan (周允元) CTS, 90: 3360:4, HTS, 114: 3941:1.

(a) d. 696.
(b) Yü-chou (豫州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-chih before age 20.
(e) Su-cheng yü-shih chung-ch'eng (肅政御史中丞).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 694:10.
(h) 1 year, 4 months. Dies in office.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

113. Sun Yüan-heng (孫元亨) No biography.

(a) Executed 697.
(b) --
(c) --
(d) --
(e) --
(f) --
(g) 696:4.
(h) 9 months.

114. Li Tao-kuang (李道廣).

(a) d. ca. 700 in honour.
(b) Remotely Hua-chou (滑州), moved to Wan-nien in Sui.
(c) Father a Sui general who joined T'ang and was rewarded with dukedom and imperial surname.
(d) No exam.
(e) Pien-chou (汴州) prefect.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 696:9.
(h) 1 year, 4 months. Transferred to provinces.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

115. Wang Fang-ch'ing (王方慶) CTS, 89: 3357:3, HTS, 106: 3942:4.

(a) d. 702 in honour.
(b) Yung-chou (雍州). Until moving north in the Chou, considered an eminent Chiang-tso clan.
(c) Four generations of office-holders, but Fang-ch'ing orphaned at age 16.
(d) No exam.
(e) Yüeh-wang-fu ts'an-chün (越王府參軍).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 696:9.
(h) 1 year, 11 months.
(i) Son holds office under Hsüan-tsung.
(j) A bibliophile and expert in ritual. Much honoured by Empress Wu.

116. Wang Chi-shan (王及善) CTS, 90: 3359:1, HTS, 116: 3944:3.

(a) 617-699. Dies in semi-disgrace after criticizing Chang brothers.
(b) Lo-chou (洛州) in Ho-nan.
(c) Father a Sui general, joins T'ang, wins dukedom, and dies in Korea.
(d) Chi-shan succeeds to father's title. No exam.
(e) First post mentioned is tso-feng-yü (左奉裕).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 697:4.
(h) 2 years, 4 months. Asks for holiday and never recalled.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Lacked formal education, but much praised by contemporaries. Large role in ending of terror.

117. Tsung Ch'u-k'o (宗楚客) CTS, 92: 3365:4, HTS, 109: 3930:4.

(a) Executed 710 in coup.
(b) P'u-chou (蒲州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned, but marriage relationship to Empress Wu.
(d) No exam.
(e) First post mentioned is Fang-hsiao-chien (方少監).
(f) None mentioned. Elder brother urges usurpation.
(g) 697:6.
(h) Disputed. Probably 11 months in all.
(i) Family extinguished.
(j) Closely connected with Chang brothers.

118. Wu San-ssu (武三思) CTS, 183: 3553:2, HTS, 206: 4109:4.

Son of Wu Yüan-ch'ing (武元慶), half-brother of the Empress Wu. See text.
(g) 697:6.
(h) Disputed. Probably 2 years, 2 months.

119. Tu Ching-ch'uan (杜景佺) CTS, nil, HTS, 116: 3944:4.

(a) d. on the road to provincial posting ca. 698.
(b) Chi-chou (冀州) in Ho-pei.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) First post mentioned is Tien-chung shih-yü-shih (殿中侍御史).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 694:8 for 5 months, 697:10.
(h) 1 year, 2 months. Transferred.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) An upright man, contributed to preservation of justice during the terror.

120. Chi Hsiu (吉頊) CTS, 186 shang: 3565:3, HTS, 117: 3946:2.

(a) d. in exile 700.
(b) Lo-chou (洛州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-chih.
(e) First post mentioned is Ming-t'ang wei (明堂尉).
(f) None mentioned. Rises by denouncing conspiracy.
(g) 698:11.
(h) 1 year, 3 months. Dismissed for insulting Wu I-tsung and because his brother gains a post under false pretenses.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Responsible for many executions during the terror, and closely connected with Chang brothers, but secretly a T'ang loyalist. Much favoured by Empress Wu.

121. Wei Yüan-chung (魏元忠) CTS, 90: 3362:4, HTS, 122: 3954:4.

(a) d. ca. 710 at age over 70.
(b) Sung-chou (宋州) in Ho-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Failed exam candidate.
(e) Appointed to Mi-shu sheng (密書省) on strength of unsolicited memorial in 678.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 698: intercalary last month.
(h) 4 years, 1 month.
(i) 2 sons have career.
(j) A principled and uncompromising official. Three times exiled from capital but much valued by Empress Wu. Helped compile her Shih-lu.

122. Yao Ch'ung (姚崇) CTS, 96: 3371:1, HTS, 124: 3959:1.

(a) 651-721.
(b) Lo-yang, more remotely from Shan-chou (陝州) in Ho-nan.
(c) Father an office-holder under T'ai-tsung.
(d) Decree examination (下筆成章).
(e) P'u-chou ssu-ts'ang (濮州司倉).
(f) Yes (蘇良嗣).
(g) 698:1.
(h) 5 years, 7 months. Resigns to care for mother.
(i) Three sons have official careers.
(j) Examens, pp. 254-5. Also known as Yao Yüan-ch'ung (元崇) or Yüan-chih (元之). Wept at deposition of the Empress Wu.

123. Li Chiao (李嶠) CTS, 94: 3368:1, HTS, 123: 3957:4.

(a) 644-713.
(b) Chao-chou (趙州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Three generations of office-holders. Considered eminent clan. Nephew of Chang Hsi (張錫).
(d) Chin-shih before age of 20.
(e) Chien-ch'a yü-shih (監察御史).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 698:10.
(h) 3 years, 4 months. Demoted at restoration.
(i) No sons mentioned.
(j) Examens, p. 245. A remarkable career, balancing sycophancy to Wu clan with some of the frankest remonstrance of his time. An important literary talent, leaving collected works in 50 chüan. Nephew of Chang Hsi [next].

