TO REBUILD THE EMPIRE: LU CHIH (754-805)
AND
HIS RESPONSE TO THE MID-T'ANG PREDICAMENT

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Asian Studies

We accept this thesis a conforming
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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

October 1992

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This study examines Lu Chih's efforts to rebuild the T'ang empire toward the end of the eighth century, revises the previous views of Lu Chih as either a pure pragmatist or a conservative moralist, and establishes the significance of his political endeavors in the context of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement.

After a thorough exploration of Lu's life and his family background, this work shows that two complementary principles underlay Lu Chih's approach to government: the principle of righteousness (理) and the principle of expediency (機). Lu's application of these principles, especially his interpretation of ch'ilan, is demonstrated by reference to his memorials to emperor Te-tsung and by his political practice. My analysis of Lu's application of these principles leads me to conclude that Lu's approach to government, both moralistic and pragmatic, may be characterized as a Confucian pragmatist approach. Relying upon this approach during the earlier stage of his official life as a Han-lin scholar, Lu Chih is seen to have been instrumental in the restoration of dynastic stability.

Lu Chih continued to employ his Confucian pragmatist approach in formulating a number of policies during his tenure as Chief Minister. His earlier advice to the throne as Han-lin scholar is consistently reflected in these policies designed to realize his vision of an ideal Confucian benevolent government. Although all of his proposed policies were intended to meet current needs, their ultimate goal is shown to be the improvement of the public well-being. Lu's commitment to the public good was such
that he consciously risked his political life for the sake of his Confucian political convictions.

A comparative analysis of Lu Chih's political and social concerns and those of the leading figures of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival reveals many close affinities, and thus establishes Lu Chih's genuine place among them. While he failed to break new conceptual ground for the Confucian revival, his political life alone is seen as a behavior paradigm of the ideal Confucian minister for the mid-T'ang Confucian revivalists, and this is precisely Lu's unique contribution to that most significant mid-T'ang movement.
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Acknowledgement

One-half page allows only minimal space for expressing my sincere gratitude to those whom I owe great intellectual debts. I would like to first thank my thesis supervisors: Professor Chen Jo-shui for his penetrating advice and insightful guidance and Professor Daniel Overmyer for his thoughtful comments and helpful suggestions. I also wish to thank Professor Alexander Woodside for his positive support. My further gratitude goes to Professor Lin Yü-sheng for stimulating my interest in Chinese intellectual history in 1980 and for his continuing encouragement; to Professor Yü Ying-shih who without knowing me nonetheless kindly answered my letter and suggested various thesis topics including Lu Chih to me; and to Professor Mao Han-kuang for graciously supplying me much needed information about Lu Chih's family background. My friends J. J. Lo, Li Hsiao-ti, Osabe Yoshihiro, Stephen Eskildsen, my dear sisters Li-li and Wei-wei and brother-in-law Tse-hua all helped me to locate valuable materials. My heart-felt thanks to every one of them. I must thank my late father Chiu Shao-ying for his unique way of upbringing. I only wish he could have lived to see the completion of this study. Finally, my inexpressible gratitude goes to Michael for his loving care and joyful companionship.
Lu Chih (754-805), better known by his canonical name of Lu Hsüan-kung, was a significant figure in mid-T'ang history. His service as a Han-lin scholar in the early stage of his political life represents another example of the encroachment of imperial personal attendants or advisors upon the power of T'ang Chief Ministers.\(^1\) As a Han-lin scholar, Lu Chih played an unusually crucial role at a time when the T'ang state was in crisis. His responses toward the social and political problems brought to him by emperor Te-tsung (reigned 779-805) made a contribution to the restoration of T'ang stability. Lu's close relationship with the throne and his service in this earlier period of his career led to his rapid rise to the position of Chief Minister at a relatively young age. During his tenure as Chief Minister, he attempted to carry out a series of policies, but his efforts in this stage of his career had limited impact. The breakdown of his close relationship with the throne led to a precipitous fall from power and subsequently to his complete withdrawal from the mid-T'ang political stage.

Lu Chih's life and his entire political service took shape in the post-An Lu-shan rebellion era. The An Lu-shan rebellion (755-763) was a turning point in the history of the T'ang dynasty. It led a unified empire into a state of permanent division, with but a short period of restoration, and also left the T'ang territory rampant with chronic militarism throughout the second half of the dynasty.\(^2\) Faced with the catastrophic social and political

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\(^1\) As is well known, before the Han-lin scholars, some eunuchs had already seriously interfered with the regular operation of the bureaucracy. Emperor Su-tsung's (reigned 756-62) eunuch Li Fu-kuo is the best example. See Ssu-ma Kuang, Tzu-chih t'ung-chien (TCTC hereafter), Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 1956, 221: 7073-74 and 222: 7115. For the development of eunuch power in the T'ang, see Wang Shou-nan, T'ang-tai huan-kuan chüan-shih chih yen-chiu, Taipei: Cheng-chung shu-chü, 1971.

changes brought about by the An Lu-shan rebellion, many concerned T'ang scholar
officials felt compelled to find a way to restore their state to its previous order. Their
undertakings created a fertile soil from which a most important intellectual movement, the
mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement, gradually grew into being.

The Ho-pei region, where the An Lu-shan rebellion first started, became semi-
independent after the T'ang court settled the rebellion through a policy of compromise.
When emperor Te-tsung attempted to exert central control over the Ho-pei region soon after
ascending the throne in 779, the so-called second Ho-pei rebellion resulted and the T'ang
court was driven into another period of grave crisis. It is in the environment created by the
general historical conditions of the post-An Lu-shan rebellion era, and against the specific
historical background of the second Ho-pei rebellion that we witness Lu Chih's emergence
on the mid-T'ang political stage.

Lu Chih is not a total stranger to Western students of T'ang dynasty history. As is
pointed out elsewhere, some parts of Lu's extant works were translated into French in
1735 and later into German early in the third decade of the twentieth century. By 1960, a
small portion of Lu's criticism of the famous two-tax system was also translated for
English readers. Despite the fact that E. G. Pulleyblank dealt briefly with Lu's approach to
government in an article on mid-T'ang intellectual activities published that year, it was only
in 1962 when Denis Twitchett published a long essay exclusively concerned with Lu Chih
that the first systematic study of Lu in English finally became available. No further

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Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan rebellion and the origins of chronic militarism in late
T'ang China," John Curtis Perry and Bardwell L. Smith, eds., Essays on T'ang

3 Professor Denis Twitchett cites J. B. Du Halde, Description de la Chine 1735, pp. 616
ff; S. Balazs, "Beiträge zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte der T'ang-Zeit, Part 3," Mitteilungen
des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin, XXXVI (1933): 1-41 in his "Lu
Chih (754-805) Imperial adviser and court official," (Lu Chih hereafter) in Arthur
Wright and Denis Twitchett, ed., Confucian personalities, Stanford University Press,
1962: 84 and 336, notes 1 and 2.

4 For the English translation of Lu Chih's criticism of the two-tax system, see William
Theodore de Bary et al., Sources of Chinese tradition, Columbia University Press,
1960: 416-423. For Pulleyblank's essay, see his "Neo-Confucianism and Neo-
research exclusively concerned with Lu Chih has been published in English during the intervening thirty years.

Lu Chih's name is not entirely unfamiliar to the general population of educated modern Chinese either. For example, after the Nationalist government took over from the Japanese invaders in 1945, trials were held in Shanghai of those who had served under the Japanese puppet government in the occupied territories. At one such trial, Lu Chih's 783 suggestion to emperor Te-tsung -- that the throne should adopt a lenient policy toward the rebellious governors and especially toward their subordinate soldiers -- was specifically cited by a military lawyer urging a judge to issue a less severe sentence to a chief collaborator who had served as leader of the Japanese southeastern regional puppet government in 1938.5

Interest in Lu Chih has continued among Chinese scholars. A number of short articles regarding his political views and his financial policies have been published since the late 1950s in Taiwan and in China after 1980. Two book-length studies of Lu's life and works were also published in 1975 and 1978 in Taipei.6

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5 Thus reports a classified document (trial case number 013.11 — 2110) on file in the Bureau of Historiography of the National Defense Ministry in Taipei. The name of the defendant is Liang Hung-chih, and the lawyer's name is Chu Hung-ju. On March 28, 1938, Japanese invaders made Liang Hung-chih their formal leader of the third puppet government at Nanking with jurisdiction over Kiangsu, Chekiang, and Anhwei. See Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, The rise of modern China, reprinted edition, Taipei: Hung-ch'iao shu-tien, 1978: 686. I am deeply grateful to my friend, Ms. J. J. Lo, for sending me this information. Ms. Lo came across this modern reference to Lu Chih while doing research for her Ph.D. thesis from Oxford University on the problem of the loyalty of Chinese intellectual during the Sino-Japanese War period. Due to the nature of this information, no photo-copy machine was available for duplication. Ms. Lo copied this lawyer's defense brief verbatim and sent it to me in a personal communication.

6 In addition to these short Chinese articles, I have also found one article in Japanese which deals with some limited aspects of Lu Chih's life. All these sources will be consulted in the course of this study. The only lengthy studies of Lu Chih's life and works are: Hsien Wu-hsiang, Lu Hsüan-kung chih yen-lun chi chi'i wen-hsüan, Taipei: Chia-hsin shui-ni kung-ssu, 1975, and Liu Chao-jen, "Lu Hsüan-kung yen-chiu," Shih-chien hsüeh-pao, vol. 9, 1978: 97-125 and vol. 10, 1979: 1-42.
While those short Chinese articles undoubtedly enhance our knowledge in relation to some aspects of Lu Chih's approach to government, the limited scope of these essays prohibits an overall investigation of their research subject. The two lengthy studies of Lu Chih are not completely satisfactory either. Although presenting much interesting information, they tend merely to juxtapose and categorize their research materials and do not undertake a critical analysis of Lu's responses to mid-T'ang historical conditions. Moreover, they also fail to reconstruct an accurate account of Lu's earlier career and his family background.

By comparison, Twitchett's long 1962 essay on Lu Chih stands out as a major critical study. It improves our understanding of Lu Chih's official life by providing an analysis of his responses to mid-T'ang historical situations during his two important periods of service at the court. It further leads us to see why a close relationship between Lu Chih and emperor Te-tsung deteriorated the way it did. More importantly, it calls our attention to the fact that Lu Chih was not a conservative Confucian, a view expressed in Pulleyblank's 1960 article, but a professional court official whose primary concern was to solve practical problems confronting the T'ang state during the late eighth century. The important contribution of Twitchett's critical study of Lu Chih has been widely recognized, and his essay was translated into Chinese and published in Taipei in 1973.7

However, there are still many unresolved problems, however. First of all, since Twitchett's study of Lu Chih is also limited in scope, some aspects of Lu's life and his immediate family remain unclear to us. Secondly, because Twitchett's essay deals with less than half of Lu Chih's responses to mid-T'ang historical conditions, the contributions Lu made to the court during his service as a Han-lin scholar, and his efforts as Chief Minister to carry

out a series of policies aimed at rebuilding the T’ang empire have still not been given a thorough examination.

Thirdly, the breakdown of a relationship as complex as the one between Lu Chih and emperor Te-tsung would seem to have involved more factors than the three given prominence by Twitchett: Lu Chih’s outspoken personality, his change of role, and Te-tsung’s autocratic rule.

Lastly, the position Twitchett maintained thirty years ago that Lu Chih was primarily a pragmatist whose orthodox Confucian beliefs were of merely secondary importance seems to have run into a new challenge. This is because David McMullen's recently published book, in which Lu is only a marginal figure, treats him as a conservative Confucian statesman devoid of any appreciation of the need to employ expediency in government.

McMullen’s view obviously contradicts Twitchett’s position, so much so that the exact nature of Lu Chih’s approach to government seems persistently to elude our understanding.

Furthermore, since the exact nature of Lu Chih's approach to government seems elusive, and since a detailed and thorough examination of Lu's responses to mid-T’ang historical conditions is still not available, Lu’s political convictions and his political commitment remain unknown to us. As a result, Lu Chih’s significance in the mid-T’ang is totally undefined.

Without satisfactory solutions to the above problems, Lu Chih’s political endeavors will remain a tantalizing puzzle to us, and our understanding of a segment of mid-T’ang history will continue to be less than adequately clear. From this perspective, it appears imperative to conduct a detailed and thorough study of Lu Chih’s life and his responses to mid-T’ang historical conditions. Such a study is important because it will not only provide answers to previously unresolved problems, but also engage in a new undertaking to

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retrieve Lu Chih's political convictions and his political ideals, and above all, establish Lu's significance in the mid-T'ang.

Thus, the following related questions are the main focus of this present study. First, what exactly were Lu Chih's responses to mid-T'ang historical conditions, and how did he analyze the needs of his time? In other words, what was Lu's approach to government, and what were the fundamental characteristics of such an approach? Was Lu's approach pragmatic, or was it moralistic, or was it perhaps both moralistic and pragmatic? Second, what basic political convictions and ideals are disclosed in Lu's approach to government; were they related to his political downfall? What are the distinct features of his political convictions and ideals? Do these features qualify him to be considered a conservative Confucian, or a practical statesman, or both, or neither? Third and last, on what basis can Lu Chih's significance in the mid-T'ang be established?

To provide appropriate answers to these questions, we shall analyze every one of Lu Chih's extant memorials, both those presented to the throne during his service as a Han-lin scholar in the earlier stage of his official life and those presented as Chief Minister in the later stage. His extant memorials will serve throughout as our fundamental sources.

The first chapter clarifies some confusions regarding Lu Chih's earlier career, some aspects of his personality and his immediate family. A clear understanding of Lu's life and family background will enable us to examine in a better light his responses to the social and political problems confronting emperor Te-tsung's court.

The second chapter attempts both to grasp the exact nature of Lu Chih's approach to government, and to delineate how Lu relied upon his approach to assist emperor Te-tsung to resolve the social and political crisis that occurred during his tenure as a Han-lin scholar. The suggestions which Lu proposed to the throne in this period will be the center of our examination.

Twitchett's position that Lu Chih was primarily a pragmatist and McMullen's view that Lu was a conservative Confucian who refused to apply expediency in government leave us
with two paradigms of polarization. In order to provide a more appropriate picture of Lu Chih and his approach to government, however, it has seemed more fruitful in our re-examination of Lu's approach to transcend any polarization paradigm, and rely upon Lu Chih's own expressed views to lead us to their most logical conclusions.

The third chapter highlights Lu Chih's political convictions and his political ideals. By investigating the policies Lu formulated during his tenure as Chief Minister, we attempt to find out whether or not a consistency existed between Lu's approach to government in the earlier stage of his official life and that of the later stage. If Lu continued to apply the same approach to government throughout his tenure as Chief Minister from 792 to 794, this will make it possible for us to demonstrate his political convictions and ideals. Once we demonstrate how Lu Chih's core convictions and political ideals are embodied in his political behavior, this will allow us to see whether he was merely a court official whose concerns revolved simply around doing his professional job and preserving his political power, or whether he represented something different in the sense that he aspired to go beyond his prescribed duty and fulfill some higher goal. In this manner we will be able to produce a more accurate portrait of Lu Chih.

In the meantime, since the political convictions and ideals upon which he based his activities during his service as Chief Minister consistently reflect his earlier position, this fact will offer some clues to explain why in the higher position of Chief Minister Lu failed to achieve the success he accomplished during his earlier service as a Han-lin scholar. It will also shed more light on the final breakdown of his close relationship with the throne.

Having presented a more complete portrait of Lu Chih, our last major chapter explores Lu's significance in the mid-T'ang. To fulfill this task, Lu Chih's approach to government will be compared with that of several notable court officials before and during his time. This will help to demonstrate by exact examples whether or not Lu Chih displayed some unique qualities as a court official.
Moreover, since the most important intellectual movement during Lu's time was the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement, we shall also conduct a comparison between Lu's approach to government and that of the leading figures of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival. Finding the similarities and differences between Lu's political convictions and ideals and those of the leading Confucian revivalists will not only help to identify the intellectual camp Lu belongs in, but more importantly, to discover whether or not we can claim a place for him in the most important intellectual movement of his time. The results of this inquiry will ultimately reveal Lu Chih's significance in the mid-T'ang.

In order to arrive step by step at the final point where Lu Chih's significance gradually unfolds, we have to start from the beginning, that is, with a thorough examination of his life and family background.
Chapter One: Lu Chih's Life and Family Background

Lu Chih was born in the thirteenth year of the T'ien-pao era, the second reign period of emperor Hsüan-tsung (754 A.D.). This was a time when the glory of the T'ang empire had begun to decline despite the existence of a seemingly stable and prosperous facade. One year after his birth the calamitous An Lu-shan rebellion broke out; it destroyed the unity of the empire and consigned this golden age of the T'ang to the status of a bygone memory.

Although the T'ang court managed to suppress the An Lu-shan rebellion in 763, it won its "victory" only by a compromise settlement. Forced to adopt a compromise policy, the T'ang court not only pardoned the ex-rebel generals, but also allowed them to be the military governors of Ho-pei where the rebellion initially started. In so doing, the court sowed the seeds of a second Ho-pei rebellion in the early 780s when Lu Chih began his service in the central government.1

Lu Chih's private life is largely an enigma. This is due to an insufficiency of existing traditional sources. Nevertheless, a close examination of his collected work -- despite their incompleteness and possible bias due to the personal preferences of their chief compiler -- will help us reach a new understanding of some aspects of his personality while at the same time elucidating his political life. 2

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1 On the compromise settlement see C. A. Peterson, "Court and province in mid-and late T'ang," in *The Cambridge history*, 1979, p. 484.
2 A note on sources:
   On the matter of the insufficiency of source materials, see Denis Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 84-87. Although Twitchett does not consider Lu Chih's biography in the *New T'ang History* useful, as I shall demonstrate later, it is the *New T'ang History*, not the other extant sources, which actually provides a very important clue for us to reconstruct Lu Chih's political life. As mentioned already, there were studies which had discussed and translated some parts of Lu Chih's extant works into English, French and German before Twitchett's 1962 study. Meanwhile, since 1962, quite a few short Chinese articles about Lu Chih's economic and political thought and two lengthy studies of Lu's life and works also became available. Moreover, a chronicle study of Lu Chih's life (*nien-p'u*), was also
published in Taipei by Yen I-p'ing in 1975. See Yen I-p'ing, *Lu Hsüan-kung nien-p'u*, Taipei: I-wen, 1975. In addition, as Twitchett mentions, two useful chronicle studies of Lu Chih's life already existed before Yen I-p'ing's book. One is the "*Lu Hsüan-kung nien-p'u*" composed by the nineteenth-century scholar Ting Yen, it is included in the 1768 *Han-yüan chi chu* (Collected works of Lu Chih); the other is the "Nien-p'u chi-lüeh" appended to the Nien Keng-yao edition of Lu Chih's works reprinted in the Ssu-pupei-yao (SPPY hereafter) edition. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962, p. 337 note 9. Another useful chronicle study was also composed by a nineteenth-century scholar Yang Hsi-min and is entitled *Lu Hsiian-kung nien-p'u*. It is in the *Shih-wu chia nien-p'u ts'ung-shu* collection. Compared with the other two Ch'ing dynasty *nien-p'u*, Yang Hsi-min's study provides more detailed information on Lu Chih's life. However, all these studies, including Yen I-p'ing's most recent *nien-p'u*, contain misleading information about Lu Chih's immediate family and his career development and should be used with caution.

Twitchett gives a detailed description of the various extant editions of the collected works of Lu Chih. However, as he says, there is a discrepancy concerning the total number of chapters contained in Lu Chih's extant works. Ch'üan Te-yü, Lu Chih's contemporary and probably also a friend, in his Preface (see *Ch'üan T'ang-wen*, CTW hereafter, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chii reprint, 1982: 493: 11-15) to the *Han-yüan chi* (Collected works of Lu Chih), describes Lu Chih's collected works as having twenty-four chapters altogether. He writes that they contained ten chapters of edicts, seven of private memorials (*tsou-ts'ao*), and seven of official memorials (*chung-shu tsou-i*). The *New T'ang History*, *I-wen chih* section (Ou-yang Hsiu, et al., ed. *Hsin T'ang-shu*, HTS hereafter, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chii edition, 1975, 60: 1616) tells us that there were ten chapters in the *Han-yüan chi*, and also twelve chapters in the *Lu Chih lun-i piao-shu chi*. Obviously, these two volumes together would make twenty-two chapters. The Sung dynasty *Ch'ung-wen tsung-mu* (compiled between 1034 and 1038) (Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition, ch. 5, pp. 377-78) says there were two chapters in the *Lu Chih chih-chi* and ten chapters in the *Han-yüan chi*. The much later *Chih-chai chu-lu chieh-t'i* (probably compiled in the mid-thirteenth century; Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition, ch. 22, p. 601) says that there were twenty chapters in the *Lu Hsüan-kung tsou-i*, which is also entitled *Pang-tzu chi*; but on another page (ch. 16, p. 448) it says that there were ten chapters in the *Han-yüan chi* and twelve chapters in the *Pang-tzu chi*; it combines these two together under the title of *Lu Hsüan-kung chi*. At the same time, the *Chüan-chai tu-shu chih* (1151; Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition, ch. 4A: 363-64) says that there were twelve chapters in the *Lu Chih tsou-i*. It then mentions that previously there were five chapters in Lu Chih's *Pang-tzu chi*, three chapters in the *I-lun chi*, and ten chapters in the *Han-yüan chi*. The author of the *Tu-shu chih* suspects that all these previous works were put together around 1090; the title of the works then became *Lu Chih tsou-i*.

Following the above information, we must agree with Twitchett that the records of Lu Chih's works have become a "bibliographical muddle." However, the *Ssu-k'u chüan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao* (chi-pu, pieh-chi lei, 3) tells us that the information in the *Chüan-chai tu-shu chih* does not match most of the historical bibliographical descriptions. The *T'i-yao* says that according to other Sung bibliographical records ever since the Southern Sung all of Lu Chih's works had been put together and placed under the general title of *Han-yüan chi*, a book containing twenty-two chapters. The *T'i-yao* further informs us that the author of *Chüan-chai tu-shu chih* must have seen an incomplete edition of Lu Chih's works and thus only listed twelve chapters in *Lu Chih tsou-i*. Because the Sung scholars also refer to Lu Chih's works as the *Lu Hsüan-kung tsou-i*, the *T'i-yao* says, many Ch'ing editions of Lu Chih's works follow this title. Based upon the explanation given by the *T'i-yao*, it seems clear to us that at least by Southern Sung times there were basically only twenty-two chapters in Lu Chih's collected works -- the *Han-yüan chi*. It is obvious that this *Han-yüan chi* contained ten chapters of the pre-Southern Sung *Han-yüan chi* and twelve chapters of Lu Chih's other memorials or edicts with a title unclear to us. This explains
why almost all the modern editions of Lu Chih's works have twenty-two chapters (ten of edicts, six of private memorials and six of official memorials). The Ssu-pu ts'ung-kan (SPTK hereafter) and SPPY editions apparently also follow the Southern Sung arrangement into twenty-two chapters.

Although there are two twenty-four-chapter editions in existence now -- one a late Ming edition by T'ang Pin-yin and Ma Yüan, the other a 1768 edition with extensive commentary by Chang Pei-fang -- as Twitchett points out, the contents of these two editions are identical with the twenty-two chapter Sung edition. When we compare these Ming and Ch'ing editions with the twenty two chapter editions, we discover that their editors completely regrouped Lu Chih's writings into chronological order; there are no new discoveries. Twitchett's comment made almost thirty years ago that the best available edition of Lu Chih's works at that time was the 1768 edition by Chang Pei-fang still applies to the current situation. This is because, like the SPTK and the SPPY editions, this 1768 edition was also compiled on the basis of a Southern Sung edition. However, unlike the SPTK and the SPPY editions which do not give us the exact date of the Southern Sung edition used by them, the 1768 edition used an edition compiled by a Southern Sung official named Lang Yeh (not Lang Hua as the editor of the 1768 edition wrote and Twitchett followed in his article). Lang Yeh presented his edition of Lu Chih's works to the throne in 1132 (1132 edition hereafter). This 1132 edition, entitled Chu Lu Hsiian-kung tsou-i, includes fifteen chapters of Lu Chih's memorials and Lang Yeh's own commentary. It was reprinted in the Shih-wan-chüan lou ts'ung-shu in 1878 and is reprinted again in the Pai-pu ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng collection. Because the 1768 edition provides the date of the Southern Sung edition (the 1132 edition) which it followed, and moreover, because the 1768 edition preserves not only Sung scholars' comments (though not Lang Yeh's commentary) about Lu Chih's works, but also contains its editor's own commentaries, this edition seems to be preferable. This is why, in this study, I have principally relied upon this 1768 edition. However, I have also compared the 1768 edition with the SPTK and the SPPY editions in case differences appear in the text. In addition, for the sake of comparison, I have also consulted the 1132 edition. The 1768 edition, hard to acquire formerly, is readily available now. In 1982 Taipei's Shih-chie shu-chU published a reprint of this 1768 edition under the title of Han-yüan chi chu (HYCC hereafter) edited by Yang Chia-lo as the sixth volume of the Chung-kuo wen-hsieh ming-chu collection.

Lu Chih's work on medicine, Lu-shih chi-yen-fang, his encyclopedic work Pei-chü wen-ye, and his fifteen chapters of P'ieh-ch'i on literary works were all lost after the Sung dynasty. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 86 and 337 note 14. As Twitchett mentions, HTS I-wen chih classes Pei-chü wen-yen with Tu Yu's T'ung-tien and other Hui-yao. It also says that it contained twenty chapters; see HTS, 59: 1563. The Sung dynasty Ch'ung-wen tsung-mu (Kuo-hsiieh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition, ch. 3: 178) and the Chiin-chai tu-shu chih (Kuo-hsiieh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition, Hou-chih section, ch. 2: 852) agree with this information. The Chiin-chai tu-shu chih further mentions that it had more than 450 sections and was similar to the Po-shih liu-t'ie (compiled by Po Chü-i), but with more literary polish. The Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao (228: 1828) quotes this passage from Chiin-chai tu-shu chih. However, both Sung shih I-wen chih and Yü-hai say that it contained thirty chapters instead of twenty chapters. See Sung shih, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 207: 5293; Wang Ying-lin, ed., Yü-hai, Taipei: Hua-wen shu-chü, 1967 reprint, ch. 201: 22. Yü-hai informs us that Pei-chü wen-yen put passages of a similar nature from the classics and historical works into different categories; altogether it contained 452 sections. Except for the difference in numbers of chapters, all the above sources agree that Pei-chü wen-yen is a sort of encyclopedic work. It was probably an administrative encyclopedia, as Twitchett points out. For Lu-shih chi-yen-fang, see HTS, 59: 1572; Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, in CTW, 493: 15; Shun-tsung shih-lu (SL hereafter), Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng edition, Commercial Press, 1936, 4: 16; Wang Ch'in-jo, Ts'e-fu yüan-kuei (hereafter
Lu Chih’s memorials to emperor Te-tsung (reign 779-805) during the two most important stages of his career clearly reveal his "conscious responses to the situations in..."
which he finds himself.” From them we can detect not only his ideas about how to solve the problems currently confronting the court of emperor Te-tsung, but also his "attitudes" and "propensities of feelings" toward particular events and circumstances. Understanding these personality traits, Lu Chih will no longer appear merely as a "depersonalized political figure," but rather more fully as a political figure with some vivid inner landscapes.

Since many early aspects of Lu Chih's official career have not been dealt with accurately, nor has the information about Lu Chih's immediate family ancestors been touched upon at all, it is also imperative to establish a more valid account of Lu Chih's political life and his family background. The examination of family background is essential not only because it generally shapes a person's character, but also because it played a particularly crucial role in determining one's social standing and upward social mobility during the T'ang. In order to determine the position of Lu Chih's family in the T'ang social hierarchy, we begin with a discussion of the Lu lineage.

**Lu lineage in the T'ang social hierarchy**

It is well understood that early and middle T'ang society, like its predecessors, the Six dynasties and the Sui, was marked by clearly observed social segregation and stratification. An enormous gap certainly existed between commoners (shu-min) and the elite class (shih ta-fu), but within the elite class there were different categorizations to define the place of a

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6 As we shall demonstrate, none of the extant studies of Lu Chih, probably due to the nature and scope of their researches, provide correct information about Lu Chih's early career.
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lineage or a clan\(^8\) in that social hierarchy.\(^9\) Generally speaking, most members of the Tang elite class belonged to the category of illustrious provincial lineages, but at the top of the elite class, a very small number of lineages constituted what some modern historians call the "aristocratic families." What made these families aristocratic was their "hereditary high social status, independent of full court control."\(^10\) They were a super elite with national recognition.\(^11\) Most of these aristocratic lineages began to emerge from the early fourth century on when north China was taken over by non-Chinese rulers.

Education and culture, economic wealth, local power based upon accumulated landed property and clan solidarity, the practice of marriage exclusivity, and ingrained social respect for birth all amounted to valuable assets for the rise of these aristocratic lineages. Nevertheless, ownership of local property seems to have constituted the chief power base for their survival during dynastic changes.\(^12\) They enjoyed high esteem and great influence

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\(^8\) I am fully aware of the difference between a "clan" and a "lineage" defined by anthropologists such as Maurice Freedman and Hugh Baker. However, scholars of the Tang dynasty have pointed out that most prominent medieval lineages were so loosely knit that "clan" and "lineage" are thus used interchangeably for the sake of convenience. In this study, I shall refer to Lu Chih's kinship group and subgroups as "Lu lineage" or "Lu clan" despite the fact that we can trace the common ancestor of the major Lu subgroups. Hugh D. R. Baker, *Chinese family and kinship*, Columbia University Press, 1979: 49 and 68. Maurice Freedman, ed., *Family and kinship in Chinese Society*, Stanford University Press, 1970: 13-14; Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The aristocratic families of early China: A case study of the Po-ling Ts'ui family*, Cambridge University Press, 1978: 22; David Johnson, "The last years of a great clan: The Li family of Chao Chün in late T'ang and early Sung," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* (HJAS hereafter), 37 / 1 (June 1977) : 98; Chen Jo-shui, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism: Liu Tsung-yüan and the intellectual changes in T'ang China," PhD dissertation Yale University, 1987: 35, and note 5. I am grateful to Professor Chen Jo-shui for giving me a copy of his thesis which is now forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.


\(^10\) In her perceptive study of the aristocratic families of early imperial China, Patricia Ebrey has shown the distinctive characteristics of these aristocratic families in early imperial China and carefully provided the above quoted definition. See Ebrey, *The aristocratic families*, 1978: 2 and 10.


\(^12\) Ebrey has demonstrated that there were complex factors at work in the determination of status; throughout time, different factors weighed differently as various dynasties changed. However, she has particularly emphasized that the maintenance of a local geographical base was crucial to the survival of these aristocratic families. See Ebrey, *The aristocratic families*, 1978: 117 and 28-32. On the other hand, some scholars
in society. Their enormous social prestige, moreover, almost always guaranteed them a high rank in the nine-tiered system of recruitment and thus allowed members of these great families to dominate for generations the top positions in government during the Six dynasties. Their participation in government in turn perpetuated their overall socio-economic power. Consequently, these prominent lineages survived into the T'ang despite the rise and fall of dynasties.

These aristocratic families were referred to by various terms during the T'ang: chiu-tsu (old clans), shih-tsu (scholar official clans), chu-hsing (famous names), kuei-tsu (noble clans), or ming-tsu (illustrious clans). Liu Fang, a mid-eighth century historian and genealogist once wrote a list in which he singled out four regionally based groups of aristocratic lineages as the most eminent families in T'ang China. Each aristocratic

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13 Mao Han-kuang, Ibid., vol. 1, ch. 4; Wang I-t'ung, Ibid., vol. 1, ch. 3; Ebrey, *The aristocratic families*, 6; Miyazaki Ichisada, *Kyōhîn kanjînô no kenkyû*, Kyoto, 1956, ch. 3, esp.: 247.


15 See HTS, 199: 5676-80; CTW: 372: 7a-11b. Liu Fang's classification of aristocratic lineages is an important evidence of what was believed in his own days and has been widely cited by scholars of T'ang history. See Twitchett, "The T'ang ruling class," 1973: 50-1; Ebrey, *The aristocratic families*, 1978: 10-11; Chen Jo-shui, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 4-8.
lineage in these four groups could trace its family roots back to the days of the Six dynasties, but the degree of their power and privilege varied considerably.

Geographically speaking, two of these four regional groups were in the north, the Shan-tung (east of the mountains, modern Hopei, Honan and central Shansi) aristocratic families, the most prestigious group of lineages among all the four elite groups, and the so called "Kuan-lung block" to which the T'ang ruling house belonged. The "Kuan-lung group" was formed by an alliance of the Kuan-chung (modern southern Shansi and modern Shensi) and the Tai-pei (modern northern Shansi) aristocratic families. The other two groups held local power in southeast China and were defined as the southern aristocracy. While one of these two southern aristocratic groups consisted of emigre clans, the other constituted the native aristocracy. Lu Chih's family belonged to the Wu  

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commandery) Lu lineage, one of the the four most prestigious native aristocratic representatives in southeast China.16

These four aristocratic groups were the cream of T'ang society, according to Liu Fang's thesis. They not only commanded the highest respect from society, but also felt themselves deserving of such respect. However, in the T'ang era, comparatively speaking, due to the suffering and losses inflicted on them by repeated military uprisings in the sixth century, the power and prestige of the southern aristocracy could not rival that of the northern aristocratic groups. In addition, the fact that Ch'ang-an was now the center of cultural and political activities naturally put the southern aristocratic families in an inferior position to compete with the northern aristocracy. Nevertheless, according to Liu Fang, this did not alter their superior social position in the T'ang elite class as a whole. In short, Lu Chih's lineage in the southeastern region, though occupying a less prominent position than the northern aristocratic families, actually ranked in the highest level of T'ang social structure.

16 For details of these four groups, see references given in the above note.
Although the presence of powerful aristocratic clans was one of the main characteristics of T'ang social structure, ironically, it was precisely during this era that the bureaucratization of the aristocracy began to take place through the famous examination system (K'o-chü chih-tu). Since it did not bring about genuine "inter-class" social mobility in T'ang China, the impact of the examination system should not be exaggerated. The process of bureaucratization was not completely carried out until near the very end of the dynasty. In the process of being bureaucratized, however, members of the aristocratic clans always had a better chance to enter and to advance in the T'ang bureaucracy. In other words, no matter how the T'ang aristocracy was transformed, before the T'ang dynasty ended a person's standing in social and political life was always closely related to his family background. Bearing this in mind, we shall first highlight the general history of the Lu lineage and then focus on Lu Chih's family background.

A profile of the Lu lineage

As mentioned above, the Lu lineage of Wu chūn was regarded as a member of the super elite class by the mid-T'ang genealogist Liu Fang. Wu chūn included the southeast and the northeast areas of modern Kiangsu and Chekiang provinces. Situated at the lower region of the Yangtze River, it constituted one of the most important economic areas of the T'ang state, especially after the An Lu-shan rebellion. During the T'ang, Wu chūn was also known as Su-chou. Though the T'ang court decided to use Su-chou to replace the old

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Han dynasty name of Wu chün in 758,\(^{18}\) both names were used interchangeably throughout the later half of the Tang. Altogether there were seven counties included in Su-
chou or Wu chün under Tang rule.\(^{19}\)

Both the *New T'ang History* genealogy (HTS ts'ai-hsiang shih-hsi piao) and a preface written in 812 to the re-compiled genealogy of the forty-nine branches by a descendant of the twenty-third generation of a major subgroup, one Lu Shu,\(^{20}\) agree that the person who initiated the history of the Lu lineage in Wu county (Wu hsien) of Wu chün was a certain Lu Lie.\(^{21}\) Although we do not know when this actually took place, one thing seems to be certain: before the Eastern Han (25-220) dynasty emerged, the Lu lineage was already firmly established in Wu hsien of Wu chün. The *History of the Eastern Han* (Hou Han shu) unmistakably refers the Lus of Wu chün as "a prominent surname for generations" (shih wei tsu-hsing).\(^{22}\)

Early in 634, the Lu family already appeared in an imperially approved list of "notable clans" (wang-shih).\(^{23}\) Even in the late tenth century it was still recognized as one of the

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\(^{20}\) This preface to the recompilation of the genealogy of forty-nine Lu branches (812 Preface hereafter) is preserved in a Ch'ing dynasty Lu clan genealogy. See *Lu-shih shih-p'u*, 24 vols., compiled by Lu I and Lu Sheng-wu in 1745 (Ch'ien-lung shan-te-t'ang edition), Columbia University Rare Books Collection, microfilm # 0876. The author of this preface, Lu Shu, was the Surveillance Commissioner (*Kuan-ch'a shih*) of the Fukien region in 812. This agrees with the information about him contained in HTS. See HTS, 73: 2972. This 812 preface is also preserved in another Ch'ing dynasty Lu clan genealogy, see *Lu-shih tsung-p'u*, compiled by Lu Chen-chih, 4 vols., Columbia University Rare Books Collection, microfilm # 548; also see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 87 and 338 note 22. I rely upon Hucker's translations (where available) of all official titles in this study. See Charles O. Hucker, *A dictionary of official titles in imperial China*, Stanford University Press, 1985.

\(^{21}\) HTS, 73: 2965 and 812 Preface.

\(^{22}\) *Hou-Han shu*, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chih edition, 81: 2682.

most illustrious "four surnames" in the southeast region.\textsuperscript{24} Apparently, the Lu family must have developed into a very large kinship organization throughout the centuries before the T'ang.

According to the *New T'ang History* genealogy, up to the Eastern Chin dynasty (317-420) there existed at least eight branch groups within the Lu clan.\textsuperscript{25} By the mid-T'ang, the clan became so large that it actually expanded to forty-nine branches which were acknowledged by the imperial ruling house. Lu Shu's 812 Preface stated plainly that each subgroup of the Lu clan should establish its separate genealogy, otherwise the lineage history might be lost due to demographic expansion.\textsuperscript{26}

Despite this proliferation of Lu subgroups, only three branches were actually mentioned in the *New T'ang History*, and that was because they had produced six chief ministers during the T'ang.\textsuperscript{27} These three subgroups included the Tan-t'u branch, the T'ai-wei (the Defender in Chief) branch and the Shih-lang (Vice Director) branch which Lu Chih's immediate family belonged to.\textsuperscript{28} While Tan-t'u was the name of a county (modern Chen-kiang in Kiangsu), the other two clan names referred to the official titles assumed by their branch ancestors.

In the Pre-T'ang era, among these three subgroups only the activities of the T'ai-wei branch have been continuously documented in dynastic histories,\textsuperscript{29} and only the T'ai-wei

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{24} Twitchett, Ibid. & Ikeda On, Ibid: 79.
\textsuperscript{25} See HTS, 73: 2965-2968.
\textsuperscript{26} See the 812 Preface.
\textsuperscript{27} See HTS, 73: 2965-2979.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} Records about less recognizable branches also exist in dynastic histories both before and during the T'ang. Examples can be found in Lu Kao's biography in *Liang shu*, and in Lu Chih's biography in *Chiu T'ang-shu* and HTS. This Lu Chih was a famous scholar of the *Spring and autumn annals*. His original name was Lu Ch'un, but he later changed his name to Chih to avoid a taboo in the name of emperor Hsien-tsung. I shall hereafter refer to him by his original name of Ch'un to avoid confusion with Lu Chih, our protagonist. *Liang shu*, Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 1973, 26: 398-99; Liu Hsü, et al. *Chiu T'ang-shu* (CTS hereafter), Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 1975: 189: 4977-8; HTS, 168: 5127-8. For Lu Ch'un's classical scholarship, see Chang Ch'üan, "T'ang Chao Lu san-chia Ch'un-chiu chih shuo," in *Ch'ien Mu hsien-sheng pa-shih sui chi-nien lun-wen-chi*, Hongkong: Hsin ya yen-chiu-suo, 1974: 149-59; E. G.
\end{footnotes}
branch, with its regional base in Wu hsien of Wu chün, was considered one of the four most prominent aristocratic lineages in the southeast area. This is largely due to its enormous social prestige and its members' powerful positions in government.  

Compared with the T'ai-wei branch, information about members of the Tan-t'u and Shih-lang branches is quite limited prior to the T'ang. Nonetheless, it was precisely in the T'ang that members of the Tan-t'u and Shih-lang families began to make names for their lineages.

To be sure, the social esteem and powerful influence accumulated for centuries along with its geographically concentrated local base sustained the Lu lineage during the military rebellions and political chaos arising toward the end of Six Dynasties. But a large question still remains: how did it maintain power and continue its reputation for being a member of the national elite in the T'ang, an era when the social and political stage was mainly dominated by the northern aristocracy, and when the imperial rulers attempted to build a strong and effective bureaucracy? To answer these questions, we shall examine how members of the three major Lu branches emerged in T'ang history. Only then can we find out where Lu Chih's immediate family stood in the lineage.

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31 Perhaps, the size of these two branches made a difference. According to the available sources, both before and during the T'ang, the size of these two subgroups bore no comparison with that of the T'ai-wei branch. See HTS, 73: 2966-80; Lin Pao, Yüan-ho hsing-tsu'an (hereafter YHHT), Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu chen-pen pieh-chi edition, ch. 10, 1a-4a.
The Tan-t'u branch

The person who carried the line of the Tan-t'u subgroup into the T'ang was Lu Te-ming (his real name was Yüan-lang, ca. 560-630). Prior to the T'ang, Te-ming's erudition had already won him respect and office in both the Ch'en and Sui dynasties. When emperor T'ang T'ai-tsung, then still Prince of Ch'in, recruited Te-ming to be an Academician of the Institute of Education (or Academy of Literary Study, Ch'în-fu wen-hsūeh-kuan hsūeh-shih) in his palace, Lu Te-ming not only had achieved a reputation as a renowned classical scholar, but was also known for his loyalty in not serving the rebel general Wang Shih-ch'ung.\(^{32}\) In 624, Lu Te-ming greatly enhanced his reputation as a Confucian scholar in a debate on Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism.\(^{33}\) He was subsequently promoted to the rank of Erudite of the National University (Kuo-tzu po-shih), and was ennobled as Baron of Wu-hsien (Wu-hsien nan).\(^{34}\)

As far as we know, Lu Te-ming was one of only two members of the entire Lu lineage who served in the governments of the first two T'ang emperors.\(^{35}\) The obvious point is that Lu Te-ming's rise in T'ang officialdom relied not so much upon his family background as on his wide prestige as a learned scholar. This, of course, is not to deny the importance

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\(^{33}\) For Lu Te-ming's scholarship, see David McMullen, State and Scholars in T'ang China, 1988: 33 & 72. For the practice of three teachings debate in the T'ang, see Lo Hsiang-lin, "T'ang-t'ai san-chiao chiang-lun k'ao," in his T'ang-t'ai wen-hua-shih, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1955: 159-76.


\(^{35}\) Mao Han-kuang thought Lu Te-ming was the only member who served in the early bureaucracy. See his "Wu chün Lu-shih," in Tao Hsi-sheng hsien-sheng chiu-chih jung-ch'ing chi-nien lun-wen-ch'i, Taipei: Shih-huo, 1989: 61. However, there was another Lu Shih-chi who also served during T'ai-tsung's reign. See CTS, 188: 4932; HTS, 195: 5584.
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of family background. After all, very few common people of undistinguished origin could afford the time and money to be a scholar.\(^{36}\)

Although Lu Te-ming himself never seems to have acquired substantial political power, one of his two sons, Lu Tun-hsin, rose to be Chief Minister from 665 to 666 under emperor Kao-tsung (reign 649-83).\(^{37}\) Like his father, Lu Tun-hsin was also ennobled as Baron of Chia-hsing county.\(^{38}\) Though information regarding his administration or his ability as an official hardly exists, the fact that he was promoted to be Chief Minister in 665 nevertheless calls for attention.

It is known that by the late months of 660, the court of emperor Kao-tsung was firmly controlled by his favorite consort, empress Wu.\(^{39}\) In spite of her recent victory in liquidating all her enemies in the top echelons of government, empress Wu still tried to amass all the support she could within the bureaucracy in order to pave the way for a future takeover of the imperial throne.\(^{40}\) To promote someone from a southern aristocratic lineage whose immediate family had become more recognizable under T'ang rule would, on the one hand, maintain the previous policy of balancing the power of regional aristocratic groups and, on the other hand, cultivate her own power base.\(^{41}\) From this point of view, it is likely that the elevation of Lu Tun-hsin to the chief ministership was engineered by empress Wu in order to further consolidate her power.

The descendants of the Tan-t'u branch continued to serve in the T'ang bureaucracy till the end of the dynasty. Most of them occupied either high or middle rank positions.\(^{42}\) In


\(^{38}\) HTS, ibid.


\(^{40}\) Ibid.


\(^{42}\) HTS, 73: 2967; also see Mao Han-kuang, ""Wu chün Lu-shih,"" 1989: 61.
all, according to the *New T'ang History* genealogy, there were twenty-one male members in the Tan-t'u branch during the T'ang era. Fifteen of that number served in the government; most of their appointments seem to be far away from Wu chün and concentrated in the metropolitan area.\(^43\) As their active participation in the bureaucracy apparently provided them with more assets to sustain the elite status of their branch in the society, it simultaneously increased their dependence upon the T'ang state.

**The T'ai-wei branch**

As stated previously, the T'ai-wei branch was the largest subgroup within the Lu lineage. During the T'ang period alone, it produced one hundred and fourteen male offspring of whom eighty-one served in the government. Moreover, three descendants also rose to be chief ministers.\(^44\) A funeral inscription says that the earliest member of this branch in the T'ang was Lu Shan-jen who served as a local official in the early T'ang.\(^45\) We do not know how Lu Shan-jen joined the bureaucracy, but his eldest son, Lu Chien-chih, was famous for calligraphy, and this talent definitely earned him access to the officialdom.\(^46\) However, the T'ai-wei branch does not seem to have restored their powerful pre-T'ang position in the government until Chien Chih's nephew, Lu Yüan-fang (639-701), rose to be Chief Minister during empress Wu's rule (690-705).\(^47\)

Lu Yüan-fang entered the bureaucracy through the doctoral examination system. He passed the *ming-ching* (enlightening the classics) examination and special decree

\(^{43}\) *HTS*, Ibid.
\(^{44}\) *HTS*, 73: 2968-78.
\(^{45}\) This tomb inscription was written during empress Wu's reign (690-705) by the famous scholar official Chang Yüeh to commemorate the Chief Minister Lu Yüan-fang, who died in 701. See *CTW*, ch. 231, 17. Mao Han-kuang does not include Lu Shan-jen in the first generation of the T'ai-wei branch members who served in T'ang officialdom. See his "Wu chün Lu-shih," 1989: 57.
\(^{46}\) *CTS*, 88: 2875; *HTS*, 73: 2968 & 116: 4235.
\(^{47}\) *CTS*, 88: 2875; *HTS*,116: 4235; *CTW*, ch. 231: 17.
examinations probably around 659. Another early member who also entered the civil service by means of the doctoral examination was Lu Yü-ch'ing. He was Yüan-fang's uncle, and obtained the chün-shih (advanced scholar) degree during emperor Kao-tsung's time.

The careers of Lu Yüan-fang and Lu Yü-ch'ing shared a similar pattern. To our best knowledge, they were the first two T'ai-wei Lus to pass the doctoral examinations in order to acquire a nominal official status. This not only proves that their scholarship and literary ability reached a certain recognizable standard, but also implies that their decisions to take the examinations could have been influenced by Kao-tsung's new emphasis on the importance of the examination system in 659. To be sure, the examination system was not the only means to obtain nominal official status, but it gradually became a necessary channel for officials who had ambitions for the highest positions in the court. From this point of view then, it was by no means a coincidence that both Lu Yüan-fang and Lu Yü-ch'ing chose to join the bureaucracy through the doctoral examinations. They must have realized that the examination system was the surest way to enter and advance in the bureaucracy. More importantly, they must have also believed that it was the safest channel to preserve the traditional power position of their families.

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48 CTS, ibid.; HTS, ibid.; CTW, ibid.; Hsü Sung, Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, three vols., 1984, vol. 3, 27: 1106. According to the Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, in addition to the ming-ching examination, there were eight special subjects decree examinations held in 659. Since Lu Yüan-fang was then about twenty years old, it is very likely that he took the ming-ching examination and these special subjects decree examinations in that year.

49 HTS, 116: 4239, also see Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, vol. 3, 27: 1031.

50 Kao-tsung's emphasis on the examination system is demonstrated by his ordering the compilation of the Hsing-shih lu [Record of surnames and lineages] in which the criteria for ranking families was strictly based upon office and personal achievement during the reigning dynasty. For the compilation of Hsing-shih lu and the problems entailed, see Denis Twitchett, "T'ang ruling class," Perspectives, 1973: 62-4.

51 Denis Twitchett, Chinese meritocracy, 1974: 8-12; also see his introduction in The Cambridge history, 1979: 21.

52 Twitchett, Chinese meritocracy, 1974: 23.
The second similarity of Lu Yuan-fang and Lu Yü-ch'ing's careers is that their promotions to high ranking posts were all conferred by empress Wu as rewards for their accomplishment of missions in the border regions.\(^53\) This again demonstrates that in order to consolidate her own power, empress Wu apparently preferred to promote members who were not likely to get involved in factional intrigues\(^54\) and whose immediate families had just begun to participate in the government.

In fact, the power and prestige of the T'ai-wei branch was reassured by Lu Yuan-fang and Lu Yü-ch'ing's performance in government and was continued by that of their descendants.\(^55\) As far as we know, at least six members of the T'ai-wei branch occupied different official posts during Hsüan-tsung's rule (712-756). Such achievement must have helped them to establish a powerful position in the bureaucracy. Ironically, the bureaucratic success of the T'ai-wei Lus loosened their ties with their local property in Wu chün. Thus, either in the late eighth or the ninth century, the descendants of Lu Yuan-fang began gradually to sell off their local property.\(^56\)

This sale of local property might very well be a logical result of their success in the Tang bureaucracy. Living a bureaucratic life at court and in different parts of the Tang empire must have made it difficult for the T'ai-wei Lus to care for their local property in Wu chün. Besides, in the late ninth century, Lu Yuan-fang's seventh generation grandson is said to have owned at least several hundred Chinese acres \((mou)\) of farm land and thirty

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53 For Lu Yuan-fang, see CTS, 88: 2875; HTS, 116: 4235; Lu Yü-ch'ing, see HTS, 116: 4239. Only the HTS biography mentions Lu Yü-ch'ing's achievement in this matter. Since this event took place at the beginning of 697, the pacification of the northwest border area most certainly must refer to the invasion of Ling-chou (modern Ninghsia) by the Turks in 697. See Ssu-ma Kuang, *Tzu-chih t'ung-chien* (TCTC hereafter), Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition 1956, 206: 6512-6.

54 Indeed, Lu Yuan-fang was demoted from his position as Chief Minister when empress Wu thought he was involved in a factional intrigue, but he was soon reappointed to the same position after she learned of his innocence. See CTS, Ibid.; HTS, Ibid.; also see Mao Han-kuang, "Wu chün Lu-shih," 1989: 58.


56 *Ta-T'ang chuan-tsai*, Shou-shan-ke ts'ung-shu edition: 1; also see HTS, 196: 5613.
houses in the southeast, even though he might indeed have considered himself impoverished.\(^{57}\) This being the case, their property in the eighth century must have been much larger than is implied in the above account. Such large property holdings naturally became a burden for the Lus if they wanted to succeed in a government which increasingly tended toward the bureaucratization of pretentious aristocratic families.

Of course, once the T'ai-wei Lus lost their local property due to practical difficulties, they could always purchase land near the capital such as in the popular Lo-yang region. This was exactly what many other aristocratic families did during the T'ang. In so doing, these aristocratic families became more and more centralized as a metropolitan elite and gradually lost their local ties.\(^{58}\) As a result, the power foundation of their aristocratic cachet was also in danger. In short, from the point of view of aristocratic families as a whole, the T'ai-wei Lus' property sale testifies to the gradually accelerating trend of bureaucratic transformation of the aristocracy.

To be sure, there were members of the T'ai-wei branch who stayed in Wu chūn and gained fame through scholarship or a Taoistic life style without entering the ranks of officialdom. A case in point is the famous late T'ang scholar Lu Kuei-meng, the seventh generation grandson of Lu Yüan-fang.\(^{59}\) On the other hand, Lu Kuei-meng's uncle, Lu Hsi-sheng, and his descendents never seemed to have ceased pursuing official appointments. As a matter of fact, Lu Hsi-sheng was even appointed to the position of Chief Minister in 895 though he only served for a short while.\(^ {60}\) Compared with the bureaucratic path taken by the majority of the T'ai-wei Lus, or for that matter the Tan-t'u

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\(^{57}\) This can be found in the biography of Lu Kuei-meng. See HTS, 196: 5613. Also see Wang Tang, *T'ang Yü-lin*, Shanghai: Ku-ch'i ch'u-pan-she edition 1978, 4: 147.


\(^{59}\) HTS, 196: 5613.

Lus, Lu Kuei-meng's case hardly represented the general trend of Lu clan development during the T'ang.

A new perspective on the Shih-lang branch and
Lu Chih's immediate family

The general trend of active government service applied equally to the evolution of the Shih-lang branch. Like the other two major subgroups, the great majority of the Shih-lang branch members also participated in the bureaucracy. Unlike the T'ai-wei and Tan-t'u Lus whose sub-choronym was always represented by Wu hsien of Wu chūn, the geographic base of the Shih-lang branch was in Chia-hsing county of Wu chūn.61 It is not clear when the Shih-lang group became established in Chia-hsing62 but, like the Tan-t'u branch, it could not match the high prestige and power generally enjoyed by the T'ai-wei branch either before or during the T'ang.

According to the New T'ang History genealogy, the person who initiated the Shih-lang branch was Lu Kuan. The only information we have about him is that he occupied the post of Vice Director of the Secretariat (Chung-shu shih-lang) in the Eastern Chin dynasty.63 The New T'ang History genealogy further states that Lu Kuan's seventh generation grandson, Lu Hsün, acquired an important position in the southern Ch'en dynasty (557-
From the Ch'en dynasty to the early T'ang, the Shih-lang Lus do not seem to have acquired any position in the bureaucracy. It is only during the K'ai-yüan era (713-741) that we find Lu Hsün's ninth generation grandson, Lu Ch'i-wang, serving as Director of the Palace Library (Pi-shu-chien) with a rank of 3b. In general, this position was only conferred upon officials who had outstanding literary ability. This makes it seem very possible that Lu Ch'i-wang, like members in the Tan-t'u and Tai-wei branches, relied upon his literary knowledge to enter the bureaucracy.

The New T'ang History genealogy records that Lu Ch'i-wang had eight sons, and all of them received official appointment. The same source states that one of his sons, Lu Pa, was Lu Chih's father, thus making Lu Ch'i-wang Lu Chih's grandfather. This genealogical attribution for the Shih-lang branch has, however, created a certain amount of confusion. In the following discussion, we shall partially reconstruct the Shih-lang branch in order to obtain a valid picture of Lu Chih's immediate family.

In the first place, instead of eight sons as listed in the New T'ang History genealogy, Lu Ch'i-wang had only six sons. The eldest son named in the New T'ang History genealogy was Lu Mi. He actually belonged to a Lu clan in Honan which was of foreign origin. This explains why Lu Mi was not included as Lu Ch'i-wang's son in the Yuan-ho hsing-tsun. The two Lu Ch'an listed in the New T'ang History genealogy should

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64 Ibid.
65 YHHT records that Lu Ch'i-wang occupied this position during the K'ai-yüan period. See YHHT, ch. 10, 4a. This would seem to invalidate Mao Han-kuang's speculation that Lu Ch'i-wang served during empress Wu's reign. See his "Wu chün Lu-shih," 1989: 60. Some sources say that Lu Ch'i-wang's position was Vice Director instead of Director of the Palace Library (Pi-shu shao-chien). See YHHT, ch. 10, 4a and Denis Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 88. However, according to a T'ang tomb inscription preserved in a Sung dynasty source, Ch'i-wang's position was Pi-shu-chien. See Chi-ku lu-mu, Ou-yang Fei compiled, in Miao Chüan-sun, ed., Yün tsu-tsai k'an ts'ung-shu edition, ch. 8, and Po-ke ts'ung-pien, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng edition, ch. 14: 388-9. Also see Ts'en Chung-mien, Yüan-ho hsing-tsun ssu-chiao chi (hereafter abbreviated as YHHTSCC), 3 vols., Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1948, vol. 10: 901.
67 HTS, 73: 2979.
68 On Lu Mi's origin, see CTW, 684: 29b; YHHT, 10: 5a.
actually refer to one and the same person, because two different characters for Ch'an were
used interchangeably during the T'ang. From an essay written by a contemporary, we
know the seniority of Ch'i-wang's six sons should very likely be listed in the following
order: Lu Wei, Lu Feng (or Lu Li), Lu Pa, Lu Jun (or Lu Chien), Lu Huai, and Lu
Ch'an. Meanwhile, contrary to the New T'ang History genealogy, it seems that among
Lu Ch'i-wang's six sons only Lu Feng's (or Lu Li's), not Lu Ch'an's, family line
extended into the last years of the T'ang.

Secondly, Ch'i-wang's son Lu Pa was not Lu Chih's father. According to a T'ang
source, the name of Lu Chih's father was Lu K'an. Although, the name provided by
Ch'üan Te-yü (759-818) in his Preface was Lu K'an-ju, it is quite certain that these two
names referred to the same person and that Lu Chih's father was Lu K'an or Lu K'an-ju.
The question that still needs to be answered is: were Lu Pa and Lu K'an the same person or
not?

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69 Ts'en Chung-mien, Lang-kuan shih-chu t'i-ming hsin k'ao-ting, 1984: 79.
70 The person who mentioned that "Lu Feng (or Lu Li) and his younger brothers Lu Pa,
Lu Jun and Lu Huai . . ." was Fu Tsai. Moreover, we find that Lu Ch'an must be the
youngest son since he still served in the government toward the end of Yüan-ho era
(805-20). See Ts'en Chung-mien, YHTS, ch. 10: 902. Although we have no
information to confirm the age difference between Lu Wei and Lu Feng, it seems very
likely that Lu Wei was the eldest brother. For while Lu Wei was highly regarded by
the notable ku-wen (ancient prose) writer Hsiao Ying-shih (706-58), Lu Feng (or Lu
Li) was a close friend of Hsiao Ying-shih's son. See CTW, 691: 8a. Of course, it is
also possible that Lu Wei could very well have been the second eldest brother. Without
further information, we can only speculate on their order of seniority. Fu Tsai led a
reclusive life on Lu mountain in Kiangsi until around 797. He was then given a post in
provincial government by Li Sun, a notable financial official in emperor Hsien-tsung's
reign. See CTW, 690: 1a, and 688: 1a. For Li Sun, see CTS, 123: 3522 and HTS,
149: 4805. We shall soon explain why Lu Feng and Lu Jun had other names.
71 The biography of Lu I says that Lu Feng was Lu I's great grandfather. This contradicts
with the HTS genealogy. See CTS, 179: 4668; HTS, 73: 2978-79. Since no other
T'ang sources offer any information on this matter, and since the HTS genealogy often
contains mistakes as is and will be shown here, I shall accept the biographical
information contained in the CTS as valid for the time being.
72 YHT, ch. 10: 4a.
73 See Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, "T'ang tseng ping-pu shang-shu Hsüan-kung Lu Chih
Han-yüan-chi hsü," in CTW, 493: 11a. Also see the one contained in HYCC, 1768
74 Lu Chih's biography in the CTS also says that his father's name was Lu K'an. See
CTS, 139: 3791 & Ts'en Chung-mien, YHT ssu-chiao-chi, ch. 10: 902.
The answer is negative. Ch'üan Te-yü seems to have been Lu Pa's close friend. He once composed a rhyme-prose (fu) to see Lu Pa off for Ching-chou (modern Hupei).\footnote{CTW, 483: 2b.} If Lu Pa were indeed Lu Chih's father, or if Lu Pa and Lu K'an were the same person, it would have appeared very unreasonable for Ch'üan Te-yü not to have mentioned any of these "facts" in his Preface to Lu's extant works. Furthermore, since Lu Chih's father died long before he reached adulthood, and since Ch'üan Te-yü was actually five years younger than Lu Chih, it would have been virtually impossible for Ch'üan Te-yü to have befriended Lu Pa if Lu Pa were Lu Chih's father. Evidently, Lu Pa and Lu K'an were two different people; Lu Pa was Lu Ch'i-wang's son and definitely not Lu Chih's father.

Thirdly, since Lu Pa was not Lu Chih's father, and Lu Ch'i-wang in turn could not have been his grandfather, Lu Chih definitely belonged to another family under the Shih-lang branch. That is, we still need to find out who Lu Chih's grandfather really was and what the actual connection between Lu Chih and Lu Ch'i-wang's family was.

As listed in the *Yüan-ho hsing-tsuan*, Lu Chih's grandfather was Lu Ch'i-cheng. A cousin to Lu Ch'i-wang, Ch'i-cheng served as a district Magistrate, probably during the K'ai-yüan era when Lu Ch'i-wang was a Director in the Palace Library.\footnote{YHHT, 10: 4a. Also see Ts'en Chung-mien, YHHTSCC, 10: 901-2.} It is said that Lu Ch'i-cheng had only one son whose name, as mentioned above, was Lu K'an or Lu K'an-ju. Like his father, Lu K'an's only official position was also as Magistrate, either of Li-yang or Li-shui county (near modern Nanking).\footnote{YHHT mentions Li-shui while CTS and Ch'i-an Te-yü's Preface agree that Li-yang was the county where Lu K'an served. See YHHT, ibid.; CTS, 139: 3791; CTW, 493: 11a.} In addition to Lu Chih, the *Yüan-ho hsing-tsuan* says that Lu K'an had two other sons, Lu Shang and Lu Keng.\footnote{YHHT, ibid.} This contradicts the *New T'ang History* genealogy which lists Lu Wei as Lu Shang's father and says nothing about Lu Keng.\footnote{HTS, 73: 2980.} Since the *New T'ang History* genealogy often contains
mistakes\textsuperscript{80} as has already been shown by its incorrect identification of Lu Pa as Lu Chih's father, it seems more reasonable to believe that Lu Shang and Lu Keng were Lu Chih's brothers, even though we have no way to prove it. In any event, as far as we know, their family line seems to have been transmitted only by Lu Chih's son Lu Chien-li. Aside from knowing that Lu Chien-li entered the officialdom through the chin-shih examination no earlier than 816, his life remains a complete blank to us.\textsuperscript{81}

With this revision of our perspective on the Shih-lang branch, especially with our knowledge of the connection between Lu Chih's immediate family and Lu Ch'i-wang's family, we shall now discuss some characteristics of Lu Ch'i-wang's family in order to acquire more substantial understanding of Lu Chih's own family background.

The main characteristics of the Shih-lang branch

The first distinct feature of the Shih-lang branch, shared actually by members of the Tan-t'u and Tai-wei branches as well, is their literary and cultivated background. One of their contemporaries once described Lu Ch'i-wang's sons in this way: "Lu Feng and his younger brothers Lu Pa, Lu Jun, and Lu Huai were all famous for their literary abilities and virtuous conduct (wen-hsing)."\textsuperscript{82} Despite the fact that such praise may often be subjective, it reflects the image of the Lu brothers among their contemporaries. In fact, the circle of the Lu brothers' friends included many illustrious literary figures of the time.

\textsuperscript{80} On this matter, see Chou I-liang, ed., Hsin T'ang shu tsai-hsiang shih-hsi piao yin-te, in Harvard-Yenching Index series, no. 16, Taipei reprint, 1966, introduction: i-xvii.

\textsuperscript{81} When the Chief Minister Ts'ui Ch'iün (772-832) administered the 816 doctoral examination, he did not pass Lu Chien-li despite the fact that he himself had acquired the chin-shih degree under Lu Chih's administration of the examination in 792. See Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, vol. 2, 18: 663-4; T'ang yü-lin, 4: 151. Also see CTS, 159: 4187-90.

\textsuperscript{82} See Fu Tsai's essay in CTW, 690: 1a.
For example, while Lu Wei, the eldest or second eldest of the six sons, was highly regarded by the notable ku-wen (ancient prose) writer Hsiao Ying-shih (706-58), his younger or elder brother, Lu Feng (or Lu Li), was a close friend of Hsiao Ts'un (739-800). Hsiao Ts'un was not only Hsiao Ying-shih's son, but also made his name as a Confucian scholar and a literary talent. Besides Hsiao Ts'un, Lu Feng (or Lu Li) had many other famous literati friends. They included poets like Lu Lun, a member of the Ten Literary Talents of the Ta-li Era (766-779) (Ta-li shih ts'ai-tzu) and the renowned Buddhist monk Chiao-jan. The poems exchanged between Lu Feng and his literati friends confirm his own reputation for literary composition. This literary tradition of the Lu brothers was continued by Lu Feng's great grandson, Lu I, in the late-T'ang.

The next characteristic of the Shih-lang branch which, as stated previously, was also a common denominator of the Lu lineage, is their active participation in the T'ang bureaucracy. So far as we know, Lu Ch'i-wang's six sons all served in the government. Although we can not be certain about the exact means through which some of the Shih-lang Lus entered the officialdom, their literary ability clearly facilitated their entrance into the bureaucracy.

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83 HTS, 202: 5769.
84 In the New T'ang History genealogy and YHHT this son was named Lu Li, but a biography of Lu I says Lu I's great-grandfather was Lu Feng. Except for the difference between Li and Feng, the rest of data concerning Lu Feng or Lu Li is identical. Besides, many poems addressed to this son also did not distinguished between Lu Feng and Lu Li. Thus we know Lu Feng and Lu Li must have referred to the same person. See HTS, 73: 2980; YHHTSCC, ch. 10: 902. Poems to Lu Feng included the ones written by Liu Ch'ang and Huang-fu Jan. The ones to Lu Li were by Li Chia-yu, Yen Wei and Lu Lun etc. See Ch'üan T'ang-shih (hereafter CTShih), 16 vols., Taipei: Fu-hsing shu-chii reprint, 1961, vol. 3, 3: 1: 853,856 and 864, vol. 5, 4: 7: 1507, vol. 4, 3: 9: 1173, vol. 5, 4: 9: 1562, vol. 6, 5: 2: 1685. For his friendship with Hsiao Ts'un and Hsiao Ts'un's life, see Hsiao's tomb inscription in CTW, 691: 8a.
85 The poems exchanged between Lu Feng and his literary friends are listed in the above note. In addition, we should add a poem written to him by Chiao-jan. See CTShih, vol. 15, 12: 2: 4735.
86 See Lu I's biographies in CTS, 179: 4668; HTS, 183: 5383.
For instance, we do not know Lu Wei’s exact official position, but whatever position it might have been, since Hsiao Ying-shih held his literary ability in high esteem, he seems to have attained it with Hsiao Ying-shih’s recommendation. Lu Feng probably also relied upon his literary reputation to acquire official appointment. His last official post, however, was not Attendant Censor (Shih-yü-shih) with a rank of 6b2 or 6a as listed in the New T’ang History genealogy, but rather Palace Censor (Tien-chung shih yü-shih) with a rank of 7a. He was still in this post during the year 800. That is, his service in the government took place during exactly the same time as Lu Chih’s career. As a matter of fact, all of Lu Ch’i-wang’s six sons were Lu Chih’s contemporaries.

Lu Feng’s younger brother, Lu Jun, whose name might have also been Lu Chien, probably served as Vice Director of the Bureau of Receptions (Chu-k’o yüan-wai-lang, rank 6b1) during emperor Te-tsung’s reign (779-805). The literary abilities of another younger brother, Lu Huai, probably won him a good grade in the examination system and led to an appointment as Editor in the Palace Library (Pi-shu sheng chiao-shu-lang) in

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87 In the New T’ang History genealogy, Lu Wei was said to have occupied the post of Vice Minister of the Ministry of Revenue (Hu-pu shih-lang) with a rank of 4a. Yen Keng-wang also agrees with this but does not provide any supporting documentation. See HTS, 73: 2980; Yen Keng-wang, T’ang p’u shang ch’eng-lang piao, 4 vols., Taipei: Chung-yang yen-chiu-yilan li-shih yin-yen yen-chiu-so, vol. 1, 1956: 148. However, YHHT tells us that Lu Wei’s official advancement reached only to the rank of Attendant Censor (Shih yü-shih), either 6b2 or 6a. See Ts’en Chung-mien, YHHTSCC, ch. 10, 901.

88 HTS, 202: 5769.

89 For his last official position see CTS, 179: 4668; Ts’en Chung-mien, YHHTSCC, ch. 10: 902; also see CTW, 690: 8a.

90 YHHT mentions Lu Jun as Lu Chien who served as Tz’u-pu yüan-wai-lang, while the New T’ang History genealogy only mentions that Lu Jun served as Tso-ssu yüan-wai-lang. Agreeing with HTS, a T’ang essay also only mentioned Lu Jun instead of Lu Chien though without giving us his official title. However, Ts’en Chung-mien points out that since we can only find the name of Lu Chien as Chu-k’o yüan-wai-lang in the T’ang shang-shu-sheng lang-kuan shih-chu t’i-ming k’ao, he believes that Lu Jun and Lu Chien must have been the same person, and the name of this person must be Lu Chien. This of course confirms the material in YHHT, but still does not explain why Lu Jun instead of Lu Chien was mentioned in the T’ang essay. That is to say, we are still not sure which name is the original. Nevertheless, for the sake of convenience, I shall simply use the name of Lu Jun. See HTS, 73: 2979, CTW, 690: 1a; Ts’en Chung-mien, Lang-kuan shih-chu t’i-ming hsin k’ao-ting, 1984: 167 & 190.
This position, ranked at 9a1, the very beginning of the T'ang bureaucratic system, but was considered by T'ang scholars a good starting point for a promising career. Since 790 was the time when Lu Chih enjoyed tremendous imperial favor, it is likely that he might have helped Lu Huai to obtain this starting position. Lu Pa enjoyed an equal literary reputation, and was listed as Director of the Ministry of Personnel (Li-pu lang-chung) in the New T'ang History genealogy. His youngest brother, Lu Ch'an, passed the chin-shih examination in 785, apparently had good command in literary composition, and rose to be Supervising Secretary (Chi-shih-chung) with a rank of 5a1 in 818. He was also ennobled later, probably toward the end of emperor Hsien-tsung's reign (805-820). In short, even though they did not rely upon their family background to enter the government, education and culture, two of the most important attributes of the aristocracy, still constituted the basis of their bureaucratic careers.

Although the six sons of Lu Ch'i-wang all seemed to have acquired official appointment, like members of the Tan-t'u and Tai-wei branches, their willingness to participate in bureaucratic life also led to gradual alienation from their local base. This is demonstrated in the career of Lu Feng's descendants.

Lu Feng's great grandson, Lu I, passed the chin-shih examination in 886. Inheriting his family's chief traits, Lu I's talent in literary composition also won high praise from his contemporaries. Largely due to his literary ability, he subsequently rose to be Chief Minister in 896 under emperor Chao-tsung (888-904). Lu I was, however, considered a native of Shan-chou (north-west of Lo-yang, in modern Honan) because his family had
moved out of Wu chün and settled in Shan-chou. This probably took place when Lu I's
father acquired an official position in Shan-chou. Their bureaucratic services entailed
closer ties with the state. As a result, when the T'ang central government was on the verge
of collapse, Lu I also had to spend his political life under the shadow of imminent chaos.
He met a tragic death at the end of Chao-tsung's reign.

As all of the main characteristics of Lu Ch'i-wang's family will be equally reflected in
Lu Chih's political life, our focus here is to find out whether or not Lu Chih and his uncles
shared certain experiences, and more importantly, what status Lu Chih's immediate family
assumed within the Shih-lang branch.

The status of Lu Chih's immediate family

Since all of Lu Chih's uncles, that is, Lu Ch'i-wang's six sons, were his
contemporaries, and since most of them served at court at the same time he did, it is natural
that they should have shared certain experiences. Indeed, the two notable poets Lu Lun
and Ch'ien Ch'i, whose poems to Lu Chih are the only ones now extant, were actually
good friends of Lu Feng. Because of the early death of Lu Chih's father, his elder uncles
probably introduced him to the literary world during his childhood. Moreover, in 791,
when Lu Ch'i-wang's wife (née either Cheng or Ho-lan) died, Lu Chih, then serving as
Vice Minister in the Ministry of War (Ping-pu shih-lang), was the one who composed the
tomb inscription for her. There must have been further similar instances to demonstrate

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95 CTS, 179: 4668; HTS, 183: 5383.
96 CTS, 179: 4668-9; HTS, 183: 5383-4. Also see Mao Han-kuang, "Wu chün Lu-shih," 1989: 60.
97 For Lu Lun's and Ch'ien Ch'i's lives and their achievements in T'ang poetry, see
Stephen Owen, The great age of Chinese poetry: the high T'ang, Yale University
98 There is a problem about the identity of Lu Ch'i-wang's wife. According to the Chi-ku
lu-mu, his wife's surname was Ho-lan and she was ennobled as Ying-yang hsin chün
(District Mistress of Ying-yang). This passage is quoted in the Pao-k'o ts'ung-pien.
However, the Pao-k'o ts'ung-pien also quotes another passage from the Ching-chao
The relationship between Lu Chih and his uncles, but limited sources do not permit speculation.

The status of Lu Chih's immediate family seems to have been inferior to that of Lu Ch'i-wang, at least before Lu Chih rose to be the Chief Minister in 792. Lu Chih himself once said that "my family has been very poor." He might have been exaggerating about his family's poverty, but his statement reveals that the economic condition of his family was definitely not very good. Of course, lack of wealth was never the only factor determining the inferior status of a family. The comparatively low ranking official positions occupied by Lu Chih's grandfather and father, the early death of his father, and

\textit{chin-shih lu} which says the wife's last name was Cheng and she was ennobled as District Mistress of Ying-yang county. From the \textit{Chih-chai shu-lu chieh-t'i} we learn that the \textit{Ching-chao ching-shih lu} was compiled in 1082 while the \textit{Chi-ku lu-mu} was at least ten years earlier than that date since the compiler was O-yang Hsiu's (1007-1072) contemporary. The \textit{Pao-k'o ts'ung-pien} was a much later work compiled around 1233. All this information does not necessary solve our puzzle, although one possibility might be that the compiler of the \textit{Pao-k'o ts'ung-pien} made a mistake when he copied the passage from the \textit{Ching-chao ching-shih lu}; that is, he mistakenly changed Ho-lan-shih into Cheng-shih. This is to say that Lu Chih's granduncle actually married a woman of foreign origin. If this was the case, it confirms the fact that marriages between Chinese and non-Chinese families were not uncommon during the T'ang, especially if the non-Chinese family enjoyed high status in society. See: Wang Shou-nan, \textit{Sui T'ang shih}, Taipei: San-min shu-chü, 1986: 687. After all, the T'ang ruling house was known for its admixture of non-Chinese blood. Of course, it is also very likely that Lu Ch'i-wang married Cheng-shih because the Ying-yang Cheng was one of the most illustrious lineages in the T'ang. Such a marriage would have enhanced the prestige of the two families. Besides, the title of the ennoblement -- "Ying-yang hsien chün" -- also seems to indicate the origin of the receiver's family. Whatever the case may be, we can only leave it as it is due to the lack of further information. See \textit{Chi-ku lu-mu}, ch. 8; \textit{Pao-k'o ts'ung-pien}, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng edition, ch. 14: 388-9 & ch. 7: 182; \textit{Chih-chai shu-lu chieh-t'i}, Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition, vol. 2, 8: 225 & 230. As for the Ho-lan family, see Ts'en Chung-mien, \textit{YHHTSCC}, 9: 838-40. In the extant passage of the tomb inscription composed for Lu Ch'i-wang's wife, Lu Chih refers to himself as the great-grandnephew rather than grandnephew of Lu Ch'i-wang. As Ts'en Chung-mien points out, this must be a copyist's mistake. Since all of Lu Ch'i-wang's sons were still alive at the beginning of Yüan-ho era (805-820), the age differences between Lu Chih and them could not have made him their grandnephew. Our study of Lu Chih and Lu Ch'i-wang's families has also demonstrated the real relationship between them. See Ts'en Chung-mien, \textit{YHHTSCC}, 10: 902. Professor Mao Han-kuang graciously checked all of the available tomb inscription rubbings in the Chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu-so in Taipei; he was unable to locate any other references to Lu Ch'i-wang's wife or any other members of the Lu Chih's family. Personal communication of April 20, 1989.

the lack of more male offspring from his family participating in the government could all have contributed to it. It is true that Lu Chih's mother was a member of the prominent Wei clan from the Kuan-chung aristocracy, but how high his mother's immediate family stood within the Wei clan, and to what extent the influence of his mother's family could have reached to the Shih-lang branch remain unclear to us. Nevertheless, the aristocratic background of Lu Chih's mother could certainly have made it easier for her to provide her children with education and culture, the absolutely necessary cachet for members of a prominent lineage, and, as shown above, the key assets to the Lus' bureaucratic career.

On the whole then, the status of Lu Chih's immediate family did not seem to have matched that of his uncles, and the position of the Shih-lang branch in turn was probably not as powerful as that of the T'ai-wei branch, though it might have enjoyed equal status with that of the Tan-t'u subgroup. In other words, Lu Chih's own family occupied a secondary position within the Shih-lang branch, and, at most, could only assume a third class standing within the three major Lu branches. But being a member of the Wu chūn Lu clan should have already provided Lu Chih's family an assured status among the most illustrious aristocratic families of the Tang. In a word, the relatively inferior position of Lu Chih's immediate family within the Lu clan did not change the overall superior status of his larger family in T'ang society. Having presented our detailed picture of Lu Chih's family background, we now turn to a discussion Lu Chih's own life.

**Portrait of an independent young man**

We do not know Lu Chih's exact birthplace, but since the Shih-lang branch was already settled in Chia-hsing county of Wu chūn during the K'ai-yüan era, it is quite
reasonable to accept that Lu Chih was a native of Chia-hsing county. In addition to the fact that he lost his father at a very young age, Lu Chih's *Old T'ang History* biography also tells us that Lu Chih (styled Ching-yü) was quite an independent and outstanding young man (*t'e-li pu-ch'ün*). It particularly points out that Lu Chih studied Confucianism diligently (*p'o ch'in ju-hsüeh*). In light of the general intellectual climate of the T'ang which "valued literature and slighted Confucianism" (*chung-wen ch'ing-ju*), especially before the An Lu-shan rebellion, such a comment made by the authors of the *Old T'ang History* on Lu Chih is by no means a cliché. It indicates that Lu Chih, in his youth, already expressed his independence by not conforming to the general trend of "valuing literature." This does not mean that he did not pay attention to literary study, nor does it imply that he did not excel in literary composition.

Quite the contrary, Lu Chih understood the important function of literature in his time, but he accorded this function a different level of significance. In one of his seven extant rhyme-prose (*fu*), Lu Chih said that "those who think set their minds on the Way; those who advance cultivate literary style." Evidently, he recognized the utilitarian value of literature in his time. He realized that literature was a necessary vehicle for any one who wanted to enter and advance in the bureaucracy.

Without diminishing the practical function of literature, Lu Chih emphasized another realm for "those who think" -- that is, the Way. Furthermore, in his words, "those who have thoroughly grasped the Way are gentlemen" (*t'ung yü tao che shih wei chün-tzu*).

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100 CTS, 139: 3791; HTS, 157: 4911; YHHT, ch. 10, 4a. Other sources such as Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface and ch. 4 of SL only mention Lu Chih's choronym as Wu chün. For Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, CTW, 493: 12a; SL, 4: 14.
101 CTS, 139: 3791.
102 CTS, 139: 3791.
104 See his "Hung-chien fu," CTW, 460: 8. All of Lu Chih's seven extant rhyme-prose are preserved in CTW. Although most of them are occasional pieces, some of the passages do reveal his inner thoughts. See CTW, 460: 1-8.
105 Ibid.: 7.
His concept of *chiin-tzu* is conflated with his idea of a genuine Confucian scholar. In a memorial to emperor Te-tsung dated 783, Lu Chih unmistakenly implied that he considered himself a Confucian scholar.\(^{106}\) Inspired to be a *chiin-tzu*, Lu Chih's concept of a Confucian scholar was quite different from the current T'ang idea of a Confucianist. While most T'ang Confucian scholars were primarily concerned with exhaustive exegetical scholarship on the five canons and state ritual programs,\(^{107}\) these never seem to occupy the center of Lu Chih's focus on Confucian learning. Rather, he often described himself as "a man who has the greatest respect for benevolence and duty" (*tsun-mu jen i*).\(^{108}\)

Though he valued Confucianism more than literature, Lu Chih nevertheless took the popular, but by no means easy, route to enter the bureaucracy.

**Acquiring the chin-shih degree**

It is well established that when empress Wu began to emphasize ability in literary composition in the late seventh century, and when the examination system was under reform early in emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign, the *chin-shih* examination gradually became the most prestigious and important channel for acquiring official status.\(^{109}\) Having recognized the practical importance of literature, Lu Chih sought a nominal official rank (*p'in*) or official status through the *chin-shih* examination. In 773, at twenty (twenty *sui*),

\(^{106}\) "Feng-t'ien lun ni yü Han-lin hsüeh-shih kai-chuan chuang," HYCC, 13: 8.

\(^{107}\) See McMullen, *State and scholars*, 1988, ch. 3 & 4.

\(^{108}\) See his memorial "Feng-t'ien lun ch'ien so ta-tsou wei shih-hsing chuang," HYCC, 12: 13.

he won the *chin-shih* degree with a sixth place among thirty-four successful candidates.\footnote{110} The fact that Lu Chih could pass such a prestigious and difficult examination at such a young age demonstrates his excellent literary ability. The literary influence of his uncles probably played a role in that regard.

**First official appointment in local government**

In order to be appointed immediately, Lu Chih did not wait for the usual placement process which required completing another four steps of assessment (*k'ao*).\footnote{111} He took the "vast erudition and grand composition" (*po-hsüeh hung-tz'u*) examination instead. This together with the "outstanding judgement on court affairs" (*shu-p'an pa-ts'ui*) were the two most prestigious placement examinations given at the time. They were reserved for candidates who had already obtained nominal official status, had excellent literary talent, and outstanding ability in judgement of court affairs.\footnote{112} Lu Chih passed the *po-hsüeh hung-tz'u* examination either in 773, the same year that he obtained his *chin-shih* degree, or

\footnote{110} Chi'\u0101an Te-y\'u's Preface says Lu Chih obtained this degree at age 18, that is, in 771. Both SL and CTS contain the same message. Based upon *Teng-k'o chi-k'ao* Denis Twitchett has explained why the date of Lu Chih's degree conferment should have been in 773. Yen I-p'ing, following the *Teng-k'o chi-k'ao* and the passage in *T'ang-shih chi-shih*, also agrees that 773 should be the correct date. See Denis Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 88 & 338 note 28; Yen I-p'ing, *Lu Hsüan-kung nien-p'u*, 1975: 9-10. Also see *Teng-k'o chi-k'ao*, Chung-hua shu-chi edition, 1984: 10: 380; *T'ang-shih chi-shih*, Chung-hua shu-chü, 1965: 32: 504.

\footnote{111} These include tests on deportment (*shen*), speech (*yen*), calligraphy (*shu*) and judgement on administrative affairs (*p'an*). See HTS, 45: 1171; *T'ung-tien*, ch. 15: 84; Denis Twitchett, *Chinese meritocracy*, 1974: 17.

in the following year (774). A poem entitled "Seeing Lu Chih Off for Su-chou after
acquiring a degree," written by Ch'ien Ch'i, another member of the famous Ten Literary
Talents of the Ta-li era, seems to suggest that Lu Chih did not take this examination in 773:

Why are you returning home so early,
For joy in Yun-chien at your success?
Long thinking of your family, the kumquats have ripened;
All washed with rain, the sojourner's sails are swift.
By night fires, you'll pass the ford;
At morning bell, you'll face P'u-ch'eng.
Rest your transcendent wings at Hua-t'ing,
And plan another time to soar again.\(^{113}\)

Although the title of this poem does not specifically mention the chin-shih degree, it
was obviously assumed by the author; passing the po-hsüeh hung-tz'u would have been
indicated by "subject" (k'o) instead of by "degree" (ti). Furthermore, the encouragement
and expectation expressed in the last two couplets seems to imply that Lu Chih might not
have passed the placement examination, but was already on his way to Su-chou or Wu
chün. Had he passed the examination and then been given a position but rejected it, the
content of the poem should have been different. Meanwhile, since the purpose of taking

\(^{113}\) CTShih, vol. 5, 4: 5: 1419. Yun-chien is the ancient name of Hua-t'ing county
(hsien). Hua-t'ing was one of the seven counties of Su-chou or Wu chün in the T'ang.
In 751, Chia-hsing, K'un-shan and Hai-yen counties were merged under Hua-t'ing
county. However, Ch'ien Ch'i's use of Hua-t'ing here is obviously an allusion to the
phrase "the cry of the crane at Hua-t'ing" (Hua-t'ing he-li) by Lu Chi, the famous
literary talent of the Lu lineage during the Western Chin dynasty. Hua-t'ing had also
been the traditional residence of the Lus before the T'ang. See YHCHTC, 25: 661.
However, the Wu-ti chi says that it was in 746 that Hua-t'ing county was established,
see Lu Kuang-wei, Wu-ti chi, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng edition, 1939: 7-8. During the
T'ang, P'u-cheng was one of the counties of Chien-chou (north of modern Fu-chou),
see YHCHTC, 29: 801; Chung-kuo li-shih ti-t'u chi, Shanghai: Ti-t'u ch'u-pan-she,
vol. 5: 55-6. The English translation is mine with the assistance of Michael S. Duke.
such an examination was to acquire an immediate appointment, it would be pointless for him to delay the examination for another two or three years. Thus, the year which Lu Chih took the po-hsüeh hung-tʻu examination was most likely 774. Having passed the po-hsüeh hung-tʻu examination, Lu Chih was appointed to be the District Defender (hsien-wei) of Cheng county in Hua-chou near Chʻang-an,\(^{114}\) and hence began his first service as a minor official in provincial government. However, he stayed in this office for no more than three years.

**First mentor and friend**

In 777, Lu Chih resigned from his first appointment and returned to Su-chou or Wu chʻūn. On his way home, he stopped at Shou-chou (in modern Anhui) to visit the Prefect Chang I (d. 783). Chang I, like Lu Chih, was a member of one of the most eminent native aristocratic families in Wu chʻūn. He entered the officialdom through the protective yin privilege.\(^{115}\) Probably because he had never heard of Lu Chih's name, Chang I at first did not pay too much attention to him. When Chang I finally talked to Lu Chih three days later, he became so impressed that he was even willing to accept him as a friend regardless of their age difference (wang-nien chiao).\(^{116}\)

When Lu Chih bade him farewell, Chang I presented him with a tremendous amount of gifts and money. He told Lu Chih to use them as expenditure for a day's meal for his mother. Lu Chih would only accept a bundle of newly prepared tea leaves as a token of Chang's appreciation.\(^{117}\) Lu Chih's early manifestation of moral purity might be

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\(^{114}\) CTS, 139: 3791; HTS, 157: 4911; SL, 4: 14; Chʻüan Te-yʻü, Preface, CTW, 493: 11 & 12.

\(^{115}\) CTS, 125: 3545; HTS, 152: 4829.


\(^{117}\) Ibid.; Chʻüan Te-yʻü's Preface, CTW, 493: 12.
Lu Chih

considered an empty posture, but we shall see that in his later career, whenever he dealt with financial matters, he never deviated from his first principles. How the relationship between Chang I and Lu Chih actually developed is not clear to us, but Chang I's later career as Chief Minister from 781 to 782 probably influenced Lu Chih's rapid rise to emperor Te-tsung's favor.

**Problematic first provincial appointment**

One question that we need to answer here is: can we accept the statement made by most sources that Lu Chih never took his first appointment in Cheng county because he did not like this position and that he visited Chang I right after he resigned from the proffered position around 774?\(^{118}\) A closer examination of the sources reveals a different scenario and provides a negative answer.

First of all, Chang I was not appointed as Prefect of Shou-chou until at least 777.\(^ {119}\) From 775 to 777 he was appointed to be the Prefect of Hao-chou (also in modern Anhui).\(^ {120}\) During his tenure there, he acquired quite a reputation both as a successful administrator of the local educational program and an erudite classical scholar. A recent study has placed him in the category of "hsing ming scholars" due to his phonologically based interpretative work on the *Meng tzu* (Mencius) and his practice of government according to the Menician principles of "benevolence and duty" (*jen i*).\(^ {121}\) As a result, his

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\(^{118}\) CTS, 139: 3791; HTS, 157: 4911; SL, 4: 14; Ch'üan Te-yü, Preface, CTW, 493: 11 & 12.


\(^{120}\) Ibid.: 1515.

\(^{121}\) For the characteristics of the "hsing ming scholars," see McMullen, *State and scholars*, 1988: 105-112 and his references. For Chang I's work on *Mencius*, see CTS, 125: 3546; on his government see, Ch'üan Te-yü's comments on him, Ch'üan Te-yü, "T'ang ku Chung-shu shih-lang t'ung Chung-shu men-hsia p'ing-chang shih Tai-tzu pin-k'o tseng Hu-pu shang-shu Chi' Cheng-kung shen-tao pei-ming," CTW, ch. 499: 5.
administration of Hao-chou earned him high praise as one of the three best provincial administrators in the middle of Ta-li era.\textsuperscript{122}

In the meantime, Chang I's leadership in defending Hao-chou against the rebellion of Li Ling-yao, a general who tried to take an independent course from the court after the death of the governor at the strategically important Pien-chou, led to his promotion. He was promoted no later than 777 to the post of Prefect of Shou-chou after the suppression of Li Ling-yao at the end of 776.\textsuperscript{123} By the time emperor Te-tsung ascended the throne in 779, Chang I was promoted to another position and no longer served in Shou-chou.\textsuperscript{124} Lu Chih himself also mentioned that he had spent two years in Ch'ang-chou (in modern Kiangsu) where Hsiao Fu (732-788) was serving as Prefect.\textsuperscript{125} Since Hsiao Fu's appointment in Ch'ang-chou did not begin until after the fourth month of 777, and since he had to leave for another position by 779,\textsuperscript{126} Lu Chih's residence in Ch'ang-chou must have been two years before 779, and his visit to Chang I in turn could only have taken place in 777. In other words, Lu Chih most certainly did take his first office in Cheng county in 774. Although he resigned out of dislike for the position, it is very likely that he hoped to receive another appointment which nevertheless failed him in 777. He chose then to return to Su-chou or Wu chün.\textsuperscript{127}

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\textsuperscript{122} The other two officials are said to be Hsiao Fu, Lu Chih's close friend as shall be shown soon, and Hsiao Ting. See CTS, 185: 4826.


\textsuperscript{124} CTS & HTS, ibid.

\textsuperscript{125} Lu Chih, "Feng-t'ien lun chieh Hsiao Fu chuang," in HYCC, ch. 14: 7.

\textsuperscript{126} The Prefect of Ch'ang-chou before Hsiao Fu was Tu-Ku Chi (725-777) who died in the fourth month of 777. See CTW, ch. 522: 6; Hsiao Fu left Ch'ang-chou in 779 see CTS, 125: 3551.

\textsuperscript{127} A passage contained in the collated edition of T'ang Yü-lin by Ch'ien Hsi-tso says that Lu Chih was once appointed to be "Huai-nan wei," but was denied the position by the Vice Director of the Ministry of Personnel (Li-pu shih-lang); Ku Shao-lien (741-803) later received the position. Since Ku Shao-lien was only appointed as "Teng-feng chu-pu" (Assistant Magistrate of Teng-feng) and since Teng-feng was in Honan, Yen I-ping argues that Lu Chih was originally given the office in Honan after he had resigned from the Cheng county office, "Huai-nan wei" must have been a mistake for
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A close friendship in Ch'ang-chou

If Chang I was the first significant friend whom Lu Chih encountered in 777, his acquaintance with Hsiao Fu was destined to become an even more important experience in his life. After his visit with Chang I in 777, Lu Chih evidently did not stay in Wu chün too long. We know that he spent the next two years in Ch'ang-chou, but he never mentioned when and why he went there. Perhaps Chang I had recommended him to the Prefect of Ch'ang-chou who might give him some kind of minor post on the provincial staff. If this was the case, the question we have to ask then is which Prefect was Chang I referring to?

The Prefect of Ch'ang-chou whom Lu Chih encountered was none other than Hsiao Fu, but he might not have been the Prefect Chang I had in mind. Hsiao Fu only took the position of Prefect in Ch'ang-chou after the fourth month of 777. Prior to that date, the early advocate of ku-wen, Tu-ku Chi (725-777), had governed Ch'ang-chou for at least four years and was also known for his excellent administration based upon Confucian principles. There is a possibility that Chang I might have recommended the youthful Lu Chih, who considered himself a Confucian scholar, to visit Tu-ku Chi. Whether or not Lu Chih had a chance to meet Tu-ku Chi depends entirely upon when he arrived at Ch'ang-chou and this is, unfortunately, unclear to us. What we can be sure of is that he definitely had a chance to meet Hsiao Fu, the Prefect who succeeded Tu-ku Chi.

According to Lu Chih, "while taking up a temporary abode in Ch'ang-chou for two years altogether, I became acquainted with Hsiao Fu through observation of his

"Honan wei". Because Lu Chih was denied the appointment in Honan, he then left for Su-chou. See Yen I-p'ing, Lu Hsüan-kung nien-p'u, 1975: 16; also see Chien Hsi-tso, "T'ang Yü-lin chiao-k'an chi" in T'ang Yü-lin, Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she edition, 1978, p. 312. For Ku Shao-lien, see HTS, 162: 4994; CTW, 478: 3. 128 See his life accounts (hsing-chuang) given by his disciple Liang Su (753-793), CTW, 522: 5-6.
government and conduct."\(^{129}\) This statement could be construed to mean that Lu Chih's residence in Ch'ang-chou was actually as a minor official in Hsiao Fu's administration. How else could he have become Hsiao Fu's friend through observation of his prefectural administration? And how would he have supported himself during those two years? Perhaps seeking for a job in the provincial government was Lu's real reason for leaving Wu for the near-by Ch'ang-chou in the first place. In any event, the seeds of friendship were sown and, as far as we know, Hsiao Fu is the only person whom Lu Chih ever described as a genuinely close friend. Their relationship grew more intimate when they were both stationed in the capital later in the 780s. In Lu Chih's words, they met quite frequently while in the capital, and their "mutual affection deepened as time went by." He even claimed that he understood Hsiao Fu's intention and temperament (chih-hsing) completely.\(^{130}\) But who was Hsiao Fu?