124. Chang Hsi (張錫) CTS, 85: 3349:1, HTS, 113: 3939:3.

(a) Died early in reign of Jui-tsung.
(b) Pei-chou (貝州) in Ho-pei.
(c) Nephew of Chang Wen-kuan (#57) and uncle of Li Chiao (#123).
(d) No exam.
(e) Not mentioned.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 700:7.
(h) 6 months. Exiled for accepting bribes.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

125. Wei An-shih (韋安石) CTS, 92: 3364:1, HTS, 122: 3955:4.

(a) d. 714 at age 64.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆).
(c) Three generations of office-holders. See #82.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) Ch'ien-feng wei (乾封尉.
(f) Yes (蘇良嗣).
(g) 700:10.
(h) 3 years, 10 months. Demoted for opposition to Changs.
(i) Two sons, and several other family members have official career. Relation to Empress Wei.

126. Li Huai-yüan (李懷遠) CTS, 90: 3360:2, HTS, 116: 3945:1.

(a) d. 706 in honour.
(b) Hsing-chou (邢州).
(c) No ancestors mentioned. Impoverished orphan.
(d) Ssu-k'o (四科).

(e) Ssu-li shao-ch'ing (司禮少卿).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 701:2.
(h) 5 months. Resigns because of age.
(i) Son and grandson have successful careers.
(j) Much favoured by the Empress Wu. Known for his frugal tastes and love of nature.

127. Ku Ts'ung (顧琮) CTS, nil, HTS, 102: 3918:4.

(a) d. 702 in honour.
(b) Su-chou (蘇州) in Chiang-nan.
(c) Father and grandfather office-holders from Sui.
(d) No exam.
(e) First post mentioned is Li-pu shih-lang (吏部侍郎).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 701:5.
(h) 1 year, 5 months. Dies in office.
(i) No descendants mentioned.

128. Li Chiung-hsiu (李迥秀) CTS, 62: 3304:1, HTS, 99: 3911:2.

(a) d. between 707-710.
(b) Eminent Lung-hsi clan.
(c) Three generations of office and titles.
(d) 3 Decree exams (英材傑出), and chin-shih
(e) Hsiang-chou ts'an-chün (相州參軍).
(f) Empress Wu values his literary talent and places him precipitately in charge of exams.
(g) 701:6.
(h) 2 years, 8 months. Demoted when attacked by other officials for his association with Chang brothers.
(i) Son has career, but family extinguished in k'ai-yüan because of his treason.
(j) His mother was of low-born family, but his wife of the eminent Ts'ui clan of Shantung.

129. T'ang Shou-ching (唐休景) CTS, 93: 3366:3, HTS, 111: 3935:4.

(a) d. 712 at age 86 in honour.
(b) Ching-chao (京兆).
(c) Grandfather and great-grandfather have military careers. Father unmentioned.
(d) Ming-ching before age 20.
(e) Wu-wang-fu tien-ch'ien (吳王府典籤).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 703:7.
(h) 1 year, 5 months. In office at restoration.
(i) Elder son succeeds to rank and has civil career. Second son a general.

(j) The greatest expert of his time on western frontier affairs. Much valued by Empress Wu.

130. Chu Ching-tse (朱敬則) CTS, 90: 3359:3, HTS, 115: 3942:3.

(a) d. 709 at age 75.
(b) Po-chou (亳州) in Ho-nan.
(c) Notable family; famed since Chou for Confucian virtue. Ancestors unmentioned.
(d) No exam.
(e) Po-shui wei (泊水尉).
(f) Yes (魏元忠).
(g) 703:7.
(h) 7 months. Resigns because of age.
(i) No descendants mentioned.
(j) Known for frankness. An historian of note.

131. Wei Ssu-li (韋嗣立) CTS, 88: 3354:4, HTS, 3943:3.

(a) d. 719 at age 66.
(b) Cheng-chou (鄭州).
(c) Son of Wei Ssu-ch'ien. See #79.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Shuang-liu ling (雙流令).
(f) Recommended by his father.
(g) 704:cheng [disputed].
(h) 11 months. Transferred when his brother reaches tsai-hsiang status.
(i) Three sons all have good careers.
(j) A relation to the Empress Wei.

132. Ts'ui Hsüan-wei (崔玄暐) CTS, 91: 3361:4, HTS, 120: 3952:3.

(a) 638-706. Dies on road to provincial demotion.
(b) Po-ling (博陵) in Ho-pei.
(c) Eminent clan. Father held low post.
(d) Ming-ching.
(e) K'u-pu yüan-wai-lang (庫部員外郎).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 704:6.
(h) 6 months. Still in office at restoration.
(i) Two sons have official careers. Younger brother a high official in own time.
(j) Exemplar of the best features of the Shantung aristocracy.

133. Chang Chien-chih (張柬之) CTS, 91: 3361:4, HTS, 120: 3952:4.

(a) 625-706. Destroyed by Wu San-ssu.
(b) Hsiang-chou (襄州) in Shan-nan.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) Chin-shih, and decree exam of 689 when he was first of more than 1,000 candidates.
(e) Ch'ing-ch'eng ch'eng (青城丞).
(f) Yes (令狐德棻，姚崇，狄仁傑).
(g) 704:10.
(h) 3 months. In office at restoration.
(i) Son a bad official, partly responsible for father's downfall.
(j) Leader of restoration coup.