Hsiao Fu's ancestors were the founding fathers of the Southern Liang dynasty (502-557). His family belonged to the highest aristocracy. His grandfather, Hsiao Sung, was Chief Minister during emperor T'ang Hsüan-tsung's rule from 728 to 733. In addition, his father, Hsiao Heng, was even married to Hsüan-tsung's daughter, the Hsin-ch'ang princess, and his cousin, Hsiao Sheng, was also married to emperor Su-tsung's daughter.\(^{131}\) Although most of his cousins led a luxurious life, Hsiao Fu himself was known both for his frugality and his pursuit of scholarship.\(^{132}\) Like Lu Chih's other friend, Chang I, Hsiao Fu was much older than Lu Chih. We do not know Chang I's actual age, but Hsiao Fu was at least twenty-two years older than Lu Chih.\(^{133}\) Also in common with Chang I, Hsiao Fu was very particular about his choice of friends.

\(^{129}\) "Feng-t'ien lun chieh Hsiao Fu chuang," HYCC, ch. 14: 7-8.
\(^{130}\) Ibid.: 8.
\(^{131}\) See CTS, 99: 3093-96; HTS, 101: 3953-55.
\(^{132}\) CTS, 125: 3550; HTS, 101: 3955.
\(^{133}\) Ibid.: 3552 & p. 3957. Hsiao Fu died in 788 at age 57.
not like the "current fashion (liu-su)", and would not want to make friends with people unless they were "poets or Confucian scholars."\textsuperscript{134}

Hsiao Fu's care in choosing his friends makes one wonder why he became a close friend of Lu Chih. Sharing a common tradition of southern aristocracy with Lu Chih definitely made a difference. Moreover, we find that one of Lu Chih's lineage elders, Lu Hsiang-hsien (666-737), was an inlaw of Hsiao Fu's grandfather, Hsiao Sung -- they were both married to daughters of the same Ho family.\textsuperscript{135} This distant relationship might have helped Lu Chih to get a post in Hsiao Fu's provincial government if he indeed went to Ch'ang-chou to seek a position. Nevertheless, it seems none of this would have mattered if Lu Chih had not been a Confucian scholar gifted with literary brilliance.

Hsiao Fu's family background and his determination to be a man of integrity made him emperor Te-tsung's loyal but critical subject. In 783, Hsiao Fu was appointed to be the Chief Minister. At that time, Lu Chih had already become one of Te-tsung's private advisors. As a court official, Hsiao Fu's unsocial and straightforward personality is said to have often alienated his colleagues. His criticism of the appointment of eunuchs as army supervisors, and of Te-tsung's sycophantic favorite minister Lu Ch'i further offended the emperor. As a result, Te-tsung was determined to send him to the south as Pacification Commissioner (Hsiian-fu).\textsuperscript{136} At this time Te-tsung heard that Hsiao Fu refused to accept this appointment. Thus displeased Te-tsung asked Lu Chih about Hsiao Fu's character.

In his protest against the arrangement of Hsiao Fu's "senddown," Lu Chih made a fairly objective evaluation of his friend to his superior. He told the emperor that Hsiao Fu had always been inspired by upright men and hence had been determined to cultivate his

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., Chang I is also said not to make friends lightly. CTS, 125: 3545; HTS, 152: 4829.
\textsuperscript{135} CTS, 99: 3093; HTS, 101: 3953.
own moral character. However, Lu Chih believed that this moral conviction sometimes made Hsiao Fu "go to extremes." Lu Chih said because Hsiao Fu intended to accomplish everything with perfection, he consequently "lacked the ability to adapt to changing circumstances." Sometimes his perfectionist attitude was said by Lu Chih to have incurred the criticism that he was a seeker after fame. Nevertheless, Lu Chih continued, a man like Hsiao Fu who always maintained that to understand the meaning of the classics was to "tenaciously guard the good Way unto death without any regret" might very well have various personality flaws, but they would not make Hsiao Fu a capricious or treacherous man unworthy of imperial trust.137

Lu Chih's assessment of Hsiao Fu is most significant. In his future career Lu Chih would demonstrate his difference from Hsiao Fu in dealing with changing conditions, but the similarities existing between their personal characters deserve our close attention. To a certain extent, Lu's portrait of Hsiao Fu can be regarded as an unconscious (or perhaps conscious) self disclosure to emperor Te-tsung. After all, it was by no means fortuitous that two people with such an age difference should have become intimate friends since their inner worlds shared many similar values.

Second official appointment

In the fifth month of 779, emperor Te-tsung succeeded his father Tai-tsung to the throne. Hsiao Fu was then given a new position in Tan-chou (modern Hunan). Prior to this new development, Lu Chih had already left Ch'ang-chou at the end of 778 or right before the fifth month of 779 in order to take the placement examination in the capital. He passed the shu-p'an pa-ts'ui examination this time for a new position.138 Judging by the

137 "Lun chieh Hsiao Fu chuang," HYCC, 14: 8.
138 None of the traditional sources tell us when exactly Lu Chih took his Shu-p'an pa-ts'ui examination. Yen I-p'ing assumes that Lu Chih went to the capital in 778 and took the examination that year, but this could only have taken place at the end of 778, otherwise
fact that Lu Chih was already qualified for another appointment since he had passed the po-
hsüeh hung-tzu examination earlier, it is most interesting to note that he should have taken
the extremely difficult and competitive shu-p'an pa-ts'ui examination again.

A logical explanation would seem to be that Lu Chih was not satisfied being man of
literary talent only. As discussed above, he aspired to be a gentleman who set his mind on
the Way. To prove that in addition to his literary ability, he also had excellent ability in
conducting government affairs, taking the shu-p'an pa-ts'ui examination was a logical
choice. His new position was that of Assistant Magistrate (Chu-pu) of Wei-nan county
(modern Shansi not far from Hsi-an). Though it was still a beginning position with a rank
of either 9a2 or 9b1, it nonetheless put him in a position actually to assist with the
government of the county. During his service in Wei-nan county, Lu Lun, a friend of his
uncle and a member of the Ten Literary Talents of the Ta-li Era, wrote a poem to him.\[139\]
In this poem, Lu Lun expressed sad resignation toward himself for aging but not yet
achieving any prospect of success, and he satirized the onerous burden assumed by low
ranking officials in general, which of course was aiming at Lu Chih's new responsibility.

Like Chang I and Hsiao Fu, Lu Chih's two poet friends, Lu Lun and Ch'ien Ch'i,
were much older than he. Ch'ien Ch'i came from the southeast region and obtained his

\[139\] The title of his poem is "I chung wang shan hsi-tseng Wei-nan Lu Chih Chu-pu,"
CTShih, vol. 6, 5: 2: 1681.
Life and Family Background

*chīn-shih* in 752, two years before Lu Chih was born. Lu Lun, on the other hand, was not a native Southerner. His early ancestors belonged to the most prominent Lu clan of Fan-yang in the Shan-tung area. He originally intended to take the *chīn-shih* examination at the end of the T’ien-pao era, but the An Lu-shan rebellion forced him, like so many other scholar-official families, to take refuge in the south with his parents. In short, as far as we know, the four people who were definitely Lu Chih’s friends were all older than he was. Moreover, they either came from the same southeast region as he did, or else had spent some time in the south. The similar geographical background probably had some effect on Lu Chih’s choice of friends. To a certain extent, all these four people seem to have played roles more like father figures than friends to him. While Lu Lun and Ch’ien Ch’i might have influenced him in the literary realm, Chang I and Hsiao Fu probably provided him with examples of exemplary scholar-officials.

**First appointment in the central government**

While Lu Chih continued his service in Wei-nan county, the newly enthroned emperor Te-tsung was launching a series of measures to restore the imperial authority. One of the most significant policies Te-tsung put forward in order to restore the authority of the central financial administration, was the famous two-tax system (*liang-shuì fa*). Since we shall discuss this tax system in the later chapters, our purpose here is to point out that it was in the second month of 780 that Te-tsung issued an edict to dispatch eleven Personnel Evaluation Commissioners (*Ch’u-chīh shīh*) to the eleven major regions of the empire.

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140 CTS, 168: 4382-3; HTS, 203: 5786. Also see note 101 above.

Their task was to initiate the new tax system and to negotiate quotas with local authorities. The Commissioner who was dispatched to the capital area was Yü Ho.

According to the *New T'ang History*, Lu Chih had a discussion with the Commissioner. Since Wei-nan county was administered by the metropolitan region, this conference must have been with Yü Ho. It is said that Lu Chih suggested to the Commissioner a series of methods for the conduct of government. These included his ideas about how to understand the customs of the general population, how to distinguish a capable and just local government from its opposite, how to select local talents, and the importance of providing welfare for the needy, eliminating unnecessary official positions and tedious laws, and abolishing redundant food supplies to the armies.

The most interesting of these proposals were Lu's ideas on managing a sound financial administration. Since we shall discuss his ideas on financial administration with the two tax system in the later chapters, it is sufficient to state here that Lu Chih's suggestions were well received at the time. Despite the fact that Lu Chih did not serve in provincial office more than five years, his knowledge of these different administrative methods indicates his deep concern for and understanding of provincial affairs. His own administrative experiences and observations in Cheng county and Ch'ang-chou must have made him "well versed in administrative matters". This is also very likely the reason

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142 This edict is preserved in TFYK, 162: 1957-8, a short version is also in *T'ang ta-chao-ling chi* (hereafter TTCLC) Peking: Commercial Press edition, 1959: 104: 534. Twitchett has translated this edict in his *Financial administration under the T'ang dynasty*, Cambridge University Press, second edition, 1970: 161-2. However, Yü Ho should be the correct name of this commissioner. Also see TCTC, 226: 7277; HTS, 157: 4911.

143 HTS, ibid. Except for HTS, none of the other traditional sources mention this discussion. Yen I-p'ing notices this information, but since he believes that Lu Chih already served in the central government, he does not see the connection of this information to Lu Chih's career development. See Yen I-p'ing, *Lu Hsiian-kung nien-p'u*, 1975: 18. Twitchett does discuss this information, but because he assumes that Lu Chih's suggestion to the Commissioner at this time was actually one of his memorials to the throne as Han-lin scholar, he does not make the connection either. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 89-90.

144 See YHICHTC, ch. 1: 1.

he was soon promoted to be an Investigating Censor (*Chien-ch'ä yü-shih*, rank 8a1) in the capital. He probably obtained this first appointment in the central government no earlier than the second month of 780.\(^{146}\)

Lu Chih remained in this position for some time. In a memorial to Te-tsung presented at the end of 783, he stated plainly that he had been given an audience by the emperor during the first half year of his service at the Censorate, but was never again asked for by the emperor.\(^ {147}\) The fact that Lu Chih was appointed to be an Investigating Censor shows that he was at the beginning of a promising career pattern which any T'ang civil servant would have envied.\(^ {148}\) However, Lu Chih was soon going to acquire another appointment which would make him a cynosure of the mid-T'ang political stage and circumvent the many years required to climb to the top of the bureaucracy in the usual pattern of career advancement.\(^ {149}\) Before he received such an appointment, the T'ang state was faced with a grave threat. In the first month of 781, rebellion broke out in the Ho-pei region.

The background of the second rebellion in the Ho-pei region involved complicated elements and will be analyzed in the next chapter. It is necessary to mention here that emperor Te-tsung's policies to restore the imperial authority constituted the major cause of the rebellion. The court originally had some chance to suppress the rebels, but it lost its momentum due to Te-tsung's unpopular reward policy. The rebellion continued and even spread to the Huai-hsi region. Moreover, the popular discontent in the capital area caused by the court's irregular tax exactions and the resentment of a frontier crack troop

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146 We do not know exactly when he was promoted to this new position, but since his suggestions were presented to the Commissioner in the second month of 780, his promotion could not have been earlier than that. Yen I-p'ing assumes that Lu Chih took this new service in 779, but I believe this is incorrect. See HTS, 157: 4911-2; Yen I-p'ing, *Lu Hsüan-kung nien-p'u*, 1975: 17.

147 See "Feng-t'ien lun ch'ien so ta tsou wei shih-hsing chuang," HYCC, ch. 12: 23.

148 The position of Investigating Censor was a major channel through which an official could be further selected to assume those prestigious and important offices designated as "pure official" (*ch'ing-kuan*). See Sun Kuo-tung, "Meng-yu-lu," in his *T'ang Sung shih lun-ts'ung*, 1980: 20; Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 89.

149 Sun Kuo-tung, ibid.: 22 & 32, note 15.
summoned to fight the Ho-pei rebels but receiving unsatisfactory rewards triggered another army revolt and a popular uprising at the capital in the late months of 783. Consequently, Te-tsung was forced to escape to nearby Feng-t'ien (west of Ch'ang-an) and led the life of an exile for almost a year.

It was against this background that Lu Chih's new appointment as a Han-lin scholar changed his personal fate and left a significant imprint on mid-T'ang political history.

Appointment as Han-lin scholar -- a turning point

While the history of the Han-lin Academy will be presented in the next chapter, we shall first establish exactly when Lu Chih assumed the position of Han-lin scholar, a subject of some confusion. Most of the sources mention that emperor Te-tsung heard of Lu Chih's name when he was still Heir Apparent. After he ascended the throne, he made Lu a Han-lin scholar.\textsuperscript{150} This has led modern historians to date Lu Chih's appointment to that position at 779.\textsuperscript{151} But as we have described above, in 779 Lu Chih was still serving in Wei-nan county, and could only assume his duties in the Censorate after his conference with the dispatched Commissioner in the second month of 780. Besides, right after his enthronement in 779 Te-tsung immediately appointed his previous classics tutor, Chang She, to be a Han-lin scholar, and Chang enjoyed the imperial favor until the third month of 780 when his involvement in a bribery scandal was discovered.\textsuperscript{152} After Chang She's fall from grace, Te-tsung did not seem to have any favorite Han-lin scholar. In fact, up to 783, his favorite minister was Lu Ch'i, whose protégé was going to be Lu Chih's nemesis.

\textsuperscript{150} CTS, 139: 3791; HTS, 157:4912; TCTC, 228: 7347; Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, CTW, ch. 493, p. 12.


\textsuperscript{152} CTS, 127: 3577-78; TCTC, 226: 7278.
Although we are certain that Lu Chih remained as Investigating Censor for some time, we do not know the exact length of his service in this office. The *Old T'ang History* attributes his appointment as Han-lin scholar to Chang I's influence. This implies that he could only have acquired this post after the seventh month of 781 when Chang I became Chief Minister. However, a T'ang source compiled in 837 unmistakably states that Lu Chih was appointed to be Han-lin scholar in the third month of 783 while he was serving concurrently as the Vice Director of the Bureau of Sacrifices (Tz'u-pu yüan-wai-lang), a subordinate section of the Ministry of Rites (Li pu). This seems to be a convincing date. For one thing, if Lu Chih was appointed in the third month of 783, this then explains why he did not present any memorials to the throne prior to 783, not even when his patron Chang I was sent away from the capital in the fourth month of 782. He was probably not so much afraid to make a protest as he was unable to gain access to the emperor. In short, it seems quite reasonable to accept that Lu Chih assumed the position of Han-lin scholar in the third month of 783.

According to the *Old T'ang History*, when Lu Chih first set in as a Han-lin scholar, he accompanied the emperor from morning till night, reciting poems, singing songs, and entertaining him. Among his three extant poems, two seem to have been composed during this period. The first is entitled "Passing the Southern Palace at Dawn, I Heard the Imperial Music."

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153 CTS, 139: 3799.
154 Ting Chü-hui, "Ch'ung-hsiu Ch'eng-chih hsüeh-shih pi-chi," in *Han-yüan ch'ün-shu*, Chih pu-tsu chai ts'ung-shu edition; Ts'en Chung-mien, "Han-lin hsüeh-shih pi-chi chu pu," in his *Lang-kuan shih-chu t'i-ming hsin k'ao-ting*, 1984: 221. As Ts'en Chung-mien points out, Lu Chih, according to "Ch'ung-hsiu ch'eng-chih hsüeh-shih pi-chi," seemed to have been appointed as Tz'u-pu yüan-wai lang first and to the Han-lin scholar position later. TFYK (ch. 99: 1187) also accepts 783 as the date of his conferment in this position.
155 CTS, 139: 3817.
Passing the Southern Palace, I heard the ancient music;
The sound first heard at daybreak amazed me.
Through the mist from that far secluded spot,
I recognized the silk-wood zither's strains:
Its rhythms modulated by each new scale,
The melody grew light on the lingering breeze;
In elegance enough to transform the vulgar,
In harmony calling forth genuine emotions.
As the distant strains saturated the morning,
An echo trailed through the city in spring.
With the coda came the first rays of sunlight,
Illuminating the vastness of Heaven and Earth.\footnote{See Li Fang et al. ed., Wen-yüan ying-hua (hereafter WYYH), Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü reprint, 1966: 184: 3; CTShih, 5: 4: 1744.}

As mentioned above, while serving as Han-lin scholar, Lu Chih concomitantly held the position of Vice Director at the Bureau of Sacrifices. Since "Southern Palace" (Nan-kung) refers to the Ministry of Rites, it is likely that sometime during this period when he was on his way to the Bureau of Sacrifices, the music on an early spring morning inspired him to compose this poem. Compared with the finest works within the splendid T'ang poetic tradition, this poem is admittedly pedantic and ordinary. However, it proves that Lu Chih had some knowledge and understanding of music. In addition to the fact that he could detect the musical instrument by listening to the melody, his attitude toward the music also reflects a typical Confucian interpretation of the social function of music.\footnote{On the Confucian concept of music, see Lun yü IX.14; XV.10; XVII. 18; Hsün tsu, "Yüeh-lun"; Li chi, "Yüeh-chi."} Although most sources agree that it was through his literary talent that Lu Chih was appointed to be
Han-lin scholar, his appreciation of music must also have made him a more enjoyable companion to the emperor.

However, this enjoyable time did not seem to satisfy Lu Chih's quest in life. The following poem, "On Receiving a Fragrant Plant from the Imperial Garden," bears out this point. If the above poem was one of Lu Chih's occasional verses, this one definitely reveals an aspect of his inner world. His inner voice seems to further confirm that this poem was composed during the early period of his service as Han-lin scholar.

Deeply secluded in the Imperial Garden,
Jade grasses grow under the sun's light.
In mist and fog they bend in the wind,
Seem to be tinged with evening glow.
Tender shoots, ever more luxuriant after the rain,
Their stalks grow sweet when the wind is warm.
Like ceremonial escorts, they line the imperial highway
As the royal carriage enters the Chien-chang Palace.
Sodden with mist, they are not shaken,
Though slender shadows are broken and shapeless.
Always afraid the spring sun will shine too late:
No one will appreciate their virgin fragrance.\(^{158}\)

A sense of understated discontent permeates this poem which uses a fragrant plant from the imperial garden as a link to Lu Chih's early service as Han-lin scholar. Although exactly when this poem was composed is not clear to us, judging by the rapid advance of Lu Chih's later career, it is quite unlikely that he should have emitted such a lament while

\(^{158}\) WYYH, 188: 7; CTShih, 5: 4: 1744.
he was ascending to the center of the political stage. In any event, this poem unmistakably confirms once again Lu Chih's higher expectations of himself. Inspired to set his mind upon the Way of government, he was obviously not satisfied with the life of a Han-lin scholar whose chief duty was entertaining the emperor like "a fragrant plant in the imperial garden." His ambitions would soon come to realization.

**On the rise**

In the tenth month of 783, emperor Te-tsung, joined by Lu Chih and a small group of officials, was forced by the uprising at the capital to escape to Feng-t'ien. Ironically enough, while as the T'ang court was on the brink of collapse, Lu Chih's personal career experienced a rapid rise. During their exile, the emperor entrusted Lu Chih with the duty of drafting all state papers. Since the court was in great peril, it needed someone who was both reliable and capable of accomplishing these tasks within a pressing time limit, and Lu Chih proved to be the emperor's ideal candidate. His competence in composing and managing all the state documents won high praise from his biographers:

The whole empire was in turmoil and beset with difficulties. Affairs of state piled up, mobilization and exactions had to be carried out near and far. The policies of state had to follow up innumerable lines of action. Each day several tens of edicts had to be promulgated. All these came from Lu Chih's hand. Wielding the brush and holding the paper he completed his drafts in an instant, and yet he never needed to rewrite anything. Although it appeared that he had given no thought to the matter in hand, when it was completed there was never any detail of the affair which had not been covered, and it was exactly what was needed for the circumstances. The clerks making copies of these documents had no rest, while his colleagues just sat and sighed with folded arms, unable to assist in any way.\(^{159}\)

\(^{159}\) Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 96. Twitchett's translation of this passage is based upon several similar passages contained in CTS, HTS, SL, and Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, see his comments on p. 341 note 87.
Of course, this praise is not without exaggeration, but it at least shows how Lu Chih became the emperor's most indispensable formulator of state documents. On the other hand, Lu Chih's role was not merely confined to that of private secretary to the emperor. Throughout this period of exile, he presented more than thirty memorials to the throne. Almost all the memorials were direct replies to the emperor's consultation. The famous philosopher Chu Hsi (1120-1200) once said he had heard that Lu Hsüan-kung "could not express himself orally, but could only write things out (k'ou shuo-pu-ch'ü; chih shih hsieh te ch'u)." If we could prove what Chu Hsi said to be valid, it would, to an extent, explain why Lu Chih and Te-tsung's communication was carried on more in written form than in conversation. Without such proof, we can only leave Chu Hsi's comment as it is.

Although Te-tsung did not completely follow Lu Chih's advice, his suggestions often became the guidelines for court policies. It is from this point of view that we shall discuss in the next chapter his contribution to restoring the stability of the Tang court. For the time being, it is sufficient to say that his influence on the imperial decisions and his ability to manage state papers caused his contemporaries to regard him as an "inner Chief Minister" (nei-hsiang).  

Toward the end of 783, Te-tsung promoted Lu Chih to the position of Director of the Bureau of Evaluation (K'ao-kung lang-chung) with a rank of 5b1, and still kept him on as a Han-lin scholar. Lu Chih at first declined this promotion, telling the emperor that "rewards should start with distant officials of low position then reach to those near officials of high position; thus deeds of merit will not be overlooked." Since as a Han-lin scholar he was a close attendant to the emperor, Lu Chih meant that he should be the last to be

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161 CTS, 139: 3817.
promoted. Lu Chih's attitude here seems to reveal that he had no intention of abusing his "inner" advisor's power at the risk of the regular bureaucracy.

In the meantime, because the rebels in the capital failed to take over Feng-t'ien immediately, it became possible for the loyalist commanders such as Li Sheng and Li Huai-kuang to re-deploy their forces to relieve Feng-t'ien. In addition, the emperor's willingness to adopt a policy of compromise toward the Ho-pei rebels also made it possible for the court armies to concentrate on warfare in Huai-hsi and the capital. As a result, the Ho-pei region came to a semi-settled situation. This semi-settlement of the Ho-pei region removed the T'ang from imminent danger. While the threat from the Ho-pei region was reduced, a new and dangerous tension nevertheless developed between the two loyalist generals.

Due to his resentment of unfair treatment between Li Sheng's forces and his provincial armies, Li Huai-kuang finally went into rebellion. Therefore, in the second month of 784, the emperor was again forced to move to Liang-chou, on the border between Szechwan and the Wei valley. Fortunately, the imperial armies under Li Sheng, joined by other loyalist forces, soon defeated both Li Huai-kuang and the rebels in the capital, and so ended Te-tsung's exile in Liang-chou in the sixth month of that year. The only rebel forces now left were under the Huai-hsi governor, but he was also eliminated early in 786.

Te-tsung returned to the capital in the seventh month of 784. At the same time, Lu Chih was again promoted to be Grand Master of Remonstrance (Chien-i ta-fu) with a rank of 5a1. This post was soon followed by another important position as Drafter in the

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164 Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 97; TCTC, 228: 7360 and 229: 7372; Li Sheng's biography, CTS, 133:3661-76; Li Huai-kuang, CTS, 121: 3491-95.
165 Twitchett, ibid.; TCTC, 229: 7386.
166 For details see Twitchett, ibid., pp. 98-102; TCTC, 229: 7391-95 and 230: 7401-19. Li Huai-kuang's rebellion is more complicated than the account given here, we will discuss it again in a later chapter.
Secretariat (Chung-shu she-jen) with the same rank order at the end of 784. Although his position as Han-lin scholar remained unchanged, his services in the palace were now probably not too much in contradiction with those of his duties in the bureaucracy. While Lu Chih's public role became increasingly important, his circle of friends seems to have remained limited. This was especially so after he lost his friends Hsiao Fu and Chang I.

**Limited circle of friends**

Right at the time when Te-tsung first fled to Feng-t'ien in the tenth month of 783, Chang I was murdered in an army revolt led by a subordinate commander named Li Ch'u-lin. Although Chang I's death must have brought some grief to Lu Chih, he still enjoyed a close friendship with Hsiao Fu, who accompanied the emperor to Feng-t'ien as well. After Hsiao Fu offended the emperor by his criticism of eunuch power in the army and was sent to the south at the beginning of 784, Lu Chih was probably left without any close friends. However, this seems to have been a result of his conscious choice.

In his memorial pleading for a re-evaluation of Hsiao Fu in 784, Lu Chih mentioned that ever since he accompanied the emperor to Feng-t'ien, he had spent most of his time in the palace in exile, and lost all contact with the world outside of the royal residence. Given some possible exaggeration in his statement, Lu Chih apparently was telling the emperor that he deliberately chose not to be associated with the other court officials. As a personal attendant to the emperor, a Han-lin scholar was not expected to have too much communication with the outside world, and Lu Chih seems to have observed this unwritten

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168 CTS, 125: 3549; TCTC, 228: 7359.
169 "Feng-t'ien lun chieh Hsiao Fu chuang," HYCC, 14: 8-9.
law very well. This apparently provides some clues to the limited source materials for his private life, and explains why "there is a curious lack of reference to him both in the writings of his contemporaries and in the unofficial histories and collections of historical anecdotes, which are very rich for his period."^170

Furthermore, at the beginning of 793, after he had been Chief Minister for eight months, Te-tsung sent an envoy to express his displeasure with Lu Chih. At that time, the emperor once again resumed the old practice of accepting gifts and money as "tribute" from provincial governors, but Lu Chih was opposed to this practice. Displeased by his opposition, Te-tsung told Lu Chih that being "unsociable and upright" he had become "unnecessarily careful and pure." Te-tsung said if he was not willing to receive any money as presents from the local governors, he should at least accept some small gifts as a gesture of good will.^171

Lu Chih's reply reveals his inner thought. He said: "My nature is ordinary and vulgar; how could I not attend to selfish concerns? My family has always been poor; how could I not have desires? The reason that I severely practice self-restraint and diligently cultivate personal integrity is because I carry a great responsibility (as Chief Minister) but have not yet reduced the tax burden or relieved the suffering of the poor. If I shamelessly open the door to bribery, it will betray my sincere concerns for the state, and increase the speed of my personal disaster. Therefore, I have practiced independent integrity and completely rejected private relationships."^172 The purpose of this memorial was, of course, to advise the emperor not to accept bribes, but it also suggests that Lu's distance from contemporary social and intellectual life was a deliberate choice. A person with such expectations for his own conduct was probably not a very popular figure among his colleagues, and very likely became a lonely character. Here we see Hsiao Fu's role as a close friend might have

^172 Ibid. Italics added.
exerted some influence upon him, but Lu Chih's own choice definitely played a deciding role in his self-imposed "unsociable" life style.

On the other hand, during his exile with the court, Lu Chih seems to have developed a certain relationship with Chiang Kung-fu. As his former colleague in the Han-lin Academy, Chiang Kung-fu, like Hsiao Fu, rose to be Chief Minister at Feng-t'ien toward the end of 783. Unlike Hsiao Fu or Lu Chih, however, Chiang was not a member of the highest aristocracy. He seems to have come from a comparatively humble family. Except for the fact that he was a native of Jih-nan county of Ai-chou (in today's Vietnam), we do not know much about his family background. Coming from a southern border province, Chiang Kung-fu entered the bureaucracy through the *chin-shih* examination. He later received a high mark in a special decree examination which led to his further promotion. His literary talent undoubtedly also won him the position of Han-lin scholar. His refined education indicates that his family enjoyed a certain provincial esteem even though it was situated on the southern frontier. The fact that a person from a remote southern backwater, with a comparatively insignificant family background could even rise to be Chief Minister demonstrates that the examination system did indeed serve as an important channel for "intra-class" mobility in Tang society. This was especially so after the An Lu-shan rebellion. Nevertheless, Chiang Kung-fu's tenure as Chief Minister did not last long.

When the court was forced to escape to Liang-chou again in the second month of 784, Te-tsung's favorite daughter, princess T'ang-an, died on the road. Concerned more with the urgent financial needs of the military, Chiang Kung-fu opposed the emperor's plan to

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174 *CTS* does not even give his family origin, it is listed in *HTS*, 152: 4831. For Ai-chou, see *HTS*, 43a: 1113.

175 *CTS*, 138: 3787; *HTS*, Ibid.
build a pagoda for a temporary burial of the deceased princess.\textsuperscript{176} Furiously offended, the emperor asked for Lu Chih's advice on how to deal with the situation.

Knowing that Te-tsung intended to punish Chiang, Lu Chih nevertheless expressed his disapproval of the idea. He presented two memorials in the fourth month of 784, and admitted that Chiang Kung-fu was a long time colleague. In the memorials, Lu Chih defended Chiang Kung-fu in these words, "who would dare offend the imperial countenance and violate the taboo if he were not one who forgets his family for the state and harms his person for the sake of the ruler?"\textsuperscript{177} Lu Chih is obviously implying that Chiang Kung-fu's concern with military expenses was reasonable. He also stated that even if Chiang might have given inappropriate advice, the emperor should have forgiven him for his efforts to perform the duty of a Chief Minister.\textsuperscript{178} Lu's advice was to no avail. Chiang was consequently demoted to the post of advisor to the Heir Apparent, and Lu Chih was the one who composed the rescript for his demotion.\textsuperscript{179}

Lu Chih probably would have made the same protest for other colleagues as long as he believed they acted out of a sense of duty. His relationship with Chiang Kung-fu, however, seems to have been more than merely that of a colleague. After all, Chiang, like Lu, was also a southerner who relied upon his literary talent to obtain the chin-shih degree. In addition, Chiang's sense of duty, seems to have constituted another reason for their friendship. It is even possible that their relationship led Lu Chih to divulge a secret to him.

According to the \textit{Old T'ang History}, in 792 when Lu Chih first took up his duties as Chief Minister, Chiang asked him to arrange a promotion for him. Explaining why he could not do so, Lu Chih told Chiang Kung-fu that he learned from the previous Chief Minister, Tou Shen (734-793), that the emperor would no longer approve any promotions for him. This secret frightened Chiang; he then pleaded to be allowed to leave office for a

\textsuperscript{176} CTS, 12: 341; TCTC, 230: 7422-23; CTS, 138: 3787-88; HTS, 152: 4832.
\textsuperscript{177} "Hsing-y{"u}an lun chieh Chiang Kung-fu chuang," HYCC, 15.: 1-2.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.: 4.
Taoist post. Te-tsung demanded his reasons and he revealed what he had heard, but "dared not" give out Lu Chih's name as his informant. Enraged by Chiang's reply, the emperor once again demoted him and further banished him to the south in the eleventh month of 792. The previous Chief Minister, Tou Shen, was then blamed for revealing such a secret; this incident is said to have become a catalyst for Tou's subsequent receipt of the death sentence.\(^{180}\)

Considering the fact that Chiang Kung-fu did not reveal Lu Chih's name to the emperor, it is difficult to understand why Lu Chih, as the Chief Minister, did not take further steps to defend him. If Lu Chih did not reveal any such "secret" to Chiang Kung-fu, Chiang would have had no reason to reveal Lu Chih's name to the emperor. Lu Chih's not defending him would then imply that his connection with Chiang was probably only confined to that of "long time colleague" without intimate friendship. On the other hand, if Lu Chih did tell Chiang Kung-fu such a "secret," his failure to defend Chiang was perhaps not so much because they were not friends as because they were both afraid that if they had acted otherwise, they would definitely have been suspected of forming a faction against the imperial will, and hence lost their lives.

Lu Chih seems to have had a few other friends. At the end of 783, Te-tsung wanted him to recommend some competent local officials to the court. He was supposed to make a recommendation according to a list of names prepared by the Secretariat.\(^{181}\) Among the thirteen names, Lu Chih thought ten of them deserved his recommendation. In addition to

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\(^{180}\) CTS, 138: 3788 and 139: 3816-17; HTS, 152: 4833. While Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface does not mention this incident at all, the Shun-tsung shih-lu says that Lu Chih was criticized by current opinion as being responsible for Tou Shen's subsequent death. However, the Shih-lu also mentions that it was Tou Shen, rather than Lu Chih, who divulged the secret to Chiang Kung-fu. See SL, 4: 15. Since the authorship of the Shun-tsung shih-lu is still an unsettled question, there is not much significance in determining who divulged this secret at this point. However, we shall soon clarify whether or not Lu Chih was the cause of Tou Shen's death.

\(^{181}\) "Feng-t'ien chien Yüan Kao teng chuang," HYCC, 14: 9-10.
"the public opinions he heard about them", his reason for choosing them lay in the fact that he "had always known them well" (su so an-chih). However, no evidence exists to substantiate his personal connection with these candidates. It is even possible that Lu Chih's statement only implies that he knew them not as "friends," but rather as public figures.

One thing seems to be clear: most of the candidates whom Lu Chih thought deserved to be recommended were either known for their classical scholarship or for their righteous conduct. Most of them were subsequently given positions at court. Ts'ui Tsao, who was a member of the so-called "Four K'uei" group, even became Chief Minister in 786.

During his entire official life Lu Chih did constantly communicate with at least one person. This person was none other than emperor Te-tsung. Before the court fled to Feng-t'ien, Lu Chih was already a close attendant to the emperor. During the exile, Lu Chih's relationship with Te-tsung grew more intimate. It is said that the emperor often called Lu Chih "Lu Chiu" (Lu the Ninth), expressing his rank among family members as well as imperial fondness. He had audiences with the emperor every morning and every

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182 Ibid.: 10. The thirteen candidates include: Yuan Kao, see CTS, 153: 4086; HTS, 120: 4324; Yang Hsü, see CTS, 190: 5059; Sun Ch'eng, see CTS, 190: 5044; HTS, 118: 3423; Chou Hao, CTS, 136: 3746; HTS, 207: 5865-66; Pei Hsü, CTS, 126: 3567; HTS, 130: 4490; Pei Chou, CTS, 122: 3507; HTS, 130: 4491; Tsui Tsao, CTS, 130: 3625; HTS, 150: 4813; Yin Liang, HTS, 199: 5683; Li Chou, CTS, 118: 3423 and 121: 3490; Ho Shih-kan, CTS, 13: 365 and 185: 4830; Yao Nan-chung, CTS, 153: 4081; HTS, 162: 4989; Lu Ch'un, CTS, 189: 4977; HTS, 168: 5127; Shen Chi-chi, CTS, 149: 4034; HTS, 132: 4538.

183 It seems that some of these candidates might have had certain connections with Lu Chih. For example: Lu Ch'un was also a member of the Wu chün Lu clan, Shen Chi-chi, though not a member of Lu clan, came from Wu chün as well. For their biographies, see the above note.

184 See note 182 for references.


186 Ch'üan Te-yü, Preface, CTW, 493: 12; HTS, 157: 4931. "Lu Chiu" refers to his rank among all the cousins of his generation. For the manner in which family seniority was determined in the Tang dynasty, see Ts'en Chung-mien, T'ang-jen hang-ti lu, Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, second edition, 1978: 5-13.
night at Feng-t’ien. The emperor relied so heavily upon him that Lu had to assist in dressing and undressing him.\(^{187}\)

When Te-tsung was forced to take refuge a second time at Liang-chou at the beginning of 784, Lu Chih and some other officials fell behind. It is said that when the emperor learned that Lu Chih was not in the entourage after the imperial arrival at a post house in the mountains, he “wept and wailed in the forbidden lodge,” and issued a handsome reward for anyone who could find Lu Chih. When Lu Chih finally arrived there, the imperial Heir Apparent and other princes all came out to greet him.\(^{188}\) Such favorable treatment demonstrates the unusually intimate relationship which existed between the emperor and his personal attendant, at least during this tumultuous period of time.

**Years of no conspicuous voice**

Between 785 and 787, Lu Chih seems to have presented only one memorial to the throne,\(^{189}\) but he continued to compose edicts throughout this period. Although still a Han-lin scholar, his status seemed to be more in tune with a regular court official than with a private attendant of the emperor.\(^{190}\) However, if Lu Chih indeed only presented one memorial during this period, it would seem to be related to the fact that two competent Chief Ministers were in charge of the administration from 786 to 789. They were Ts’ui Tsao (737-787), whom Lu Chih had recommended to the emperor before, and Li Mi (722-

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188 Ch’üan Te-yü’s Preface, CTW, 493: 13; Twitchett, ”Lu Chih,” 1962: 341 note 89.
189 This memorial, ”Shou Ho-chung hou ch’ing pa-ping,” was presented around the eighth month of 785. See HYCC, 17: 10-20; also see TCTC, 232: 7463-65. Twitchett’s statement that “none of his [Lu Chih’s] memorials dating from the period after the return to the capital have survived” is thus not completely accurate.
Lu Chih, a "most fascinating, unconventional figure." They both tried to carry out a series of reforms, but did not succeed.\textsuperscript{191}

Lu Chih probably respected their competence and reformist efforts and thus felt he should have observed the regular bureaucratic routine by not acting as an "inner minister." After all, as early as 783 Lu Chih himself already said that as a Han-lin scholar, it was his duty not to interfere with court affairs unless he was inquired of by the emperor.\textsuperscript{192}

Besides, with these capable ministers in court, Te-tsung probably no longer felt the need to consult Lu Chih as he had done during the period of exile. Nevertheless, even if this was the case, it does not mean the emperor became estranged from Lu Chih. On the contrary, Lu Chih continued to receive honorable treatment from the emperor.

\textbf{In mourning at Lo-yang}

Sometime prior to 787, Te-tsung dispatched a eunuch to Su-chou to help Lu Chih bring his mother to the capital where he could directly care for her. She died in the winter of 787 at the capital, and Lu Chih resigned his office to observe the traditional three year mourning ritual for her.\textsuperscript{193} Burying his mother in Lo-yang, Lu Chih also wanted to reinter his father from the south to Lo-yang so that both of his parents could be buried together. Te-tsung once again sent a eunuch to escort Lu's father's hearse to Lo-yang for him. Such honorable treatment from the emperor was greatly admired by the court officials.\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{191} For Ts'ui Tsao and Li Mi's reformist efforts, see TCTC, 232: 7467-68, 7475, 7489-95; CTS, 130: 3620-23, 3625-3627; also see, Michael Dalby, "Court politics," The Cambridge history, 1979: 589-94.

\textsuperscript{192} See his "Lun liang-ho chi hui-hsi li-hai chuang," HYCC, 11: 14.

\textsuperscript{193} None of the sources tell us exactly when his mother died. However, as we shall see, Lu Chih was appointed to a new position at the beginning of 790 after finishing the mourning ritual. Moreover, since the three year mourning ritual generally only lasted twenty-five months, Lu Chih's mother must have passed away in the winter of 787. For Lu Chih's appointment, see CTS, 13: 369; for the three year mourning ritual, see \textit{Li-chi}, "San-nien wen"; \textit{Hsün Tzu}, "Li-lun p'ien".

\textsuperscript{194} For this honorable treatment, see CTS, 139: 3800; HTS, 157: 4923; Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, CTW, 493: 13. It has been suggested that Lu Chih's continuing intimacy with
The question that needs to be asked is: why did Lu Chih not bury his mother in Wu chün? Certainly, with the emperor's trust and support, he could have easily arranged his mother's burial in the southeast without disturbing his deceased father. Like members of other Lu families, a strong sense of being close to the political and cultural center must have prevailed over Lu Chih's need to preserve local ties. Observing his mourning ritual in Lo-yang, after all, ensured an easier access to the emperor who up to that time was the most significant person in Lu Chih's political life.

When Lu Chih was leaving the court, provincial governors provided him with a great deal of money and gifts for burial expenses and his monthly expenditure. He rejected all the offers with but one exception. Reporting first to the throne, he only accepted the monthly tribute money from Wei Kao, the military governor of Chien-nan (Szechwan). Wei Kao was his friend long before he began his official career. It is very likely that Wei Kao had some close connection with his mother's family, otherwise, given his deliberate choice of an unsociable life style and his upright character, Lu Chih would not have accepted his monthly financial support.

To observe the mourning ritual, Lu Chih took a temporary abode in the Feng-lo Ssu, a Buddhist temple on Sung-shan, a popular Buddhist mountain resort outside of Lo-yang. His decision to stay in a Buddhist temple at least shows that he did not have any antipathy toward Buddhism. In fact, during the Ta-li era (766-779), his grand-uncle, Lu Ch'i-wang, the emperor was due to an affinal relation on his mother's side with Te-tsung's favorite new consort, who also belonged to the prominent Wei clan of the Kuan-chung region; see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 103. However, since we do not know in what way Consort Wei's family was connected to Lu Chih's mother, and if they were really connected, we still do not know how close their relationship was; we really do not have any evidence to substantiate this connection. Tang lineages were often rather loosely knit groups, and simply having the same surname does not guarantee any real connection.

195 Mao Han-kuang also points out Lu Chih's reinterment of his father represents another example of aristocratic centralization, see his "Wu chün Lu-shih," 1989: 66.


had even donated his family house to serve as a Buddhist temple so that his daughter could reside there as a nun.\textsuperscript{198} Moreover, as previously mentioned, Lu Chih's older uncles also had friendly relationships with the famous Buddhist monk Chiao-jan. Although it is difficult to know Lu Chih's actual interest and understanding of Buddhism, the devotion of his grand-uncle's family probably exerted some influence on him. Of course, Lu Chih's residence in the Feng-jo Ssu on Sung-shan also reflected the custom among the T'ang literati of pursuing studies and intellectual discussions at scenic Buddhist temples on famous mountains.\textsuperscript{199}

Lu Chih seems to have been continually occupied with state affairs before he came to Sung-shan, and he would become even more so after he returned to the court later. It seems that this mourning period was a perfect time for him to engage in scholarship. Several of his scholarly works, such as the \textit{Pei-chü wen-yen}, a sort of administrative encyclopedia,\textsuperscript{200} were perhaps completed during these quiet years. It is also interesting to note, however, that although he had "studied medicine books in his youth,"\textsuperscript{201} he does not appear to have compiled any such works, at least not at this stage of his life. The fact that most of his early works dealt with political history and administration rather than subjects like medicine which are often associated with Taoism, reflects his deep concern for the

\textsuperscript{198} See \textit{Po-ke ts'ung-pien}, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng edition, 14: 394.


\textsuperscript{200} For \textit{Pei-chü wen-yen}, see note 5. Lu Chih's other works include \textit{Hsüan-tsung pien-i lu}, \textit{Ch'ien-shih lu} and \textit{Ch'ing-nang shu}. Only the \textit{Sung-shih l-wen chih} lists \textit{Hsüan-tsung pien-i lu} and \textit{Ch'ing-nang shu}, it also says that there were two chapters in the former work and ten chapters in the latter. \textit{Pien-i lu} seems to have contained historical accounts of events during Hsüan-tsung's reign while \textit{Ch'ing-nang shu} seems to have been a kind of literary encyclopedia since it is placed in the \textit{Lei-shu} section of the \textit{Sung-shih l-wen chih}. Both HTS and \textit{Sung-shih} agree that there was only one chapter in \textit{Ch'ien-shih lu}, it probably dealt with envoys's dispatches. See HTS, 58: 1485; \textit{Sung-shih}, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 203: 5113 and 5115, 207: 5295. Also see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 86 and 337 note 13 and 14.

\textsuperscript{201} See TFYK, Chung-hua shu-chü reprint, 859: 19.
conduct of government. It also implies that Lu Chih's mind was basically oriented to this world.

In the fifth month of 788, Lu Chih's close friend Hsiao Fu passed away in his southern residence.\(^{202}\) It is most unfortunate that we do not know how this sad news might have affected Lu Chih. Had his literary Pieh-chi been preserved, we would definitely be able to learn more about his inner feelings toward this intimate friend. Since Lu Chih was a deliberate loner, and since he is hardly ever mentioned in the extant writings of his contemporaries, one wonders to what extent his lost works might have contained information that would greatly enhance our knowledge about his detached attitude toward personal relations. At any rate, the quiet years of mourning reached an end toward 790. Lu Chih was undoubtedly ready to resume his official life after three years on the periphery.

**Return to the capital**

Lu Chih returned to the capital at the beginning of 790. In the second month of that year, while resuming his position as Han-lin scholar, Te-tsung further promoted him temporarily to the post of Vice Minister of the Ministry of War (Ping-pu shih-lang) with a rank of 4a.\(^{203}\) It is said that when Lu Chih was given an audience to express gratitude to the emperor, he "prostrated himself and wept" at which point Te-tsung's countenance softened and he began to console him.\(^{204}\)

Lu Chih's way of expressing gratitude may appear ludicrous to our modern sensibilities. But if we consider the position that he was appointed to and the possible impact it might have had upon him, we will probably understand why he expressed himself

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\(^{202}\) CTS, 125: 3552.


\(^{204}\) CTS, 139: 3800; Ch'üan Te-yü, Preface, ibid.; HTS, ibid.
with such emotion. In the post-An Lu-shan era, the position of vice minister grew substantively more important than that of the ministers of the six ministries under the Department of State Affairs. The vice ministers were now actually responsible for administrative decisions, while the position of minister became a nominal rank given for reward and promotion. Once given this office, the possibility of assuming the chief ministership was definitely not beyond reach.

The fact that the emperor not only did not become estranged from Lu Chih during his three year absence from the court, but also appointed him to such a crucial position must have been a reassuring sign of imperial favor. Now that he had lost both of his parents and his close friends, this continuous intimate relationship with the emperor seems to have become more critical to a solitary figure like Lu Chih. It is by no means fortuitous that we find him often writing to the emperor that he was "greatly beholden to Your Majesty for taking me as an intimate friend". If we consider Lu Chih's career development and his relationship with Te-tsung up to this point, his words convey a sense of genuine emotion rather than merely perfunctory rhetoric.

To be sure, Lu Chih's feelings toward Te-tsung must have been quite complex. After all, the emperor was in the first place his master, but he also played the roles of benevolent elder and sometime frustrated friend in need of advice. In addition, this new promotion almost certainly changed Lu Chih's family's status among the wider circle of their relatives. In light of these conspicuous psychological and material benefits derived from this new phase of his life, Lu Chih's extravagant emotional gesture seems perfectly logical.


206 See Lu Chih's "Feng-t'ien lun ch'ien so ta-tsou wei shih-hsing chuang," HYCC, 12: 13, "Hsieh mi-chih yin lun so hsüan shih chuang," also contains similar passage, see ibid., 20: 12.

207 A year later, in 791, Lu Chih composed the tomb inscription for his grand-aunt, that is, for Lu Ch'hi-wang's wife. If he had not received this new position, he probably would not have been asked to do so.
While the new appointment made Lu Chih's return to the capital satisfactorily pleasant, he was soon ensnared in a power struggle.

**Entanglement in a power struggle**

According to the sources, two of Lu Chih's previous colleagues in the Han-lin Academy, Wu T'ung-hsüan and his brother Wu T'ung-wei, had always competed with Lu Chih for imperial favor. Coming from the south, both the Wu brothers started their service in the Academy in 783. Their Taoist father had taught Te-tsung before he ascended the throne. Through their father's connection then, the Wu brothers became the favorite companions of the Heir Apparent. Their literary talent subsequently won them both the position of Han-lin scholar.

When Lu Chih began to dominate imperial attention by his indisputable ability at formulating state documents during the court's exile; the Wu brothers, especially Wu T'ung-hsüan, are said to have become quite dissatisfied and began frequently to criticize Lu Chih before the emperor. Due to their interference, Lu Chih was even passed over for Chief Minister when people with inferior backgrounds and abilities such as Chiang Kung-fu rose to that position. We are also informed that Lu Chih treated the Wu brothers in a similarly haughty manner because he had a "narrow and impetuous temperament" (hsing pien-chi). Their competition inevitably led to mutual antipathy. In a memorial probably composed right at the beginning of 788, Lu Chih advised the emperor to return the

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208 According to the biographies of the Wu brothers in CTS, Wu T'ung-wei became a Han-lin scholar in 783 while T'ung-hsüan took that office in 785, but the CTS Annals say that Wu T'ung-hsüan also started this service in 783. See CTS, 12: 338 and 190b: 5057-58; Ts'en Chung-mien, "Han-lin hsüeh-shih pi-chi chu-pu," in his Lang-kuan shih-chu t'i-ming hsin k'ao-ting, 1984: 223-24.

209 CTS, 190b: 5057-58; HTS, 145: 4732.

210 CTS, 139: 3800.

211 CTS, 190b: 5057.
responsibility of edict formulation to the Drafters in the Secretariat because it was only expedient to assign Han-lin scholar such functions during times of chaos.\textsuperscript{212}

Lu Chih's memorial is said to have been intended to strip the power of rescript formulation from the Wu brothers out of fear that they were forming factions in the palace, trying their best to remove him from the position of Han-lin scholar.\textsuperscript{213} While it is perfectly probable that Lu Chih's 788 memorial was motivated by purely selfish interests, we should recall that shortly after he assumed the position of Han-lin scholar in 783, Lu Chih already stated that it was the Han-lin scholars' duty not to interfere with the regular bureaucratic operations. Moreover, at the end of 783, he was also opposed to his own special promotion given as a reward by the emperor. From this point of view, this memorial can be regarded as a logical extension of his earlier conviction. On the other hand, the fact that at the beginning of 788, he himself was about to leave the service makes this memorial appear more self serving and less seriously concerned with the proper function of the regular bureaucracy, even though, as is so often the case in politics, these two factors are not necessarily in contradiction. In any event, Te-tsung did not accept his suggestion at the time.\textsuperscript{214}

After Lu Chih was given his new promotion when he returned to the capital, Wu Tung-hsiian was subsequently appointed to the position of Grand Master of Remonstrance

\textsuperscript{212} This memorial is preserved in \textit{T'ang Hui-yao}, which says the date of the memorial was 788. The biography of Wu Tung-hsiian in CTS also contains a similar but undated passage. See Wang Pu, \textit{T'ang Hui-yao} (THY hereafter), 3 vols., Taipei: Shih-chieh shu-chü edition, 1982: 57: 979; CTS, 190B: 5057. Twitchett assumes, however, that the accurate date should be 787 probably because in 788 Lu Chih was supposed to be in mourning; he could not thus have presented this memorial. Yet, we know that Lu Chih's mother died toward the end of 787. Considering all the necessary procedures he had to go through before he resigned from office it is most likely that he did not leave the capital until the beginning of 788. Moreover, since the so-called "three years mourning period" actually only corresponds to twenty-five months, and since Lu Chih returned to the capital around the second month of 790, he must have left the capital around the first month of 788. It would thus have been possible for him to present this memorial right before he left for Mt. Sung.

\textsuperscript{213} CTS, 190b: 5057.

\textsuperscript{214} CTS, 139: 3818.
(Chien-i ta-fu) in 791. Expecting a much more important position, Wu T'ung-hsüan was bitterly disappointed at this new offer.\textsuperscript{215} His discontent exacerbated the already existing antagonism between Lu Chih and himself, and he soon found supporters willing to assist him in his intrigues against Lu Chih.

One of these supporters of Wu T'ung-hsüan was a favorite nephew of Tou Shen, the Chief Minister at the time. Tou Shen was recommended to be Chief Minister and also to head the financial office of the government by the previous Chief Minister, Li Mi, in 789.\textsuperscript{216} Li Mi's recommendation was in opposition to Pan Hung (720-792), the original candidate the emperor had in mind. Li Mi told the emperor that Pan Hung was not as flexible as Tou Shen in managing state affairs, but Te-tsung rejected his first recommendation.\textsuperscript{217}

Coming from an illustrious lineage, Tou Shen made his name as a competent and impartial official through a succession of legal posts.\textsuperscript{218} Although he did not have the usual literary polish shared by most of the scholar-officials in high governmental office, Te-tsung is said to have valued his ability in judging legal cases and given him several audiences to discuss state affairs before he assumed the chief ministership.\textsuperscript{219} Thus, even if Te-tsung originally intended to appoint Pan Hung as Chief Minister, he seems to have held Tou Shen in high regard and eventually accepted Li Mi's second recommendation.\textsuperscript{220}

When Lu Chih returned to the court at the beginning of 790 then, Tou Shen had already assumed the chief ministership for a year. During his administration, Tou Shen was

\textsuperscript{215} According to his biography in CTS, he was hoping to receive the position of Drafter in the Secretariat. His biography in HTS says that he was appointed to this post in 794 which is definitely a mistake. As we shall see, he had already been banished to the south by 792. CTS, 190b: 5057-58; HTS, 145: 4732.
\textsuperscript{216} TCTC, 233: 7517-18.
\textsuperscript{217} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{218} CTS, 136: 3745-46; HTS, 145: 4730; Michael Dalby, "Court politics," The Cambridge history, 1979: 594.
\textsuperscript{219} CTS, ibid.; HTS, ibid..
\textsuperscript{220} We do not know why Te-tsung rejected Li Mi's first recommendation, but his reluctance does not seem to be a latent cause for Tou Shen's later fall from power as suggested by Michael Dalby, "Court politics," The Cambridge history, 1979: 594.
notorious for his acceptance of "tribute money" from provincial governors and indulgence of his favorite nephew's corruption.\(^{221}\) In light of Tou Shen's unsavory political conduct, it is understandable that Lu Chih found "Tou Shen and Your subject [myself] are always at odds."\(^{222}\) Neither is it surprising to learn that Lu Chih started to criticize Tou Shen's acceptance of tribute money after he returned to the court.

Under these circumstances, the Wu brothers found Tou Shen's nephew a willing partner in their schemes for an attack on Lu Chih, their common enemy.\(^{223}\) Through their combined efforts, Lu Chih was eventually removed from the position of Han-lin scholar which he had occupied for at least eight years. Although he lost his constant access to the emperor, Lu Chih seems to have still enjoyed Te-tsung's trust. As a matter of fact, by the eighth month of 791, he was formally designated to take up the office of Vice Minister of the Ministry of War.\(^{224}\)

**Producing "the dragon and tiger list"**

In the winter of 791, Lu Chih was placed in charge of the administration of the doctoral examinations for the coming year. This year's examination results were quite remarkable. Many of the graduates became dominant figures on both the political and intellectual stage in decades to come. Not only were the famous ku-wen writers Han Yü, Li Kuan and Ouyang Chan on the list; the future statesmen Li Chiang and Ts'ai Ch'ün were also among those who received their degrees that year.\(^{225}\) No wonder that year's graduates were later referred to as ascended to the "dragon and tiger list" (lung-hu pang).\(^{226}\) It is said that Lu

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\(^{221}\) See CTS, 136: 3747-48; HTS, 145: 4731.

\(^{222}\) "Shang-liang ch'u-chih Tou Shen shih-t'i chuang," HYCC, 19: 19.

\(^{223}\) CTS, 136: 3748 and 190B: 5058.

\(^{224}\) CTS, 190B: 5057 and 139: 3800; TCTC, 233: 7524.


\(^{226}\) See HTS, 203: 5787; Twitchett, "Lu Chih," ibid.
Chih chose these candidates primarily due to suggestions given by his examination advisor Liang Su (753-793).\(^{227}\) A decade later, when Han Yü mentioned this astonishing examination, he praised Lu Chih's rigorous evaluation of the candidates' essays, especially his unwavering trust of Liang Su's recommendations.\(^{228}\)

When Liang Su assisted Lu Chih in managing these examinations, he was a Han-lin scholar who concurrently held the position of Right Rectifier of Omissions (Yu Pu-ch'üeh) in the Secretariat (Chung-shu sheng).\(^{229}\) His talent in literary composition, especially in ku-wen style writing, is said to have been nonpareil among his contemporaries. Like his teacher, Tu-ku Chi, Liang Su also had a lively interest in Taoism and Buddhism. His most famous essay on meditation was actually written from a lay Buddhist perspective.\(^{230}\) A man of such intellectual caliber should easily have impressed Lu Chih, who was about the same age and had similar intellectual propensities. It is thus quite natural that Lu Chih chose Liang Su to be his examination advisor. However, Lu Chih's preference for Liang Su instead of Ts'ui Yüan-han, Liang Su's friend, who was much older but nonetheless had a good reputation for literary composition,\(^{231}\) was related to other factors.

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\(^{228}\) In 802, when Ch'üan Te-yü was in charge of the administration of the doctoral examinations, Lu Shen, the Vice Director of the Ministry of Sacrifices, was his assistant. Han Yü then wrote a letter to Lu Shen and made his comments on that unusual 792 examination. See Han Yü, "Yü Tz'u-pu Lu Yüan-wai shu," CTW, 553: 6. Also see Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, 15: 556; Lo Lian-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng shu-chü, 1977: 59.


\(^{231}\) See Ts'ui Yüan-han's biography, CTS, 137: 3766-67; HTS, 203: 5783-84.
According to Liang Su's own account, Liang was Hsiao Fu's friend for a long time.\textsuperscript{232} This connection probably began in 777 when Hsiao Fu succeeded Tu-ku Chi as Prefect of Ch'ang-chou. As a disciple of Tu-ku Chi, Liang Su stayed in Ch'ang-chou for four years during Tu-ku Chi's administration there.\textsuperscript{233} When Hsiao Fu took over the administration after Tu-ku Chi's sudden death, Liang Su must have acquired a minor post on Hsiao Fu's staff. After all, Hsiao Fu is said to have made friends with Confucian scholars and poets only. His relationship with Hsiao Fu definitely grew intimate as time went by. When Hsiao Fu became Chief Minister in the latter half of 783, he recommended Liang Su to take a position compiling official history, but Liang Su declined the appointment due to his mother's illness.\textsuperscript{234} The above information makes it seem very likely that Lu Chih had already met Liang Su when they both stayed in Ch'ang-chou and were probably both on Hsiao Fu's staff. Lu Chih's trust of Liang Su did not, then, depend purely on his personal talent, even though that was a necessary condition.\textsuperscript{235} Nevertheless, Lu Chih's rejection of Ts'ui Yüan-han as his examination assistant would prove to be costly.

Although Liang Su's recommendation was essential to Lu Chih's evaluation of the candidates for the 792 examination, the final decision could only be made by Lu Chih himself.\textsuperscript{236} Among the twenty-three chin-shih graduates, many of them came from the highest stratum of the Tang society; many of them also, like Lu Chih, came from the

\textsuperscript{232} See Liang Su's "Chien-ch'a yü-shih LI chün fu-jen Lan-ling Hsiao-shih mu-chih ming," CTW, 521: 12. This tomb inscription was written for Hsiao Fu's late sister.

\textsuperscript{233} See Liang Su's own account in his "Chi Tu-ku Ch'ang-chou wen," CTW, 522: 11; also see Kanda Kiichiro, "Ryō Shoku nempu," in Tōhō Gakkai sōritsu nijūgo shūnen kinen tōhōgaku ronshū, 1972: 259-274. However, Kanda Kiichiro was not aware of Liang Su's close connection with Hsiao Fu.

\textsuperscript{234} See Liang Su's tomb inscription composed by Ts'ui Yüan-han, CTW, 523: 26.

\textsuperscript{235} Liang Su's wife, like Lu Chih's mother, also came from the eminent Wei clan, but whether this had any influence on Lu Chih's trust in Liang Su remains unclear to us. For Liang Su's wife, see Ts'ui Yüan-han, "Yu Pu-chüeh Han-lin hsüeh-shih Liang chün mu-chih," CTW, 523: 26; Kanda Kiichiro, "nempu," 1972: 15.

\textsuperscript{236} For the responsibility of the chief examiner in the chin-shih examination, see Fu Hsüan-tsung's excellent study on T'ang-tai k'o-chü yü wen-hsüeh, Shensi jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1986: 226-228.
The unusual presence of the southerners in this list proves that the chin-shih examination provided a chance for provincial elite members to enter the bureaucracy.

However, judging by the customary practice of candidates presenting scrolls (hsing-chüan) to influential scholars and officials during the waiting period at the capital prior to the examination, it is difficult to imagine that geographical background never played a role in Lu Chih's evaluation of these southern graduates. As we have stated, his limited number of friends all shared a similar southern provenance, or else had living experience in the south. On the other hand, the role of this geographical background should not be exaggerated. At most, it functioned as a contributing factor. After all, Lu Chih's enemies also shared the same geographical background his friends did.

In any case, the unusual presence of the southern graduates probably gave the Wu brothers a reason to use the administration of the 792 examination as the basis of their attack on Lu Chih.

His opponents fall

While Lu Chih was engaged in the examination details, the Wu brothers and Tou Shen's nephew were busy plotting against him. They accused Lu Chih before the emperor of accepting bribes in his administration of the examinations. A thorough investigation proved the accusation unfounded. At this juncture, Te-tsung further discovered that Wu Tung-hsüan had taken an imperial princess as his concubine. Obviously enraged by Wu Tung-hsüan's conduct and the intrigue he and his supporters plotted against Lu Chih, Te-tsung punished them with banishment to the south. On the way south, Wu Tung-hsüan

237 John Lee has carefully compared the background of these twenty-three graduates, see his "The dragons and tigers of 792," T'ang Studies, 6,(1988): 33-36.
238 For the hsing-chüan practice and the problem of fairness it created for the administration of the examinations, see Fu Hsüan-tsung, T'ang-tai k'o-chü, 1986, esp. ch. 9 & 10; also see Victor Mair, "Scroll presentation in the T'ang dynasty," HJAS 38 (1978): 35-60.
was executed. Due to his indulgence of his nephew's corruption, Tou Shen lost his chief ministership and was banished to Ch'en-chou (modern Hunan) in the fourth month of 792.\footnote{239 TCTC, 234: 7527-28; CTS, 190B: 5058 and 136: 3748.}

Tou Shen's problems were not over yet. As mentioned above, in the eighth month of 792, Lu Chih's colleague and friend Chiang Kung-fu asked to be allowed to resign from office because of a secret divulged to him by Lu Chih. His request led the emperor to blame Tou Shen. At the time, Tou Shen accepted lavish gifts from a local military governor just as though he did not mind his banishment. This was reported to the throne around the end of 793 by Li Sun, then the Surveillance Commissioner in Hunan. Li Shun's report was clearly motivated by his dislike of Tou Shen because Tou, during his tenure as Chief Minister, had sent him to the south. Li was summoned back to the capital only due to Lu Chih's recommendation in the seventh month of 792.\footnote{240 On Tou Shen's taking money see CTS, 136: 3747; TCTC, 234: 7542; on Li Sun, CTS, 123: 3521-21, 13: 375 and 386. On Lu Chih's recommendation, see his "Lun hsiian ling ch'u Pei Yen-ling tu-chih shih chuang," HYCC, 18: 21.} Believing that Tou Shen was now secretly dealing with some local military governors, Te-tsung was ready to order the death penalty for him. It was only due to Lu Chih's intervention that Tou Shen managed temporarily to escape from this sentence. At this point we can discuss the question of whether or not Lu Chih was responsible for Tou Shen's death.

At the time of Tou Shen's death, current opinion (shih-i) blamed Lu Chih because he had revealed the secret to Chiang Kung-fu.\footnote{241 As has been mentioned in note 180, see CTS, 139:3817, 138: 3788; SL, 4: 15.} A Tang short story later accused Lu Chih of sending an assassin to murder Tou Shen before Tou fell from power.\footnote{242 The title of this story by Liu Ch'eng is "Shang Ch'ing." It is collected in Li Fang, et al., T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi, Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 1961, 275: 2168-69. We do not know Liu Ch'eng's actual dates, but a recent study tells us that he was a grandson of the famous genealogist Liu Fang and was probably active during emperor Wu-tsung's reign (840-846). See Pien Hsiao-hsüan, "T'ang-tai hsiao-shuo yü cheng-chih," Chung-hua wen shih lun-ts'ung (1985), vol. 1: 180-86.} But, when Te-tsung was about to pronounce the death sentence on Tou Shen, it was Lu Chih who
presented several memorials asking the emperor to reconsider. In his first memorial, Lu Chih made it clear that since he was never on good terms with Tou Shen he did not have any private interests in rescuing him. What he was concerned with was that no evidence had proven Tou Shen guilty of sedition. Were he given the death penalty, Lu Chih said, the public would be shocked and would criticize it as an unjust verdict even though they all knew Tou Shen was guilty of forming a private "faction" (tang) and taking bribes. Lu's arguments actually persuaded Te-tsung to change his verdict. Tou Shen was banished to the far south in the third month of 793. For the time being, the emperor did not press for Tou Shen's death, but he was determined to confiscate all his property, including his maids and concubines. Lu Chih again remonstrated with Te-tsung not to take such action. He argued that since Tou Shen was not guilty of treason (p'an-ni), it would be against the law to confiscate his property.

Judging by Lu Chih's memorials, it seems that if he had intended to have Tou Shen killed, he would not have wasted so much time and energy in preventing the emperor from carrying out his will. Moreover, as the great historian Ssu-ma Kuang pointed out, even if Chiang Kung-fu learned a "secret" from Lu Chih, Lu Chih still should not have taken the blame. After all it was Chiang Kung-fu's own initiative, not Lu Chih's, to resign from the office and thus be forced to reveal Tou Shen's name to the emperor. To be sure, since

244 CTS, 138: 3748.
246 See TCTC K'ao-i section, TCTC, 234: 7537. In this K'ao-i section Ssu-ma Kuang first quoted the Te-tsung shih-lu to show that it was Tou Shen, not Lu Chih, who told Chiang Kung-fu the "secret." Probably knowing that Wei Ch'u-hou was the compiler of the Te-tsung shih-lu, Ssu-ma Kuang then presented the fact that it was Lu Chih who tried to save Tou Shen and the argument given in our discussion. In his conclusion, Ssu-ma Kuang further pointed out that the contemporary criticism of Lu Chih was purely speculation. Because they knew Lu Chih and Tou Shen were already in disagreement, any disaster befalling Tou Shen then had to have been caused by Lu Chih. In addition, Ssu-ma Kuang believed, the official historian who did not like Lu Chih would thus attribute the fall of Tou Shen to Lu Chih. Here "the official historian" must refer to Li Chi-fu since Ssu-ma Kuang knew Han Yü's version of Shun-tsung
Lu Chih's contemporaries did not necessarily have access to his memorials, it is understandable that they blamed him for Tou Shen's death. On the other hand, given Lu Chih's historically verifiable actions, it seems more reasonable to agree with Ssu-ma Kuang's judgement that the T'ang short story's accusation of murder against Lu Chih is unfounded.247

But what, then, caused the emperor to change his mind and execute Tou Shen when he was on his way into exile? The answer lies both in Te-tsung's personal distrust of Tou Shen and eunuch resentment toward him. In late 791, Tou Shen slandered Wu Ts'ou, a reputable Surveillance Commissioner at Fukien and a brother of Te-tsung's grandmother. An investigation not only proved Wu Ts'ou's innocence but also laid the groundwork for Te-tsung's distrust of Tou Shen.248 Tou Shen's nephew's involvement in the attack against Lu Chih only hastened his downfall.

Although Lu Chih should not be blamed for Tou Shen's death, he certainly was responsible for the imperial punishment of Yu Kung-i. Like Lu Chih, Yu Kung-i also came from the southeast. He acquired the chin-shih degree in 781, but is said to have disagreed with Lu Chih when he first took the chin-shih examination.249 During the imperial exile, he served as a secretary under General Li Sheng's command. Later when Lu Chih became Chief Minister in 792, Yu was the Vice Director of the Ministry of Sacrifice (Tz'u-pu yüan-wai-lang) subordinated to the Ministry of Rites (Li pu).250 It is said that Yu Kung-i's ability in literary composition was greatly admired by his

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248 See Wu Ts'ou's biography, CTS, 183: 4747; TCTC, 233: 7525.
249 Yu Kung-i acquired the chin-shih degree in 781, but he may have failed the earlier examination in 773 when Lu Chih acquired his degree. See Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, 11: 418; CTS, 137: 3767.
250 See his biography, CTS, 137: 3767-68.
contemporaries. In the fifth month of 784, when the imperial forces finally recaptured the capital, it was Yü Kung-i who composed the victory announcement from General Li Sheng to the emperor. Te-tsung was extremely impressed by his literary polish and gave him a strong commendation. This greatly displeased Lu Chih.

While Yü Kung-i was highly regarded by his contemporaries for his literary talent, he was, at the same time, criticized for his unfilial behavior toward his stepmother. After Lu Chih assumed the chief ministership, he reported Yü's unfilial conduct to the emperor, suggesting that the emperor rescind Yü's official appointment; Te-tsung agreed with Lu's suggestion. Yü Kung-i was then issued a copy of the Hsiao ching (Classic of Filial Piety) and returned to the southeast. Thus stigmatized by this punishment for unfilial behavior, Yü Kung-i never again acquired an official appointment; he died in frustration. Those who sympathized with Yü all blamed Lu Chih for his narrow and imperious personality (pien-chi). A Sung dynasty scholar even believed that Lu Chih's later downfall was the "scourge of Heaven" (t'ien-ch'ien) against him in order to avenge Yü Kung-i.

Compared with his well reasoned defense of Tou Shen, one cannot help but wonder why Lu Chih bore such a grudge against Yü Kung-i. Perhaps the bitter feud with the Wu brothers had such a threatening effect upon him that he was resolved to eliminate all potential opponents during his reign as Chief Minister. This still does not explain why he needed to take such extreme measures. After all, he had only followed the usual practice of banishing his opponent Yü Shao, whose literary competence was no less impressive than that of Yü Kung-i. We need to take some other factors into consideration here.

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253 Yü Shao's biography see CTS, 137: 3766; HTS, 203: 5783. Except that Lu Chih and Yü Shao were not on good terms, we have no information to explain why Lu Chih banished Yü to the south.
Ever since the third century, Confucian values such as filial piety and brotherliness had become the fundamental cohesive forces of Chinese family life. Under this premise, Tang emperors always upheld the virtue of filial piety as the essence of Confucian teaching. The imperial endeavor in popularizing the Hsiao ching during emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign is an obvious example. During Tai-tsung's reign (762-779), officials who believed that understanding the Confucian classics was more relevant to the restoration of order in a shattered empire than skill at frivolous and impractical literary compositions began to request that the emperor include the Hsiao ching in the doctoral examinations. The fact that unfilial behavior constituted one of the unforgivable "ten evils" (shih e) during the T'ang further demonstrates to what extent filial virtue was regarded as a force for social stability.

In light of these factors, we may explain Lu Chih's treatment of Yü Kung-i as reflecting his genuine belief in the necessity for officials to maintain exemplary conduct; but on the other hand, it is not impossible that he could have used Yü Kung-i's "unfilial" behavior as the best pretext to eliminate a personal contender.

Although Lu Chih successfully persuaded Te-tsung to remove Yü Kung-i from office, he failed to convince the emperor to disqualify P'ei Yen-ling (728-796) from the most important financial office in the realm; and P'ei Yen-ling proved to be Lu's undoing.

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255 For details see McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 88 and 300 note 90 and 91.

256 This refers to Yang Wan's memorial to the emperor in 763; there were other suggestions for the improvement of the doctoral examinations in the post-rebellion period. See McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 88-97 and p. 303 note 124; on the criticisms of the examinations see TT, 17: 93-99.

257 The crimes known as "ten evils" had been established before the Sui dynasty, the T'ang only inherited and revised them. See Ta T'ang liu-tien, 6: 22-23.
Tenure as Chief Minister -- the second turning point

In the fourth month of 792, right after Tou Shen's removal, Lu Chih was promoted to the position of Chief Minister. It seems that Lu Chih finally had his chance to put his concept of government into practice. The ensuing personnel problem nevertheless foreshadowed his ill-fated reformist effort. We shall discuss Lu Chih's reformist effort in due time, here we will focus on the events which led to the termination of his political career.

The prelude began in the seventh month of 792 when Pan Hung, head of the Ministry of Revenue (Hu-pu shang-shu), passed away. Prior to his death, Pan Hung had developed a bitter conflict with the Salt Commissioner Chang Pang, a man he had originally recommended to serve as Vice Minister of the National Granaries (Ssu-nung shao-ch'ing).

During emperor Tai-tsung's reign, the state finances operated on two separate authorities with the Department of Public Revenue controlling the north and the Salt and Iron Commission controlling the south. When Yang Yen (728-781), the chief architect of the two-tax system, became Chief Minister in 780, he attempted without success to restore financial authority to the Ministry of Revenue (Hu-pu). In addition to the fact that the Ministry of Revenue had deteriorated to such an extent that the court had to transfer the power to its subordinate but still functioning office, the Department of Public Revenue, the rebellion of Ho-pei governors in 781 and the ensuing popular uprising in the capital in 783 further forced the government to once again rely upon the income from Salt. This

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258 CTS, 123: 3519; HTS, 149: 4803.
inevitably refurbished the power of the Salt Commission. This situation continued even after the complete suppression of the rebellion in 786.\textsuperscript{260}

When Tou Shen became Chief Minister in 789, he was concurrently appointed to be in charge of the business of the Department of Public Revenue (\textit{ling Tu-chih}).\textsuperscript{261} Right before his demotion in the third month of 792, Tou Shen deliberately arranged for Chang P'ang to become Salt Commissioner to circumscribe Pan Hung's power over financial administration because he knew Pan was going to replace him and take over control of the Department of Public Revenue (\textit{p'an Tu-chih}).\textsuperscript{262} Thus an unavoidable enmity developed between Chang P'ang and Pan Hung, heads of these two most important financial organs. By the fourth month of 792 when Lu Chih assumed the position of Chief Minister, they wrangled openly and refused to cooperate. Lu Chih consequently reported this administrative division and the personal feud between these two financial ministers to the emperor. Te-tsung settled this problem only by reverting to the old practice of establishing dual financial authorities in both northern and southern China.\textsuperscript{263}

After Pan Hung's death, Lu Chih originally recommended four candidates to succeed him at the Department of Public Revenue. According to Lu Chih, these four candidates all had both experience and excellent records in financial administration.\textsuperscript{264} The candidates included Tu Yu (735-812), the author of \textit{T'ung-tien}, then governor of Huai-nan and a


\textsuperscript{261} CTS, 136: 3747 and 123: 3519.

\textsuperscript{262} On the relationship between Tou Shen and Pan Hung, see CTS, 123: 3519; HTS, 149: 4803. "P'an Tu-chih" or "Ling Tu-chih" all refer to the practice of appointing officials holding other offices to be in charge of the business of the Public Revenue Department. This was the result of shifting power from the Ministry of Revenue to the Department of Public Revenue. For details, see Twitchett, "The Salt Commissioners," \textit{Asia Major} (1959): 65-66 & 72-73; Twitchett, \textit{Financial administration}, 1970: 100-101 and 111-113; THY, 59: 1018.


\textsuperscript{264} "Lun hsüan ling ch'u Pei Yen-lin tu-chih shih chuang," HYCC, 18: 21.
future statesman; Lu Cheng (737-800) and Li Heng, two previous assistants of the financial expert Liu Yen (716-781); and Li Sun (739-809), as previously noted the main architect of Tou Shen's second banishment. 265 Except for Li Heng, the other three candidates were apparently much older than Lu Chih.

The exact relationship between Lu Chih and these candidates is not clear, but his recommendation seems to have derived more from objective knowledge of their expertise in finances than from any private connection. Of course, it is possible that Lu Chih recommended Li Sun precisely because he had been an opponent of Tou Shen. In like manner, his choice of Tu Yu could be related to the fact that Tu Yu had been treated unjustly in 782 by Te-tsung's former favorite, Lu Ch'i. 266 In other words, his recommendation of these two may have been due to their suffering political injustice at the hand of his political opponents. Then again, if this was the case, it would be difficult to explain why Lu Chih recommended Lu Cheng given the fact that he had been Tou Shen's confidant. 267 Thus we are hesitant to conclude that any one of these candidates was definitely Lu Chih's protégé. 268

Of the four candidates, Te-tsung rejected Tu Yu and Lu Cheng on the grounds that the former's position as governor of the Huai-nan region was too important for him to be removed and that it would be otiose to give the latter another appointment since he just recently obtained a new one. 269 Te-tsung seems to have preferred Li Heng, then Surveillance Commissioner of Kiangsi. Lu Chih tells us that the emperor had instructed him to send an envoy to Kiangsi to summon Li Heng back to the capital. 270

265 Tu Yu's biography, CTS, 147: 3978-83; HTS, 166: 5085-90; Lu Cheng, CTS, 146: 3966-67; HTS, 149: 4799; Li Sun, CTS, 123: 3521-23; HTS, 149: 4805-06; there is no official biography for Li Heng; on his service under Liu Yen, see CTS, 123: 3515.

266 On Tu Yu's treatment see CTS, 147: 3978 and 12: 333. For Lu Ch'i, see CTS, 135: 3713-18; HTS, 223: 6351-54.

267 CTS, 146: 3967.


269 "Lun hsüan ling ch'ü Pei Yen-ling Tu-chih shih chuang," HYCC, 18: 22.

270 Ibid.; on Li Heng's career see CTS, 13: 371 and 373.
Arguing that the function of the Department of Public Revenue was too crucial to be left vacant for several months before Li Heng could return to the capital, Lu Chih requested that the emperor appoint the newly arrived Li Sun as Supervising Secretary (Chi-shih chung) while concomitantly placing him as Acting Head of the Public Revenue Department. If Li Sun performed his duty properly, Lu Chih said the emperor could then appoint him to the position of Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue (Hu-pu shih-lang); if he failed to perform well, the emperor could give him some other position after Li Heng's return. In this manner, Lu Chih believed the regular financial operations could continue while the court was waiting for Li Heng's arrival from the south. Moreover, Li Shun's ability in conducting financial affairs could also undergo a thorough testing and evaluation.\(^7\)

Te-tsung at first agreed with Lu Chih's suggestion, but he changed his mind and insisted on replacing Li Sun with P'ei Yen-ling (728-796), an old protégé of the emperor's former favorite Lu Ch'i, who also had close connections with Tou Shen.\(^2\) Te-tsung's reason was that he feared that Li Sun might not be an appropriate candidate to head up the Public Revenue Department.\(^3\) Later events would prove the emperor mistaken.\(^4\) For the time being, P'ei Yen-ling, while keeping his current position as Vice Minister of the Court of National Granaries (Ssu-nung shao-ch'ing), was placed in temporary control of the Department of Public Revenue (ch'üan ling Tu-chih) in the seventh month of 792.\(^5\)

Once P'ei Yen-ling was given such an important position, his cooperation became crucial for Chief Minister who intended to carry out any reform programs. The ensuing

\(^7\) "Lun hsüan ling ch'u P'ei Yen-ling Tu-chih shih chuang," HYCC, 18: 22.
\(^2\) For P'ei Yen-ling's connection with Lu Ch'i and Tou Shen, see CTS, 135: 3720; HTS, 167: 5106.
\(^3\) Ibid.
\(^4\) Li Sun, with Tu Yu's support, actually became one of the most powerful financial experts during emperor Hsien-tsung's reign (805-820); his subordinates even continued to dominate the financial administration until 830. CTS, 123: 3522; Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 120.
\(^5\) CTS, 135: 3720; TCTC, 234: 7533.
conflict between P'ei Yen-ling and Lu Chih served as a catalyst leading to Lu's political downfall. But who was P'ei Yen-ling? Why was he Lu Chih's nemesis?

**Arch-antagonist -- P'ei Yen-ling**

The exact relationship between Te-tsung and P'ei Yen-ling before the seventh month of 792 is not clear to us. Although coming from one of the most prominent clans in Ho-tung, P'ei Yen-ling's immediate family did not seem to enjoy high status within the lineage due to its lackluster political achievements.\(^{276}\) After the explosion of the An Lu-shan rebellion, P'ei Yen-ling's family joined the tide of intellectual migration to southern China, settling in the middle Yangtze region.\(^{277}\) During this period, P'ei Yen-ling acquired some reputation as a scholar of the *Shih chi* (*The Records of the Grand Historian*). This reputation later justified his position in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies (Chi-hsien yüan) as Assistant Scholar under Lu Chi's patronage.\(^{278}\)

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\(^{278}\) Twitchett seems to believe that P'ei Yen-ling's appointment to the Chi-hsien yüan was through the recommendations of Tung Chin (724-799) and P'ei Po-yen rather than through Lu Chi's arrangement. Tung Chin then served as the Prefect of Hua-chou, not far from the capital, and was concurrently Defense Commissioner for the Tung-kuan pass, probably from 780 to 783. It is likely that at the beginning of this period, Tung Chin put P'ei Yen-ling on his provincial staff; the Personnel Evaluation Commissioner (Ch'u-chih shih) in that area, Twitchett says, was P'ei Po-yen. According to CTS, it was through the recommendation of the Personnel Evaluation Commissioner in that area that P'ei Yen-ling gained a post as Erudite at the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*T'ai-ch'ang po-shih*). He was later appointed to be a *Chi-hsien* scholar. All the sources that I have consulted agree that it was Lu Chi who placed P'ei Yen-ling in the Chi-hsien yüan while concurrently promoting him to be Director of the Catering Bureau (*Shan-pu lang-chung*) after he assumed the chief ministership in the second month of 781. Although P'ei Po-yen did recommend someone to be a *Chi-hsien* scholar, this was in 782; and the candidate was not P'ei Yen-ling. Moreover, P'ei Po-yen might very well not have been the Personnel Evaluation Commissioner in the Hua-chou area before 781. When Te-tsung sent eleven Personnel Evaluation Commissioners to the provinces in the second month of 780, P'ei Po-yen was sent to the Ho-tung area; the Commissioner who was sent to the Hua-chou area was Liu Wan. It seems that it was Liu Wan, not P'ei Po-yen, who recommended P'ei Yen-ling for a
Given the fact that P'ei Yen-ling did not suffer banishment after his patron Lu Ch'i fell from power, it has been suggested that P'ei must have formed intimate ties with Te-tsung. This would be convincing if we did not take P'ei Yen-ling's demotion in 787 into consideration. In 787, P'ei Yen-ling offended the current Chief Minister, Chang Yenshang, and was demoted to the post of local Magistrate in a district near the capital. He did not return to court until Tou Shen daringly took his side against Li Mi, who became Chief Minister in the sixth month of that year. Later on when Tou Shen took over the chief ministership, he made P'ei first Vice Minister of the Court of Imperial Treasury (T'ai-fu shao-ch'ing) and later Vice Minister of the Court of National Granaries (Ssu-nung shao-ch'ing). Both appointments were closely related to state finances. It may have been through these positions that P'ei Yen-ling started to form more intimate connections with the emperor, but prior to 792 his relationship with Te-tsung was probably not as close as has been suggested.

Seen in this light, Te-tsung's insistence upon replacing Li Sun with P'ei Yen-ling to take control of the Public Revenue Department was probably due to his belief that P'ei's seniority and experience in financial administration would outshine that of Li Sun. Compared with Li Sun, the sixty-four year old P'ei Yen-ling was more experienced, having actually been in charge of the Public Revenue Department's branch office at Lo-yang during Ts'ui Tsao's chief ministership in 786. Another possible reason for Te-
tsung's appointment of P'ei Yen-ling is because he knew P'ei would not interfere with his acceptance of provincial tribute money; he could even depend upon P'ei Yen-ling to enrich his personal treasury. If this was indeed what the emperor had in mind, events to come would prove his financial prescience, at least as regards his own pocket.

When Te-tsung decided to appoint P'ei Yen-ling to take control of the Public Revenue Department, Lu Chih's reaction was completely negative. He gave two reasons to justify his strong opposition. In the first place, he emphasized the crucial importance of the Public Revenue Department to the survival of the state and the people's livelihood. One could not afford to appoint the head of such a critical office lightly. Lu Chih told the emperor that "if the Head tended to be parsimonious, it might cause trouble (in the armies); if he was too generous, fraudulence would then ensue." Secondly, since P'ei Yen-ling was an "eccentric, perverse, reckless, impetuous, arrogant, and loquacious" person, Lu Chih said he was definitely not the right candidate for that position.

Moreover, Lu Chih told the emperor P'ei Yen-ling was not only despised by men of education and understanding, but was also sneered at by the general public. If Te-tsung insisted on appointing him to such an important position, Lu Chih believed P'ei Yen-ling would become a laughing stock throughout the empire and his appointment would also cause thousands of people to suffer. He told the emperor that although he knew for certain that P'ei Yen-ling was not the right person, he was still willing to urge the emperor to solicit also the opinion of Chao Ching, the second Chief Minister.

Unfortunately for Lu Chih, Te-tsung remained unmoved and P'ei Yen-ling became temporary Head of the Public Revenue Department in the beginning of the seventh month of 792, only three months after Lu Chih became the Chief Minister. From then on, Lu

283 "Lun hsüan ling ch'u P'ei Yen-ling Tu-chih shih chuang," HYCC, 18: 23. Also see TCTC, 234: 7533.
284 Ibid.
285 Ibid.
Chih could not avoid direct conflict with P'ei Yen-ling, and it was through P'ei's efforts that Lu was driven off the mid-T'ang political stage at the end of 794.

**On the decline**

Once in control of the Public Revenue Department, P'ei Yen-ling relied upon experienced clerks of the Department for various financial devices. From 793 to 794, he obtained imperial permission to establish several kinds of irregular storehouses in addition to the extant Left Storehouse (Tso-tsang k'u) under the Court of Imperial Revenues (T'ai-fu ssu). He intended to fill these storehouses by collecting the regular tax arrears and imposing irregular supplementary taxes. It is said that these financial devices did not help to increase the state revenues, but only created extra paper work and wasted manpower. At the same time, P'ei Yen-ling also advised the emperor not to refill vacant official positions any more so that the state could use these emoluments as revenue.

Under these conditions, Lu Chih probably could not help but repeatedly appeal to the emperor to replace P'ei Yen-ling. Te-tsung, however, neglected his requests and thought he was discriminating against P'ei Yen-ling, thus increasing his trust of P'ei Yen-ling more than ever. At the same time, Lu Chih was not the only one who advised the emperor to replace P'ei Yen-ling. Ch'üan Te-yü (759-818), then the Left Rectifier of Omissions (Tso pu-ch'üeh) in the Chancellery (Men-hsia sheng) and, as we mentioned before, a friend of Lu Chih's uncle, Lu Pa, also presented memorials to the throne toward the end of 792 and in the seventh month of 793.

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287 CTS, 135: 3721; TCTC, 234: 7548.
288 CTS, 135: 3722; HTS, 167: 5107.
289 Ch'üan Te-yü's career, see CTS, 148: 4002; HTS, 165: 5076.
Ch’üan Te-yü’s main point was to let the emperor know that the general opinion among the court officials believed that P’ei Yen-ling had not performed his duties properly. He specified P’ei’s misdeeds, such as claiming the unfinished regular tax revenues as surplus and hence attributing success to his own policies and delaying food supplies to the border armies. He pleaded with the emperor to conduct an investigation so as to find out whether criticism against P’ei Yen-ling was due to his being a "lone, faithful and independent" official or because of his mis-management of state finances.290

Ch’üan Te-yü’s memorials did not create any threat to P’ei Yen-ling’s favored position. The main point of his advice was nevertheless incorporated into Lu Chih’s later memorials to the throne. Although neither Ch’üan Te-yü nor Lu Chih ever mentioned that they were friends, the former’s respect for Lu Chih is clearly evident in his Preface to Lu Chih’s collected works. Ch’üan Te-yü’s friendship with Lu Chih’s uncle probably made him acquainted with Lu Chih. Lu Chih’s deliberate choice not to have private communications, on the one hand, might have constituted one of the reasons why Ch’üan Te-yü, a man with a wide circle of friends, did not even have private correspondence with him; but on the other, the fact that Lu Chih used Ch’üan Te-yü’s criticism of P’ei Yen-ling in his own memorials reveals that they probably shared certain common principles and had some mutual communication.

In the autumn of 794, P’ei Yen-ling intended to have hay and fodder substituted for the usual grain as tax payment from the metropolitan district around the capital. He was very likely to have believed this device could provide sufficient supplies for the palace army cavalry. It has been suggested that P’ei’s device was not without justification since the state pasturages had been ruined by frequent Tibetan invasions of Kansu even before the An Lu-shan rebellion.291 The problem with P’ei Yen-ling’s suggestion lay in the fact that

290 CTS, ibid.; HTS, ibid; TCTC, 234: 7549; CTW, 486: 5-7; Ch’üan Tsai-chih wen-chi, SPTK edition, 47: 280-81.
he had not taken the complicated labor-procurement system into consideration, nor had he thought about the potential deficiency in tax income in the capital if this device was actually put into practice. These were the exact reasons why Lu Chih made a strong objection to the emperor.292

Knowing that his plan had been obstructed, P'ei Yen-ling then told the emperor that the state should claim the several hundred hectares vacant land he had investigated in the capital region as summer pasture for the cavalry horses. Te-tsung first believed him and told Lu Chih about this suggestion. Lu Chih and other chief ministers' objections forced the emperor to investigate the vacant land. The result proved that P'ei Yen-ling's report about the vacant land was false.293 This incident, however, still did not cause the emperor to waver in his trust of P'ei Yen-ling.

Confronted with such frustration, Lu Chih must have realized the prospects for him to carry out any real reform were indeed bleak. In the eleventh month of 794, he finally presented one of his longest memorials to the emperor in which he launched a serious indictment against P'ei Yen-ling. He not only criticized P'ei Yen-ling's inept management of finances, but also attacked his personal conduct in a most specific way.294

First condemning P'ei Yen-ling as a shameless "small man" (hsiao jen), Lu Chih then gave specific examples of P'ei Yen-ling's "crimes" in managing state finances.295 To a large extent, Lu Chih's criticism was directly aimed at the emperor. He blamed the emperor for accepting P'ei Yen-ling's absurd claim that he had retrieved a large sum of money and commodities, which was actually part of the regular revenues, from a pile of night soil. When this caused a controversy, Te-tsung would not allow any investigation as

293 CTS, 135: 3721; HTS, 167: 5106; TCTC, 234: 7548-49.
295 Ibid.
if nothing irregular had taken place. In doing so, Lu Chih said the emperor had allowed "truth and falsehood to coexist" while "law and morality grew lax." 296

In order to demonstrate that Te-tsung's trust in Pei Yen-ling was misplaced, Lu Chih further reminded the emperor of Pei's inexcusable delay of the food supplies to the border armies in the strategic outposts of Yen-chou (modern Ninghsia) and P'ing-liang (modern Kansu). 297 Although here Lu Chih's criticism clearly echoed Ch'üan Te-yü's previous attack on Pei Yen-ling, by this time, however, Lu was the only official who dared to protest directly against the imperial trust of Pei Yen-ling. When provincial military governors sent envoys to inquire about these food supplies, Lu Chih continued, Pei Yen-ling always slandered and insulted them. If any subordinate official disagreed with him, Pei not only cursed him, but insulted his ancestors or even his whole clan. Lu Chih regarded such profanity as "unbearable to the ears of morally respectable men." 298

To show his confidence in these charges, Lu Chih asked the emperor to carry out a public investigation of Pei Yen-ling's conduct. If his criticism of Pei was proven false, he would be willing to accept whatever consequences should be inflicted upon him. 299 Lu Chih's account of Pei Yen-ling's misdeeds was obviously intended to convince the emperor to remove him from control of the Department of Public Revenue. Lu might have succeeded if he had not misjudged his fellow Chief Minister, Chao Ching (736-796).

Chao Ching is said to have been a learned man. His eloquence pleased Te-tsung and he was promoted to be Supervising Secretary (Chi-shih chung) in 787. 300 Like Lu Chih, Chao Ching's services in various provincial offices probably provided him with a good understanding of government methods. 301 When Lu Chih was appointed to be Chief

296 Ibid.: 6.
299 Ibid.: 22.
300 CTS, 138: 3775 and 12: 358; HTS, 150: 4811.
301 For his career in the provinces, see ibid.; he is said to have had "deep knowledge about the way of government" (shen yü li-tao). See CTS, 138: 3776.
Minister in the fourth month of 792, Chao Ching also obtained the same appointment. One source claims that Chao Ching’s rise to Chief Minister was actually due to Lu Chih’s recommendation.\textsuperscript{302} His relationship with Lu Chih seems to have gone well until his position as Chief Minister was placed under Lu Chih in the fifth month of 793.\textsuperscript{303}

According to the sources, Chao Ching deeply resented Lu Chih because he believed it was through Lu Chih’s arrangement that he was transferred to a substantially inferior position. It is said that the reason Lu Chih transferred Chao Ching to the position of second Chief Minister was because Lu “relied upon his long service in the palace, . . . received special benevolence and favor, (and thus) regarded the administration of the state as his own responsibility.”\textsuperscript{304} Since Chao Ching bore a bitter grudge against Lu Chih, he began frequently to use his eye disease as a pretense for not participating in the administration.\textsuperscript{305}

Nevertheless, it is likely that Chao Ching’s transfer to the post of second Chief Minister was in accord with the emperor’s instructions. A few months before his transfer, Te-tsung told Lu Chih that if he had something important to report, he should not tell Chao Ching, but just have it written down and presented to him secretly.\textsuperscript{306} In reply, Lu Chih told the emperor that since both Chao Ching and he were in charge of a pivotal position in the

\begin{footnotes}
\item \textsuperscript{302} See SL, 4: 15. The TCTC obviously believes the authenticity of this claim. See TCTC, 235: 7565. Both biographies of Chao Ching contained in CTS and HTS do not mention such recommendation.
\item \textsuperscript{303} CTS, 138: 3779; TCTC, 234: 7543. Originally the official title of Chief Minister for both Lu Chih and Chao Ching was "Vice Minister of the Secretariat, Jointly Manger of Affairs with the Secretariat-Chancellery" (Chung-shu shih-lang, T’ung Chung-shu Men-hsia p’ing chang shih). Chao Ching later was given the title of "Vice Minister of the Chancellery" (Men-hsia shih-lang) which implied that his position as Chief Minister was second to that of Lu Chih. However, the power of the Men-hsia shih-lang sometimes superseded that of the Chung-shu shih-lang, but this was not the general case. On the development of the different titles and their power status for the Tang Chief Minister, see Sun Kuo-tung, "Tang-tai san-sheng chih chih fa-chan yen-chiu," in his T’ang Sung shih lun-ts’ung, 1980: 83-185, esp. 117-123, 129 and 147. Also see 157 for examples of the higher status accorded to Men-hsia shih-lang.
\item \textsuperscript{304} CTS, 138: 3779.
\item \textsuperscript{305} Ibid., TCTC, 234: 7543.
\item \textsuperscript{306} “Hsieh mi-chih yin lun so hsüan shih chuang,” HYCC, 20: 1. Also see TCTC, 234: 7540.
\end{footnotes}
administration, he had never concealed any state secrets from him. He further advised the emperor not to damage "the virtue of impartiality" by hiding certain things from his ministers.  