134. Fang Jung (房融) CTS, 111: 3403:3, HTS, 139: 3985:3 [Biography of son, Fang Kuan].

(a) exile 705, death shortly thereafter.
(b) Lo-yang.
(c) No ancestors mentioned.
(d) No information.
(e) No information.
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 704:10.
(h) 3 months. In office at restoration.
(i) Son has biography.

135. Wei Ch'eng-ch'ing (韋承慶) CTS, 88: 3354:2, HTS, 3943:3.

(a) d. ca. 709 in honour.
(b) Son of Wei Ssu-ch'ien. See #79.
(c) Above.
(d) Chin-shih.
(e) Yung-wang-fu ts'an-chün (雍王府參軍).
(f) None mentioned.
(g) 704:11.
(h) 2 months. Demoted at restoration for connection with Chang brothers.
(i) No sons mentioned.
(j) Much praised for his work in presiding over exam system. Skilled in literature and helps compile the Shih-lu of Empress Wu as well as composing a separate work called Tse-t'ien huang-hou chi sheng-wen (則天皇后紀聖文).

NOTES

(1) The native place given throughout the Appendix is that which is listed in the CTS biography, and the term "eminent clan" is used only in the case of explicit statement by the same source. I choose this methodology for the sake of consistency, and because the CTS most nearly represents contemporary opinion. But caution is necessary. In the first place, the authors of the HTS display a much more pronounced aristocratic attitude, so that many tsai-hsiang are listed in the table there as members of great clans when their connection was very tenuous, and in spite of the fact that their biography in the same work offers a different pen-wang. This is the case with the Empress Wei, and for instance with Li I-yen (#63). Secondly, there are problems of geographical terminology. Hsüeh Yüan-ch'ao (#61) came from Fen-yin (汾陰) in P'u-chou, a place also known as Ho-tung, and the home of the eminent Ho-tung Hsueh clan. Is there a reason beyond historical ignorance why the authors of the CTS do not identify the affiliation? Thirdly, there is the problem of false claims. Li I-fu (#39) is the most obvious example, but the list of tsai-hsiang more successful than he in establishing in history their false claims could be readily expanded.

A thorough search through epigraphical evidence would yield a substantially more accurate list but I see little to be gained in such a line of enquiry. The connection between the tsai-hsiang and the great houses strikes me as an artificial one, for there is probably no case in the seventh century of a man rising to chief-minister rank solely on the basis of family eminence. The aristocratic cast of high officialdom in the T'ang is a phenomenon to be remarked, but unless it is shown

(a) that the consciousness of these officials was more aristocratic than bureaucratic after the attainment of high office, and

(b) that family background alone could form the basis of ministerial cohesion or factionalism, then this approach to the history of the period should be subordinated to others.

(2) The chief value of presentation of the data in this form is the demonstration of a trend away from personalized government. Of note in this regard are:

(a) The rapid decrease in the incidence of recommendation. At least from the 660's onward, advancement became increasingly structured, and the highest posts were filled by men with a bureaucratized mentality and an understanding of the system.

Influential connections and the ability to win general notice by outstanding performance or virtue diminished in importance. Even the extension of the recommending privilege by the Empress Wu seems to have had little effect at the highest levels of government.

(b) The diminution and virtual disappearance of marriage relationships with the imperial family.

(c) The progressive shortening of tenure, as ministers were progressively regarded by the ruler as instruments of policy rather than as colleagues. Demotion and the shifting of posts may be regarded in this light as well as being seen as mechanisms of imperial control or the assertion or prerogative.

(d) The rising importance of examination as a qualification for high office, a phenomenon discussed in the text.

(3) The chart shows clearly the importance of a family tradition of office-holding. I find fewer than a dozen men under the Empress who achieved tsai-hsiang status after beginning with examination alone. Twice that number had no degree, but came from families which although not among the pre-eminent clans even at the local level, had held (low) office earlier in the dynasty. The yin privilege must have played a part, but I suspect that intangible factors were of greater significance. It will be noted that few tsai-hsiang were without descendants in bureaucratic positions, but that few of them equalled the eminence of their forebearers. This is a suggestive trend and worthy of pursuit in the later T'ang.

(4) The tsai-hsiang sample, while conducive to misinterpretation, is by no means barren, and particularly if combined with other definable groupings such as high officials in the six Boards, could yield many more insights into T'ang government. The order of career progress and the relation of lower posts to the eventual attainment to tsai-hsiang rank, the role of military men, the development of specialized function, and the relationship of the tsai-hsiang to regionalist problems could all be explored with profit.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

In the following bibliography, no attempt has been made to list every work consulted. Citations appear only for those whose importance transcends the clarification of single problems, and for those to which the author has had frequent recourse. Citations of numerous others appear in the relevant footnotes. Dictionaries, standard references and bibliographies, as well as the various indexes to inscriptions, Tunhuang materials, sui-pi, etc., are well-known to the restricted readership of this work, and go unlisted here. For the same reason, discussion of the traditional Chinese works in section one of the bibliography seems extraneous, and notation is restricted to the author and edition cited in the text.