If Lu Chih had intended to dominate the administration, he would certainly have seized this ready made opportunity to achieve his ambition. From Te-tsung's remarks, it sounds as though the emperor, for whatever reason, did not completely trust Chao Ching. It is thus reasonable to believe that Chao Ching's transfer was more an imperial decision than Lu Chih's initiative. However, Lu Chih was the one whom Chao Ching deeply resented, and Lu did not even know it.

Demotion

By the time Lu Chih presented his memorial of indictment against P'ai Yen-ling to the emperor, Chao Ching is said to have revealed to P'ai Yen-ling many of Lu Chih's criticisms of him; this made it easy for P'ai Yen-ling to counter Lu's criticisms and convince the emperor of his trustworthiness. A few days either before or after Lu Chih presented the memorial to the throne, Lu obtained Chao Ching's promise that he would join him in attacking P'ai Yen-ling in a court conference with the emperor. In light of this agreement, Lu Chih did not seem to have realized that he had offended Chao Ching. He obviously hoped to rely upon Chao Ching for confirmation that his criticism of P'ai Yen-ling was intended to improve the public welfare. In addition, he must have been sure of Chao Ching's support since Chao Ching himself had tried to save some officials from a frame-up engineered by P'ai Yen-ling. However, his confidence proved to be a species

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308 SL, 4: 15; TCTC, 235: 7565.
309 CTS, 138: 3778; HTS, 150: 4811. The Old T'ang History comments that since Chao Ching deliberately failed Lu Chih, his noble efforts to save some officials are suspect. See CTS, 138: 3789.
of self delusion. When Lu Chih ended his criticism at the court conference, Te-tsung already manifested a displeased countenance. At this juncture, Chao Ching betrayed his promise to Lu Chih by remaining completely silent.\(^{310}\) This silence seems to have provided Te-tsung with a timely excuse to remove Lu Chih, now a growing thorn in his side, from the position of Chief Minister.

In the twelfth month of 794, Lu Chih was demoted to the post of Advisor to the Heir Apparent (\textit{T'ai-tzu pin-k'o}).\(^ {311}\) From then on Lu Chih lived behind his own house doors. Except for going to court audiences, in his fear and caution he refused to see any visitors or relatives.\(^ {312}\) P'ei Yen-ling was not quite satisfied with this result, however. At the beginning of 795, he started to slander Chang P'ang, the Salt Commissioner, Li Ch'ung, the Metropolitan Governor, and other officials who had criticized his management of finances due to their experience with the financial administration. In his plot against the Metropolitan Governor, P'ei Yen-ling obtained support from the Director of the Review Bureau (\textit{Pi-pu lang-chung}) who was willing to say that Lu Chih and the Governor were involved together in several incidents of bribery. This Director of the Review Bureau was none other than Ts'ui Yüan-han, the man who had been rejected by Lu Chih as an assistant in the 792 doctoral examinations. Ts'ui's support of P'ei Yen-ling was evidently motivated by his resentment toward Lu Chih.\(^ {313}\) This intrigue nevertheless did not immediately threaten Lu Chih's life.

To achieve his goal of having Lu Chih executed, P'ei Yen-ling further accused Chang P'ang, Li Ch'ung and others of not only forming a private faction (\textit{tang}) with Lu Chih, but also trying to instigate a military uprising by criticizing his office for not providing fodder to the cavalry forces. At that point someone from the palace army told the emperor that P'ei

\(^{310}\) CTS, 138: 3779; HTS, ibid.; TCTC, 235: 7565.
\(^{311}\) CTS, 139: 3817 and 13: 380; TCTC, ibid..
\(^{312}\) SL, 4: 15; CTS, ibid. Since most of Lu Chih's uncles were also serving in the court then, "relatives" here must have referred to them.
\(^{313}\) CTS, 149: 4022; HTS, 203: 5784.
Yen-ling had in fact delayed the fodder supplies; Te-tsung's reaction was not to blame P'ei Yen-ling, but rather to become convinced of what P'ei had said about Lu Chih's faction intriguing in the army. The emperor decided without hesitation to execute Lu Chih and his so-called "faction." 314

The fact that almost no official dared to protest against this imperial decision demonstrates that P'ei Yen-ling's power dominated the court; it also shows that Lu Chih's lifetime unsociability made him a lonely fighter in this complicated political struggle with P'ei Yen-ling. Had Yang Ch'eng, the Grand Master of Remonstrance (Chien-i ta-fu), not taken the risk of speaking up for him then, Lu Chih would have been sentenced to death in the early months of 795 at the age of forty-one. Although Yang Ch'eng's protest against Te-tsung's punishment of an "innocent minister" almost cost him his own life, the Heir Apparent's intercession nonetheless saved both him and Lu Chih. 315

Banishment

Having escaped the death sentence, Lu Chih could no longer preserve his position in the capital. In the fourth month of 795, he was banished to Chung-chou (near modern Chungking in Szechwan) as an Administrative Aid (Pieh-chia) to the Prefect of that region. He remained there for ten years, and led his usual or perhaps an even more isolated life, so much so that the local population never saw his face. 316 Although his friend or maternal relative, Wei Kao, appealed repeatedly to the emperor to let Lu Chih replace him as Governor of the Chien-nan area (Szechwan), 317 we do not know whether or not Lu Chih

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315 See CTS, 192: 5133; HTS, 194: 5570; TCTC, 235: 7567.
317 Twitchett believes Wei Kao's contribution to the improvement of the border situation with the Tibetans must have influenced the imperial decision on Lu Chih's sentence. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 121. For Wei Kao's appeal, see CTS, 139: 3818; Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, 493: 14; TCTC, 236: 7611. For Wei Kao's contribution, see
had any communication with him during this time. The only friend he might have had during this period was Li Chi-fu (758-814), then Prefect of Chung-chou, the author of the Yüan-ho chün-hsien t'u-chih, a famous work of T'ang administrative geography, and a future statesman in emperor Hsien-tsung's reign.\(^{318}\) Sometime towards 800 when a new Prefect was dispatched to replace Li Chi-fu in Chung-chou, Te-tsung told this official to send his regards to Lu Chih, but he never again summoned Lu Chih back to the capital.\(^{319}\)

Although due to his fear of slander, Lu Chih deliberately refrained from composing any historical or literary works during these ten years, he did complete a work on medicine. The purpose of this study was to find some relief for local residents from the diseases caused by pernicious miasmas. The work is entitled Lu-shih chi-yen fang and has fifty

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\[^{318}\] Both TCTC and CTS mention that Lu Chih met Li Chi-fu in Chung-chou. Lu Chih originally was afraid that Li would take some revenge on him because he had banished Li Chi-fu to the south due to his close connection with Tou Shen in 792. However, Li is said not to have resented Lu Chih at all; he still treated him as if he was Chief Minister. Thus they became close friends and visited each other every day. See TCTC, 236: 7611; CTS, 139: 3818 and 148: 3992-93. The fact that neither Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface nor the extant Shun-tsung shih-lu mentions this episode makes us tend to agree with Pulleyblank's suggestion that this episode "may have been reported to the History Office by Li Chi-fu during the time that he had the supervision of [the Han Yu version of the Shun-tsung shih-lu], that is, during Han Yu's tenure of office." This is to say that the validity of the "friendship" between Li Chi-fu and Lu Chih cultivated in Chung-chou is questionable. See Pulleyblank, "The Shun-tsung shih-lu," BSOAS, 19 (1957): 342. However, the fact that TCTC actually recorded this episode without making any qualification in the K'ao-i section shows that Ssu-ma Kuang believed the episode to be reliable. Nevertheless, this still does not answer the question why neither the extant Shun-tsung shih-lu nor Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface record such an episode. Obviously, the author of these two works either did not know about this episode or did not accept its authenticity. From this point of view, we also have to question whether or not Ch'üan Te-yü used Han Yu's version of the Shun-tsung shih-lu to write his Preface, as Pulleyblank suggested (see note 6). Because if he did, he should have mentioned this episode in his Preface. Perhaps, on this particular episode, Ch'üan Te-yü did not follow Han Yu's version of the shih-lu since he and Li Chi-fu were colleagues during Hsien-tsung's reign (805-820) and he probably knew Li Chi-fu was not a very generous person toward his opponents. Or perhaps knowing that Lu Chih was basically an unsociable person he did not believe Lu Chih would have made "close friends" with Li Chi-fu. For Li Chi-fu's attitude toward his opponents, see TCTC, 237: 7649, 7654 and 7687. Without any further evidence, we can only leave this matter as it is.

\[^{319}\] CTS, 139: 3818.
It has been suggested that Lu Chih’s devotion to this work on medicine was a desperate attempt to win back Te-tsung’s attention since the emperor also had a strong interest in medicine, but his concern for the local people’s suffering seems to have motivated him more to return to his youthful study than did his now crushed political ambition. In any case, his medical studies probably did not appreciably improve his own physical condition.

Emperor Shun-tsung ascended the throne and was ready to summon Lu Chih back to court in 805, but Lu died shortly before the imperial edict reached Chung-chou. Lu Chih was buried in Chung-chou near a Taoist temple. He may have been reinterred later in Wu chūn. He was given the posthumous official title of Minister in the War Ministry (Ping-pu shang-shu) as well as the canonical name "Hsüan;" he is subsequently remembered primarily by the name Lu Hsüan-kung.

Closing remarks

From the time he became a Han-lin scholar to the day he lost his position as Chief Minister, Lu Chih was always close to the imperial power. This proximity to central power had two main consequences. First, intimacy with the imperial power undoubtedly...
reinforced his chance to rise in the bureaucracy. Second, as was the case with members of
the other Lu branches and of other aristocratic families, bureaucratic success ironically
increased Lu Chih's dependence upon the state. Such dependence nevertheless did not
prevent him from trying to do what he believed ought to be done even at the risk of
committing lèse majesté.

If he had not fought his losing battle against P'ei Yen-ling, he might have continued to
enjoy both imperial favor and his own sphere of power in the court. Why was a man
repeatedly described as "cautious" willing to risk all he had in such a battle? He had seen
the rise and fall of various ministers, including that of his intimate friend Hsiao Fu. Would
not the rapid changes in their political fates have made him realize the impossible task he
was engaged in? In the following chapters we shall provide answers to these questions,
but here let us listen to Lu Chih's own voice.

Before he decided to present his massive indictment of P'ei Yen-ling to the throne,
some of Lu Chih's friends (perhaps Ch'üan Te-yü or his uncles), had advised him not to
employ too severe a criticism in his advice to the emperor. Lu Chih said in reply: "I have
not betrayed the Son of Heaven on high and I have not betrayed what I have learned in this
world; nothing else troubles me (Wu shang pu-fu T'ien-tzu, hsia pu-fu wu so-hsüeh, pu-
hsü ch'i-i'a)." 324 To understand what Lu Chih meant by this, we have to explore the
foundations of "what [he] learned" and explain how "what [he] learned" guided him in the
service of emperor Te-tsung. These are the themes of the following chapters.

324 Ch'üan Te-yü, Preface:13; CTS, 139: 3817; HTS, 157: 4932.
Chapter Two: A Confucian Pragmatist Approach

At the beginning of 785, six months after emperor Te-tsung returned from forced exile to his court in Ch'ang-an, after the Ho-pei region returned to a semi-subjugated state as a result of the emperor's conciliatory policy, the Chao-i military governor came to court. He reported to the throne that the imperial Acts of Grace and Amnesty issued during the emperor's exile had moved all the soldiers in the Shan-tung area to tears. This public sentiment convinced the Chao-i governor that the court definitely would soon suppress the rebels. Although exaggeration in this sort of historical passage is not unusual, the fact that Lu Chih himself also mentioned this emotional event in similar phrases in a memorial to the emperor indicates that these imperial edicts may indeed have had a powerful impact on their audience. The person responsible for drafting these edicts and whose advice to the throne served as the guiding principle of these edicts must therefore have played a significant role in the court's settlement with the rebels.

No wonder Lu Chih's contemporaries commented that in Te-tsung's suppression of the rebellion in 786 he relied not only upon the might of the military, but also upon "the help of his virtuous and literary confidant." This "virtuous and literary confidant" was, of course, none other than Lu Chih.

Because Lu Chih's approach to reestablishing T'ang stability was manifested in his conscious responses to concrete historical circumstances, before we examine his approach, it will be helpful to discuss first the historical background that gave rise to rebellion during the early years of Te-tsung's reign.

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1 An area occupying a part of present day southern Hopei and northern Honan provinces.
2 This military governor was Li Pao-chen. See CTS, 139: 3800; HTS, 157: 4932; TCTC, 229: 7392.
3 See his "Shou Ho-chung hou ch'ing pa-ping chuang," in HYCC, 17: 13. Also see TCTC, 232: 7464.
4 See Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface, CTW, 493: 12; also see HTS, 157: 4932.
Historical background of the second Ho-peii rebellion and emperor Te-tsung's subsequent exile

Although emperor Te-tsung's policies aimed at restoring imperial authority at the beginning of his reign were the direct cause of the second rebellion in the Ho-peii area, the residual impact of the An Lu-shan rebellion on the region indirectly set the stage for this historical incident. As mentioned before, forced to adopt a compromise policy in settling the An Lu-shan rebellion in 763, the T'ang court had to reinstate former rebel generals as military governors of Ho-peii, and thus lost effective control over one of its most populous and rich provinces. Ho-peii, divided into four provinces after the An Lu-shan rebellion, subsequently became a semi-autonomous region by refusing to realize its financial obligations to the court and by usurping the court's power to establish its own candidates as governors. In addition to the Ho-peii region, there were other inland provinces where military governors became equally difficult to control. However, since its powerful semi-independent position was rooted not only in the specific historical conditions created by the An Lu-shan rebellion but also in its century-long regionalist tradition, Ho-peii continued to constitute the major threat to the stability of the T'ang empire in the post-An Lu-shan era.

7 The regionalist tradition in Ho-peii had its historical roots as far back as the seventh century. See E. G. Pulleyblank, The background of the rebellion of An Lu-shan, 1982: 75-81. Pulleyblank uses "separatist" instead of "regionalist" to describe this tradition. Since the Ho-peii military governors never really intended to separate from the court, and in fact, often relied upon the court's approval to strengthen their position in their own provinces, it seems more appropriate to call them regionalists. For the Ho-peii governors' ambivalent relationship with the court, see Wang Shou-nan, T'ang-tai fan-chen yü chung-yang kuan-hsi chih yen-chiu, revised 1978 edition: 311-57, esp. 356-57. Thanks to Professor Chen Jo-shui for his suggestion of the term "regionalist."
When Te-tsung ascended the throne in the fifth month of 779, the condition of the empire was relatively stable compared with the situation that prevailed at the beginning of his father Tai-tsung's reign (762-779). This was mainly owing to the appeasement policy practiced toward these powerful military governors. A young and ambitious monarch, Te-tsung was resolved to take strong measures to regain control over provincial government, especially in the semi-independent provinces in the Ho-pei area. In order to remind the Ho-pei provinces of their regular financial obligations toward the court, the emperor transferred the gifts and money given to the throne as "tribute" for imperial birthdays by the governors of P'ing-lu (modern Shantung and north of Kiangsu) and Wei-po (southern Hopei, northwest Shantung and a corner of northeast Honan) to the state treasury as regular tax revenue. Furthermore, he refused to follow the compromise policy often practiced by the court in the post-An Lu-shan rebellion period of accepting and confirming the usurper Liu Wen-hsi as governor of the northwestern Ching-yüan region. These policies sent a warning signal to the governors in Ho-pei.

Meanwhile, when one of eleven Commissioners dispatched by Te-tsung went to the Ho-pei region to negotiate the two-tax quotas with local authorities, he ordered the Wei-po military governor, T'ien Yüeh, to reduce the size of his armies and convert the disbanded troops back into taxpaying peasants. Tien Yüeh exploited this occasion for his own prestige among the troops by blaming the court for threatening the livelihood of the soldiers. While this event unquestionably intensified centrifugal forces in Ho-pei, it was the death of governor Li Pao-ch'en in Ch'eng-te (western Hopei) in the first month of 781 that finally brought the court and Ho-pei's military governors into direct confrontation. Since emperor Te-tsung refused to accept Li Wei-yüeh, son of Li Pao-ch'en, as the succeeding governor of Ch'eng-te, the provinces of P'ing-lu and Wei-po joined Ch'eng-te

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8 For emperor Te-tsung's strong policies see, Michael Dalby, "Court politics in late T'ang times," *The Cambridge history*, 1979: 500-01; for Liu Wen-hsi's revolt and Te-tsung's reaction, see TCTC, 226: 7277-81.
in open rebellion. Worse still, they were supported by the governor of Hsiang-yang (Hupei area) and thus the vital Han valley supply route from the capital to the middle Yangtze was blocked.\(^9\)

In the ensuing conflict, the court achieved some initial successes owing to the loyal support of Chu Tao, governor of Lu-lung province (near modern Peking), the assassination of Li Wei-yüeh by his subordinate commander, Wang Wu-chüan, who then submitted himself to the court. However, the rewards Te-tsung bestowed upon Chu Tao and Wang Wu-chüan did not meet their expectations; they turned against the court in 782. By that time, the northeast region was once again in total rebellion. The subsequent revolt of the powerful Huai-hsi (Honan area) governor, Li Hsi-lieh, further exacerbated an already bleak situation by cutting the Pien canal route through which the court received its major supplies from the south.\(^10\) With two crucial economic lifelines under rebel control, and with each rebel leader assuming the title either of King or Grand Generalissimo at the end of 782, the T'ang court was indeed caught in a grave predicament.

Since all his supplies from the south were beyond reach, and his depleted treasury was yet to benefit from the newly implemented two-tax system, emperor Te-tsung was forced to exact all kinds of irregular taxes from the capital population. These included, among others, exactions from the wealthy merchant class, taxes on various commodities such as tea, lumber, and bamboo, and doubling the monopoly tax on salt. In the sixth month of 783, a tax was even imposed on all buildings according to their size, and a percentage levy

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\(^9\) See TCTC, 227: 7302.
on all mercantile transactions was also put into practice. As a result, the capital was filled with popular resentment and discontent. Meanwhile, the loyalist troops were soundly defeated in Ho-pei and the prospect of victory appeared remote.

By the ninth month of 783, the Huai-hsi rebel leader Li Hsi-lieh completely paralyzed the imperial armies and forced the court to summon a force of crack troops from the northwestern province of Ching-yüan to break the stalemate in the Huai-hsi area. When these troops arrived at the capital in the tenth month of that year after a long and exhausting march, the emperor repeated the same mistake he made in the previous year by failing to reward them to the level of their expectations. An army revolt ensued and, at the same time, a popular uprising began in the capital. Further exacerbating the situation, these troops established the previous governor of Ching-yüan, Chu Tz'u, elder brother of the Ho-pei rebel Chu Tao, as their leader. This capital rebellion ultimately forced Te-tsung into exile in Feng-t'ien.

While exiled in Feng-t'ien, Te-tsung's favorite Chief Minister Lu Ch'i (d. 785) deliberately prevented an imperial audience with Li Huai-kuang, a loyalist commander

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12 TCTC, 228: 7344-45; Twitchett, Ibid.
13 When Te-tsung refused to accept Liu Wen-hsi as the governor of Ching-yüan in the second month of 780, Chu Tz'u was appointed governor of that region to suppress Liu Wen-hsi. Liu was killed by his subordinate generals in the fifth month of that year; Chu Tz'u later was given the title of Chief Minister as a concurrent position in addition to his actual position as military governor in various provinces, but his governorship in Ching-yüan was given to a royal prince. See TCTC, 226: 7278 & 7281 and 7288-89. When his younger brother Chu Tao rebelled in 782, he invited Chu Tz'u to join him, but his secret letter to Chu Tz'u was discovered by the court before it reached Tz'u. Te-tsung did not charge Tz'u with any crime. However, the emperor did make him stay in the capital and thus took away his military power. See TCTC, 227: 7328; CTS, 200B: 5386. By the time he was established as the leader at the capital by his former troops, he was obviously ready to join the rebellion. This has led one modern historian to suspect that Chu Tz'u's rebellion was a premeditated one. See Jen Yü-ts'ai, T'ang Te-tsung Feng-t'ien ting-nan chi chi'shih-liao chih yen-chiu, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1970: 10-12. Also see Chao Yüan-i, Feng-t'ien lu, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ch'u-pien edition, Commercial Press, 1937: 2.
whose Ho-chung armies (in modern Shansi) marched a great distance from Ho-pei to relieve the court from imminent danger. Since Lu Ch'i was aware that Li Huai-kuang had openly criticized his abuse of power and various intrigues against capable ministers, he was afraid that Li Huai-kuang's successful defense of Feng-t'ien would cause the emperor to listen to whatever Li had to say. Due to this fear, Lu Ch'i deliberately advised the emperor to send Li away immediately to fight Chu Tz'u in Ch'ang-an. Te-tsung's consent to Lu's request alienated this loyal commander, and indirectly established the foundations for Li Huai-kuang's later rebellion.

It has been pointed out that the main reason behind Li Huai-kuang's later rebellion was actually his resentment of unfair treatment between Li Sheng's Shen-ts'e armies (Palace armies or Army of Divine Strategy) and his provincial forces. However, if Lu Ch'i had advised the emperor to grant an audience with Li Huai-kuang, Te-tsung might have had a chance to placate Li's discontent in person, and thus induce him willingly to endure his straitened financial conditions together with the court. His failure to do so has often led traditional Chinese historians to hold Lu Ch'i responsible for Li's subsequent rebellion.

15 For Lu Ch'i's life and his intrigues against capable ministers, see CTS, 135: 3713-18; HTS, 223: 6351-54; TCTC, 226: 7297 & 227: 7301, 7304, 7308-09, 7334-35 & 228: 7339. For example, he engineered the death of Yang Yen (726-781), the primary architect of the two-tax system and the first Chief Minister then at the court. On Yang Yen's life, see CTS, 118: 3418-26; HTS, 145: 4722-27.

16 See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 101. For Li Huai-kuang's resentment, see TCTC, 230: 7402-3; CTS, 133: 3664-65. For the different imperial treatment of the Shen-ts'e armies compared with other local forces during Te-tsung's reign, see HTS, 50: 1334. The Shen-ts'e Army was originally established to defend the northwest frontier in 754. It was sent east when the An Lu-shan rebellion broke out and later stationed in Shan-chou (in modern Honan) as an inner defence line of the capital. In 763 when Te-tsung's father, emperor Tai-tsung, fled from the Tibetans to Shan-chou the Shen-ts'e Army there protected him well. After his return to the capital, emperor Tai-tsung incorporated the Shen-ts'e Army into the palace guards, and thus established its importance in the Tang military system as the Palace Army. Its importance to the throne became even more obvious when emperor Te-tsung also had to rely upon its protection when he escaped to Feng-t'ien in 783. The preferential treatment accorded the Shen-ts'e Army was in part a reflection of the emperor's gratitude to this Army. For the history of the Shen-ts'e Army, see HTS, 50: 1332-36; THY, 72: 1294; Michael Dalby, "Court politics," The Cambridge history, 1979: 573-74 & 586-87; Obata Tatsuo, "Shinsakugun no seiritu," Tōyōshi kenkyū, 18:2 (1959): 35-56.

17 See TCTC, 229: 7377-78; CTS, 121: 3493-94.
To be sure, due to public pressure, Te-tsung finally demoted Lu Ch'i in the twelfth month of 783, but the emperor was unable, or probably unwilling, to correct the unequal treatment between the Shen-ts'e armies and Huai-kuang's forces. The result was Huai-kuang's eventual rebellion and Te-tsung's further exile to Liang-chou in the second month of 784.18

As noted in the previous chapter, during this difficult and dangerous time, Lu Chih's keen abilities in formulating state documents and his probing vision in dealing with pressing problems made him an important figure on the mid-T'ang political stage. But if he had not occupied the position of Han-lin scholar in the first place, it seems doubtful he could have risen to the center of mid-T'ang political life within such a short time. To explain this, a brief description of the development of the Han-lin Academy (Han-lin yüan) and the status of Han-lin scholars becomes necessary.

The development of the Han-lin Academy and Han-lin Scholars

The Han-lin Academy was formally established in the early years of emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign (712-756). Admittedly, the gathering of a group of talented young men including poets, calligraphers, artists, scholars of classical studies, and even masters of chess around T'ang rulers started as early as emperor T'ai-tsung's reign (627-649), and continued in empress Wu's time (690-705). Nevertheless, it was during Hsüan-tsung's rule that the title of Han-lin scholar first appeared. Prior to 738, a group of talented young men formed a palace organization directly attached to the emperor. They held either the title of "Academician awaiting orders" (Han-lin tai-chao) or "Academician in attendance" (Han-lin kung-feng), and most of them also held other official titles concurrently for the purpose of grading their official ranks and salaries. As personal attendants to emperor Hsüan-tsung, their original function was to entertain the emperor by displaying their artistic,

18 TCTC, 229: 7385 & 230: 7402-10.
literary and academic excellence. In 738, they acquired the unifying title of Han-lin Academician or Han-lin scholar (*Han-lin hsüeh-shih*), and at the same time, another Academy of scholars (Hsüeh-shih yüan) was added as a new section to the Han-lin academy. This new Academy of scholars soon became Hsüan-tsung's private secretariat, and overshadowed the original Han-lin academy.¹⁹

Although Hsüan-tsung originally kept the Han-lin scholars on hand more to give pleasure to his personal life than to participate in decision making on state affairs, this soon changed after the An Lu-shan rebellion. The chaos brought about by the rebellion may have forced emperor Su-tsung (reign 756-762) to rely heavily upon Han-lin scholars to draft imperial edicts since they were always close at hand. This made the emperor easily susceptible to their influence. In the post-rebellion period, emperor Tai-tsung still entrusted them with this duty normally performed by the Secretariat, and as a result, obstructed the regular operation of the bureaucracy. When Te-tsung came to the throne in 779, the scholars' role as private secretariat to the emperor had been firmly established.

This transformation of the Han-lin scholars' functions demonstrates how they could be used as convenient and trustworthy means for emperors to bypass the regular bureaucratic procedures, especially during chaotic periods. Clearly, the more powerful the Han-lin scholars became, the less effective was the operation of the regular bureaucracy. Their existence, like that of the eunuchs, may be seen as another example of the recurrent contention in traditional Chinese history between the so-called "inner court" and the "outer court." To be sure, unlike the situation with the eunuchs, the contention between the Han-lin scholars and the regular bureaucracy must not be exaggerated; the highest official positions always remained the logical place for the extension of a Han-lin scholar's career.

especially after Te-tsung's time. Lu Chih's career development actually serves as a conspicuous example.

Having sketched in the historical background and the institutional development of the status of Han-lin scholar, we shall now examine Lu Chih's approach to re-establishing mid-T'ang stability during this tumultuous era.

**A Confucian pragmatist approach**

Between the eighth month of 783 and the eighth month of 785 Lu Chih presented more than thirty memorials to the throne, and formulated more than eighty rescripts for the state. On the surface it may appear that it was the state rescripts, especially the three Acts of Grace and Amnesty issued at the beginning of 784, in the seventh month of 784, and in the first month of 785, which exerted an emotional influence on the rebel forces; but the guiding principles behind these edicts were in complete accord with Lu Chih's many private memorials to the throne. In other words, it was Lu Chih's approach to the problems confronting the court of emperor Te-tsung during this period that actually contributed to the settlement with the rebels. In order to understand the characteristics of Lu Chih's approach, how it influenced imperial policies, and what impact it had on contemporary situations, an analysis of his memorials is imperative.

It is clear that Lu Chih's memorials are conscious responses to particular historical situations and to a particular ruler at a particular time. Outwardly, it would seem that there is no coherent thread upon which to tie these individual responses together. A closer examination, however, reveals that certain principles distinctly underlie all his responses.

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20 On the contention between "inner" and "outer" court in the Former Han dynasty, see Wang Yü-ch'üan, "An outline of the central government of the Former Han dynasty," *HJAS*, 12 (June 1949): 134-87, esp. 166-73; in T'ang, see Michael Dalby, "Court politics," *The Cambridge history*, 1979: 587. The *Old T'ang History* mentions that after 805, the most respected Han-lin scholars would eventually become Chief Ministers, see CTS, 43: 1853-4.
Under the rubric of these basic principles, Lu Chih’s memorials no longer appear to be mere disconnected individual items; rather, they begin to form a systematic and meaningful whole in which a Confucian pragmatist approach begins to loom large. What, then, are these fundamental principles that underlie his approach?

I and Ch'üan

The two central principles that emerged in Lu Chih’s memorials to emperor Te-tsung are the notions of "righteousness" and "expediency" (I and Ch'üan). In a memorial advising Te-tsung how to reward fruit peasants who presented melons to the emperor during his exile, Lu Chih said:

The ways to establish a state lie only in righteousness (i) and expediency (ch'üan). The methods to lead people lie only in honor (ming) and profit (li). Honor is close to emptiness, but is important in moral teaching; profit is close to substance, but is light in virtue. All those measures used to consider and decide right and wrong and to set up legal institutions are dependent upon righteousness. As for considering when to employ honor (emptiness) or profit (substance), judging the degree of their moral importance, making these two (honor and profit) coexist without harming each other, adopting these two alternately without contradiction, following the multitude's desire, estimating the appropriateness of the time and hence practicing proper administration in prosperous or declining times so as not to exhaust the people, all of these things depend upon expediency. If the ruler relies exclusively on substantial profits without the aid of emptiness (i.e., honors), they will then be wasted and deficient, and the (state’s) resources will be insufficient. If the ruler relies exclusively on empty honors without supplementing them with substance (i.e., profits), they will then be absurd and deceptive and people will not be motivated to pursue them. Thus, the reason the state formulates a code of awards, grants money and goods, and bestows grain emoluments is to make manifest the substance (profits); the reason it differentiates between official ranks and makes distinctions in the adornment of their clothes is to beautify the emptiness (honors). The ruler (the person on high) has to understand the significance (of profits and honors), be skilful in alternating them, make them depend upon each other as the inside and outside (of a garment), and cause the people to employ them daily without realization. Thus the principle of expediency in governing a state will be achieved (by the ruler)."

In his explanation of how to govern a state, Lu Chih apparently upheld the I principle, or the principle of righteousness, as the moral foundation of a state. Without this foundation, there would be no standard upon which moral judgements and an institutional framework could be based. The Ch‘üan principle, or the principle of expediency, on the other hand, was put forward by him as a complementary principle by means of which the institutions of the state could be successfully operated within the moral framework established by the I principle. Without the I principle, one would not know why certain actions should be taken, and without the Ch‘üan principle one would not know how to take appropriate actions. Both principles are equally necessary in Lu Chih’s approach to government.

What deserves our attention here, however, is that to Lu Chih the idea of expediency did not mean political trickery. According to his definition, expediency, or ch‘üan, was basically a kind of keen ability to know when to apply the least harmful, or when to adopt the most helpful policies to preserve and increase the welfare of the state. This can be further demonstrated in his advice to Te-tsung not to displace Li Ch'u-lin as military governor of Feng-hsiang (western Shensi).

In the sixth month of 784 when the rebellion came gradually under control, emperor Te-tsung intended to summon Li Ch'u-lin to accompany him on his return to the capital, and subsequently eliminate Li’s military power. To be sure, Li Ch'u-lin was not a governor loyal to the T'ang court. In the tenth month of 783 he actually staged the murder of Lu Chih's mentor and friend Chang I when Chang was replacing the rebel Chu Tz'u as the governor of Feng-hsiang. Right after this murder, Li Ch'u-lin immediately surrendered to Chu Tz'u under whom he had previously served.22 However, when Chu Tz'u was defeated by the loyalist forces at Feng-t'ien, Li then quickly sent tribute goods to the throne to show his support to the court. Of course, Te-tsung resented Li Ch'u-lin's opportunistic

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22 See TCTC, 228: 7359-60; CTS, 125: 3548-49.
behavior, but in order to keep Li as a supporter, though a superficial one, the emperor was forced to accept him as military governor of Feng-hsiang.\(^{23}\)

Nevertheless, when the emperor's policy of compromise gradually soothed the Ho-pei rebels in 784, he was ready to follow the general opinion among his ministers that he should now take away Li Ch'u-lin's military power.\(^{24}\) As a result, the emperor not only refused to give audience to Li's envoys, but also retained these envoys in his capital in exile.\(^{25}\) Meanwhile, Te-tsung also tried to find a way to deprive Li of his military power once and for all. To avoid Li's suspicion, Te-tsung planned to give Li the outward honor of escorting the imperial return to the capital while actually taking this advantage to revoke his governorship at Feng-hsiang. Considering his plan to be expedient (*ch'iuan*), the emperor asked Lu Chih for his suggestion.\(^{26}\)

Knowing Te-tsung's plan, Lu Chih advised the emperor not to accept opinions arising from "the small loyalty of pedantic Confucian scholars (*shu-ju hsiao-chung*)"\(^{27}\) because this would only obstruct the important task of restoring the court's stability. Two main reasons underlie Lu Chih's argument. First, since the Huai-hsi area was still controlled by the rebels, the emperor should accept Li Ch'u-lin's professed loyalty and placate him so as to concentrate the court's forces to fight the rebels in the Huai-hsi region. Second, although Li had betrayed the court, since he re-declared his loyalty, the court could actually rely upon his local armies to fortify the strength of the loyalist forces, or at least to prevent him from becoming another threat to the court. Reasoning thus, Lu Chih then quoted Confucius' words as a warning to the emperor: "lack of self-restraint in small matters will bring ruin to great plans."\(^{28}\) To Lu Chih, a ruler should practice this "self-restraint in small

\(^{23}\) TCTC, 230: 7419-20.

\(^{24}\) Ibid.

\(^{25}\) Lu Chih, "Hsing-yüan ch'ing fu-hsün Li Ch'u-lin," HYCC, 16: 1; also see TCTC, Ibid.

\(^{26}\) See Lu Chih, "Lun t'i-huan Li Ch'u-lin chuang," HYCC, 17: 6.

\(^{27}\) "Hsing-yüan ch'ing fu-hsün Li Ch'ü-lin chuang," HYCC, 16: 5.

matters" in order to carry out greater projects. He stated that the conduct of Duke Huan of the Chi state in the Spring and Autumn period (722 - 481 B.C.) exemplified this Confucian proverb.

What Lu Chih referred to was apparently the well-known event of Duke Huan's appointment of Kuan Chung, a man who formerly attempted to assassinate him, as his Chief Minister, and his subsequent reliance upon Kuan Chung's help to establish himself as the first hegemon during that period.\(^2\) Using Duke Huan of Ch'i as a model, Lu Chih was advising Te-tsung to relinquish short term gains for the sake of the greater needs of the state. Lu Chih's own behavior in this instance was consistent with his suggestion. That is, he personally could not possibly feel any goodwill toward Li Ch'u-lin, the man responsible for the murder of his mentor and friend Chang I; but when the well-being of the state was the main concern, Lu Chih did not let personal animosity "ruin" what he believed to be "great plans." In order to advise him to pursue a policy which would bring substantial benefit to the state in the long run, Lu Chih further explained his concept of expediency to the emperor.

Lu Chih told Te-tsung that to summon Li Ch'u-lin to escort the imperial return to the capital, and then to remove his military power by keeping him away from his province was not an expedient policy. It was rather a political scheme secretly designed to trap Li Ch'u-lin. If he carried out this scheme, Lu Chih said, the emperor could not morally justify his conduct to other military governors who had betrayed the court before, but were on the verge of once more proclaiming their renewed loyalty to the court. Moreover, those who had been placated by the court might thus begin to distrust the court and cease to appreciate the policy of placation.\(^3\)


\(^3\) For Duke Huan's appointment of Kuan Chung as chief minister, see *Chun-ch'iu Tsuo Chuang chü-chieh*, Taipei reprint: Hsin-lu shu-chii, 1966, Ch., 1 (*Chuang-kung*): 31.

\(^4\) "Lun t'i-huan Li Ch'u-lin chuang," HYCC, 17: 7.
Lu Chih told the emperor what he considered to be expedient was quite the opposite of what his majesty had in mind. Lu Chih then explained his definition of expediency to the emperor:

As for the meaning of expediency (ch'üan), it is derived from an analogy with ch'üan and heng. Heng is the steelyard; chüan is the weight. Thus, when the weight lies in the steelyard (or when the weight is hanging), the amount of things (one obtains) can then be accurate. If you apply (the principle of) expediency (ch'üan) to human affairs, the lightness or heaviness of their righteousness will not be missed. When using it to approach (moral) principles, one will definitely select the major ones and discard the minor ones; when using it to distance (yourself from) calamities, one will definitely choose to (endure) the lesser ones and avoid the greater ones. If you are not an enlightened person, it is difficult to exhaust the essence and subtlety of it (expediency). Therefore, the sage (i.e., Confucius) valued it.\(^{31}\)

To further prove the validity of his definition of expediency, Lu Chih recalled that Confucius once said:

A man good enough as a partner in the pursuit of the Way need not be good enough as a partner in a common stand; a man good enough as a partner in a common stand need not be good enough as a partner in the exercise of moral discretion (ch'üan).\(^{32}\)

According to Lu Chih, the point of Confucius' statement was to show "how difficult it was to know chi (chih chi chih nan ye)."\(^{33}\)

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\(^{31}\) Ibid.: 7-8. There is a one word difference in the different editions of this memorial. That is, some editions record this passage as "... Thus, when the weight lies in the steelyard (heng)," and some record it as "... when the weight is hanging (hsüan)." The 1768 edition, that is, the one I am using throughout this study, and the Sung dynasty Lang Yeh edition preserved in the late nineteenth century Pai-pu ts'ung-shu chi-chêng collection have "steelyard (heng)," while the SPTK and SPPY editions have "hanging (hsüan)." Since I find the difference does not change the basic meaning of Lu Chih's definition of expediency, I have presented the two possible translations in the above passage. On these different editions, see chapter 1, note 2 on sources.

\(^{32}\) See the Analects, ch., 9 (Tzu-han): 29. For the English translation, see D. C. Lau, Confucius, the analects, 1979, 9/30: 100. Emphasis added. For Lu Chih's quotation of this passage, see "Lun t'i-huan Li Ch'u-lin chuang," HYCC, 17: 8.

\(^{33}\) "Lun t'i-huan Li Ch'u-lin," HYCC, 17: 8.
Although he did not explicate the meaning of *chi*, in an earlier memorial Lu Chih briefly mentioned that "*chi*, is the slight beginning of things (*chi che, shih chih wei ye")."\(^{34}\)

Moreover, in *The Book of Changes* (or *I ching*), we also find a reference which defines *chi* as follows: "*Chi*, is the slight beginning of a movement, and the earliest indications of good fortune (or ill). The superior man (*chün-tzu*) sees them, and acts accordingly without waiting for (the delay of) a day."\(^{35}\) Based upon these two sources, we can interpret "to know *chi*" as "to know the germination of a right opportunity (or an opportune moment)."

Because *chi* refers to the germination of a right opportunity, or an opportune moment, to recognize it is no easy task. However, from Lu Chih's point of view, as long as one observes the expediency principle, this difficulty will be minimized.

Lu Chih did not quote other classical philosophers' ideas about *ch'üan* to support his own definition, but we can find similar explanations of *ch'üan* in *Mencius*, in *Hsun tzu* and also in *Mo tzu*.\(^{36}\) One common feature shared by Lu Chih and these philosophers' interpretation of *ch'üan* is their agreement concerning the importance of discarding small gains for the sake of reaching an ethically higher good. Hsun Tzu even stated that "the

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\(^{34}\) See "Feng-t'ien lun ch'ien so ta-tsou wei shih-hsing chuang," HYCC, 12: 15.


Way (Tao) is the correct weighing (standard) in ancient times and in the present. (Tao che, ku-chin chih cheng-ch'üan ye)." 37

Meanwhile, we find Lu Chih telling emperor Te-tsung that the imperial plan to remove Li Ch'u-lin's military power at that particular time was not only inappropriate, but was also in opposition to the Way (Tao). The reason is quite obvious. Because, Lu Chih argued, if the emperor had carried out his plan, what the court would have gained would be just one region, but what the court would have lost would be the trust of all the other military governors, and this would further jeopardize the emperor's position. This certainly was in conflict with Confucius' way of practicing the expediency principle. How could one consider something in opposition to the Way to be expedient? And how could one regard the manipulation of political trickery as being wise? 38 Convinced by Lu Chih's advice, Te-tsung eventually abandoned his original plan, and Li Ch'u-lin also retained his position as military governor at Feng-hsiang. 39

As mentioned above, Lu Chih believed that the operation of expediency was complementary to the application of righteousness in governing a state. His rejection of political trickery (shu, or ch'üan shu) as being expedient, moreover, is definitely not a "condemnation of expediency." 40 In fact, his explanation of expediency really demonstrates his genuine search for a farsighted, and at the same time, morally responsible policy to protect the well-being of the state. Ch'üan is the principle which makes it possible for the state to obtain the maximum possible amount of moral correctness with the minimum possible amount of damage at a specific time and under specific circumstances.

37 See Dubs, trans., The works of Hsuntze, ch., 22: 515.
38 "Lun t'i-huan Li Ch'u-lin," HYCC, 17: 8.
39 TCTC, 231: 7443.
40 See McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 239. Professor McMullen's book is an extremely important study of the political and intellectual life of Tang China. However, I believe his comments on Lu Chih's attitude toward expediency are inaccurate, an understandable oversight in such a comprehensive study.
For Lu Chih, to practice the principle of expediency does not mean to engage in political tricks. Whereas political tricks often involve using morally dubious means to achieve certain small gains, expediency requires the adoption of policies which might not lead to one individual's satisfaction, but would satisfy the greater needs of the general population. The operation of expediency depends upon a higher ethical standard and does not contradict the principle of righteousness. As Lu Chih explained them, these two principles ought to function alternately in the same spectrum. In the following section, we shall see how and under what conditions Lu Chih advised emperor Te-tsung to apply these two principles.

The application of the principle of righteousness

Despite the fact that it was Lu Chih who advised emperor Te-tsung how to govern the state, the truth remains that the chief responsibility for carrying out that advice fell on no other shoulders than the emperor's. Lu Chih's ministerial advice provided two pillars which still required Te-tsung's imperial action to set them up. This being the case, the imperial conduct became crucial since the emperor was ultimately responsible for the destiny of his state and his people. This point of view is closely related to the emperor's role in traditional Chinese political reality.

The first emperor of the Ch'in dynasty established a unified empire and institutionalized the position of emperor in 221 B. C. From that time on until the end of Chinese imperial history in 1911, the position of emperor was the only permanently hereditary office, except, of course, when one dynasty replaced another. Monopolized by one particular family during stable dynastic periods, this hereditary position was theoretically accompanied by unlimited authority and all-encompassing power.\(^{41}\)

\(^{41}\) On the establishment and development of the institution of emperor in Chinese imperial history, see Hsing I-t'ien's excellent study, "Chung-kuo huang-ti chih-tu te chien-li yü
Situated at the apogee of the entire social and political structure, emperors were not merely political rulers; they also assumed the role of moral leaders. Although the ideal ruler set out in Confucian political theory was one who governed without interfering action (wu-wei) and through delegating responsibility to his Chief Ministers, in traditional Chinese political reality, with the exception of those who were dominated by eunuchs or imperial relatives, emperors were fiercely protective of their ruling power. As a consequence, the power of the Chief Ministers often suffered under a strong and ambitious emperor. Moreover, since emperors were the ultimate arbitrators of all bureaucratic decisions, their trust and respect for the bureaucracy became necessary if it was to operate on a reasonable and objective basis. Under these conditions of imperial Chinese political reality, the key to good government often resided more in the emperor than in the bureaucracy.

Theoretically speaking, the seeds of the enormous scope of Chinese imperial power were already sown in the pre-Ch'in political doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven (t'ien-ming), a doctrine that emerged during the Chou dynasty (ca. 1122 B.C. - 771 B.C.). It is true that the central tenet of the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven is its emphasis on the moral virtue of the ruler as the foundation of his legitimacy, but the same doctrine also considered the person who became the supreme political ruler "the Son of Heaven (t'ien-tzu)." Furthermore, "the Son of Heaven" was also entrusted with the Mandate to rule the human world or "all under Heaven (t'ien-hsia)." Once the position of emperor became institutionalized, although individual emperors still had to pay lip service to the moral
teachings of the doctrine,\textsuperscript{45} what they exploited most about the doctrine was its sanction of their political rule over the entire human world as divine descendants of Heaven.

The fact that emperors could not completely neglect the moral legitimacy of their rule demonstrates whatever limited effect the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven still had on them. It is within this framework that we find many Confucian officials repeatedly relying upon this doctrine, perhaps their only weapon within the imperial system, to circumscribe the imperial power. Their purpose was to transform imperial moral conduct so that a benevolent government would be possible. As we shall see, in this respect Lu Chih consciously observed these Confucian norms. His unusually persistent commitment to this political doctrine, moreover, established him as a significant figure in his time. Bearing this in mind, we can now return to our discussion of Lu Chih.

Since benevolent imperial rule was believed to be the fundamental source of the state's cohesion and stability, one major aspect of Lu Chih's approach to the problems faced by the court naturally focused upon the emperor's personal conduct. Thus, he applied his principle of righteousness to improving the emperor's behavior. His application of the principle in this context, for the convenience of analysis, can be further examined in three closely related categories. These include his responses aimed at raising the emperor's consciousness of the importance of being a benevolent ruler, prescribing proper measures for the imperial treatment of court ministers, and remonstrating the emperor to value the common people. We shall deal with them in this order.

Raising the imperial consciousness of being a virtuous ruler

Strictly speaking, all of Lu Chih's memorials were intended to raise emperor Te-tsung's awareness of being a benevolent monarch. The most conspicuous and specific one, however, was his discussion of the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven.

In the tenth month of 783, right after Te-tsung was forced into exile in Feng-t'ien, the emperor was under great pressure to demote his favorite Chief Minister Lu Ch'i. By then Lu Ch'i was openly blamed for advocating irregular tax exactions, for his intrigues against loyal ministers such as Yang Yen and Chang I, and for his mistake about Chu Tz'u's absolute loyalty to the court.\(^46\) As mentioned above, even the powerful governor Li Huaikuang voiced strong criticisms against him. Although Te-tsung was eventually forced to banish Lu Ch'i to the south two months later,\(^47\) at the time he was quite dismayed by this pressure. He told Lu Chih that the decline or prosperity of the state had always been decided by heavenly predestination (also t'ien-ming); thus the court's current predicament was predetermined, and his ministers (meaning Lu Ch'i) were not to be blamed.\(^48\) The emperor, in a sense, was trying to clear Lu Ch'i's name, but he probably also sincerely believed that the present crisis was predestined because it reminded him of a prediction made by a soothsayer (shu-shih) in 780.\(^49\)

In reply, Lu Chih first discussed what he believed to be the causes of the court's present predicament. While praising Te-tsung's determination to restore the imperial authority at the beginning of his reign, Lu simultaneously pointed out that Te-tsung's impatience in carrying out his strong policies was the direct cause of the Ho-pei rebellion.

\(^{46}\) TCTC, 228: 7357 and 229: 7385.

\(^{47}\) Ibid.; CTS, 12: 338.


\(^{49}\) A soothsayer named Sang Tao-mao told the emperor in 780 that he would have to escape from the palace to Feng-t'ien within a few years. Te-tsung followed his advice and constructed a high city wall around Feng-t'ien at that time. See TCTC, 226: 7355; Sang Tao-mao's biography, CTS, 191: 5113; HTS, 204: 5812.
He particularly blamed the emergency tax exactions for the popular uprising in the capital. Furthermore, he also criticized the emperor for becoming less forgiving, and actually very suspicious of his subjects. According to Lu Chih, this was because the emperor was too confident of his own correctness. As a consequence he often applied overly quick judgements to court affairs and was too harsh in his evaluations of his subjects.

To be sure, Lu Chih did say that his majesty's ministers (also referring to Lu Ch'i) were responsible for preventing the emperor from finding out about the discontent among the regular bureaucracy as well as among the general population, but he insisted that the emperor's less forgiving and very suspicious disposition was the real cause of "the perfunctory and careless (kou-ch'ieh)" behavior of his subjects. Implying that the emperor failed to observe the rule of benevolence, he then attempted to reorient the imperial understanding of the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven.

Prior to his reorientation, Lu Chih emphasized that he never dabbled in studies of divination or esoteric methods (chan-suan mi-shu), but from his study of the ancient classics, he understood that the Mandate of Heaven was neither constant nor predetermined. Its conferment depended rather upon human conduct or the ruler's behavior. To substantiate his argument, Lu Chih resorted to the classics for support. After citing that "Heaven sees as my people see; Heaven hears as my people hear," and that "it is difficult to rely on Heaven; its Mandate is not constant. (But if the sovereign see to it that ) his virtue be constant, he will preserve his throne; if his virtue be not constant, the nine provinces will be lost by him," Lu Chih stated that Heaven's judgement was

51 These two passages do not appear in the present edition of the Book of documents or Book of history (Shu ching). They appear in the chapters called "the Great declaration (T'ai-shih), section 2" and "the Common possession of pure virtue (Hsien yu i-te)" in the forged ancient text of the Book of documents. The first passage also appears in Book 5A/5 of Mencius. Since the authenticity of this forged part of the Book of documents was not seriously dealt with until the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911), Lu Chih and other Tang literati naturally believed it to be authentic. On the problem of the forged Book of documents, see Ch'iü Wan-li, Shang-shu chi-shih, Taipei: Lien-ching ch'u-pan kung-ssu, 1983: 21-31. For the English translation, see James Legge, trans.,
unquestionably derived from popular inclinations. Thus, the emperor ought to realize that "there is no Mandate of Heaven beyond the realm of human affairs" (fei yü jen-shih chih wai, pieh yu T'ien-ming ye).  

Thus disabusing the emperor of the idea that the Mandate of Heaven was predetermined, Lu Chih further told him that even The Book of Changes, a classic believed to grasp the essence of the changes in human destiny, upheld virtuous human conduct as the basis for granting the Mandate of Heaven. He reminded the emperor to heed a comment traditionally attributed to Confucius:

"Yu (blessing) is the symbol of assisting. He whom Heaven assists is observant (of what is right); he whom men assist is trustworthy. [The individual here indicated] treads the path of sincerity and desires to be observant (of what is right), and studies to exalt the worthy. Hence 'Help is given to him from Heaven. There will be good fortune, advantage in every respect.'"  

To make his point stronger, a similar message was given as a parallel:

"Danger [arises] when a man feels secure in his position. Destruction [threatens] when a man seeks to preserve his worldly estate. Confusion [develops] when a man has put everything in order. Therefore the superior man does not forget danger in his security, nor ruin when he is well established, nor confusion when his affairs are in order. In this way he gains personal safety and is able to protect the empire."

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In the same manner, Lu Chih also emphasized that none of the other ancient classics maintain that prosperity and decline are determined by fate. On the contrary, they all agree that human conduct is responsible for both calamity and good fortune. From this perspective, Lu Chih told the emperor that "to win the multitude is to win the state (te-chung tse te-kuo)."\(^5\) In short, with the support of statements in the classics, he warned the emperor that good governance was the only key to winning popular support, which in turn would lead to the prosperity of the state.

If the emperor still insisted that the present predicament was predetermined, Lu Chih suggested his majesty consider the fact that before the army revolt broke out at the capital, the capital population, though they did not understand soothsaying or divination, had been worried about a potential threat caused by the emergency tax measures. They certainly did not think that the subsequent uprising at the capital was predetermined by Heaven. The emperor should now understand that there was no causal connection between the soothsayer's message of 780 and his majesty's present exile in Feng-t'ien. Clearly, Lu Chih was saying that what the emperor should be concerned with was not some unreliable divination, but rather the practical matter of good governance on earth. When such good governance was practiced, Lu Chih told the emperor, Heaven's assistance would naturally follow.\(^5\) In short, the Confucian belief that the Mandate of Heaven was predicated upon human governance (t'ien-ming yu-jen) constituted the core of Lu Chih's entire argument.

Although Lu Chih's discussion of the Mandate of Heaven was primarily derived from classical Confucianism, it was also under the influence of the theory of the correlation between Heaven (or nature) and human conduct. That is, we find Lu Chih asserting that the present crisis of the T'ang court was an admonishment which came from Heaven (t'ien-chieh) due to the emperor's inappropriate policies.\(^5\) Later, in a memorial of 792, he also

\(^6\) Ibid.: 7.
\(^7\) Ibid.: 8.
stated that a disastrous flood was "perhaps" Heaven’s warning against the harsh imperial
treatment of the former Chief Minister’s relatives.\textsuperscript{58} The assertion that natural disasters and
military uprisings were Heaven’s warning for imperial misconduct certainly reflects the
central tenet of the Han correlative cosmology. Judging from the fact that the correlative
 cosmology of Han Confucianism occupied an important role in the Tang Confucian
ideology,\textsuperscript{59} its influence on Lu Chih was probably only natural.

Nevertheless, because Lu Chih specifically emphasized that he "never dabbled in
studies of divination or esoteric methods," because he actually disputed against the belief in
divination, and because, when he mentioned Heaven’s warning, he simply used the phrase
without further delineating the tenets of the correlative cosmology, one may suspect that
Lu’s appropriation of the Han correlative cosmology was only limited to the central
intention of this theory to restrain imperial conduct. As one notices, the main emphasis of
Lu Chih’s advice to emperor Te-tsung always fell on the importance of human striving for
virtuous rule; the concept of Heaven’s warning only appeared in a subsidiary and
peripheral manner.\textsuperscript{60} Since the virtuous governance of a benevolent ruler occupied the
essential position in Lu Chih’s political consciousness, it is only logical that he would urge
emperor Te-tsung to "observe the Way (tsun Tao)" after he refuted the emperor’s fatalism.
Why "observe the Way?" Because at this most dangerous time, Lu Chih answered, the
Way was all the emperor had to guarantee safe passage through the present ordeal.\textsuperscript{61} But
what was "the Way" in Lu Chih’s mind?

\textsuperscript{58} "Ch'ing ch'ien shih-ch'en hsüan-fu chu-tao tsao shui-tsai chou-hsian chuang," HYCC,
18: 17.

\textsuperscript{59} See Juo-shui Chen, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 80

\textsuperscript{60} See "Lun hsü ch'ien-hsing chih yu chuang," and "Ch'ing ch'ien shih-ch'en hsüan-fu
also notices Lu’s emphasis on the primacy of virtuous rule in this regard, see H. G.
Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven: Liu Tsung-yüan’s T’ien shuo and

\textsuperscript{61} "Lun hsü ch'ien-hsing chih yu chuang," HYCC, 12: 8.
According to Lu Chih, "the Way" Te-tsung should observe was easy to understand and easy to carry out. It included, Lu said,

- disregarding oneself to follow the multitude;
- disobeying one's own desire to follow the Way;
- distancing sycophants so as to be close with loyal and honest (subjects);
- treating (subjects with) the utmost sincerity to be rid of swindling;
- stopping the road of flattery and extending the door of remonstrance;
- sweeping away all methods of seeking after profits;
- concentrating on measures for soothing the people;
- recording a small virtue and a small ability so as to exhaust the talents of every (minister);
- forgetting small defects and small complaints so that no one is neglected.

Two points are essential in his advice: the necessity of establishing a just, honest and capable bureaucracy, and the importance of putting the people's welfare ahead of imperial desires. For Lu, to observe the Way was first and foremost to ensure the public well-being.

While Lu Chih's prescriptions for the emperor were not difficult to understand, as we shall immediately see, they were certainly not that easy for Te-tsung to put into practice.

**Treating court officials with sincerity**

In the eleventh month of 783, one month after Lu Chih admonished the emperor to "observe the Way," Te-tsung asked Lu Chih what the urgent tasks were at present. Facing the possibility of a total disintegration of the T'ang state, the emperor was genuinely anxious to restore its stability. This was the time when Lu Ch'i obstructed the imperial audience with the originally loyal Li Huai-kuang. Knowing Li Huai-kuang's discontent and the public resentment of Lu Ch'i's prevention of imperial contact with the regular officials, Lu Chih told Te-tsung that he believed the most urgent task was to "examine and investigate the public sentiment (shen-ch'a ch'ün-ch'ing). What public sentiment desires most, your majesty should carry out first; what they resent most, your majesty should

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62 Ibid.
eliminate first." This was so because "the root of order or chaos lies in the hearts of the people (jen-hsin)." Here, Lu Chih reminded the emperor of his previous point that "to win the people is to win the state."

In another memorial immediately following, Lu Chih further cited a passage from the Li chi (or The Records of Rites) in support of his argument: "public feelings were the field (to be cultivated by) the sage kings." At the same time, Lu Chih also made it clear that he had recently learned that the public feared the channels of remonstrance had been blocked and thus the emperor could not find out what public sentiment was. Believing that ministerial remonstrance was the most important channel through which the emperor discovered the genuine condition both of his bureaucracy and his people, Lu Chih urged the emperor to accept sincerely ministerial remonstrance, and ensure that this channel was not obstructed. Only by doing so, could public sentiment be transmitted to his majesty.

On the one hand, Te-tsung praised Lu Chih for his "exhausting loyalty (chin-chung)" to the throne; but on the other hand, the emperor told him that the real cause of his present exile was nothing more than his "sincere treatment of (his court subjects) (t'ui-ch'eng)." Te-tsung said he originally liked to accept ministerial advice and remonstrance; he also had treated his subjects sincerely. However, he found his ministers were seldom loyal; their discussion of current affairs rarely went into the heart of the matter; they were simply showing off themselves and blaming him for everything so as to win themselves a good name. Because he felt that his ministers had manipulated and betrayed him, and could not

63 "Feng-t'ien lun tang-chin so ch'ieh wu chuang," HYCC, 12: 9.
64 Ibid.: 9-10.
66 Ibid.: 10-11. The tenor of this memorial was to urge the emperor to accept ministerial remonstrance.
67 "Feng-t'ien ch'ing shu tui ch'iin-ch'en chien hsü ling lun shih chuang," HYCC, 13: 10; also see TCTC, 229: 7381; HTS, 157: 4916.
contribute anything significant to his governing, recently he had simply refused to accept their advice and remonstrance.\textsuperscript{68}

Te-tsung's statement may have indeed reflected certain genuine problems among his ministers. After all, Lu Chih had mentioned earlier that "perfunctory and careless behavior" was practiced among the emperor's ministers. However, Lu Chih had also stated that the emperor's less forgiving and suspicious disposition was chiefly responsible for the "perfunctory and careless behavior" among his officials. Now that the emperor stated his dislike of his officials and admitted his deliberate rejection of remonstrance, Lu Chih had to challenge him.

To begin with, Lu Chih defined what he believed to be "exhausting loyalty." In his words, "to speak everything one knows is exhausting (chin), and to serve the ruler with righteousness is loyalty (chung)."\textsuperscript{69} Lu Chih's purpose in defining this concept was not only to express his own fundamental principle in serving his ruler, but more importantly, also to request that the emperor extend the sincere imperial treatment granted him to other court officials and forget their shortcomings. If the emperor could accomplish this, Lu Chih maintained, his officials would all exhaust their loyalty to the throne. But why should Te-tsung treat his ministers sincerely and forget their shortcomings, especially when he believed that they were not loyal to him?

In the first place, Lu Chih answered, "the way of the Son of Heaven is the same as [the way of] Heaven. Since Heaven does not eliminate all growth because there are bad trees on earth, the Son of Heaven should not eliminate (the process of) listening to remonstrance."\textsuperscript{70} This apparently provided a rationale for accepting ministerial remonstrance. Thus Lu Chih told the emperor that his majesty's behavior in rejecting remonstrance would be similar to "giving up eating for fear of choking." From Lu Chih's

\textsuperscript{68} "Feng-t'ien ch'ing shu tui ch'ün-ch'en chien hsü ling lun shih chuang," HYCC, 13: 10.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.: 11.
viewpoint, as long as the emperor occupied the position of the Son of Heaven, he should live up to his title.

Secondly, Lu Chih warned the emperor to be aware that "once one is not sincere, one (meaning an emperor) can not hold (his people's ) hearts; once one is untrustworthy, one's words can no longer be carried out."71 This was also why a passage from The Doctrine of the Mean (or Chung yung) in the Li chi particularly stated: "Sincerity is the end and beginning of affairs; without sincerity no affairs can be carried out."72 Having indicated the inseparable relation between sincerity, the people's trust, and governance, Lu Chih asked the emperor how he could expect to consolidate the state without treating his ministers sincerely.

To be sure, Lu Chih did not advise Te-tsung simply to behave like a naive sovereign. While accepting remonstrance and advice, Lu Chih said the emperor also needed to test the validity of these suggestions. Following the logic of Lu Chih's argument then, as long as the emperor did not act out of suspicion and self-assumed justice, being discreet and cautious by no means contradicted the principle of sincerity. In fact, once the emperor treated his officials sincerely, the reverse would also take place, and the consolidation of the state would certainly not be beyond reach. According to Lu Chih, this was also the rationale behind the following teaching: "it is only he who possesses the most complete sincerity that exists under Heaven who can give full development to his nature. Able to give the full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other people."73 Thus, Lu asserted: "if you (i.e., the ruler) do not give full development to your own nature, but expect to give full development to other people's nature, the multitude will definitely suspect (your integrity) and not follow you. If you are not sincere in the

71 Ibid.
72 Ibid. For an alternative translation, see Legge, The four books, Taipei reprint, p. 96.
73 Ibid.: 12. I have modified Legge's translation of this passage from the Chung yung. See Legge, The four books, p. 92.
beginning but say that you will be sincere later, the multitude will definitely doubt (your sincerity) and not trust you."  

To expound further the necessity of practicing sincerity, Lu Chih raised a very fundamental issue which, at the same time, reveals his basic approach to governing a state. Having explained that a sovereign's sincerity was the necessary condition for sincere conduct on the part of his subjects, Lu Chih immediately continued:

Now if there were provincial governors who were not sincere to the state, your majesty would then send armed forces to attack them; if there were ministers and commoners who broke your majesty's trust, your majesty would then issue orders to have them killed. The reason why the officials obeyed the orders to kill and attacked and would not dare to release (those people) is that they rely upon what your majesty has (i.e., sincerity) to condemn those people (for their lack of trustworthiness). Now if your majesty becomes insincere in (managing) things, and not trustworthy to the people, people will criticize (your majesty). What would your majesty then rely upon to suppress them?

With this statement, Lu Chih seems to have brought out the issue of fundamental legitimacy in Confucianism. For one thing, his statement reaffirms the central belief of classical Confucianism that the relationship between a ruler and his subjects is basically reciprocal. If a ruler does not observe the proper way to treat his subjects, his subjects may equally abandon their duty to him. As Confucius once said: "Let the ruler be a ruler, the subject a subject..." Mencius later elaborated this principle: "If a prince treats his subjects as his hands and feet, they will treat him as their belly and heart. . . . If he treats them as mud and weeds, they will treat him as an enemy." It follows for Lu that if a ruler fails to rule sincerely, the foundation of his legitimacy as a ruler would be effectively undermined.

Of course, Lu Chih by no means intended to undermine Te-tsung's rule; his statement only served as a warning to the emperor the purpose of which was to guide the emperor to

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74 Ibid.
return to the right Way. As a result, despite the fact that the logical implication of his statement could be used to indicate Lu's tacit approval of the Mencian idea of removing a tyrant ruler, what he actually did was to exhort the emperor to rectify the things he had previously done wrong, and start once again to accept advice and remonstrance from his ministers.

To ensure the practice of accepting remonstrance, Lu Chih said "nine maladies" (chiu pi) must first be eliminated. As he put it:

Of the so-called 'nine maladies,' the rulers have six and the subjects have three. Preference for winning, embarrassment at hearing of [one's] mistakes, indulgence in sophistic debates, showing off one's intelligence, increasing one's authority, and lack of restraint for one's strong will; these are the six [maladies] embodied by rulers. Flattery, taking a wait and see attitude, and cowardice are the three [maladies] embodied by their subjects. 

According to Lu Chih, the formulation of these "nine maladies" was the result of his reflection on the relationship between rulers and subjects during his reading of past history. In his reading, he discovered that there had been more chaotic periods than periods of order in history. The main reason behind the chaos was that communication between rulers and their subjects had been blocked by these "nine maladies." Although three of these nine maladies were not the rulers' fault, Lu Chih stated that their six maladies nevertheless created an environment for the growth of wrong doing on the part of their subjects. Lu Chih said he did not think "the original minds (ch'u-hsin)" of rulers were necessarily "wanton and violent (yin pao)," but once they developed the six maladies, they subsequently refused to accept remonstrance from their subjects. When public feelings could no longer be transmitted to the rulers, the seeds of chaos were thereafter sown.

Since emperor Te-tsung intended to restore order in the state, Lu Chih suggested he follow the conduct of the six ancient sage kings -- Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, and kings Wen

77 For this idea of Mencius, see Lau, trans., *Mencius*, 1970, 1B/8: 68.
78 "Feng-t'ien ch'ing shu tui ch'ün-ch'en chien hsü ling lun-shih chuang," HYCC, 13: 17.
and Wu -- because these six sage kings were exemplary rulers who had earnestly sought ministerial remonstrance.\(^7^9\) Otherwise, Lu advised the emperor to at least imitate the closest example of the great emperor Tai-tsung.\(^8^0\) Although Lu may have idealized Tai-tsung's virtue, if we compare Tai-tsung's openness to remonstrance with that of other T'ang emperors, Lu's advice seems justifiable. After all, Tai-tsung's acceptance of ministerial advice and remonstrance established the foundation for the "good rule of the Chen-kuan (Chen-kuan chih chih)."\(^8^1\) To be sure, Lu Chih understood that not all remonstrances were significant, but in order to understand the genuine sentiments of his subjects, the emperor would have to treat every remonstrator with equal sincerity. In so doing, Lu said, the emperor and the remonstrators would all acquire a good name due to their right conduct.

Although Lu Chih even provided the emperor with a utilitarian reason to accept ministerial remonstrance, Te-tsung does not seem to have accepted his advice. Four months later in the fourth month of 784, after Te-tsung was forced to move his exiled court to Liang-chou due to Li Huai-kuang's revolt, the emperor again displayed his suspicious inclinations. He told Lu Chih that recently there had been many low ranking officials claiming to have escaped to Liang-chou from the capital to express their loyalty to the throne. However, the emperor said he thought these sorts of people were usually no good, and might even harbor some evil plots against him. He wanted Lu Chih to deal with the situation.\(^8^2\) Under the pressure of consecutive revolts by his subjects, the emperor probably had a heightened sense of insecurity. However, believing Te-tsung's attitude

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\(^7^9\) "Feng-t'ien lun ch'ien so ta-tsou wei shih-hsing chuang," HYCC, 12: 15.
\(^8^0\) Ibid.: 16-18.
\(^8^1\) For emperor Tai-tsung's acceptance of remonstrance and the good rule in the Chen-kuan (True Vision) reign, see Howard Wechsler, *Mirror to the son of Heaven, Wei Cheng at the court of T'ang T'ai-tsung*, Yale University Press, 1974: 106-35.
\(^8^2\) "Hsing-yüan lun hsü ts'ung tse-chung fu hsing-tsai kuan teng chuang," HYCC, 15: 13; also see TCTC, 230: 7425.
toward his subjects constituted the main reason for the present crisis, Lu Chih was further
determined to re-enlighten his master.

In his advice, Lu Chih told the emperor that his majesty held a contemptuous attitude
toward his ministers. Because of his contempt the emperor attempted to rule without
consulting his ministers and became exceedingly defensive against them. As a result,
"those who were capable complained about not being employed, those who were loyal
worried about being suspected, those who had accomplished notable deeds (for the state)
f feared that they would not be accepted (by the emperor), ... these things led to treason and
disaster."83 Now if the emperor still held these low ranking officials in contempt and tried
to rely upon schemes to govern them, Lu Chih went on, they would never become close to
his majesty; but if the emperor exhibited warm feelings toward them, even if they harbored
ill feelings toward the throne, they would become confidants. The capital was still
occupied at the time by the rebels, and the road from Ch'ang-an to the exiled court was
mountainous and dangerous. How many, Lu Chih asked, would have trudged over such a
route to come to the exiled court as those low ranking officials had done? Under these
circumstances, Lu Chih insisted, even treating those low ranking officials as sincerely as
possible was probably not good enough, but if his majesty actually suspected their
motivation, who would dare to talk about loyalty any more?

In conclusion, Lu Chih once again admonished the emperor to cultivate his ultimate
sincerity so as to move his subjects, and model himself upon the sage king Yao, about
whom even Confucius once commented: "Heaven alone is great, and it was Yao who
modelled himself on Heaven."84 Lu Chih apparently subscribed to the almost universal
Confucian belief in Yao as the paradigm of a benevolent ruler.

83 Ibid.: 16.
84 Ibid.: 14; this quote appears in the Mencius, see D. C. Lau's trans., Mencius, 1970,
3/A : 103.
Although Lu Chih's own commitment to ministerial remonstrance was obvious enough, Te-tsung still could not commit himself to Lu's prescription. As mentioned before, exactly around this time the emperor insisted on demoting Lu Chih's intimate friend Hsiao Fu and banishing Lu Chih's colleague Chiang Kung-fu due to his resentment of their remonstration. It is true that his position as Han-lin scholar kept Lu Chih's criticism of the emperor private, and probably made the emperor tolerate Lu Chih's remonstrance, but the emperor's tolerance of Lu Chih was also related to his dependance on Lu's unusually astute aid and council to help him restore stability. Te-tsung's treatment of Hsiao and Chiang nevertheless testifies to the ineffectiveness of Lu Chih's suggestions in this particular regard. However, Te-tsung did adopt Lu Chih's advice to apply the notions of sincerity and forgiveness in other respects, but before we deal with this subject, we shall first examine how Lu Chih demanded that the emperor value more highly the common people.

Winning the people's hearts

Since according to Lu Chih, the main purpose for rulers to accept ministerial remonstrance was to find out the genuine conditions of the people, it is only natural that he had profound concern for the welfare of the people. Indeed, we find Lu Chih repeatedly reminding emperor Te-tsung that "the root of establishing a state lies in winning the multitude (the people)." To demonstrates that the people, not the ruler, were the main body of the state, Lu Chih used an ancient boat and water metaphor to illustrate his point. If the boat (ruler) did not follow the course of the water (the people or public feelings),

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87 Ibid.: 14. The origin of the boat and water metaphor is not clear, but it seems to first appear in the "Wang chih" chapter of Hsün Tzu, see Dubs, The works of Hsuntze, Taipei reprint, p. 183.
without doubt it would soon sink. The message obviously aimed at warning rulers that "the water can support the boat, or the water can capsize the boat too." Within this context, Lu Chih again encouraged Te-tsung to imitate the ancient sage kings so that he could "follow the hearts of all under Heaven, but dare not to ask all the people under Heaven to follow (his majesty's) desire." 88

What were the people's desires? Lu Chih's answer to this question was based upon his observation of the public suffering, and at the same time, his understanding that the rebellion still posed a grave threat.

Ever since the rebellion broke out, as Lu Chih told the emperor, military conscription had created great disturbances in the towns and villages. It had made "fathers and sons part; husbands and wives separate; one man is drafted, ten households have to provide him with financial support. Those who stay (at home), suffer from this financial burden; those who leave (for the battlefield), worry about the sword blades." Furthermore, the emergency tax exactions and their accompanying harsh regulations are so great in number that "the clerks can not bear (to carry them out), and the people have no means of livelihood. In the midst of conscription, the farm lands and the mulberry fields are abandoned; the flesh and blood of the people are exhausted by floggings (to exact taxes). Towns and marketplaces are distressed; households and families are resentful, all the multitude are screaming with pain, and the prefectures and counties are restless." 89

Witnessing this general suffering, Lu Chih told the emperor that it should be clear that "what all under Heaven now desire is to put the weapons to rest, and to work in peace; what all under Heaven resent is the heavy taxes and levies, and the harsh regulations." 90

As early as the eighth month of 783 Lu Chih had, in fact, already exhorted the emperor to abolish all the irregular taxes imposed upon the capital population. Moreover, he had also admonished the emperor to adopt a policy of compromise toward the Ho-pei rebels so

88 "Feng-t'ien lun ch'ien so ta-tsou wei shih-hsing chuang," HYCC, 12: 14.
89 "Lun hsü ch'ien-hsing chih so yu chuang," HYCC, 12; 2-3.
90 "Feng-t'ien lun tsou tang-chin so ch'ieh wu chuang," HYCC, 12: 10.
as not to increase the size of the conscript levies.\textsuperscript{91} The main reason behind his argument was that "the people are the root of the state; the wealth is the heart of the people. When the heart is damaged, its root will be damaged; when its root is damaged, its branches and trunk will be toppled; the foundation of its root will then be pulled out and destroyed."\textsuperscript{92} Unfortunately, Lu Chih's advice was to no avail, probably because Te-tsung did not expect to be forced into exile in Feng-t'ien.

By the time the immediate danger to the exiled court was relieved, the capital Ch'ang-an was, however, still under rebel occupation. Under these conditions, Lu Chih apparently understood that it was impossible and impractical to ask the emperor to actually stop the war and all the accompanying measures at this particular time. Meanwhile, he also did not encourage the emperor merely to announce his intention to follow what the people really wished, without putting in motion some concrete actions to substantiate his words. On the contrary, Lu Chih said that empty talk would only violate the sincerity of the imperial repentance. To avoid such a situation, Lu Chih believed the only thing that the emperor could do was to "disobey his majesty's own desires in order to do what is difficult for his majesty; to extend his majesty's sincerity for the sake of eliminating what people criticize. Hence, his majesty's repentance can be made clear for all to see, and correspond with his majesty's discussion of (political) renewal."\textsuperscript{93} What does this suggestion mean? The following examples will further elucidate Lu Chih's advice.

Toward the end of 783, there were discussions among Te-tsung's ministers about adding a few words to the previously proposed imperial title of "Divinely Spiritual Civil and Military" for the coming year.\textsuperscript{94} The divination officials believed that there had been

\textsuperscript{91} For abolishing the irregular taxes, see his "Lun Kuan-chung shih-i chuang," HYCC, 11: 13; for decreasing the armed forces, see "Lun liang-Ho chi Huai-hsi li-hai chuang," HYCC, 11: 19-20.
\textsuperscript{92} "Lun liang-Ho chi Huai-hsi li-hai chuang," HYCC, 11: 20.
\textsuperscript{93} See "Feng-t'ien lun tsou tang-chin so ch'ieh wu chuang," HYCC, 12: 10.
\textsuperscript{94} The earlier suggestion was presented to the throne at the beginning of 780, see TCTC, 226: 7275. The translation of the title is Twitchett's, see his "Lu Chih," 1962: 98.
more than one hundred and sixty six years of the Tang state, and thus there ought to be some changes to correspond with this number as well as to indicate the new beginning of an era.\textsuperscript{95} The suggested change would have Te-tsung accept his ministers' advice and add even more exalted words to the resplendent title already proposed.\textsuperscript{96} The emperor inquired of Lu Chih about his opinion, and as expected, Lu did not give his endorsement. He had to present two memorials before he finally persuaded the emperor. Advising Te-tsung not to follow this "nonessential suggestion (mo-i),"\textsuperscript{97} Lu Chih offered some clear and simple reasons.

He first told the emperor that it was not an ancient practice to adopt such a splendid title. This itself meant that "the lightness and heaviness of a ruler lies not in his title. Making his title sublime does not help increase his good governance; decreasing his title does not damage the beauty of his virtue."\textsuperscript{98} Secondly, to adopt such a lofty title at such a perilous time would violate the imperial sincerity of self repentance and loose the people's support. What the emperor needed to do was restrain his own desires and humbly criticize himself so that the sincerity of his repentance could be demonstrated to the public. Thus refusing to adopt this overly exalted title would certainly be a proper act.

Thirdly, if the emperor felt he must follow the concept of correspondence between numbers and a change of a new era, he should simply abandon the overly pretentious title previously proposed rather than adding more words to it. Because, Lu Chih continued, it would be much better for the emperor to soothe Heaven's wrath by a humble act than lose the people's heart by inflating an already resplendent title. When the emperor behaved humbly, Heaven would also help. To conclude his argument, Lu Chih stressed that the Taoist classic, \textit{Tao te ching} also mentioned that "lords and princes refer to themselves as

\textsuperscript{95} See CTS, 139: 3792; HTS, 157: 4919; TCTC, 229: 7389.
\textsuperscript{96} See "Feng-t'ien lun tsun-hao chia tsu chuang," HYCC, 13: 1.
\textsuperscript{97} "Feng-t'ien lun tsun-hao chia tsu chuang," HYCC, 13: 2.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.: 3.
'solitary', 'desolate,' and 'hapless.' This was meant to emphasize that rulers should take "the inferior as [the] root."

The fact that Lu Chih disapproved of using the notion of a correspondence between numbers and a change of a new era as a justification for the adoption of a more splendid imperial title, and his prescription to act humbly in the face of a warning from Heaven seems to confirm our previous speculation. That is, his acceptance of the Han Confucian correlative cosmology seems to have only centered on calamities as Heaven's warning against the emperor's misconduct. It seems quite clear that other than for the purpose of restricting and correcting the imperial conduct, Lu Chih rejected any other correlative notions which might please the emperor or gain imperial favor. In view of his consistently limited use of the correlative principle, we can see that positive human striving for virtuous behavior undoubtedly occupied Lu's focal awareness whereas Heaven's reaction was of only secondary concern.

The reason behind his quotation of a Taoist concept may be, mutatis mutandis, quite similar to his appropriation of the correlativist notion of "Heaven's warnings." Just as Lu Chih could not possibly ignore the Han Confucian correlative cosmology due to its dominant position in the T'ang official discourse, his brief reference to a Taoist concept might also be related to the fact that the Taoist religion enjoyed an especially favorable treatment by the T'ang ruling house. In addition, we may recall that emperor Te-tsung was also extremely interested in Taoist medical works. In this regard, it is most likely that Lu Chih entertained these ideas only as a subordinate necessity rather than as a fundamental

100 This was what many Han Confucian scholars did. See F. W. Mote, trans., Kung-ch'üan Hsiao's A history of Chinese political thought, 1979: 497-98.
101 Partly because Li, the supposed surname of Lao Tzu, was the same as that of the T'ang ruling house, T'ang rulers, more out of political than religious needs, claimed that they were his descendants. For the imperial promotion of, and its relationship with the Taoist religion, see THY, 50: 865-69. Also see Wang Shou-nan, Sui T'ang shih, 1986: 708-710; Kubo Noritaka, Dokyoishi, Tokyo, 1977: 219-236; Juo-shui Chen, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 12 esp. note 29.
commitment. This also seems to resemble Lu Chih's attitude towards the difference between "literature" and "the Way." As discussed in the last chapter, while he upheld "grasping the Way" as the ultimate sign of a gentleman (chün-tzu), he simultaneously stressed the necessity of "literature" in advancing oneself in the bureaucracy.

By the same token, as long as aspects of Han Confucian correlative theory and Taoism did not contradict his commitment to the Confucian Way, and as long as they could serve to transform emperor Te-tsung's conduct, Lu Chih would probably not hesitate to appropriate their relevant teaching for the sake of gaining an effect. This is not to deny that Lu Chih himself also had an early interest in medicine, a subject which is often related to Taoistic philosophy. But since he only wrote about it out of social concern in the late and desperate stage of his life when he tried to relieve local suffering from the ill effects of an unhealthy environment, it is unlikely that he had any deep commitment to the Taoist teachings concerning methods of governing during the rising phases of his political life.

In addition to behaving humbly, Lu Chih also asked Te-tsung to restrain his personal greed so as not to keep the public funds in his own treasuries, the Ta-ying k'u and the Ch'üang-lin k'u. This was in the first month of 784, by which time the exiled court was no longer besieged by the rebels. Some loyal provincial governors, at the same time, had managed to send tribute and taxes to the throne. It was probably his suffering from straitened financial conditions in the earlier months and not necessarily his avaricious nature that motivated the frightened emperor to keep the provincial tribute and taxes in his personal treasuries. Strongly opposing this selfish act, Lu Chih explained why it was necessary to discontinue this practice.

102 We have discussed why Lu Chih compiled a medical book during this stage of his life in the previous chapter, see the section entitled Banishment in chapter 1.
103 "Feng-tien ch'ing pa Ch'üang-lin, Ta-ying erh k'u chuang," HYCC, 14: 1-6.
104 CTS, 139: 3793; HTS, 157: 4920.
105 At the very beginning of his reign, Te-tsung's policies showed that he intended to put into effect clean and honest governance. This demonstrates that he was not necessarily "avaricious by nature" as Twitchett maintains. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 100.
Lu Chih told the emperor to spread the wealth in order to win the hearts of the people, the Son of Heaven's real treasure. Lu also pointed out that "in handling affairs, if the ruler takes the public (interests) into his heart, the people will definitely be happy to follow him; but if he takes personal gain (tributes) into his heart, the people will definitely oppose and rebel against him." Laying down the principle that the public welfare is the ultimate concern of the state, Lu Chih reminded the emperor that when the court was first exiled to Feng-t'ien, the emperor endured the attendant hardships together with his subjects, and no one complained about the suffering.

Although imminent danger had been just recently removed, the rebels still occupied the capital; the injured troops still groaned and moaned on the roads; and the loyalist forces had still received no rewards. In the face of such miseries, Lu Chih asked Te-tsung how could his majesty bear to keep provincial tribute and taxes in his personal treasuries, and not pay the expenses of the court? Asking the people to suffer with the ruler during trials and tribulations, but refusing to share benefits with them during happy and fortunate times, Lu Chih maintained, would certainly cause complaints and criticism. To avoid such resentment, Lu Chih requested Te-tsung to restore the honest and unblemished governance practiced at the beginning of his reign and to abolish his two personal treasuries so as to use the funds to reward the army and his meritorious subjects. In short, "having the same desires as those of the people " would demonstrate the sincerity of the imperial repentance and gain the support of the public.

These two examples bring out what Lu Chih believed emperor Te-tsung could do in terms of gaining the sympathy and support of the people. Apparently, before any genuine measures of public relief could be put into practice, Lu Chih maintained that virtuous imperial conduct was the key to winning the people's hearts. Although Te-tsung did not

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For Te-tsung's early policies, see CTS, 12: 320-322. As we shall see, even Lu Chih mentioned this fact on this occasion.

106 "Feng-t'ien ch'ing pa Ch'iung-lin Ta-ying erh k'u chuang," HYCC, 14: 4.
107 Ibid.: 2-6.
completely follow Lu Chih's advice in the treatment of his ministers, he nevertheless acquiesced in regard to obtaining public support.\textsuperscript{108} Obviously convinced by Lu Chih's suggestions, in the famous Act of Grace and Amnesty formulated by Lu Chih and issued around this time (the first month of 784), the emperor announced that from then on no one should address him with the overblown title of "Divinely Spiritual Civil and Military."

Besides, Te-tsung also blamed himself for the public suffering brought on by the war measures. In showing his repentance, the emperor promised that he would practice a frugal governance, but would reward meritorious subjects. To rectify his previous mistakes he would treat his ministers with sincerity and forgiveness.\textsuperscript{109}

Given that later on Te-tsung did not observe what he had earlier promised in terms of the treatment of his ministers, and since he also resumed the practice of keeping provincial tributes in his personal treasuries, his early 784 measures of abolishing the overly resplendent title and personal treasuries can certainly be regarded as purely tactical necessities during a time of emergency.\textsuperscript{110} The same thing can not be said, however, about Lu Chih's advice.

Lu insisted that it was precisely because the emperor had deviated from the Confucian norm of benevolent rule in the first place that the state had been thrust into the present catastrophe. Furthermore, since Lu advocated the ancient Confucian teaching that the people, not the emperor, were the root of the state,\textsuperscript{111} virtuous imperial conduct was never

\textsuperscript{108} For Te-tsung's acceptance, see CTS, 139: 3793-94; HTS, 157: 4919-20; TCTC, 229: 7389, 7397.

\textsuperscript{109} See "Feng-t'ien kai-yüan ta-she chih," HYCC, 1: 1, 5 & 13.


\textsuperscript{111} See "Lun liang-ho chi huai-hsi li-hai chuang," HYCC, 11: 20. In this memorial Lu Chih quoted the passage "the people are the root of a country (min wei pang pen)" from the Book of documents. This passage, however, only appears in the chapter entitled "the Songs of the five sons (wu-tzu chih ke)" in the forged ancient text of the Book of documents. For the English translation, see Legge, The shu king, in The sacred books of China, vol., III, 1899: 79.
merely to be practiced only in the face of an emergency situation; rather Lu believed it to be the rightful duty of the emperor to realize it at all times for the sake of preserving the root. The only difference was that during a time of crisis, when the emperor could not end the public suffering quickly, his virtuous conduct became even more absolutely indispensable. His exemplary conduct was the emperor's only remaining asset to convince the public that he was still a redeemable ruler. In short, virtuous imperial conduct was not a manipulative variable applied only in emergency situations, rather, it was a basic constant never to be neglected. Therefore, we find that Lu Chih frequently reiterated the importance of sincerity as a necessary condition for governance. He did so especially when emperor Te-tsung was at the point of issuing the above mentioned Act of Grace and Amnesty at the end of 783.

During the last month of that year, based upon Lu Chih's earlier suggestions,112 emperor Te-tsung finally decided to adopt a compromise policy to deal with the rebels in Ho-pei. When he was getting ready to issue the Act of Grace and Amnesty to placate the rebel forces as well as gain public support, he again consulted Lu Chih for his opinion in formulating this edict. In response, Lu Chih once more singled out the notion of sincerity as the basic principle for issuing imperial edicts. He told the emperor that using words but not deeds to move people could not make a deep impression in the first place, and if the words were not even sincere then no one would appreciate them. Since sincerity was the key to winning people's hearts, the emperor must be genuinely committed to whatever he announced in the edicts. If the emperor knew that he could not carry out certain measures, he should never have them written into the edicts.113 In spite of the fact that the emperor only followed Lu Chih's advice for a short while, the principle behind Lu's suggestions

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112 This refers to Lu Chih's earliest memorials "Lun liang-ho chi huai-hsi li-hai chuang," and "Lun kuan-chung shih-i chuang," presented in the eighth month of 783. See HYCC, 11: 1-26. We shall soon deal with these two memorials in the following section.

nevertheless became the guiding spirit, not only for this particular edict, but also for the imperial Acts of Grace and Amnesty which followed later in this period as well.

In addition to exhorting the emperor to cultivate his personal conduct, Lu Chih also provided other concrete measures for dealing with the rebels and for ameliorating public suffering. Here let us turn to those responses that Lu derived from the application of his principle of expediency.

**Exercise of Lu Chih's expediency (chüan) principle**

While, as Lu Chih maintained, the cultivation of sincerity and virtuous conduct on the part of the emperor was the most necessary ingredient in the application of the principle of righteousness, the cultivation of the imperial perception and judgement became a parallel element in the exercise of expediency. Since expediency was not defined as political trickery, but as a keen ability to recognize the opportune moment for applying the most appropriate policy to maximize the well-being of the state, the perception of the changes of time and circumstances, and the judgement derived from that perception occupied a central place in Lu Chih's advice to emperor Te-tsung. Indeed, in his discourse with the throne, Lu Chih frequently told the emperor to "examine the changes of the times," and to "understand the changes of the times." Subsequently, how to adapt to and appropriate the changed times and circumstances constituted another motif of his approach to the problems faced by the T'ang court. In the following section, we shall examine how Lu Chih exhorted Te-tsung to exercise his principle of expediency in dealing with the rebels as well as with loyal subjects in that chaotic circumstances of the day.

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115 "Hsing-yüan tsou-ch'ing hsü Hun Chen Li Sheng teng chu-chün ping-ma tzu-chü ch'i-pien chuang," HYCC, 16: 16.
Handling the rebels with expediency

In the eighth month of 783, Lu Chih presented to the throne his two earliest extant memorials analyzing situations in the Ho-pei, Huai-hsi and Kuan-chung (capital) regions. At this time, the Tang capital had not yet fallen into the hands of the rebels, but as noted before, the fighting in Ho-pei offered very little reason to be optimistic about victory. These bleak prospects propelled the emperor for the first time to consult his favorite Han-lin scholar. This is also the first time that we find Lu Chih holding forth on his particular notion of expediency.

The main points of Lu Chih's responses are simple but they go right to the heart of the matter. First, he advised the emperor to concentrate all his forces to recover the Huai-hsi region, loss of which posed a real threat to the economic survival of the court. Defeat of the Ho-pei rebels, he said, was only a secondary priority. To make this clear, Lu Chih explained that while the Huai-hsi rebels controlled the key economic supply line from the south to the capital, the military governors of the Ho-pei region were actually less of a threat due to their mutual resentment. They were given to fighting among themselves when facing no other threat, and could not endanger the court's survival as the Huai-hsi rebels obviously could. To further strengthen his case, Lu pointed out that "the court placed the Ho-shuo region (Ho-pei area) outside the scope of its policies, and this situation had persisted for about thirty years. Thus the current situation was not an urgent crisis which had arisen in a single day." In light of this situation, he encouraged the emperor to "compare the degree of seriousness of the disasters and distinguish the order of importance and urgency in offence and defense."

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In the second place, he urged the emperor to strengthen his defense of the Kuan-chung region so that the heart of the empire would not be exposed to sudden invasions either from within or without.\textsuperscript{120} Referring to the Kuan-chung area as the "root (pen)" in comparison to other regions of the empire which were the "branches (mo)", Lu Chih advised the emperor always to consider Kuan-chung's stability the first priority in relation to other regions. He maintained that this was a necessary exercise of expediency in governance.\textsuperscript{121} It is precisely under this premise that we see him exhorting the emperor not to antagonize the capital population with the imposition of irregular tax exactions. After all, "if the people's hearts remain unshaken, the state's foundation will thus be stabilized."\textsuperscript{122}

Thirdly, in order to concentrate the fighting in the Huai-hsi region, and end the war soon, Lu Chih proposed that the emperor offer amnesty to the rebels. He told Te-tsung that "only four or five fierce people" were the leaders of the Ho-pei and Huai-hsi rebel forces. The rest of them were probably forced to join the rebellion either out of fear or by mistake. Not necessarily all of them had deliberately planned to betray the throne. Moreover, if they knew that the emperor was willing to offer them amnesty, most of them would certainly prefer to preserve their lives than to be traitors.\textsuperscript{123}

In retrospect, Lu Chih's advice proved insightful, but Te-tsung was unable to appropriate his vision until two months later, after the fall of the capital. By this time, the emperor finally gave in to circumstances. As a result, in the first month of 784, the above mentioned Act of Grace and Amnesty was issued, and Lu Chih's suggestions actually

\textsuperscript{120} The external invasion refers to the possibility of a Tibetan attack. Twitchett mentions that Lu Chih was involved in the Treaty negotiations during the early month of 783 due to the fact that some state correspondence with the Tibetans was drafted by him at that time. However, the state correspondence Twitchett refers to was not drafted in 783. It was rather drafted in 786, because the minister who negotiated with the Tibetans was Chao Yü, and Chao Yü was designated to this mission in 786. See, Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 95. On state correspondence, see "Ssu Tu-fan chiang shu," and "Ssu Tu-fan tsai-hsiang shang-chie-tsan shu," HYCC, 10: 9-17. On Chao Yü, or Chao Chien as given in HTS, see CTS, 196B: 5249; HTS, 216: 6094.

\textsuperscript{121} "Lun Kuan-chung shih-i chuang," HYCC, 11: 1.

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.: 11-13.

\textsuperscript{123} "Lun liang-Ho chi Huai-hsi li-hai," HYCC, 11: 15-16.
became imperial policies to be put into practice. Besides terminating all the irregular taxes, and making an imperial self criticism, the emperor also offered amnesty to all the rebel governors in Ho-pei and Huai-hsi. Meanwhile, the court also confirmed their positions as governors in these provinces. Chu Tz’u, however, was the only rebel leader who received no amnesty. This was probably related to the fact that Chu Tz’u established himself as "emperor" and actually conducted his own court in the T’ang capital. Nevertheless, all the rebel governors’ subordinates were to be pardoned accordingly.

Although the anticipated effects of this edict were not completely realized, since Chu Tz’u and the Huai-hsi governor Li Hsi-lieh remained unmoved, the majority of the Ho-pei rebel governors did in fact show their appreciation for the imperial amnesty. This led to their eventual acceptance of the court’s compromise policies which allowed them to continue as semi-independent provincial forces. The other significance of this edict was that it set the tone for several later Acts of Grace and Amnesty. They were issued in the seventh month of 784, after Chu Tz’u was defeated and the capital was recovered; in the first month of 785 when amnesty was offered to Li Huai-kuang and Li Hsi-lieh; and in the eleventh month of the same year, after the court suppressed Li Huai-kuang and once more offered amnesty to the remaining rebel forces under Li Hsi-lieh. Due to the fact that this policy of extending amnesty to all the subordinate rebels was repeatedly emphasized during the fighting against Li Huai-kuang and Li Hsi-lieh, it probably helped to weaken the

124 See TCTC, 228: 7360.
125 "Feng-t’ien kai-yüan ta-she chih," HYCC, 1: 1-13, also see Twitchett’s detailed discussion of this Act, in his "Lu Chih," 1962: 99.
126 Except Chu T’ao in Yu-chou, Wang Wu-chün from Ch’eng-te, T’ien Yüeh from Wei-po and Li Na from Ping-lu all expressed their repentance to the throne. See TCTC, 229: 7392-93.
128 See the two imperial edicts to recruit the rebel forces under the command of Li Huai-kuang and Li Hsi-lieh. These are "Chao-yü Huai-hsi chiang-li chao," and "Chao-yü Ho-chung chao," HYCC, 5: 13-16.
rebel troops' will to fight, and consequently contributed to the military suppression of Li Huai-kuang and Li Hsi-lieh.\textsuperscript{129}

It was not an easy task for Lu Chih to persuade the emperor to pardon all the subordinates of the rebel leaders. As a matter of fact, he frequently had to stress the importance of expediency so that the emperor would perceive the necessity of its application. In addition to the above noted example of retaining Li Ch'u-lin's military governorship, Lu Chih's advice to release Chao Kuei-hsien is another case in point.\textsuperscript{130}

Toward the end of the seventh month of 784, emperor Te-tsung was in the process of issuing another Act of Grace and Amnesty. This was because the rebel Chu Tz'u was defeated by loyalist forces under Li Sheng's command a month earlier,\textsuperscript{131} and the capital was once more returned to the court's control. At this time, Te-tsung told Lu Chih that most of his generals agreed that Chao Kuei-hsien, a court subject who supposedly surrendered to Chu Tz'u during the capital uprising, should be sentenced to death without leniency.\textsuperscript{132} In expressing a contrary opinion, Lu Chih provided the following grounds.