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A

A-shih-na Ho-lu 阿史那賀魯
A-shih-na Ni-shu-fu 阿史那泥熟闍
A-shih-na tu-chih 阿史那都支
A-shih-te Wen-fu 阿史德温傅
An-hsi 安西
An-pei 安北
An Shun 安舜
An Song 安勝
An-tung 安東
An-ye 安業
Azumi no Hirabu no Muraji 阿曇比邏夫連

B

Bhadanta 大德
Bodhiruci 菩提流志

C

Ch'an 禪

Chang 張

Chang Chao 張昭

Chang-chiao 章醮

Chang Chien-chih 張柬之

Chang Cho 張鷟

Chang Ch'un 章群

Chang-fu 章符

Chang I-chih 張易之

Chang-ku 掌固

Chang Ming-shan 張明善

Chang T'ing-kuei 張廷珪

Chang Wen-kuan 張文瓘

Chang Yüeh 張說

Ch'ang 唱

Ch'ang-an chih 長安志

Ch'ang-chou 常州

Ch'ang Liu 長流

Ch'ang-ming hsing-li pang 長名姓歷牌

Ch'ang-sun Shun-tê 長孫順德

Ch'ang-sun Wu-chi 長孫無忌

Chang Ch'ang-tsung 張昌宗

Chao-chou 趙州

Chao-chün 趙郡

Chao I 趙翼

Chao-i 昭義

Chao Wan-li 趙萬里

Ch'ao-hsien 朝鮮

Ch'ao-yeh ch'ien-tsai 朝野僉載

Chen 震

Chen-kuan chih chih 貞觀之治

Chen-kuan cheng-yao 貞觀政要

Chen Ti-erh 甄翟兒

Chen-yüan chiang-chün 鎮遠將軍

Ch'en Ku-yüan 陳顧遠

Ch'en-kuei 臣軌

Ch'en shih-i chi 陳拾遺集

Ch'en Tzu-ang 陳子昂

Cheng 鄭

Cheng Chiao 鄭樵

cheng hsing-jen 征行人

cheng-ming 正名

cheng-shih t'ang 政事堂

cheng-t'ung 正統

Ch'eng-ku hsien 城固縣

ch'eng-kuang 承光

Ch'eng-yang princess 城陽公主

Ch'eng Wu-t'ing 程務挺

Chi Hsiu 吉須

chi-mo 籍沒

Ch'i-chou 齊州

ch'i-chu She-jen 起居舍人

Ch'i-pi Ho-li 契苾何力

chia-men 甲門

Chia Pi 賈弼

Chia Yen-chung 賈言忠

Chiang-nan 江南

Chiang-tso 江左

Chiang ya 姜牙

Ch'iang 羌

chiao-hsing 僥倖

ch'iao-hsing 僑姓

chieh-tu 節度

chien-ch'a 簡察

chien-chiao 檢校

chien-jen tu-fu chih heng 姦人妬婦之恒

chien-te 建德

Ch'ien-chin 千金公主

ch'ien-feng 乾封

Ch'ien-yüan tien 乾元殿

chih-chü 制舉

Chih-I 智顗

chih-ming-chu 值明主

Chih-sheng 智昇

Chih-yen 智嚴

Chin 晉

Chin-k'o t'i-po so-yin 金刻題跋索引

Chin-shang shih-lu 今日實錄

chin-shih 進士

Chin-shih ts'ui-pien 金石萃編

Chin-yang 晉陽

ch'in 秦

Ching-chao 京兆

Ching-chou tu-tu 荊州都督

Ching-hsi 京西

Ching-hua-yüan 鏡花緣

Ching Hui 敬暉

Ching Po 敬播

Ching T'ang 敬堂

Ch'ing-ho 清河

Ch'ing-ho Ts'ui 清河崔

Ch'iu Shen-chi 丘神勣

Chou 周

Chou Chü 周矩

Chou I-liang 周一良

Chou Hsing 周興

Chou-liu 周留

Chou Tao-chi 周道濟

Chu Ching-tse 朱敬則

Chu Ching-ming 祝欽明

Chu Hsi 朱熹

Chu Hsi-tsu 朱希祖

Chu-hsing lüeh 著姓略

Chu-kuo 柱國

chu-mei feng-yao 著美風謠

chu-se 諸色

chu-shih 主事

chu-shu 主書

chü 擧

Chü-ch'ang 居常

chü-jen wei mi-chü 擧人為覓擧

ch'u-ming 除名

Chü-pen 劇本

Ch'u Jen-huo 褚人穫

ch'u-shen 出身

ch'uan-chih 專制

Chūgoku senya ichiya 中國千宿一夜

ch'ui-kung 垂拱

Ch'ui-kung ko 垂拱格

Chün-chou 均州

chün-fu 軍府

chün-hsing 郡姓

chün-kuo ta-shih 軍國大事

chün-wang 郡王

chung-nei ch'ing-wai 重內輕外

chung-nu 中女

chung-shu tu-shih 中書都事

Chung-tsung 中宗

Ch'ung-chün 重俊

Ch'ung-hsien kuan 崇賢館

ch'ung-hsüan shu 崇玄署

Ch'ung-ming 重明

D

Divakara 日照，地婆訶羅

Duke of Liang-kuo 梁國公

Duke of Ying 應國公

Duke Wu of Chou 周武公

E

en-tu 恩度

F

Fa-hsiang 法相
Fa-lin 法林
Fa-lin 法琳
Fa-min 法敏
Fa-tsang 法藏
fa-tzu 法子
Fa-yüan chü-lin 法苑珠林
fan-hu 番户
Fan Wen-lan 范文瀾
Fan-yang lu 范陽盧
Fan Tzu-kai 樊子蓋
Fang 房
Fang-chou 房州
Fang Hsiao-ju 方孝孺
Fang Hsüan-ling 房玄齡
fei-ch'ang tsai-yung 非常才用
Fen-chin 汾晉
feng-ch'en fu 奉宸府
Feng-chou 豐州
Feng Hao 馮浩
feng-k'o 鳳閣
feng-ku 風骨
feng-nei 封内