To begin with, Lu Chih made it clear that he understood why most of the generals believed Chao Kuei-hsien should not receive an imperial pardon. Stating that their belief was correctly based upon the stipulated laws, Lu Chih nevertheless asked the emperor to "examine the actual circumstances (yüan ch'ing)" behind Chao's surrender. On the one hand, Lu Chih agreed that "it is the ministers' usual intention to eliminate the evil ones for the ruler according to the law;" but on the other, he insisted that "it is in the ruler's exercise of

\textsuperscript{129} This is reflected in the death of these two rebel governors. Knowing that his followers were reluctant to fight the loyalist troops any longer, Li Huai-kuang committed suicide while Li Hsi-lie was murdered by a subordinate general. In Li Huai-kuang's biography, it is said that he was murdered by a subordinate general, but the \textit{K'ao-i} section in TCTC disregards this record, see CTS, 121: 3494; TCTC, 232: 7460-61 esp. the \textit{K'ao-i} section, and 7468.
\textsuperscript{130} See his "Ch'ing shih Chao Kuei-hsien tsui chuang," HYCC, 17: 3-6.
\textsuperscript{131} For Chu Tz'u's defeat, see TCTC, 231: 7434-37; CTS, 200B: 5389-90; CTS, 133: 3668-70; Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 98.
\textsuperscript{132} See "Ch'ing shih Chao Kuei-hsien tsui chuang," HYCC, 17: 3.
of an important expediency that he pacifies the people's fear by examining the actual circumstances (of evil behavior)."\textsuperscript{133}

In order to help the emperor understand the actual circumstances behind Chao Kuei-hsien's surrender, Lu Chih explained to the emperor that Chao was originally a subordinate general stationed in Feng-hsiang. When Te-tsung was forced into exile in Feng-t'ien, Chao was on the road to fight the rebels in Hsiang-ch'eng (in modern Honan). Because his immediate superior went back to Feng-hsiang, Chao was left alone, and was unable to decide how to proceed. At this juncture, Chu Tz'u tricked him into going to the capital to await the emperor's return. Unaware that Chu Tz'u had already betrayed the court, Chao thus followed Chu Tz'u and became his captive. While in captivity, Lu Chih continued, Chao's troops were all subjected to Chu Tz'u, but he himself did not accept Chu Tz'u's appointment to serve under his rule. Judging from the above information, Lu Chih said, Chao's case definitely deserved sympathy. The only crime that Chao was guilty of, according to Lu Chih, was that he did not commit suicide for the sake of preserving his integrity. If he had done so, Lu Chih declared, he would have become a loyal martyr.

Evidently, Lu Chih was implying that even though Chao lacked the courage to become a martyr, his passive resistance to the rebel's appointment already proved that he did not join the rebels out of his own free will.\textsuperscript{134}

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.: 3-4.

\textsuperscript{134} Lu Chih's explanation of Chao Kui-hsien's case contradicts the information recorded in the two Tang dynastic histories and in the TCTC. According to these records, Chao Kui-hsien originally served under Li Huai-kuang. When Huai-kuang revolted in the beginning of 784, he had already sent Chao to T'ung-chou (in the east of modern Shensi) to establish a foothold for him. However, Pei Hsiang (751-830), the local official in charge, successfully persuaded Kui-hsien not to betray the court. See CTS, 113: 3356; HTS, 140: 4647; TCTC, 230: 7417. Since Pei Hsiang was only in charge of Tung-chou affairs during the end of 783, if Kui-hsien was indeed sent there by Li Huai-kuang, this must have taken place around that time. For the date of Pei Hsiang's service in T'ung-chou, see Yu Hsien-hao, T'ang tz'u-shih k'ao, vol. 1, 1987: 115. This is clearly in conflict with what Lu Chih explained in his memorial. However, Lu Chih's accounts do not contradict the fact that emperor Te-tsung did summon troops to relieve Hsiang-ch'eng from Li Hsi-lie's attack in the ninth month of 783. See TCTC, 228: 7351. Moreover, Lu Chih's statement indicated that emperor Te-tsung and his court officials were all aware of Chao Kui-hsien's surrender to Chu Tz'u. Thus, it
Once the actual conditions of Chao Kuei-hsien's surrender to Chu Tz'u were made clear, Lu Chih went on to argue that since the capital had only just recently been recovered, it was a time to extend the imperial virtue, and because of this, the emperor needed to be extremely cautious in the application of the penal code. If the emperor sentenced those guilty ones simply according to the letter of the law, it would make those who, despite their fear, still intended to return to the court stop doing so, and subsequently strengthen the rebels' position. If following the generals' suggestion to sentence Chao might actually prolong the fighting the people had to endure, Lu Chih asked what benefit could the court get out of it.

To push his case one step further, Lu then drew a parallel between the strict legal trial of those ministers who had fallen under An Lu-shan's rule during emperor Su-tsung's reign and Te-tsung's intended sentence for Chao Kuei-hsien. He reminded Te-tsung that when those T'ang subjects who still remained in the rebels' camp heard that emperor Su-tsung violated his original promise of amnesty by granting judicial officials permission to sentence those fallen ministers who had returned to the court earlier; they all stopped regretting their former submission to An Lu-shan's forces, and this prolonged the war against the rebels. Lu Chih told Te-tsung that in the end, what emperor Su-tsung had achieved only amounted to "trusting the legal officials but missing the expediency principle." It also proved Lu's constant belief that "lack of self-restraint in small matters will bring ruin to great plans." ¹³⁵

While advising emperor Te-tsung to draw lessons from recent history, Lu Chih, at the same time, also hoped that, with the exception of the principal culprits, the emperor would

¹³⁵ Ibid.: 4-5. As noted before, the English translation of the second quote is from D. C. Lau, trans., Confucius the analects, 1979: 135. Lu Chih's accounts of emperor Su-tsung's sentence of those ministers is similar to the historical records, see TCTC, 220: 7043-7050.
sentence his fallen subjects leniently. To complete his argument, he again requested the emperor not to accept impulsive suggestions, but rather to grasp this "great opportunity" to demonstrate the imperial forgiveness so that doubts and suspicions on the part of those who wanted to rejoin the court would all be eliminated.\textsuperscript{136}

We do not know what exactly happened to Chao Kuei-hsien after Te-tsung learned about his situation from Lu Chih. However, in the Act of Grace and Amnesty issued immediately afterwards, the emperor did admit that since it was the imperial loss of virtue that brought suffering to the people and caused them to commit crimes of treason or bribery in order to keep alive during the crisis, it would violate the sincerity of imperial repentance and the principle of increasing harmony if death sentences were given to the guilty ones.\textsuperscript{137}

In this context, it is likely that Te-tsung finally perceived the importance of expediency, and pardoned Chao Kuei-hsien in the hope that his generous act would recruit defectors on the side of the rebel forces. If this was indeed the case, Te-tsung's optimism was certainly justified because the two Acts of Grace and Amnesty he issued then greatly mollified the Ho-pei rebel governors, and pacified the population in the capital.

When Li Huai-kuang committed suicide and brought the fighting between the Ho-chung rebel forces and the court to an end, however, Lu Chih once again felt compelled to remind emperor Te-tsung of the expediency principle. This occurred in the eighth month of 785 when Te-tsung asked him how to handle this newly developed situation.

Worrying that the emperor would follow some reckless suggestions to exploit the victory over Ho-chung to push on fighting against the last rebel governor Li Hsi-lieh, Lu Chih told the emperor that this was the time to distribute imperial favor (\textit{hui}), not the time for showing off imperial power (\textit{wei}).\textsuperscript{138} For one thing, the emperor had already demonstrated his power by eliminating Chu Tz'u and Li Huai-kuang. What the emperor

\textsuperscript{136} "Ch'ing shih Chao Kuei-hsien," HYCC, 17: 6.
\textsuperscript{137} See "Ping Chu Tz'u hou che-chia huan-ching ta-she chih," HYCC, 1: 15.
\textsuperscript{138} This is his "Shou Ho-chung hou ch'ing pa-ping chuang," HYCC, 17: 10-21.
needed to do now was to offer amnesty to all the subordinate rebels in the Ho-chung region and to Li Hsi-lieh's forces as well. In so doing, Lu Chih explained, Li Hsi-lieh would not have any excuse to defame the emperor's sincerity. Otherwise, if the court pushed on fighting against him, Li Hsi-lieh would definitely accuse the court of being deceitful in issuing its previous Acts of Grace and Amnesty as a trick to gain time. Consequently, he might even exploit this situation to convince the Ho-pei governors that since it now had the ability to do so the court would resume the attack on them soon.¹³⁹

Having pointed out the potential threat of another crisis, Lu Chih immediately alerted the emperor not to bring about another disaster. Instead, his majesty had to be especially cautious at this new turning point. Only if one thought about calamity when living at a fortunate moment, Lu averred, could one preserve that good fortune. Since the emperor was living through a fortunate period that had only recently developed, Lu Chih encouraged the emperor to "extend the favor of his sympathy in order to add to his imperial power and take advantage of the power (recently) gained from eliminating (the Ho-chung) rebels to distribute imperial favors."¹⁴⁰ In this way he could remove the danger of any immediate calamity. Once these measures were carried out, Lu Chih believed Li Hsi-lieh would simply become an "outcast (tulu)." He would have no excuse to convince his internal followers to fight the court, and neither would he have any external cohorts to rely upon. Most of all, the emperor would have no need to fight against him since it was only a matter of time before either a human or a demon would perform the job for the throne.¹⁴¹

In his concluding comments, Lu Chih again pleaded with the emperor to compare the gains and losses between extending imperial favor and abusing imperial power so that this opportunity to re-establish the court's stability would not be thrown away.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Ibid.: 18. Also see TCTC, 232: 7463.
¹⁴⁰ Ibid.: 19; TCTC, 232: 7465.
¹⁴¹ Ibid.: 20; TCTC, ibid..
While Lu Chih's prediction concerning Li Hsi-lieh's fate may sound dramatic, it certainly was accurate. Li was poisoned by a subordinate general, Ch'en Hsien-ch'i, in the third month of 786. This not only impelled the Huai-hsi rebels to surrender to the throne, but also concluded the last phase of a rebellion by military governors which had lasted nearly five years. For the time being, emperor Te-tsung willingly adopted Lu Chih's suggestions. He offered a general amnesty to the Ho-chung and Huai-hsi rebels, probably right after Lu Chih submitted his memorial. As for dealing with the rebels, we see that Lu Chih's specific suggestions, which were derived from his principle of expediency, were eventually accepted by Te-tsung as the basis of his decision making. In situations where loyal subjects were involved, a parallel can also be detected although not without some variations.

**Treating loyal subjects with expediency**

Lu Chih's memorials presented in this section do not specifically contain the term ch'üan (or expediency). Since, however, Lu perceived of ch'üan as a sort of keen ability to recognize and to grasp the opportune moment to apply the most appropriate policies, the following discussion will demonstrate why certain of Lu Chih's memorials are particularly analyzed here as examples of his advocacy of expediency.

To demonstrate how Lu Chih persuaded emperor Te-tsung to apply expediency to situations involving loyal subjects, we have to switch our focus back to the time when Li Huai-kuang was on the verge of revolt. As previously discussed, the unequal treatment between Li Sheng's palace armies and Li Huai-kuang's provincial forces eventually pushed Li Huai-kuang to betray the court. Before he joined the rebel camp, Li Huai-kuang had

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143 On Li's murder, see TCTC, 232: 7468-69.
already repeatedly put off the order to fight the rebel Chu Tz'u while at the same time secretly making contact with him. On the alert for such activities, Li Sheng felt the need to plead with the emperor for permission for his troops to encamp a short distance further away from Huai-kuang's armies at Hsien-yang. Still hoping that he could keep Huai-kuang in line, Te-tsung refused to grant such permission to Li Sheng. In the meantime, because the emperor was persuaded by Lu Ch'i not to give Li a personal audience even though he knew about Huai-kuang's dissatisfaction, he merely sent Lu Chih to Huai-kuang's encampment to placate him. After returning from this mission in the second month of 784, Lu Chih immediately urged the emperor to grant permission for the redeployment of Li Sheng's forces.

Lu Chih contended that since Huai-kuang repeatedly disobeyed imperial orders, if the emperor continued to appease him without taking some precautionary measures, the consequences would be hard to predict. At this point when the court's existence was in peril, Lu Chih went on, the emperor must not treat this matter in any ordinary way. He told Te-tsung that Huai-kuang himself said with contempt that he did not care if Li Sheng's troops were shifted away from his armies. Under these circumstances, Lu Chih said that granting Li Sheng the permission he wanted should not provide Huai-kuang with grounds for complaint since he had already stated that he would not even care in the first place.

After analyzing the situations, he told the emperor:

when I first received your majesty's order to be an envoy and proclaim your majesty's instructions (to Li Huai-kuang), it was [originally] because the grain rations were unequal. This was by chance the same time that (Li Sheng wanted to) redeploy his troops. Thus, the two things occurred at the same time. Fortunately, Huai-kuang did not say anything to obstruct this (Li Sheng's) plan, but gave me a disingenuous reply; the event and the opportunity presented themselves together as if some hidden assistance had revealed itself. If your majesty loses this convenient opportunity, later

146 See his "Feng-t'ien lun Li Sheng so kuan ping-ma chuang," HYCC, 14: 10-14. Also see TCTC, 230: 7403-04.
repentance will not be able to recapture it. I only wish your sage wisdom will reach a speedy judgement and decision.  

In this manner, Lu Chih urged the emperor to exploit this opportune moment and shift the palace armies as soon as possible. Events to come proved that it was precisely due to Lu Chih's astute advice that Te-tsung was able in good time to save the palace armies from direct confrontation with Huai-kuang's forces. However, when a similar situation occurred later, Te-tsung failed to heed Lu Chih's suggestion; he procrastinated until the situation deteriorated.

Right at the time when Li Sheng was about to move his armies away from Huai-kuang's encampment, Lu Chih encouraged the emperor to allow two other generals' military forces to join Li Sheng and shift away from Huai-kuang's troops as well. In addition to the reasons he had already explained to the emperor in regard to Li Sheng's case, Lu Chih also pointed out that making these armies stay together could easily lead to trouble. Because these military governors did not trust Huai-kuang, Huai-kuang also looked down upon them and resented the fact that they did not accept his orders. Now that Li Sheng was going to decamp to another location, the emperor could take advantage of this situation and order these two armies at once to march on with Li Sheng. Meanwhile, Lu Chih continued, the emperor could simply inform Huai-kuang that these armies were to escort Li Sheng's troops so that they would not come under attack from the rebels.

Since Te-tsung was worried that Li Sheng's case might have already given Huai-kuang an excuse to revolt, he told Lu Chih he did not want to antagonize Huai-kuang any further. At this point, Lu Chih warned the emperor of the serious danger involved in missing this opportunity. He said:

I have thought and worried a hundred times and been unable to sleep all night due to the safety or danger entailed in gaining or losing the

\[147\] "Feng-t'ien lun Li Sheng so kuan ping-ma chuang," HYCC, 14: 12-13.

\[148\] "Feng-t'ien tsou Li Chien-hui Yang Hui-yüan liang chieh-tu ping-ma chuang," HYCC, 14: 13-15. Also see TCTC, 230: 7404-06.
opportunity (to move these two armies away); I sincerely believe that anyone who indulges in procrastination and is unable to correct a mistake will in the end suffer grave harm; anyone who in the midst of chaos and unrest is unable to extricate himself from the danger will certainly not enjoy a lasting peace. I have now presented all of my limited advice. I only hope that your majesty will reflect on it and choose (the right course).¹⁴⁹

Te-tsung's failure to grasp this opportunity as Lu Chih urged him to do so eventually led to the loss of these two armed forces.¹⁵⁰ Had he also refused or hesitated to grasp the earlier opportunity to permit Li Sheng to move his troops, mid-T'ang history would probably have run a different course.¹⁵¹

When Li Huai-kuang finally revolted and forced emperor Te-tsung to escape further to Liang-chou, Li Sheng's army was the only loyalist force that stayed near the capital region to fight against Chu Tz'u's and Huai-kuang's troops.¹⁵² Apparently frightened by Li Huai-kuang's mutiny, Te-tsung told Lu Chih that Li Sheng and other commanders' armies needed to be regulated and instructed by the court so that they would march forward. In order to do so, the emperor told Lu Chih he would send "an envoy" to proclaim the imperial decree to them.¹⁵³ Knowing that it had been the imperial practice to dispatch a eunuch envoy to represent the emperor in the field, and to "supervise" military affairs ever

¹⁴⁹ "Feng-t'ien tsou Li Chien-hui Yang Hui-yuan liang chieh-tu ping-ma chuang," HYCC, 14: 15.
¹⁵⁰ Ibid.: 15; TCTC, 230: 7405-06; for what happened to these two armies, see TCTC, 230: 7409.
¹⁵¹ Since Li Sheng's armies played a major role in suppressing the rebel forces, this would have been a distinct possibility. For Li Sheng's military deeds and his contribution to the court, see CTS, 3661-87; also see "Li Sheng Feng-hsiao Lung-hsi chieh-tu chien Ching-yuan fu yu-an-shuai chih," HYCC, 8: 11-14. This is the imperial edict drafted by Lu Chih which showed emperor Te-tsung's acknowledgement of Li Sheng's meritorious deeds; Tung K'e-ch'ang, "Lun Li Sheng," Liao-tung ta-hsueh hsueh-pao, 3 (1980): 49-52.
¹⁵² TCTC, 230: 7412.
since the court's exile in Liang-chou,\textsuperscript{154} Lu Chih expressed his strong disagreement with this plan in a memorial submitted in the fifth month of 784.\textsuperscript{155}

He began his statement by first demanding that the emperor compare the advantages and disadvantages between those field commanders who could make their own decisions in the middle of war, and those who had to be controlled by a far off central court, or for that matter, by an imperial delegate who knew hardly anything about military maneuvers. Discouraging the emperor from controlling his field commanders from a distance, Lu Chih insisted that the device of sending eunuchs to spy on the commanders would only make the commanders either disobey imperial orders for the sake of strategic necessities, or follow orders but let slip a golden opportunity to win a battle. Thus impeded, it would be only natural that no one would risk his life to fight for the court.

After specifying that the emperor's plan would only create difficulties for his field commanders, Lu Chih then asked Te-tsung to consider that previously, when his majesty first carried out such a policy, his field commanders did try to observe the imperial instructions. Due to difficulties on the road, however, by the time imperial instructions reached the field, they had often become useless because the situation in the field had completely changed. Obviously, what the emperor imagined in his exiled court was different from what actually happened on the field of battle. Under these circumstances, even when some commanders were forced to disregard imperial instructions, it was definitely not a deliberate act of insubordination on their part. Moreover, Lu Chih went on, exiled as he was in such an outlying place during this turbulent time even if there was indeed a commander who disobeyed the imperial instructions, could the emperor really

\textsuperscript{154} For information about the development of eunuchs appointed as army supervisors, see note 136 of the previous chapter.

\textsuperscript{155} This is his "Hsing-yüan tsou-ch'ing hsü Hun Chen Li Sheng teng chu-chün ping-matzu-ch'ü chi-pien chuang," HYCC, 16: 13-16. Part of this memorial also appears in TCTC, 231: 7430-31.
seize his military forces and have him killed? If not, why then continue such a harmful practice?

Implying that the emperor should abolish this practice of appointing eunuchs as army supervisors, Lu Chih then told the emperor that those who were now defending the court all said that they were doing it purely out of their own loyalty. What they preferred was to be delegated responsibility to make their own decisions; what they worried about most was being impeded by ineffective orders. Thus, Lu Chih requested that the emperor "consolidate them (the field commanders) by bestowing your trust upon them; delegate flexible (decision making) power to them; treat them with unusual rewards, and disregard all (other) trivial matters."  

His contention was based upon the idea that "the emperor's power is very different from that of his ministers, and only when he does not hold to his own views can he then adopt the views of others. The most important thing about the use of this power is to be in accord with people's desires; the key to using it lies in fully understanding the changes of time and circumstances."  

Although Lu Chih never mentioned the word eunuch in this memorial, his criticism of using eunuchs as army supervisors seems obvious. However, unlike his intimate friend Hsiao Fu's attack on this practice, Lu Chih's criticism was directed more at the actual disadvantages created by this practice than at the eunuchs' general abuse of power which resulted from it. Even though their points of emphasis are different, these two friends basically advocated the same principle, but Hsiao Fu's recent banishment to the south probably left Lu Chih alone to present a solitary protest in the court. It is not surprising then that Lu Chih's advice to the emperor regarding this particular practice seems to have been without result. Despite the fact that Te-tsung was unable, or more accurately,

156 Ibid.: 16.
157 Ibid.
159 For Hsiao Fu's attack, see CTS, 125: 3551; TCTC, 229: 7397.
160 As far as we can see, no particular historical records indicate otherwise. The fact that later on Lu Chih would again oppose this practice shows that the emperor probably did
unwilling, to employ Lu Chih's idea of expediency in delegating authority to field commanders, he nonetheless followed Lu Chih's suggestions to reward these generals and their subordinates.

In fact, when the emperor wanted to grant honorific titles to those who accompanied him to Liang-chou, including eunuchs and Lu Chih himself, Lu Chih admonished him to stop this measure. One of his main reasons was that it would upset the military men since they were the ones actually risking their lives in the field. Furthermore, he also pleaded with the emperor particularly to reward an old military governor, Ch'ü Huan (726-799) and his army.

According to Lu Chih, Ch'ü Huan's army was originally subjected to Chu Tz'u's command. Their loyalty to the court, however, did not bring them any reward from the court. On the contrary, fighting Li Hsi-chieh in the Huai-hsi region, they received no supplies and no help either from the court or from the neighboring provinces. Lu Chih told the emperor that when one read Ch'ü's memorial describing their hardships, it was difficult not to be moved by their perseverance in despair. Compared with his contemporary generals, Lu Chih said, Ch'ü was indeed a rare exemplar of the loyal subject. He requested the emperor not to treat this matter with the usual procedures, but instead to secretly send an imperial decree to a southern provincial governor to provide Ch'ü's army with all necessary supplies.

In spite of his distrust of the field commanders, Te-tsung certainly could understand Lu Chih's point. Besides agreeing not to grant honorific titles to those subjects who accompanied him to Liang-chou, he must also have accepted Lu Chih's request specially to reward Ch'ü Huan. Later we find that Chü Huan and his army actually contributed a great

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deal in the fighting against Li Hsi-lieh. Moreover, Ch'iü also became a capable local
governor who reconstructed the devastated provinces in an area near Huai-hsi.\textsuperscript{163} The
salutary effects of adopting Lu Chih's advice, which was formulated on the basis of his
principle of expediency, was thus verified again.

Besides encouraging rewards for military personnel, Lu Chih also paid attention to the
emperor's intention to reward ordinary peasants in Liang-chou. In the third month of 784,
Te-tsung planned to grant honorific official titles to those peasants who presented melons
and various fruits to the throne when he was on his way to Liang-chou. The emperor told
Lu Chih that he wanted to please these people and because honorific titles were only empty
titles which did not cost or harm anything, he would grant them as rewards.\textsuperscript{164}

In expressing his contrary opinion, as noted already, Lu Chih distinguished the
different categories where the two principles of righteousness (i) and expediency (ch'üan)
should be applied. While pointing out that the one function of expediency was to help the
emperor make appropriate administrative decisions, Lu further explained why it was not
suitable to grant honorific official titles to ordinary peasants.

For one thing, "the official titles and positions are public property (or public
possessions); they are also an important power of the state. Only those who make eminent
contributions and possess (outstanding) talents and virtue are qualified to occupy those
titles and positions; if not derived from these two channels, they do not fall within the
scope of the code of awards."\textsuperscript{165} Asserting that granting official titles should accord with
the performance of substantial deeds, Lu provided his reasons for opposing the emperor's plan.

\textsuperscript{163} See CTS, 122: 3502.
\textsuperscript{164} See "Chia hsing Liang-chou lun chin-hsien kua-kuo-jen ni-kuan chuang," and "Yu lun
chin kua-kuo-jen ni-kuan chuang," HYCC, 14: 15 & 16.
\textsuperscript{165} "Chia hsing Liang-chou lun chin-hsien kua-kuo-jen ni-kuan chuang," HYCC, 14: 15-
16.
Lu further warned that ill effects had already arisen because there had been too many awards of these titles during the fighting against the An Lu-shan rebellion.\(^{166}\) Now if the emperor granted the peasants such titles, those who had previously earned similar titles by risking their lives in battle or by unusual merit would certainly think the court was valuing their conduct on the same level as the mere presentation of fruit and melons. From this perspective, Lu Chih believed the emperor's task was not to grant more honorific titles, but rather to restore their proper place in the system of rewards. If the emperor continued to degrade these titles by granting them to fruit peasants whose contribution was by no means comparable to military sacrifices, the award of honorific titles would necessarily lose its function and become a meaningless practice.

Besides, Lu Chih stated with undeniable commonsense, the peasants who offered fruit were only villagers and poor people. What they really treasured was food and clothing (profit); granting them empty titles would do them absolutely no good. To complete his proposition, Lu suggested that if the emperor really wanted to please them, it would be much better to bequeath some money and goods to them instead of granting useless titles. In this way, the peasants would not lose any benefits, and the state would not violate the expediency principle.\(^{167}\)

It is evident that the purpose of Lu Chih's advice was to prevent any further abuse of the award system. His worry about the degradation of the system was not so much for the protection of the bureaucrats as for its impact on the court's survival. Although he did not mention it, Lu must have known that when the rebels attacked the exiled court at Feng-t'ien, Te-tsung had already instructed one of his generals to induce his troops to fight

\(^{166}\) Here Lu Chih must be referring to the practice during emperor Su-tsung's reign, for details see TCTC, 219: 7023-24.

\(^{167}\) "Yu lun chin kua-kuo-jen ni-kuan chuang," HYCC, 14: 18-20. Also see TCTC, 230: 7418.
against the rebels by proffering more than one thousand honorific titles. Even though he disagreed with such practices on principle -- he criticized a similar policy carried out by Su-tsung while fighting against the An Lu-shan rebellion -- for the sake of survival, Lu Chih could not attack the emergency act as such. Nevertheless, Te-tsung's plan to award more honorific titles to the peasants must have heightened his desire to prevent the award system from further degeneration through the emperor's unnecessary practice. This of course does not mean that he was less concerned with the common people's benefits than the emperor. Quite the contrary, his consideration was much more realistic and portrayed his accurate understanding of ordinary psychology.

The final example that demonstrates how Lu Chih requested the emperor to exercise the expediency principle took place in the sixth month of 784. Right at the moment when the capital had just been recovered and the court was preparing to return to Ch'ang-an, the emperor wanted Lu Chih to formulate an edict instructing one of his generals to look for his palace messenger girls who had become lost in Feng-t'ien. Te-tsung said these servant girls must be found; money would be provided for their make-up and clothing, and they must be sent to the imperial residence without delay. Refusing to obey the emperor's order, Lu Chih explained why he could not draft such an edict.

He first told the emperor that looking for palace maids was not necessary since his majesty already owned an exceedingly great number of this type of female servant. Furthermore, his majesty must be aware that the empire was inundated with wounded soldiers and emaciated people. Looking for palace maids under these conditions, providing them with money for clothing and make-up, and requiring their immediate return to the

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169 See "Hsing-yüan lun tz'u Hun Chen chao-shu wei ch'ü san-shih nei-jen teng i-chuang," HYCC, 16: 16. Also see CTS, 139: 3788-89; TCTC, 231: 7437. According to Hu San-hsing's comment on TCTC, these maids served as messengers in the inner palace for the emperor.
imperial residence would appear even more inappropriate. It would openly reveal the emperor's indifference to the people's sufferings, and would easily cause public complaints and criticism. To avoid such potential popular dissatisfaction, Lu Chih drew the emperor's attention to the fact that "there are orders of priority for state affairs, and degrees of seriousness for rightful duties." In Lu Chih's mind, it was not the emperor's personal pleasures, but rather reconstructing the imperial ancestral temples and restoring the rites of ancestral worship, offering condolences to deceased soldiers, rewarding meritorious deeds, and alleviating public miseries that should constitute the emperor's first priorities after returning to the capital.

Furthermore, Lu Chih went on, due to the fact that it had been months since his majesty lost these palace maids, it was likely that some generals or soldiers might have already taken them as their private possession. If this was the case, the imperial search would only cause suspicion and panic among these generals and soldiers since they were not intending to return the palace maids voluntarily in the first place. Lu Chih thus urged the emperor not to ignite the fuse that might lead to another disaster on this front. Lu may sound callous telling the emperor that his majesty need not insist on finding these palace maids because there were many other beauties in the world, but he made it clear at the time that giving them up for the time being did not necessarily mean the emperor was abandoning his beloved maid servants. It only demonstrated that the emperor would not "let small matters obstruct the accomplishment of the important tasks." In other words, fulfilling his personal pleasures should not come before his majesty's pursuit of the public welfare. Facing other rebel forces yet to be reckoned with, Lu Chih again resorted to the ancient classics to warn the emperor "not to forget danger in his security," especially since this precarious security was still accompanied by genuine danger.

170 "Hsing-yüan lun tz'u Hun Chen chao-shu wei chü san-shih nei-jen teng i-chuang," HYCC, 16: 18.
171 Ibid.: 19.
172 Ibid.: 20. The quote is from The i ching, Wilhelm and Baynes translation, 1950: 341.
Emperor Te-tsung's withdrawal of the idea of issuing the imperial edict suggests that he may have worried about the potential unrest Lu Chih told him would be caused by an open search for the palace maids. Still unwilling to forsake these prize personal possessions, however, Te-tsung sent eunuchs out to find them instead. This illustrates the fundamental difference between the emperor and his Han-lin scholar. Lu Chih regarded expediency as a morally justifiable means to be exercised both in emergency and in normal times when one must abandon personal profits in order to achieve public well-being. The emperor, however, would willingly apply Lu's expediency principle only when he considered it a useful scheme for the recovery of his state. If the application of expediency jeopardized his personal enjoyment at a time when there was no clear and present danger, emperor Te-tsung obviously was unwilling to sacrifice his personal pleasures for the advancement of the public welfare.

Closing remarks

Our analysis of Lu Chih's memorials to the throne reveals that his approach to all the problems faced by the T'ang court during this chaotic period bears the conspicuous imprint of his Confucian pragmatism. In his striving to help emperor Te-tsung re-establish the T'ang court, Lu Chih repeatedly reminded the emperor that the people, not the ruler, were "the foundation of the state." It was the ruler's responsibility to ensure that the foundation of the state was stable and secure; the realization of public desires always came first, before satisfaction of the ruler's. This, of course, reflected the quintessential belief in "the importance of the people (min wei kuei)" sustained by the classical Confucians, especially

173 CTS, 139: 3799; TCTC, 231: 7438.
Confucian Pragmatist Approach

by Mencius.\(^{174}\) It was within this context that Lu was fundamentally concerned with virtuous governance.

However, since he employed a Confucian pragmatist approach, Lu Chih was neither conservative in the sense of refusing to adapt to changes of time and circumstances, nor was he a pure pragmatist whose proclaimed value system would become secondary to practical concerns.\(^{175}\) On the contrary, Lu Chih's emphasis on the importance of adapting to the unusual circumstances of the day always focused upon the accomplishment of a higher ethical goal. That is, unlike his Confucian scholar contemporaries whom he considered "pedantic", Lu Chih regarded the Confucian classics as the repository of living principles for imperial conduct. Because of this, he actually created an interpretive framework for his concept of expediency based upon his own understanding of Confucius' teaching of higher ethical standards as embodied in the *Analects* and other ancient


\(^{175}\) Except for Twitchett's study, most studies of Lu Chih in Chinese or studies in English which discuss him either neglect or misread Lu Chih's concept of expediency (*ch'üan*). For example, Hsieh Wu-hsiung devotes half of his book to a discussion of Lu Chih's memorials. He deals with Lu Chih's emphasis on the importance of "sincerity" and "people's welfare" in governance; he also mentions that Lu talked about grasping an opportunity in military maneuvers, but he never notices or discusses Lu Chih's emphasis on expediency. See Hsieh Wu-hsiung, *Lu Hsiian-kung chih yen-lun chi chi wen-hsüeh*, 1975: 36-63. Liu Chao-jen's study of Lu Chih briefly mentions that Lu Chih was "good at applying the method of expediency (shan-yung ch'üan-pien chih-shu)" to military operations, but does not give any analysis of Lu Chih's conception of expediency nor the role of expediency in Lu Chih's approach to government. See Liu Chao-jen, "Lu Hsiian-kung yen-chiu," *Shih-chien hsüeh-pao*, 10 (1979): 11. Pulleyblank's article on Neo-Confucianism in mid-T'ang intellectual life treats Lu Chih as a conservative statesman with a realistic view of practical matters, but probably because this is only a survey study of mid-T'ang intellectual life, it does not take Lu Chih's pragmatism into further consideration. See Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism," 1960: 94. On the other hand, as mentioned above, McMullen's idea that Lu Chih condemned expediency is a misreading of Lu's notion of expediency. See his *State and scholars* 1988: 239. Although Twitchett's study emphasizes Lu's practical concerns, it tends to treat Lu Chih as a pure pragmatist whose theoretical belief in orthodox Confucianism was only secondary. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 118.
Within this framework, the pursuit of a higher ethical goal became the prerequisite for realizing his pragmatism. It is precisely through this Confucian pragmatist approach that we find him making a seminal contribution to the restoration of T'ang stability.

In the application of his principle of righteousness, we see Lu Chih serving as a spokesman for both the court officials and the general population. He admonished emperor Te-tsung to emulate sincerely the ancient sage kings in cultivating virtuous conduct by "restraining his personal desires." Believing that virtuous governance was a *sine qua non* for winning public sympathy and support, Lu Chih urged emperor Te-tsung to show self-criticism and repentance to his subjects and accompany them with concrete policies to relieve the financial burden of the people. In so doing, he helped the emperor to mollify the people and thus stabilize the vacillating public mind.

In the same manner, but operating on his principle of expediency, Lu Chih helped the court to lower the rebels' fighting morale by demanding that emperor Te-tsung offer amnesty not only to the rebel governors but also to their subordinates. To a certain extent, the ensuing emotional impact of this policy on rebel psychology necessarily reduced the centrifugal force away from the court, and thus increased the court's chances of winning their military campaigns. In addition, Lu Chih also prompted the emperor in good time to forestall a direct confrontation between the palace troops and Li Huai-kuang's armies, and dissolved several potential military threats by instructing the emperor to be generous toward military subjects who either committed or were alleged to have committed the crime of treason. Likewise, it was probably also due to his request that the court finally took unusual measures to preserve the strength of a loyal general who made a difference fighting against the Huai-hsi rebels.

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176 His definition of expediency subsequently won him the accolade of being the only one since the Han dynasty who understood the true meaning of expediency as it was presented in the *Analects*. See the comments in TCTC, 231: 7439.
In sum, through the interplay of his two principles of righteousness and expediency, Lu Chih not only helped the T'ang court to consolidate its stability, but also exerted a key influence on the court's military policy decisions. This is not to deny that military forces played a direct and an essential role in defending the court. After all we have seen that Lu Chih himself constantly reminded the emperor to reward his military staff properly. Although emperor Te-tsung was always the final arbitrator in every decision that he made, our examination of Lu Chih's approach to every problem brought to him by Te-tsung shows that it was Lu Chih, not emperor Te-tsung, who actually played the role of behind the scenes mastermind of many crucial imperial policies. In short, it was on the basis of Lu Chih's penetrating vision that emperor Te-tsung ultimately formulated many of his decisions. This is probably also the reason that Lu Chih's contemporaries placed his contribution to the court on an equal footing with that of the military forces. From this perspective, his contribution to mid-T'ang stability was just as indispensable to the court as that of the military campaigns. As a Han-lin scholar, or rather as an "inner Chief Minister," Lu Chih indeed served the court well through his Confucian pragmatist approach. While the T'ang court was in the process of gradual recovery, Lu Chih was, however, receding from the center to the periphery. When we next hear his voice again, though, he will be in the limelight of the mid-T'ang stage once more.
Chapter Three: Lone Pursuit of an Ideal

At the beginning of 793, after Lu Chih had assumed the responsibilities of Chief Minister for eight months, he presented a memorial to the throne containing the following passage:

I, the lowly, have received your majesty's kindness in frequently sending [me] profound decrees expressing sympathy and comforting regards one on top of another. Your majesty's teaching and instructions are so comprehensive and complete that the loving-kindness between one's own flesh and blood can not even go beyond this. . . . I suppose that since my ability is ordinary and mediocre; I have not produced unusual and outstanding results; [but] the only thing that I ought to do is to exhaust my loyalty and faithfulness in order to correct and assist your majesty's policies. What everybody feels it difficult to say I will definitely not hide; where ordinary human feelings are easily covered up, I will definitely not retreat from mine. I hold my faithful (literally, bright and faithful) heart in my hand in order to repay your majesty. This is my ordinary (literally: foolish) person's single devotion and will not change. I only wish that my enlightened master will sympathize with it and tolerate it."

In this passage one detects Lu's inner feelings and his self perception as Chief Minister, the highest position in the bureaucracy. This self-disclosure reveals that as a Chief Minister Lu was not contented to serve as a mere bureaucrat carrying out routine duties, however serious. Rather he considered "correcting and assisting the imperial policies" with utmost loyalty and honesty a higher mission he had to fulfill. Thus in this memorial he urges the emperor to accept him as a loyal but critical Chief Minister. Lu Chih aspired to re-enact the role of imperial adviser that he had played during the period of court exile. The difference was that as an actual Chief Minister, he could and would take the lead in putting forth his

1 "Hsieh mi-chih yin lun so hsüan shih chuang," HYCC, 20: 2. Toward the end of this passage, the text of the SPTK and SPPY editions read "this is (a state) which once achieved (i-chih, means once arrives or achieves) by a foolish person, he will not change." The above translation is based upon the 1768 and 1132 editions, both of which have it as "This is a foolish person's single devotion (i-chih, means one's will or devotion) and will not change." Since the basic meaning of this passage remains the same despite this one word difference, we shall leave it as it is.
reformist policies rather than passively waiting for an imperial consultation to present his advice as he did when he was a Han-lin scholar.

As a Han-lin scholar, or rather as an "inner Chief Minister," he had made a crucial contribution to the reestablishment of T'ang stability, but Lu Chih's efforts to "correct and assist" the imperial policies, as discussed before, suffered ultimately from the antagonism between him and his arch-opponent Pei Yen-ling.

Be that as it may, during the two years he served as Chief Minister, Lu Chih's reformist efforts were not a total failure. Some of his advice and suggestions were put into practice and produced beneficial results for the court. His approach to the contemporary tax situation also proved to be pertinent to problems created by the famous two-tax system. In order to understand his reformist efforts, we shall discuss the memorials Lu Chih presented during his tenure as Chief Minister according to three main categories. These include his suggestions for reforming the bureaucracy, strengthening the power of the state, and improving the people's livelihood.

Whereas these three categories constitute what may be called the public domain, another category which we need to pay equal if not more attention to is part of the private sphere. This refers to his continuing endeavor to transform emperor Te-tsung's personal conduct. We need to look into Lu Chih's attempt in this specific regard not only because it will reinforce from a different perspective our understanding of his approach to governance, but also because his attempts in this particular area gave rise to antagonistic forces that gradually jeopardized his entire reformist effort.

In the following analysis, we shall investigate what reformist policies Lu Chih engaged in and what results they had. At the same time, we shall also examine whether or not Lu still applied his Confucian pragmatist approach to these reformist efforts. A brief discussion of emperor Te-tsung's concerns during this time will be helpful at this point, however, in order to place Lu's efforts in a more appropriate perspective.
The emperor's main concerns

When Lu Chih became Chief Minister in the fourth month of 792, it had already been six years since the court settled the Ho-pei rebellion. Although the court had gradually recovered from the chaos of that period, Te-tsung no longer pursued strong policies toward provincial military governors. He adopted, rather, the appeasement policy practiced during his father emperor Tai-tsung's reign in dealing with the powerful military governors. The nightmare of the rebellion seems to have forced the emperor to take more interest in preserving a stable status quo than in pursuing his earlier ambition to restore imperial authority over provincial power. Meanwhile, bitter memories of his straitened financial situation in exile also led the emperor to resume the old practice of accepting "tributes" from provincial governors to enrich his personal treasuries.2

In order to sustain stability, however, a well-defended border capable of resisting foreign invasion became indispensable. To be sure, two T'ang military governors' efforts in the western border provinces induced the state of Nan-chao to renew its relationship with the court, and consequently reduced the Tibetan threat to a considerable degree. The T'ang alliance with the Uighurs also eliminated a potential enemy from the north.3 Nonetheless, without certain financial arrangements and an adequate border defense these successes would hardly have been attainable in the first place. Within this context, defense and finance easily dominated the emperor's concerns.4 They in turn became a challenge for officials called upon to serve as Chief Minister.

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2 For the emperor's financial suffering, see TCTC, 232: 7469; for his acceptance of provincial "tributes," see TCTC, 235: 7572; CTS, 48: 2087-88.
3 For information about the T'ang relationship with the Tibetans during Te-tsung's reign, see Michael Dalby, "Court politics," The Cambridge history, 1979: 607-11; also see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 108, esp., notes 168 and 169.
As mentioned before, Ts'ui Tsao (737-87) and Li Mi (722-89), two capable Chief Ministers prior to Lu Chih, all tried to carry out some policies regarding border defenses and financial improvement. Mainly due to the opposition of a powerful provincial governor, Ts'ui Tsao's financial reforms were without result. Li Mi's reformist measures, by contrast, saved substantial sums of cash for the court. He was also chiefly responsible for the T'ang alliance with the Uighurs in their fight against the Tibetans. Although Li's idea of establishing military-agricultural colonies (t'un-t'ien or ying-t'ien) was not carried out, as we shall see, Lu Chih's suggestions for improving military defenses on the frontier would incorporate similar views.\(^5\) When Lu Chih finally replaced Tou Shen and took over the responsibilities of Chief Minister, his first step, however, was aimed at increasing the quality and efficiency of the bureaucracy.

Establishing a capable and just bureaucracy

Almost immediately after he was appointed Chief Minister in the fourth month of 792, Lu Chih proposed to allow the secondary heads of various central government offices to recommend their own candidates for subordinate posts within their departments.\(^6\) Te-tsung first approved of this policy and issued a decree for its enforcement in the fifth month of

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\(^5\) On the discussion of Ts'ui Tsao and Li Mi's reformist policies and their results, see Michael Dalby, "Court politics," in The Cambridge history, 1979: 589-591. Also see, CTS, 130: 3620-23 & 3625-27; HTS, 53: 1369-70.

\(^6\) See his "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chi-chien shu-li chuang," HYCC, 18: 1-13. Under the title of t'ai sheng chang-kuan, here translated as "secondary heads," Lu Chih included: Vice Directors of the Three Departments (i.e., the Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs, Shang-shu p'u-yeh; Vice Director of the Secretariat, Chung-shu shih-lang; and Vice Director of the Chancellery, Men-hsia shih-lang); Assistant Directors of the Left and the Right in the Department of State Affairs (Shang-shu tso yu ch'eng); Attendant Censors (Shih yū-shih); Grand Masters (Ta-fu) who occupied mid-level head posts in all Bureaus (ssu) or in the Nine Courts (chiu-ssu) and the Palace Aid to the Censor in Chief (Chung-ch'eng). For the English translation of these official titles, see Charles Hucker, Official titles, 1985: 4826, 5278, 6951, 8174, 5939 and 5350.
that year, but changed his mind soon after that. In a private decree to Lu Chih, the emperor told Lu that he had heard some criticism of this policy. According to Te-tsung, opponents of this policy claimed that bribes had been involved in the process of recommendation, and thus the policy had failed to obtain men of true talent for the posts. The emperor told Lu that as Chief Minister he should appoint officials himself and should not entrust the heads of various bureaus with such power.

Lu Chih then presented a long memorial to defend his position and persuade the emperor not to end this policy. He first explained why he advocated the method of recommendation:

The pressing matter of governance lies in obtaining the [right] persons, but the difficulty of recognizing the [right] persons is still a problem even for the sages and wise people. If [appointment is granted by] listening to candidates' words, then one cannot guarantee [the moral correctness of] their conduct; [by] examining their conduct, one then may neglect their abilities; [by] evaluating their administrative efficacy, artful schemes and false devices will then frequently arise, and faithful and honest candidates will rarely be advanced; [by] following their reputation, [excess] competition will then greatly increase; those who are deep but do not seek after advances in official life will then not be promoted. Only when [recommendation relies upon] officials who always communicate closely with [potential] candidates, thoroughly know all the details about them, inquire after their conduct and ambition, and examine their abilities, can those who guard the Way but hide their talents then be recognized, and the hypocrites who fish for fame and [excessively] ornament their appearances be rejected. Therefore, Confucius said: "Look at the means a man employs, observe the path he takes and examine where he feels at home. In what way is a man's true character hidden from view?"

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7 TCTC, 234: 7531. Also see CTS, 13: 374.
8 "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chien-chü shu-li chuang," HYCC, 18: 1; also see TCTC, Ibid.
9 "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chien-chü shu-li chuang," Ibid.: 2. For the English translation of Confucius' saying, see D. C. Lau, Confucius, the analects, Book II/10, 1979: 64.
The system of recommendation Lu Chih advocated was supposed to involve the official placement process only.\(^\text{10}\) As early as 785 Lu seemed to have already endorsed such a recommendation policy.

In an imperial edict Lu drafted in 785 when still a Han-lin scholar, the identical recommendation policy was proclaimed. The edict clearly stated that these recommendations should be applied to those candidates selected by the Ministry of Personnel (Li-pu). That is, only those who had already passed their Doctoral examinations (held by the Ministry of Rites [Li-pu]) and obtained a nominal official rank (p'ìn) could be eligible for placement through recommendation.\(^\text{11}\) The fact that Lu Chih suggested a similar recommendation measure in 792 indicates that the 785 policy was probably never carried out. This further implies that Lu's 792 policy may actually represent a continuing effort to pursue the emperor's, or perhaps his own, earlier position. This in turn means that what Lu was aiming at in 792 was to reform part of the procedures regarding official placement. The following examination of the arguments he put forth in favor of his proposal will shed more light on this.

Lu Chih told the emperor that the recommendation method had not only been practiced in previous dynasties, but had also been followed by the Tang as well. According to the Tang rule, Lu went on, the appointment of officials with a nominal sixth rank or below to a substantive post was carried out in the Ministry of Personnel; the Chief Minister and the emperor merely gave their endorsement. This practice was unlike the appointment of officials with a nominal fifth rank or above which had to be recommended by the Chief Minister to the emperor first, and then followed by an imperial edict to confirm the

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\(^{10}\) Since it was common for scholar officials in Lu's time to prefer such a recommendation method to the examination system, it does not follow, as Twitchett implies, that Lu Chih was opposed to the examination system as a whole. See Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 105.

\(^{11}\) See "Chen-yüan kai-yüan ta-she chih," HYCC, 2: 4-5.
appointment. As time went by, Lu lamented, some dominant Chief Ministers violated this rule. They concentrated on increasing their own power and took this appointment function away from the Ministry of Personnel. Since these Chief Ministers became the arbitrators of official appointments, and the channels of appointment grew increasingly narrow, the bureaucratic machine failed to recruit true talents.

Believing that this practice should be rectified, Lu Chih then specifically indicated that broadening the channels of official appointment and establishing a capable bureaucracy were two things he could do to return his gratitude to the emperor. But what made Lu think that his recommendation measure could prevent bribes and other unfair practices?