feng-po 封駁

feng-shan 封禪

Feng Yen 封演

fu-jui 符瑞

Fu Kung-shih 傅公祏

fu-lu 符籙

Fu-ma 駙馬

fu-ping 府兵

H

Han Hsien-tsung 韓顯宗

han shih 寒士

Han Hsiu 韓休

Han Wu-ti 漢武帝

Hansŏng 漢城

hao-chieh 豪傑

Hao Ch'u-chun 郝處俊

hao-ling shu 昊陵署

Hao-tsu 豪族

Hayashi Fusao 林房雄

Hei-ch'ih ch'ang-chih 黑齒常之

Hei-shan 黑山

Heng-ching 恒景

Ho-lan Min-chih 賀蘭敏之

Ho-tu 河圖

Ho-yüan 河源

Hopei 河北

Hou Ssu-chih 侯思止

Hsi 奚

Hsi-chou 嵩州

Hsi-ho chün 西河郡

Hsia 夏

Hsiao 蕭

hsiao-ch'uan 小銓

hsiang 象

Hsiang-li 相里

Hsiang-li Chin 相里金

Hsiao Liang-ti 蕭良娣

Hsiao-wen ti 孝文帝

hsieh-san-pao 邪三寶

Hsieh Yao-huan 謝瑤環

hsien-ho 顯和

Hsien-hsiang 咸享

hsien-kung 縣公

hsien-liang fang-cheng 賢良方正

Hsien-shou 賢首

hsien-t'ien t'ai-hou 先天太后

Hsien-yang 咸陽

Hsin-ch'eng 新城

Hsin-chien she 新建設

Hsin-chou 忻州

hsing 姓

hsiang-chü 鄉舉

hsing-chün 行軍

Hsing-chün ssu-chi 行軍司鎧

hsing-hsi lun 姓系論

Hsing-shih lu 姓氏錄

Hsing-tsu-hsi lu 姓族系錄

Hsing-yang kuan 興陽館

hsiu-tsai 秀才

Hsiung-chin 熊津

Hsü Ching-tsung 許敬宗

Hsü Hsiao-t'ien 許嘯天

hsü-li 胥吏

Hsü P'eng-chiao 徐鵬校

hsü-shih 胥士

Hsü Sung 徐松

hsü-t'u 胥徒

Hsü Yen-pai 徐彦伯

Hsü Yu-kung 徐有功

hsüan 選

hsüan-chieh 選解

Hsüan-tsung 玄宗

Hsüan-tung shih-chi 宣同師記

Hsüeh 薛

Hsüeh Ch'ien-kuang 薛謙光

Hsüeh Huai-i 薛懷義

Hsüeh Jen-kuei 薛仁貴

Hsün-chih chai-chi 遜志齋集

hsün-fu-shih 巡撫使

hsün-kuan 勳官

hu 户

Hu Chen-hsiang 胡震享

Hu Ch'u-pin 胡楚賓

hu-ming 糊名

Hu San-hsing 胡三省

hua-ch'eng 化城

hua-fo tsung-k'ung lai mo-ting wei shou chi
化佛從空来摩頂為受記

Hua-yen 華嚴

Huai-chou 懷州

Huai-shuo 懷朔

Huan Yen-fan 桓彦範

huang-ssu 皇嗣

Hui 卉

Hui-an 慧安

Hui-ching 慧淨

Hui-neng 慧能

hun-chu 婚主

Hung-lu ssu 鴻臚寺

Hung Mai 洪邁

Hwabaek 和白

Hwarangto 花郎徒

Hyoso 孝昭

I

i 義
i-cheng 役征
I-ching 義淨
I-chiao ching 遺孝經
i-t'u 異圖
I-yüan 義源
Ili River 伊麗河

J

jen 仁

ju-lai 如來

Jui-shih 瑞石

Jui-tsung 睿宗

Jung-ch'i hsü-pi 容齋續筆

Jung-ch'i san-pi 容齋三筆

Jung-kuo fu-jen 榮國夫人

Jung-yang Cheng 滎陽鄭

K

Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao 陔餘叢考

k'ai-fu-i-t'ung san-ssu 開府儀同三司

kan-yeh 感業

K'ang Yu-wei 康有為

Kao Shih-lien 高士廉

kao-hua 高華

kao-liang 高梁

kao-shen 告身

Kao-tsung 高宗

k'ao 考

kao-yang 高陽

Kashgar 疎勒

Khan Ku-ch'u-lu 骨咄祿

Khotan 于闐

Kim Ch'un ch'u 金春秋

Kim Yusin 金庾信

ko 格

k'o-chün, k'o-ping 客軍, 客兵

Kokonor 青海

kuan 官

Kuan-chung 關中

k'u 酷

Kucha 龜茲

Ku-chin ping-yao 古今兵要

Ku Ch'u-lu 骨咄祿

kuan-mien chih chia 冠冕之家

kuang-chai 光宅

kuang-ming sheng huang-ti 光明聖皇帝

kuang-chai ssu-t'ien-hsia pa-piao i-shih-chih

光宅四而天下八表一時至

kuang-lu ta-fu 光錄大夫

kuang-ming-ssu 光明寺

kuang-ming sheng huang-ti 光明聖皇帝

Kuang-wu ming 廣武銘

k'uei-chi 窺基

Kuei-kuo kung 歸國公

k'uei-yu 癸酉

Kum River 錦河

K'ung-tzu ch'an 孔子讖

kuo-fen ssu 國分寺

Kuo Hsiao-chen 郭孝慎

Kuo Mo-jo 郭沫若

Kuo Pai-kung 郭伯恭

Kuo Yüan-chen 郭元振

K'un-ling 崑陵

K'ung-hao fu 控鶴府

kung-pu shang-shu 工部尚書

Kyerim 鷄林

L

Lai Chün-ch'en 來俊臣

lan-kuan 濫官

lang-chung 郎中

lao 勞

lao-chün 老君

Lei-li 類例

li 禮

li and i 禮.義

Li Chan 李湛

Li Chang 李璋

Li Chao-te 李昭德

Li Chen 李貞

Li Chen 李稹

li-cheng 里正

Li Chi 李勣

Li Chiang 李繦

Li Chiao 李嶠

Li Chih 李贄

Li Chih ts'ang-shu 李贄藏書

Li Chin-ch'ung 李盡忠

Li Ching 李靖

Li Ching-ch'en 李景諶

Li Ching-hsüan 李敬玄

Li Ching-yeh 李敬業

Li-chou 利州

Li-chou chiang-t'an tso 利州江潭作

Li Chuan 李譔

Li Ch'ung 李冲

Li Ch'ung-jun 李重潤

Li Fei 歷飛

Li-hsiang-kuo lun-shih-chi 李相國論事集

Li Hsiao-ch'ang 李孝常

Li Hsiao-i 李孝逸

Li Hsien 李賢

Li Hung 李弘

Li I-fan 李義範

Li I-fu 李義府

Li I-shan 李義山

Li Lung-tzu 李龍子

Li Mi 李密

Li O 李諤

Li Ping 李昞

Li-pu 吏部

Li-pu 禮部

Li Shan-kan 李善感

Li-shih ti chen-shih yü i-shu ti chen-shih

歷史的真實與藝術的真實

Li-tai ti-wang hsing-ai mi-wen 歷代帝王性愛秘聞

li-ts'un 里村
Li Yung 李邕
liang 良
Liang Ch'i-ch'ao 梁啟超
liang-chia 良家
Liang-chou 涼州
liang-jen 良人
Liao River 遼河
lin-ch'ao ch'eng-chih 臨朝稱制
Lin Hui-hsiang 林惠祥
lin-pao 鄰保
ling 令
Ling 靈
Ling-chou 靈州
Ling-hu Tê-fen 令狐德棻
ling-shih 令史
Ling-yün ko-chu 凌雲閣主
Liu 劉
Liu Chih-chi 劉知幾
Liu Ch'ung 劉沖
Liu Hsiang-tao 劉祥道
Liu Hsiao 劉曉
Liu Hsü 劉昫
Liu Hung-chi 劉弘基
Liu Jen-jui 劉仁叡
Liu Jen-yüan 劉仁願

Liu pin-k'o hsi-hua lu 劉賓客喜話録

Liu Shih 柳寔

Liu-shou shu-tso 留守書佐

Liu Ssu-li 劉思禮

Liu Su 劉肅

Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元

Liu Tz'u 柳玭

liu-wai 流外

Liu Wei-chih 劉禕之

Liu Wu-chou 劉武周

Liu Yün-chi 劉允濟

lo-hsing 虜姓

Lo Kuan-chung 羅貫中

Lo Lung-chih 羅龍治

Lo Pin-wang 駱賓王

Lou Shih-te 婁師德

Lu 盧

Lu Ch'eng-ch'ing 盧承慶

Lu Chih 陸贄

Lu Ching-ch'un 路敬淳

Lu-hsüan-kung ch'uan-chi 陸宣公全集

Lu-ling 盧陵王

lu-shih 録事

Lu Tung-tsan 祿東贊

Lü 呂

lü 律

Lü Chen-yü 呂振羽

Lü Hsia-ch'ing 呂夏卿

Lü Ssu-mien 呂思勉

Lü Ts'ai 呂才

Lü-chou 呂州

lü-ling 律令

luan-t'ai 鸞臺

Lun Chin-ching 論欽陵

Lung-hsi 隴西

lung-shuo 龍朔

Lung-t'u t'u 龍吐圖

M

Ma Chou 馬 周
Ma Tsai 馬 載
mai-hun 賣 婚
man-fen-chieh 滿分戒
mao-hsing 茂姓
Meng-ch'i pi-t'an 夢溪筆談
Meng-ch'ih 濛池
meng ya 萌芽
mi-chü 覓舉
miao 廟
Miao Shen-k'o 苗神客
min 民
ming-ching 明經
Ming-fa-wang 明法王
Ming-pao yüeh-k'an 明報月刊
Ming-sha 鳴沙
Ming T'ang 明堂
Mo-ch'o 默啜
mu-ping 募兵
mu-shih 募士
Mulgul 鐵勒
Munmu 文武
Muyol 武烈

N

Naitō Torajiro 内藤虎次郎

Namgun 男健

Nan-pu hsin-shu 南部新書

nei-shih-ling 内史令

Nien-erh-shih cha-chi 廿二史劄記

O

Ogata Isamu 尾形勇
Ōtani Kosho 大谷光照
Ōtani Shoshin 大谷勝真
Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修

P

Pa-chou 巴州

pai 拜

pai-hsing 百姓

p'an 判

Pañcaveramanī 五戒

P'an-lung-t'ai pei 攀龍臺碑

Pao Ssu-wei 寶思維

Pao-t'u 寶圖

Parhae 渤海

Pei-t'ing tu-hu-fu 北庭都護府

P'ei 裴

P'ei Hsing-Chien 裴行儉

P'ei Yen 裴炎

pen-kuan 本貫

P'eng-lai 蓬萊

pi-hsia 陛下

pi-wei 避位

p'i-chao 辟召

pin-k'o 賓客

p'in-ts'ai 聘財

ping-chou 并州

Po-chou 博州

Po-ling Ts'ui 博陵崔

Pojang 寶藏

Poksin 福信

Prince of Lu-chiang 盧江王瑷

Prince of Wei 魏王

Prince of Wu 平王少子武

Prince Wen of chou 周文王

p'u 譜

p'u-sa 菩薩

Puyolong 扶餘隆

Q

Queen Chindok 真德王

S

Saitō Aiko 齋藤愛子

Samguk Sagi 三國史記

Samguk Yusa 三國遺事

san-ch'i ch'ang-shih 散騎常侍

San-chiao chu-ying 三教珠英

San-ch'üan 三銓

San-huang 三皇

San-kang 三綱

San-i 三儀

San-kuan 散官

San-kung 三公

san-lei 三類

Seng-ch'ang 僧長

Seng-shih-lüeh 僧史略

Sha-po-lo khan 沙鉢羅可汗

shan 善

Shan-nan 山南

Shan-tung 山東

Shan-yü 單于

shang-chu-kuo 上柱國

shang-hu 上戶

Shang-kuan I 上官義

shang-pien 上變

Shang-shu 商書

shang-shu tu-shih 尚書都事

Shang-yüan 上元

Shang-yüeh 尚鉞

she-chih kuo-cheng 攝知國政

Shen Ch'uan-ch'i 沈佺期

Shen Chi-ch'i 沈既齊

shen-hsien 神仙

Shen-hsiu 神秀

Shen-huang wang 神皇王

shen-lung 神龍

sheng 勝

sheng-chiao 聲教

shen-tu 神都

sheng-mu shen-huang 聖母神皇

sheng-shen huang-ti 聖神皇帝

sheng-shih 聖氏

sheng-wang 聖王

shih 士

shih 試

shih-cheng chi 時政紀

Shih-ch'i-shih shang-chiao 十七史商榷

Shih-chou 世冑

Shih-hsing 十姓

Shih-i 士逸

Shih-jang 士讓

Shih-leng 士稜

Shih-ling 市令

shih-liu-wai 視流外

shih-lu 實錄

Shih-lun-chi 史論集

Shih-pen 世本

shih-shih feng 食實封

shih-ta-fu 士大夫

Shih-tsu chih 氏族志

Shih-t'ung 史通

shu 庶

Shu 蜀

Siksānanda 實義難陀

Silla 新羅

Sinmun 神文

So Yüan-li 索元禮

Sŏngdŏk 聖德

ssu-hsing 四姓

ssu-k'ai ts'an-chün 司鎧參軍

ssu-k'ung 司空

ssu-ta 四大

ssu-t'u 司徒

Su An-heng 蘇安恒

Su Mien 蘇冕

Su Ting-fang 蘇定方

Sui-chou 綏州

Sui-T'ang yen-i 隋唐演義

Sui Wen-ti 隋文帝

Sun Jen-shih 孫仁師

Sun Wan-jung 孫萬榮

Sung 宋

Sung Chih-wen 宋之問

Sung ssu-ta-shu k'ao 宋四大書考

T

ta-ch'eng 大成

ta-chiang-chün fu-k'ai-tsao 大將軍府鎧曹

ta-chung-cheng ssu-t'u 大中正司徒

ta-pao 大寶

Ta-sheng hsüan-chi 大聖懸記

ta-tu-tu 大都督

ta-ye 大業

Ta-fei-Ch'uan 大非川

Tai-fang 帶方

Tai-pei 帶北

t'ai-ch'u 太初

T'ai-hang 太行

Tai Li Ching-yeh t'ao Wu-shih chi 代李敬業討武氏檄

T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi 太平寰宇記

T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi 太平廣記

T'ai-p'ing yü-lan 太平御覽

t'ai-shih 太師

t'ai-ssu 台司

t'ai-sun 太孫

T'ai-tsung 太宗

t'ai-tzu 太子

t'ai-tzu san-shih 太子三師

t'ai-wei 太尉

T'ai-yüan 太原
T'ai-yüan shih-chi 太原事跡
T'ai-yüan Wang 太原王
T'an-kang 曇剛
T'ang Chiao 唐皎
T'ang-chien 唐鑑
T'ang Chih-ch'i 唐之奇
T'ang-hsing hsien 唐興縣
T'ang Hsiu-ching 唐休璟
T'ang-jen pa-chia shih 唐人八家詩
T'ang-kung erh-shih-ch'ao yen-i 唐宮二十朝演義
T'ang Lin 唐林
T'ang p'u-shang cheng-lang piao 唐僕尚丞郎表
T'ang-shu chih-pi 唐書直筆
T'ang Te-tsung 唐德宗
T'ang-wen hsü-shih 唐文續拾
T'ang-wen shih-i 唐文拾遺
T'ao Hsi-sheng 陶希聖
Tao-seng ko 道僧格
Tao-shih 道世
Tashkent 石國
te-hsing 德行
te-ta-tzu-tzai 得大自在
Teng-cheng 等乘
Teng-hsia chi 燈下集
Teng-k'o chi-k'ao 登科記考

ti-chu 地著
Ti Jen-chieh 狄仁傑
tieh 諜 = 牒
t'ieh 帖
t'ien-chai wan-sui 天冊萬歲
T'ien Kuei-tao 田歸道
t'ien-nü 天女
t'ien-nu shou-chi 天女授記
t'ien-she-nü 田舍女
tien-shih 殿試
T'ien-shou sheng-t'u 天授聖圖
t'ien-shu 天樞
T'ien-t'ai 天臺
T'ien T'ang 天堂
T'ien Tê-p'ing 田德平
t'ien-t'ung-tzu 天童子
tien-yeh 典謁
t'ing-ch'ang 亭長
Ting-chou 定州
T'ing-chou 庭州
Tokchim 道琛
Tokmak 碎業
tsa-hu 雜户
tsa-se-jen 雜色人
tsa-wen 雜文
tsai-hsiang 宰相

ts'ai-jen 才人

tsan-che 贊者

tsan-p'u 贊普

ts'an-tso shih-p'in 參佐視品

ts'e 冊

ts'e 策

Tse-tien shun-sheng huang-hou 則天順聖皇后

Ts'en Wen-pen 岑文本

tsou-chü chin-chih 奏取進止

tsu-yung-tiao 租庸調

tsui 最

Ts'ui 崔

Ts'ui I-hsüan 崔義玄

Ts'ui, Lu, Li and Cheng 崔盧李鄭

Ts'ui Min-kan 崔民幹

Ts'ui Hsüan-wei 崔玄暐

Tsung ch'in-k'o 宗秦客

tsung-kuan 總管

Tu Ching-chien 杜景儉

tu-hu-fu 都護府

tu-shih 都事

tu-tu-fu 都督府

tu-tu-fu ch'ang-shih 都督府長史

Tu-t'ung-chien lun 讀通鑑論

t'u 徒

T'u Yü-hun 吐谷渾

t'uan-chieh 團結

T'ui-pei t'u 推背圖

tun-chiao 頓教

t'ung-ch'ang chün 同昌軍

T'ung-ch'eng 同城

T'ung-chou 同州

T'ung-chou 通州

T'ung t'ien T'ang 通天堂

Tz'u-en 慈恩

Tz'u Hsi 茲禧

tz'u-pu 祠部

U

Uija 義慈

Ungjin 熊津

W

Wai-ch'i 外戚

wan-sui t'ung-t'ien 萬歲通天

Wang and Hsieh 王.謝

Wang-ch'i 王氣

Wang Ch'iu-li 王求禮

Wang Fu-chih 王夫之

Wang Fu-sheng 王伏勝

Wang Hsiao-chieh 王孝傑

Wang Hung 王弘

Wang I-t'ung 王伊同

Wang-ming 王命

Wang Ming-sheng 王鳴盛

Wang Ting-pao 王定保

Wang Tang 王讜

Wang Wei 王威

Wei 韋

Wei Cheng 魏徵

Wei chi 韋機

Wei-chou 魏冑

Wei-hsiu 威秀

Wei Hsüan 韋絢

Wei Hsüan-chen 韋玄貞

Wei Hsüan-t'ung 魏玄同

Wei-kuo fu-jen 魏國夫人

Wei Ssu-li 韋思立

Wei Ssu-wen 魏思温

wen 文

Wen-ch'eng Princess 文成公主

Wen-shui 文水

Wen-Ying pao 文應報

Wu 武

Wu-ch'ang hsien 武昌縣

Wu-che-hui 無遮會

Wu Ch'eng-ssu 武承嗣

Wu-chi t'uan-ping 武縣團兵

Wu-chih-lei 烏質勒

Wu Ching 吳兢

Wu-ch'uan 武川

Wu Han 吳晗

Wu-hou chih Jen 武后之忍

Wu Hsia 武洽

Wu-hsing 吳姓

Wu-hsing hsien 武興縣

Wu-hsiang 無想

Wu Hua 武華

Wu-hsüan 武選

Wu I-tsung 吳懿宗

Wu k'o-chi 武克己

Wu Mei-niang 武媚娘

Wu San-ssu 武三思

Wu Shih-huo 武士彠

wu-tê 武德

Wu Tse 吳澤

Wu Tse-t'ien 武則天

wu-tzu 戊子

Wu Yu-chi 武攸暨

Wu Yu-i 武攸宜

W Yu-ning 武攸寧

Y

yang 羊

Yang 楊

Yang Chih-chiu 楊志玖

Yang-chou 揚州

Yang Hsiung 楊雄

Yang Liang 楊諒

Yang Ling-chieh 楊令節

Yang Shen-jang 楊神讓

Yang Shou-chüeh 楊守掘

Yang Ssu-cheng 楊思正

Yang Ssu-chien 楊思儉

Yang Ssu-hsüan 楊思玄

Yang Su 楊素

Yang-ti 煬帝

Yang Tsuan 楊纂

Yang Yün-ju 楊筠如

Yao Ch'ung 姚崇

yen 言

Yen-chi 延基

Yen-hsiu 延秀

Yen Keng-wang 嚴耕望

Yen Li-pen 閻立本

Yen Shan-ssu 嚴善思

yen-sheng 厭勝
Yen-tsung 彥宗
Yin 殷
Yin 蔭
Yin-chou ssu-ma 殷州司馬
yin erh pu-luan 淫而不亂
Yin-tsung 印宗
Ying-chou 營州
Yŏn'gae Somun 泉蓋蘇文
yu 酉
yu-hsiang su-wei 右廂宿衛
yu-su-cheng yü-shih-t'ai 右肅政御史臺
Yü 羽
Yü-ch'i sheng-shih chien-chu 玉谿生詩箋註
Yü-chou 豫州
Yü-hai 玉海
Yü-hua Palace 玉華宮
yü-lin-chun 羽林軍
Yü Pao-chia 魚保家
Yü Wen-t'ai 宇文泰
Yüan Pan-ch'ien 員半千
Yüan shu 袁樞
Yüan Shu-chi 袁恕己
Yüan-shuang 元爽
Yüan-sung ch'an 元嵩讖
Yüan T'ien-kang 袁天綱

yüan-wai 員外

yüan-wai-lang 員外郎

yüan-wai t'ung-cheng 員外同正

Yüan Wan-ching 元萬頃

Yüeh wang ch'ang-shih 越王長史

Yung 雍

Yung-ch'ang Lo-shui 永昌洛水

yung-hui 永徽

yung-lung 永隆

yung-shih 永式

Yung-t'ai Princess 永泰公主