Lu Chih made it clear that officials who once made a recommendation would be life-long sponsors of their candidates. They had to present written documents to provide grounds for their recommendation and to guarantee the validity of their recommendation. If their candidates proved to be capable officials, they could advance in the official ranks and receive salary increases. Otherwise, they would be demoted and lose their salary. Lu Chih believed this policy would not only help the court find appropriate candidates for lower ranking positions, but also provide a proper method for evaluating higher ranking officials.

In addition, Lu maintained that it was common for human beings to treasure their honor and reputation. Since secondary heads of the various offices were all potential candidates for higher official posts, he contended, they would not want to damage their reputation and incur punishment by making dishonest and prejudiced recommendations. With these preconditions established, Lu was convinced of the applicability of his recommendation measure.

12 "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chü-chien shu-li chuang," HYCC, 18: 3-4; on this issue, also see TT, ch., 15: 84; Twitchett, "Chinese meritocracy," 1974: 17.
13 "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan," Ibid.: 5.
14 Ibid.
16 Ibid.: 9.
Now that the emperor wanted to revoke his original consent to this policy, and asked him to monopolize the power of appointment, Lu Chih said it would amount to "changing a public recommendation into a private one and transforming overt praise into a private secret." His reason was simply that a Chief Minister could not possibly know all the available candidates in person; he would have to rely upon his relatives or personal friends for such candidates. Under these conditions, Lu Chih maintained, it would be far better to allow secondary heads to make their recommendations in public than to depend upon the Chief Minister's personal appointment through his own private channels.

Furthermore, Lu reasoned, since secondary heads in the central government could actually become future Chief Ministers, why should they not be allowed to recommend one or two subordinates at this point in their career since it was the emperor's intention that they be permitted to monopolize appointments once promoted to the position of Chief Minister? To Lu, delegated responsibility was essential to efficient bureaucratic operation. He insisted that different offices should have different functions. As he stated:

When the sages regulate affairs, they will certainly estimate the appropriateness of [various] things. They will not presume all talent to reside in one person, or expect something beyond a person's ability; they make officials in senior positions take charge of important affairs, and officials in junior positions responsible for details. Therefore, rulers select their Chief Ministers; Chief Ministers select heads for a multitude of offices, and heads will select their subordinates. . . . If one wants to obtain the [right] candidates, there isn't any easier way than this [measure]. . . . As for seeking out talented persons, the important thing is to broaden [the channels] for examining and evaluating [officials]; this is to make [the selection process] accurate. Broadening channels lies in [allowing] officials to recommend whomever they know well, and recommendations made by senior heads will [perform] this [function]; accurate evaluation consists in demanding that actual performance correspond to the titles of the [evaluated] officials, and the order of advancement established by Chief Ministers will [fulfill] this [function]. If the [channels] for seeking candidates are not broad, the lower ranking officials will then rarely advance; . . . capable candidates will then often be lacking [to fill] the appointments; . . . if evaluation of the officials is not accurate, capable and the incapable

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17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.: 9-10.
Several elements of this statement deserve our attention. First of all, it is obvious that Lu Chih only proposed to reform the procedures followed in the placement process, not the entire examination system. Secondly, because he advocated delegation of responsibility, he rejected the idea that the Chief Minister should monopolize the powers of appointment as suggested by the emperor. Thirdly, he demanded "that the actual performance correspond to the titles of the [evaluated] officials" in order to ensure that the court would have capable officials and that the bureaucracy would function effectively. Finally, once he focused upon the proper function of each bureaucratic position, Lu Chih showed no particular interest in enhancing his own personal power. This commitment to public service was quite consistent with his earlier behavior. That is, while serving as an "inner Chief Minister," Lu never exhibited any intention to abuse his special privileges.

In sum, Lu Chih believed that the method of recommendation could "make wise people introduce candidates similar to themselves, open the door to the utmost fairness, and make all functioning officials eligible for recommendation based upon their own abilities." As for himself, the Chief Minister, he said he would "carefully observe the rule of examining and evaluating officials, report and praise intelligent ones, and make certain that due rewards and punishments are meted out without fail so that no one will be passed over and the court will not lack talented candidates."

To be sure, Lu Chih's emphasis on "rewards and punishments" makes him sound like a Legalist, but this is not unusual because, as is well known, Legalist methods had been blended with Confucian practices in the imperial government since the Han dynasty. In

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19 Ibid.: 10-11.
20 "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chü-chien shu-li chuang," HYCC, 18: 5.
21 Ibid.: 5-6.
fact, the pre-Ch'in Confucian philosopher Hsün Tzu even considered "rewards and punishments" indispensable in governing the state,\(^23\) and his theories also contain a streak of Legalism.\(^24\) The point of fundamental distinction lies in the fact that for Lu Chih, just as for Hsün Tzu, "rewards and punishments" were intended as measures leading to the establishment of a just and capable bureaucracy, not as devices to reinforce the power of the ruler which all Legalists ultimately sought.\(^25\) As we have noted before, and shall demonstrate later, the Legalist goal of elevating the ruler was most antithetical to Lu Chih's approach of government.

In his final plea to the emperor, Lu Chih urged Te-tsung to follow empress Wu Tse-t'ien's (reigned 690-705) appointment policy. He praised empress Wu's encouragement of the recommendation method as the reason a great many able officials were recruited during her reign. He admitted that empress Wu's policy had made official appointments too easy, but insisted that her critical evaluation of the officials had produced an efficient bureaucracy.\(^26\) Lu Chih's advice to Te-tsung is quite interesting when we consider that he may have been the first T'ang Chief Minister to praise her rule.\(^27\)

Without excluding the possibility that Lu Chih simply had an unusually perceptive insight in recognizing the salutary influences of empress Wu's appointment practice, it is also possible that his praise for empress Wu might have emanated in part from personal


\(^{25}\) On the discussion of the Legalist thought, see Ibid.: chs., 6 & 7, especially see pp. 423-24 for the fundamental distinction between the Confucian and the Legalist schools of thought.

\(^{26}\) "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chü-chien shu-li," 18: 11-12.

\(^{27}\) For a modern study of Empress Wu's ability to rule and her achievements as a ruler see, R. W. L. Guisso his *Wu Tse-t'ien and the politics of legitimation in T'ang China*, Program in East Asian Studies of Western Washington University, 1978. According to Guisso (p. 201), Lu Chih was "the first important minister" to praise Empress Wu in this way.
considerations. As noted before, the Lu clan's rise in the T'ang bureaucracy corresponds exactly with the period of empress Wu's ascendance. Nevertheless, when Lu requested Te-tsung to compare the gains and losses between the recommendation system and the one demanded by the emperor, Te-tsung still chose to rescind his previous order of consent. Thus ended Lu Chih's first reformist proposal.

Although his first attempt to change the system of official appointments ended in failure, Lu Chih did not cease his efforts to improve the bureaucracy. In the fifth month of 794, almost exactly two years after he presented the above memorial, we again find Lu setting out to "correct and assist" Te-tsung's policy for appointing and promoting officials. Two things motivated Lu Chih to present this new memorial. He was frustrated by the imperial intention to follow some other advisors' suggestion and allow vacant official posts to remain unfilled, and he disagreed with the emperor's policy of slowing down the process of official transfer and advancement.

Lu Chih began his memorial by reaffirming the teaching of the ancient classics that a ruler should function as a figure head and only rule through able officials. Within this context, he made it clear that vacant offices must be filled:

I have heard from the classics which say: "stately are the many officers; King Wen through them enjoys his repose;" they also say: "let him not have his various officers cumberers of their places. The work is Heaven's; men must act for it!" This tells us that officials must be many, and offices must be filled; it also honors the principle of employing people on the basis of

29 See TCTC, 234: 7532. As Twitchett points out, in the eleventh month of 793, an Act of Grace drafted by Lu Chih did urge the provincial governors to recommend talented and virtuous scholars to the throne, but this was not intended to institute Lu Chih's recommendation measure as a regular practice. This only referred to a special decree examination which was supposed to take place in the seventh of 794, and in fact did take place in the tenth month of that year, see "Chen-yüan chiu-nien tung-chih ta-li tashe chih," HYCC, 3: 6; Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, vol., 2, 13: 488. Also see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 105.
30 Although it is not mentioned in Lu's memorial, it is very likely that the person who made these suggestions was P'ei Yen-ling, Lu's arch-opponent. As noted before (in chapter 1: 91), P'ei advised the emperor not to refill some vacant posts so that the court could have more revenue by not paying the emoluments.
their abilities, and expounds the practice of holding oneself (i.e., the ruler) in a respectful posture without interfering. These are the reasons for gains and losses in governing the state.\textsuperscript{31}

While calling on the emperor to fill all vacant offices, Lu was not unaware that the emperor might worry about the quality of the officials thus appointed. However, he believed that "every human being has intelligence which will only be brought to the fore by [proper] leadership."\textsuperscript{32} As a result, he told the emperor, "thus we know a person's talent will rise and fall according to his time and circumstances. When appreciated, it will develop; when praised, it will rise; when restrained, it will decline, and when dismissed, it will disappear. These are the reasons for the increase and decrease of talented people."\textsuperscript{33}

Arguing from the perspective that the responsibility of employing official talents rested on the ruler's shoulders, Lu Chih was obviously less worried about whether or not officials were capable than about whether or not their talents were properly employed.

According to Lu Chih, there were seven errors currently being practiced in the court which prevented the emperor from obtaining capable officials. There is no doubt that Lu's criticism of these ills was also aimed at improving the imperial conduct, but since our primary concern here is to examine Lu Chih's conception of how to establish a reasonable policy to evaluate officials, we shall leave the part which concerns the imperial conduct to a later discussion.

Some of the errors brought up by Lu reflect his earlier criticism of appointment practices. For example, the first error was that the emperor still tended to follow the previous system of promoting officials. That is, the criteria of promotion were not based upon individual abilities, but upon whether or not candidates were recommended by the


\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.: 8.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.: 8-9.
Lu Chih's favorite Chief Minister. Strongly opposed to this practice, Lu Chih told Tsetsung:

Granting [things] and taking [them] away are the ruler's powers; honors and offices are public possessions. The ruler should not dispense public possessions according to his personal pleasure; he should not take advantage of this power to vent his own unbridled anger and indignation; he should not let a minority of one obstruct the majority, and should not strip a person of office for personal reasons.34

The second error also reflects his earlier position that evaluation of officials should be based upon their actual performances. Since the emperor "did not evaluate actual situations, but only concentrated on widely searching for criticism of the officials," Lu Chih contended that this had provided a chance for the small men (hsiao-jen) to attack the gentlemen (chün-tzu). As he put it:

Gentlemen regard cherishing the talented as their main concern; small men consider injuring the good as a profitable [thing to do.] When [one] cherishes a talented person and recommends him [for a position], he is then [considered] close to [forming] a clique, when [one] injures the good and obstructs [a candidate’s appointment or promotion], he then appears to be public-minded. Once one is considered close to [forming] a clique, then [your majesty] will quickly suspect him without distinguishing [the right and wrong of the accusation]; once one appears to be public-minded, then [your majesty] will demonstrate [your] trust in him without examining [his public-mindedness]. Therefore, the great Way has always been destroyed by unreasonable criticisms; fine talents are often rejected due to slander. It is primarily due to these [reasons] that [the court] has lost [able] scholars and calumny has often been started.35

Although chün-tzu and hsiao-jen are typical Confucian terms which often carry heavy moral connotations, hsiao-jen in Lu's mind, however, were not necessarily immoral characters. In the 792 memorial discussed above, Lu Chih actually defined hsiao-jen as those who "regard preventing discussion as an outstanding thing to do, acting eccentrically as (evidence of) not forming a clique. They only pursue interests close at hand, but neglect

34 Ibid.: 10.
35 Ibid.
(to make) long term plans; they practice small sincerity but injure the great Way. Thus, the *Analects* say: "They are determined to be sincere in what they say, and to carry out what they do. They are obstinate little men."³⁶ Accepting Confucius' teaching, Lu made it clear that the difference between the small men and the gentlemen was that the former's concern was too narrowly focused.

The next four errors are all focused upon Te-tsung's attitude toward the officials. In discussing them Lu Chih basically criticized the emperor's treatment of the officials as too harsh and unfair. He contended that this was because the emperor failed to evaluate officials on the basis of their individual ability and their actual performance. Instead, the criterion employed by the emperor was often his personal partiality. For instance, once an official offended the emperor, despite the fact that he was a capable subject, his chances of being promoted or transferred again nevertheless came to an end. Likewise, once an official pleased the emperor with a single phrase, the emperor would promote him without even considering his actual abilities.

By acting this way, Lu said, the emperor was "abandoning the carpenter's level line, and using personal preference to judge the bent and the straight (i. e., right and wrong); discarding the weight and steelyard, and using his bare hand to estimate the lightness and heaviness [of things]."³⁷ Consequently, this not only reduced the number of capable officials serving at court, but also gave rise to opportunistic behavior among the officials.³⁸ Lu still held the emperor responsible for the officials' behavior at court.

Lu Chih called the last error "following tradition without considering its feasibility."³⁹ Here he specifically focused upon the problem of not refilling vacant offices, and of

³⁹ Ibid.: 9.
slowing down official transfer and advancement. From Lu's statement, we learn that the argument that supported such policies was that they were standard practices in the past. Intending to continue this tradition, Te-tsung particularly called Lu's attention to the fact that the imperial father-in-law had even served in one position for more than ten years during the previous reign. The emperor's message was that such traditional precedents ought to be observed.

Although looking to the past for examples was a universal attitude among Confucian scholars in Lu's time, and, as noted already, Lu Chih himself also frequently urged the emperor to model himself upon the ancient sage kings and to imitate the good rule of emperor T'ai-tsong and empress Wu, he did not, however, advise the emperor to preserve those historical precedents regarding vacant offices and the policy of delayed official advancement. Why was he opposed to the continuation of these particular practices? Was he not contradicting his own position of learning from the exemplary rules of the past? His discussion of the last error will provide answers to these questions.

Lu Chih began his discussion by pointing out the implied difference between him and those who advocated not refilling the vacant offices and slowing down official transfer and advancement. He criticized their resorting to the past as "reciting platitudes but not making inferences from changes of time [and circumstances]; preserving the dross of the old classics but not basing one's judgment on [the reality of] things." Opposing any mechanical imitation of historical standards, Lu implied that the criterion for employing a tradition should be a flexible selection according to circumstances and the changing needs of the times.

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40 Ibid.: 16-18.
To further support his position, Lu Chih went on explaining why mechanically accepting past practices would not solve the problems of the T'ang bureaucracy. As he contended:

In ancient times, since people's habits and customs were simple; there were not many official titles; only the able [ones] were distinguished from the incompetent [ones]. There also were no discussions on seniority and rank order, no demands for effective results in one day, and no disputes based on minute differences in performance. ... Therefore, "The book of Yii" (in the Shang shu) says: "every three years there was an examination of merits, and after three examinations the undeserving were degraded, and the deserving advanced." This then shows that officials definitely had to wait for nine years before they could receive a promotion or demotion. However, some of those who were promoted were appointed from the status of poor commoners to various official posts; even though they had to stay in an office for a long time, what was there to complain about? ... In recent times, the established offices are gradually increasing, the list of [official] ranks are even more numerous. ... they all require regular qualifications which all have to be observed. If we follow the tradition of the [ancient sage kings] T'ang (Yao) and Yii (Shun) and make nine years [in each office] as the term for all [official advancements], this will definitely cause the high positions often to suffer from a dearth of [right] candidates, [while the] low ranking officials are constantly lamenting that their hair [is growing] white [waiting for a promotion].

In the administration of the three [ancient] dynasties (Hsia, Shang, and Chou), what they added to and what they omitted from [the practices of the past] were different. Surely this was not because they loved to change. It was only because the times and circumstances forced them to do so. As for Kun (father of the legendary sage king Yii), he damned up the inundating waters and did not have any accomplishment, but he was not banished and killed until nine years later. If there are officials who are like Kun in later dynasties, must it be nine years again before they are punished? I certainly know this could definitely not be the case. Intending to carry out punishments quickly, but [carrying out] official advancements slowly, and regarding this as a method of following ancient [practice] is like walking backward yet hoping to reach the people before you. ... Whenever seeking for old precedents, one must distinguish the right ones from the wrong ones. The right ones need not be changed and the wrong ones need not be preserved. Besides, there are differences [caused by] the contradictions in the old precedents themselves.

At the beginning of the previous sage's reign (i. e., Te-tsung's father's reign), a dominant minister was in power. He dealt with official appointments mostly according to personal favor. There were frequent promotions within one month, and there were no transfers for many years. By the middle of the reign, ill feelings arose between the ruler and the Minister; for the time being, they simply [let things] remain undecided (literally, enjoyed themselves) and everything was stagnant. In terms of appointment, it became even more difficult; at the beginning fairness was lost because of prejudice and partiality; and doubt and distrust followed to block the operation [of the appointment process]. Consequently, the regular
order lacked assessment, and officials' [transfer and advancement] were thus hindered. These [defects] should all be corrected, how can they be worthy to serve as [our] models?

In this long refutation, Lu Chih makes several interesting points. First, he clearly demonstrates that he viewed history as an evolutionary process. He observes that bureaucratic structures evolve from a primitive stage to a much more complex one. Thus, past practices no longer meet the needs of the present time. Secondly, he indicates that the motive force behind this evolutionary change is not the human factor but rather impersonal time and circumstances (shih-shih). In other words, he admits that objective conditions sometimes dictate historical development even though human subjective will does not wish it. Thirdly, he allows that not all traditional practices were correct, and there is no point in imitating harmful precedents. Rather they should be critically examined before being applied to current situations.

The above statement does not necessarily mean that Lu Chih perceived history as a progressive development. What is evident, though, is that he recognized that historical standards are changeable. Within this context, we find that his attitude toward traditional practices proceeded in accordance with his accustomed pragmatist sensibility. That is, he was not opposed to learning from the past; he simply insisted that the applicability of past practices depended upon their feasibility under present conditions.

Meanwhile, Lu Chih maintained that the reason official posts should always be filled was not only because the court needed officials to deal with affairs, but also because this could cultivate persons of talent for future employment. Thus, no matter what sort of

43 Ibid.: 15-19. Italic added. The passage from "The books of Yü" can be found in the "The canon of Yao" chapter of the present edition of The book of documents, as is the story of Kun's damming up the flood. For the English translation, see Legge, The shu king, in The sacred books of China, vol. III, 1899: 45. The powerful Chief Minister in emperor Tai-tsung's reign refers to Yuan Tsai; for his abuse of the power of official appointment, see TCTC, 225: 7257-58; also for his rise and fall, see Michael Dalby, "Court politics," in The Cambridge history, 1979: 577-79.
offices were vacant, they ought to be filled. This was why, Lu argued, the classic *Li chi* once stressed the necessity of filling every office.\(^{44}\)

After making this point, Lu Chih requested that the emperor neither delay nor speed up official transfers and advancement. He urged Te-tsung to consider the long and harsh process required for a scholar to first enter the officialdom, the common human psychology of sticking to old ways if one remained in the same position too long, and the danger of growing opportunistic if transferred too soon. There were only three methods Lu suggested that would serve as a "middle way (*chung-tao*)" for evaluating and regulating officials.

These included "using elevation and promotion to make manifest those who have unusual abilities;" "using demotion and dismissal to correct those who neglect their duties;" and "using assessment and advancement to carefully (note the records of) those who observe the regular norms."\(^{45}\) Lu Chih believed that once this "middle way" was carried out, special talents would be recognized and the variously ranked offices would subsequently also become regulated.\(^{46}\) However, this particular effort failed to win the emperor's support.\(^{47}\)

Lu Chih did succeed in carrying out certain bureaucratic reforms during his tenure as Chief Minister. For one thing, he was praised for changing the custom, followed in the post-An Lu-shan period, of assembling candidates for official appointments once every three years into an annual practice. This unquestionably speeded up the circulation of official appointments by filling vacant offices with qualified candidates who had been

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\(^{44}\) "Lun ch'ao-kuan ch'üeh-yüan," HYCC, 22: 19. What Lu Chih referred to was a passage in the "She-i" chapter of the *Li chi*, which reads as follows: "To regulate (the discharging of the arrows), in the case of the Son of Heaven, the playing of the Tsou-yü (the last piece in the 2nd book of the first part of the *Shih ching*, or *The book of odes*). . . The Tsou-yü is expressive of joy that every office is (rightly) filled." For the English translation, see Legge, trans., *The li ki*, part IV, in *The sacred books of China*, vol., XXVIII, pp. 446-47.

\(^{45}\) Ibid.

\(^{46}\) Ibid.

\(^{47}\) TCTC, 234: 7555.
waiting for years. His achievement in this specific regard probably resulted from imperial consent to his advice that offices should not be left vacant. Be that as it may, his original intention to establish a capable and just bureaucratic machine remained largely unfulfilled. In comparison, his pursuit of strengthened state power achieved a more satisfactory result.

**Strengthening the power of the state**

While attempting to reform the bureaucracy, Lu Chih also felt impelled to strengthen the border defenses. He was aware of the emperor's concern with this matter, but his effort in this regard was not a direct response to the imperial call. It was more a response to his own perception of the urgent problems involved in defending the frontiers. In a memorial presented to the throne in the eighth month of 792, Lu explained why and how he intended to improve the present border defenses.

In this memorial, Lu Chih maintained that two things were fundamental in establishing a strong border defense: sufficient grain reserves and dependable armed forces. We shall first focus upon his effort to improve the frontier grain reserves.

**Filling the frontier granaries**

Before he proposed to the throne a detailed policy regarding the frontier grain reserves, Lu Chih had tried other reformist measures, but to no avail. He pointed out that previously the emperor had relied upon the policy of "harmonious purchases (ho-ti)" to perform the

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49 Lu mentioned the emperor's concern at the beginning of a memorial which will be discussed here. See, "Ch'ing chien Ching-tung shui-yün shou chüeh-chia yü yüan-pien chou-chen ch'ü-hsti chün-liang shih-i chuang," HYCC, 19: 1.  
task, that is, "compulsory purchase of [grain] by the government at high prices"\textsuperscript{51} from peasants in the border regions. The purpose of this policy was to encourage grain cultivation in the frontier provinces and subsequently reduce the burden of transporting grain from the interior.\textsuperscript{52} Lu Chih believed it to be an effective measure, but he felt its goals had not been realized. In his opinion, the main reason for failure was that the local officials in charge did not carry out their responsibilities. As Lu put it:

\ldots However, the officials in charge of [the harmonious purchases] were narrow and parsimonious; they could not follow the demands of the times so as to help finish the task; they neglected the [harmonious purchase] plan designed by the government for [emergency] use and practiced improper mercantile [activities]. When there was a good harvest and peasants were willing to let [the government] purchase their grain, [the officials] then made sure to cut down the [purchase] price, and did not gather and store [the grain] in time; when they encountered a famine and grain was difficult to come by, they did not consider the grain shortage but even made [the peasants] accept harmonious purchases. This allowed powerful families and grasping officials to take control of the power of making profit. They bought grain at cheap prices, waited until the the government and the people were both short of [grain], then took advantage of the urgency of the times to sell it at a price ten times higher. There were also close relatives of influential people and travelling scholars\textsuperscript{53} who either relied upon generals on the frontier or officials in charge to make low price [grain] purchases in [frontier] military towns and sell this grain at high prices in the capital. There were indeed a great many such people who simply sat around and obtained large profits.\textsuperscript{54}

The results of these malpractices, Lu Chih lamented, not only brought more misery to the peasants, but reserved little grain for the border provinces. If any emergency occurred, it would not have been possible to sustain the frontier forces. Frustrated by this situation,

\textsuperscript{52} "Ch'ing chien Ching-tung shui-yün shou chūeh-chia . . .", HYCC, 19: 6.
\textsuperscript{53} Travelling scholars refer to those scholars, with or without doctoral degrees, who obtained their first service in provincial governments not through regular channels of official appointment by the court, but through personal recruitment by local governors (pi-chao). The nature of their services involved providing administrative expertise and clerical advice to local government. In middle and late T'ang, a great number of scholar officials entered the bureaucracy in this manner. The initial career of the famous ku-wen writer Han Yü is a case in point. For more information on the rise of this practice, see The Cambridge history, 1979: 20-21 and 648; for Han Yü's first service, see Charles Hartman, Han Yü, 1986: 28 & 35-36.
\textsuperscript{54} "Ch'ing chien Ching-tung shui-yün shou chūeh-chia . . .", HYCC, 19: 7.
Lu said that he had earlier requested the emperor to send a special envoy to correct such malpractices, but Te-tsung insisted that "the most reasonable thing to do is to follow the [current] practice" and thus rejected his plea. He had also suggested increasing the reserves of the military requisitions on the frontier when there were abundant harvests, but the officials in charge insisted that there was no extra budget for that, and so his suggestion was passed over. Although rejected by the throne, Lu did not give up his pursuit. He worked out another proposal and eventually convinced the emperor to put it into practice.

In this proposal, Lu assured the emperor that his new plan would "not disturb the people; not change the [current] practice (i. e. the 'harmonious purchases' of grain); not increase taxes; not require [extra] government money; not eliminate the [emperor's] entertainments, and not restrain the amount [usually available] for extra and unnecessary expenditure." Such a statement implies that Lu Chih understood that if he intended to carry out his new plan this time, he had to convince the emperor that his plan would satisfy the court's needs, but would not disturb the status quo. What, then, was his new proposal?

Before we discuss his new proposal, we should first examine how Lu Chih came to design such a policy. This will provide us with a better picture of his approach to grain transportation. Lu made it clear that his new proposal was a product of his own reflection on two different methods of handling grain transportation, one that had actually been carried out previously and one that was currently in the air. It was also based upon his own investigation of the actual process.

In Lu's judgement, both of these two methods demonstrated ignorance about ways to be flexible. He told the emperor that there had been several good harvest years in the capital region recently, but the Huai-nan and Ho-nan regions were hit hard by a terrible
flood in the summer of that year (792) and their crops were totally ruined.\textsuperscript{57} Since the reserves in the capital granaries were sufficient enough to supply the armies stationed in Kuan-chung for several years to come, the peasants in the capital area were frustrated by the fact that good harvests had actually caused the price of their grain to fall drastically. Because of this, the court had allowed the common people to pay their taxes in grain instead of in money.

By contrast, due to the flood, the price of grain in the flooded provinces climbed so high that a large segment of their population were impoverished. They had to abandon their homes and find work elsewhere. Under these conditions, Lu argued that while the court should have purchased the grain at a price much higher than the market price in the capital region to encourage agriculture, it should also have sold the reserve grain at a greatly reduced price to people in the flooded provinces to relieve their misery. However, Lu told the emperor that there were still officials who insisted on operating the grain transportation system as if nothing unusual had happened. They insisted that the flooded provinces transport their usual amount of grain to the capital where what was needed was money not grain to conduct "harmonious purchases." Lu criticized these officials as being "accustomed to past experiences but devoid of understanding of what is appropriate for the times."\textsuperscript{58}

Meanwhile, Lu Chih also attacked officials who only "took notice of the present interests [of the state], but took no measures to prevent future calamities."\textsuperscript{59} To validate his criticism, Lu cited the example of a previous practice. He recalled that several consecutive years of drought had ravaged the capital area after the suppression of the rebel Chu Tz'u in 785. Consequently the imperial granaries only contained less than one month's reserve, but some officials nonetheless requested that the throne cease operating

\textsuperscript{57} There were more than 40 provinces in the Ho-nan and Huai-nan regions which suffered from this flood, see TCTC, 234: 7533.

\textsuperscript{58} "Ch'ing chien Ching-tung shui-yün shou chüeh-chia ...," HYCC, 19: 10.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.: 11.
the grain transportation system in order to save the transportation costs for other expenditures. This not only brought about a famine, but also led to starvation in the capital area.60

In order to correct these two equally inappropriate ways of operating the grain transportation system, Lu Chih told the emperor that regulating grain transportation should conform to changes of time and circumstances. He asserted:

[A ruler] relies upon wealth to assemble people, but their lives depend upon food. When regulating the state expenditure, one should weigh (ch'üan) the importance [of various priorities]. If grain is insufficient but there is a surplus of money, then slacken [the process of] accumulating money and concentrate on enriching the granary; if there is a surplus of grain but money is insufficient, then slow down the accumulation of grain and be stingy in spending cash. If the state's governance is peaceful and stable, money and grain both abundant, the population numerous and increasing, and the corvée not being practiced, [the state] can then constantly use the surplus wealth to extend grain transportation; even if there is a high cost [for the transportation fees], it will only aid the poor. If [the above] three measures are practiced at the appropriate times, the importance [of the various priorities] will be balanced (ch'üan), and the state expenditure will thus be regulated.61

In this statement, Lu Chih continued to emphasize the importance of using the principle of ch'üan (or expediency) in regulating the state expenditure. He maintained that the state first had to ensure that there was sufficient grain and money before any further expansion of grain transportation. His pragmatist approach led him to conduct an additional investigation of the current conditions of grain transportation. He discovered that the current practice inherited the rules set up by Ts'ui Tsao when he became Chief Minister at the beginning of 786. According to Lu, in order not to repeat the mistakes caused by the termination of grain transportation, Ts'ui Tsao started the practice of transporting one million shih (about 1.75 millions bushels) of grain to the capital annually. He carried out

60 Ibid.: 11. For details about the drought and famine, see CTS, 12: 348; TCTC, 231: 7453; also see Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 327, note 78.
61 Ibid.: 10-11.
this measure by making the ships coming from the Yangtzu valley unload their grain stocks into several granaries at different junctions along the water route. In this way, the ships from the south did not need to spend so much time on the journey. Ts'ui Tsao, of course, did not invent this policy. As is well known, this was P'ei Yao-ch'ing (681-743)'s reformist policy which was effectively carried out in 734 when he served as Chief Minister during emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign.62

Although Ts'ui Tsao's corrective measures proved to be efficient, Lu Chih found that it was no longer appropriate to continue this practice, because several good harvests in the capital region had already obviated the need to transport grain from the south. At the same time, Lu also discovered that granaries in the Ho-nan region were over-stocked to the point that newly transported grain was simply piled up in the open for years, thus creating tremendous unnecessary waste. In Lu's estimation, the available reserves could already supply the capital for at least seven years even without further grain being transported from the south.

In addition, since many officials already asked the court to extend the "harmonious purchases" of grain in the capital region to relieve the peasants' burden, Lu calculated that the amount of grain thus purchased by the government would be equal to the amount transported from the south in two years. In other words, the capital region could sufficiently support itself for at least two years without transported grain. Based upon this calculation, Lu told the emperor, many officials had suggested to end grain transportation once and for all.63 However, he had a different idea.

Lu was opposed to halting grain transportation completely, because once it was terminated, the boats and ships would be of no use and subsequently fall into ruin. If any


famines and droughts should occur in the capital again, the consequences of having ended
the grain transportation system would be disastrous. To Lu Chih, any rules and
regulations, no matter how perfect they were when first initiated, would become inadequate
as time went by. The important thing was to make the initial plan as complete as possible,
and "not allow old customs to harm the principle of affairs nor present interests ruin the
eternal rules."\(^{64}\) Lu said it was from this perspective that he had designed his reform
proposals.

The basic idea of Lu's plan was to reduce greatly the amount of grain transported from
southern China and the Ho-nan region by water to the capital. He proposed to eliminate
800,000 out of the 1,100,000 shih of grain transported annually from the south to the Ho-
yin granary (in modern Honan). Then there should be a further reduction of transport
onwards from the Ho-yin granary to the capital. By so reducing grain transportation, the
government could first sell the 800,000 shih of grain thus saved at a reasonably low price
(harmonious sale, or ho-t'iao) to victims in flooded provinces. The money obtained from
this sale would amount to 640,000 strings of cash. This could then be added to the large
sum also saved from transport costs which was about 690,000 strings. Altogether the
government would obtain 1,330,000 strings of cash. Here then was Lu Chih's final aim.
That is, his goal was to appropriate more than 66 percent of this huge sum of money to
finance "harmonious purchases" of grain on the northwest frontier, and the rest of that
money would be used for the same purpose in the capital.\(^{65}\)

If everything was carried out in this way, Lu believed that his new proposal would "not
change the current practice." That is, he would continue to rely upon the practice of the
"harmonious purchases" of grain to fill the border granaries. However, what he did not
discuss in relation to this new plan was how it could prevent any potential corruption
involved in the practice of "harmonious purchases" of grain.

\(^{64}\) Ibid.: 14.
\(^{65}\) Ibid.: 14-15. Also see Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 94 and 327 note 79.
Lu Chih believed that his plan could, on the one hand, benefit the peasants in the capital area and, at the same time, keep the state granary reserves intact, since the grain purchased from the capital area would make up the grain deficiency caused by the reduced transport. At the same time, according to his investigation of the northwest frontier provinces, he stated that his plan could also establish a satisfactory level of grain reserves in those provinces without adding any extra financial burden to the government. With so many tangible benefits waiting to be garnered, Lu urged the emperor not to miss this Heaven-sent opportunity of establishing grain reserves in the border provinces.

Lu Chih seemed to have been quite confident of the feasibility of his own policy. He told the emperor that his goal was to "obtain one year's grain (about one million \textit{shih} of grain, according to Lu) for one hundred thousand soldiers on the frontier for use in times of urgent difficulty." He even stated that if the emperor could truly listen to his suggestions "without being impeded by slander," he would be able to accomplish this task within a hundred days. Lu was probably worried that whoever had previously attacked his policy of reforming the bureaucracy might try to obstruct this one as well. This shows that although Lu was a Chief Minister, he seemed to feel more frustrated about winning imperial approval of his reformist policies than when he was a Han-lin scholar. Nevertheless, his misgivings about possible obstruction turned out to be unnecessary, because his policy was well received by the throne.

In the ninth month of 792, one month immediately following Lu's memorial, an imperial edict ordered the northwest border provinces to carry out his proposal. Another edict issued in the tenth month of that year tells us that the border provinces had already stored 330,000 \textit{shih} of grain through the practice of "harmonious purchases." It further

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66} "Ch'ing chien Ching-tung shui-yün shou chüeh-chia...", HYCC, 19: 15-16.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Ibid.: 17.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Ibid.: 9.
\item \textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{70} See TCTC, 234: 7536.
\end{itemize}
ments that the funds for those purchases were allocated from the transportation cost savings.\textsuperscript{71} On the basis of this information, it is very likely that Te-tsung rendered Lu his full support in this particular policy.\textsuperscript{72} Lu Chih's own words also validate this point of view.

In a memorial presented in the fifth month of 793, Lu made it clear that the emperor had listened to his suggestion regarding the grain reserves in the frontier provinces. It was not without a sense of pride that he said his policy had enabled those provinces to store more than one million shih of grain.\textsuperscript{73} This means his intended goal was achieved within a mere eight months. Once we recall how the funds for "harmonious purchases" on the frontier were supposed to be accumulated, we have to agree that the emperor probably did follow Lu's policy completely to reach that successful result. At the same time, just as Lu promised, no new burdens were added to the regular state expenditures.

As effective as Lu's policy proved to be, it does not seem to have endured very long. In the autumn of 794, two years after this policy was put into practice, Lu Chih already had to present another memorial requesting the emperor not to allow the officials in charge on the frontier to use the grain reserves for regular monthly military provisions. He was not opposed to any emergency appropriation; after all, that was the purpose of his policy. What he was opposed to was leaving those granaries empty afterwards.\textsuperscript{74} Lu Chih's memorial probably was of no avail since he soon fell from power himself at the end of that same year.

In any case, through the continuing application of his expediency principle, that is, through his constant estimation of the degree of appropriateness of various measures, and

\textsuperscript{71} See CTS, 49: 2125; also see Ibid., especially the K'ao-i section.
\textsuperscript{72} The "Shih-huo chih" section in the New T'ang history is the only source that I can locate so far which says that Te-tsung did not completely follow Lu's policy. See, HTS, 43: 1374. However, our immediate discussion will show that the information from the New T'ang history contradicts Lu Chih's own statement regarding grain reserves in the border provinces.
\textsuperscript{73} See his "Lun yüan-pien shou-pei shih-i chuang," HYCC, 21: 3.
\textsuperscript{74} "Ch'ing pien-ch'eng chu-pei mi-su teng chuang," HYCC, 21: 1-2.
his emphasis on the importance of accommodation to changes of time and circumstances, Lu Chih effectively designed a policy which, for a short while, brought a conspicuous benefit to the border granaries. Once he had successfully dealt with one fundamental problem regarding the defense of the frontier, he was more than ready to tackle the other one, that is, to establish a dependable armed forces on the frontier.

Establishing dependable frontier armies

Lu Chih maintained that there were six problems which rendered the current Tang border armies insufficient in defending the state. Before we examine his discussion of these problems, it is perhaps necessary to understand his basic position in dealing with border defense. From his reading of history, Lu said that one could learn all the strong and weak points of nearly every border defense method that had been applied in the past to deal with the "barbarians." In general, he divided these methods into five categories. He also indicated that none of these methods was as flawless as those who advocated it would doubtless have claimed.

For example, according to Lu Chih, those who argued for transforming the "uncultivated" through virtue did not realize that "if authority was not established, then virtue [alone] could not tame [them];" those who preferred to suppress them by military force were unaware that "if virtue was not cultivated, then force [alone] could not be relied upon;" those who supported marriage alliances between Han Chinese and foreigners did not know that "we made the alliance but they broke it again." Lu Chih's intention was not to discredit these methods of border defense, instead, he was trying to show that although they all had certain valuable points, their actual effects varied in different historical contexts. He believed this was caused by the fact that some

76 Ibid.: 3.
rulers insisted on practicing certain measure while neglecting to consider their feasibility. As he put it:

This was due to clinging to normal principles to manage an unusual circumstance; used to what one has seen [before], but ignorant of the times one lives in. The middle kingdom has its [times of] prosperity and decline; barbarians [also] have their ups and downs; there are good and bad opportunities, and there are safe and dangerous arrangements. Thus, there is no definite rule, and there is no method that will always win. 77

Lu Chih's emphasis on the necessity of evaluating rules and methods against the objective background of the time and circumstances is quite obvious. He also made it clear that objective elements rather than subjective wishes often determine which particular method ought to be applied. For example, he pointed out that making marriage alliances with the "barbarians" had nothing to do with establishing genuine friendship between the two countries. The plain truth was that during that specific time, the middle kingdom simply could not have afforded to fight a powerful outside enemy, either because of internal chaos or for other reasons. Thus, marriage alliances were only a convenient device to please the "barbarians" and avoid being invaded.

While presenting such realistic analyses, Lu Chih frankly admitted that "although [this method] was not a perfect plan for managing barbarian [affairs], its adoption was, however, necessitated by time and circumstances." 78 From Lu's perspective, the key to success for any one of these five defense methods depended upon whether or not the reigning ruler knew how to "take advantage of the time and make good use of the circumstances." 79

On the one hand, Lu said that there was no perfect method of frontier defense. On the other hand, he asserted that there was a sort of principle which could be used to

77 Ibid.: 5.
78 Ibid.: 8.
79 Ibid.
"investigate the critical situations of safety and danger, estimate the important odds of success and failure," and always remain the same throughout dynastic changes.80 This was simply the principle that "if [the emperor] employs the wrong people and indulges in his own desires, then [the state] will definitely fail; but if [the emperor] employs talented people and follows the multitude then [the state] will definitely be preserved. This is true [both] for ancient times and the present; this is the one [constant principle] that underlines all [other] principles of affairs."81

For Lu Chih then, the ultimate criteria for practicing any specific defense method depended on employing the right people and having the public welfare as its first priority. Only with these preconditions, could one decide which method would be most appropriate in relation to the current time and circumstances.

After clarifying his basic position in dealing with the problem of border defense, Lu Chih told Te-tsung that the current defense strategy did try to take possible objective factors into consideration, but six deficiencies (liu-shih) prevented it from achieving its goals. All six were created either by failing to pay attention to the requirements of time and circumstances, or lack of consideration for the ordinary human feelings of the frontier soldiers.

One of two related deficiencies was the problem of increasing the numbers of military governors in frontier provinces, and, at the same time, having them inspected by eunuch supervisors, thus weakening their command authority. The other was not delegating the power to make on-the-spot decisions to the frontier generals. As we recall, Lu had voiced similar criticisms when Te-tsung intended to dispatch a eunuch supervisor to general Li Sheng's camp in 784. Later, when he presented his 792 memorial dealing with the problem of improving grain reserves on the frontier, he again blamed these two related

80 Ibid.: 9.
81 Ibid.
problems for causing the border forces to be defeated by the Tibetans. The fact that Lu repeatedly brought them up, demonstrates his serious concern with these problems.

Lu Chih maintained that the Tibetans' entire combat force was only equal to about ten of the T'ang's large prefectures, and their forces on the Chinese borders were quite limited. The reason that they could constitute the strongest threat to the T'ang was mainly because they had a single and unified command while the T'ang command labored under various restraints. One restraint came from the establishment of additional military governors in order to divide the power of any single governor of one large province, and, at the same time, balancing these generals' power by placing them under the inspection of eunuch supervisors. Lu explained things this way:

... However, [the court] then divided the Shuo-fang region; three provincial governors with a military command were thus appointed. The number of the other generals also reached 40; they all received a commission by special edict, and [the court] sent eunuchs to inspect and supervise each one of them; people (i.e. these generals and eunuchs) contend with each other and do not obey each other's instructions. [The court] will only order them (the generals) to meet and arrange military attacks after receiving a notice from the frontier asking for emergency help. Since there is no chain of command from above, generals only treat each other with the usual courtesy. This is just like trying to save the drowning in an easy manner, or rescue the burning by bowing complaisantly to each other; it would certainly be very difficult to hope to avoid grave danger [in this manner].

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82 See "Ch'ing chien Ching-tung shui-yün shou chüeh-chia, . . .," HYCC, 19: 4-5.
83 See "Lun yüan-pien shou-pei shih-i chuang," HYCC, 21: 17. During the 730s, the criterion for being designated a large prefecture (shang-chou or chüün) was having more than 40,000 households. See TT, 33: 188. This would make the number of the Tibetan combat forces unbelievable high, but Lu's statement is not very clear.
84 "Lun yüan-pien shou-pei shih-i chuang," HYCC, 21: 19-20. In 779, when emperor Te-tsung began his reign, he was afraid that Kuo Tzu-i (695-781), one of the most notable generals of the mid-T'ang, would become hard to control due to his accumulated military power. The emperor thus elevated the general to the rank of imperial teacher while actually taking away all of Kuo's military power. Meanwhile, in order to prevent any one military governor from having too much concentrated power again, three new military governors were appointed to be stationed in Kuo's original province, in the Shuo-fang region (in the southwest and northern area near Ling-wu county of modern Ning-hsia). TCTC, 234: 7545; 225: 7259; for Kuo Tzu-i's life and contribution to the T'ang, see CTS, 120: 3449-66.
Lu Chih's main purpose was to demonstrate that increasing the number of frontier generals without establishing a commander in chief only paralyzed their combat ability. He simultaneously indicated, however, that sending eunuchs as army supervisors did not ameliorate the situation. It only introduced another source of contention for power and further impeded the generals' willingness to take any active initiative. This negative attitude toward the practice of dispatching eunuchs as army supervisors is quite consistent with his basic position in 784. It seems that his plea to establish a single and unified command aimed to render this practice, to a large degree, obsolete.

At the same time, Lu Chih once again called the imperial attention to the fact that decisions made in the court could not possibly meet the needs in the field. As with his 784 criticisms, Lu reminded Te-tsung that decisions made in court could only restrain field commanders from seizing the best opportunities to engage the enemy. He told the emperor:

Recently decisions relating to the frontier armies have mostly been made by your majesty. When selecting and appointing military officials, [you] first sought those who were easily controlled; [you] lessened their powers by dividing their troops into many sections; and [you] weakened their minds by reducing their responsibilities. Although this corrected [previous mistakes], it also produced some drawbacks. It has led to the elimination of the principle of instructing them to fulfill their delegated responsibilities; to the decline of their determination to risk the responsibility of blame or their lives should they fail in their assignments. Every way they turn, they are following orders; when [the court] makes a mistake in a military situation, they also have to follow orders, and when [the court's instructions] deviate from the proper way of doing things, they still have to follow orders. . . .

When two powerful armies meet and come to a stalemate, the arrival of an opportunity demands immediate action; even if you have a strategy ready and waiting, you still fear to lose [the chance to use it]; it would certainly be a mistake if you only started to plan at the time [the opportunity arrives]. Besides, [the court] is a thousand miles away, as far off as the nine levels [of Heaven]; it would be difficult to make the report of frontier situations completely clear [to the court]; the receiver's reading and understanding will [also] not be the same [as the senders]; even a sage could not assure that there are no omissions in the report. . . . The barbarians' fast riding and sudden attack was as quick as a whirlwind, but the postal courier's report only reached [the throne] ten days or a month later. Those who guard the territory did not dare to fight the enemy because they only had a few troops; those who shared their command would not attack because they did not receive an imperial order. . . .

After the brigands had plundered to their hearts' content and withdrawn, [our] generals then [simply] related their own meritorious deeds and
reported a victory. They reduced every one hundred of their defeated and deceased men to only one while they exaggerated every one hundred of whatever they grabbed to a thousand. Since those generals rejoiced that the chief [power to] command was in the court, they were not worried about being involved in criminal punishment. Your majesty also thought that the important power [hence, responsibility] resided with you and thus did not investigate the whole affair. Managing military forces in this manner can be called losing an opportunity due to the remoteness of command.\textsuperscript{85}

As is shown in his criticism, Lu Chih was quite aware that the emperor's intention in controlling military governors in frontier provinces was to correct previous mistakes, that is, to avoid letting any one particular general amass too much military power so as to become a threat to court security. Lu understood that the emperor's recent experience of exile motivated him to take this corrective measure. However, Lu's purpose here was to point out that this correction also entailed some corrosive effects on the military defense of the frontier. In other words, this correction could no longer help accomplish the tasks set for those defenses; the present time and circumstances demanded a different approach to this problem.

Since both the emperor's concern and Lu Chih's criticism were justifiable, there seems to have been a genuine dilemma in regard to this problem of delegating the power to make on-the-spot decisions to frontier generals. Did Lu Chih perceive any way out of it?

Lu's solution to this problem was to take every possible preventive measure beforehand. He suggested that whenever the court planned to select generals and commanders, it was first necessary to examine their conduct and abilities. After instructing them what their future tasks would be, they should be required to make a self-assessment in which they had to estimate whether or not they were capable of such tasks. If they felt they were, they should state how they were going to accomplish these tasks, by what

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.: 23-24. There is a one word difference in SPPK and SPPY; they both have \textit{chiang} (border) where HYCC has \textit{ch'iang} (powerful armies). In this context, the HYCC version seems more appropriate.
means and within how much time they thought they could achieve their goals. The court would in turn evaluate their designs and devices and examine their actual feasibility. At this time, Lu Chih went on, the court could select the proper candidates based upon their demonstrated talents. If they failed to measure up, they should be rejected right at the beginning, so the court would not have to worry about them in the future. However, once they were appointed, they should be entrusted with delegated power without being under suspicion. Only then, Lu believed, could "[the court] examine their judgements, and carry out rewards and punishments. Those who receive rewards will not consider them indiscriminate; those who deserve punishments will be unable to find excuses [to get out of them]. Since the power of commission is concentrated [on them], naturally they will no longer act in a merely perfunctory manner."

There were four further deficiencies that, according to Lu Chih, existed side by side with these two related problems. They were: the inappropriate dispatch of inland forces (chiefly from the Ho-nan and Chiang-huai regions) to guard the frontier; the court's failure to conduct a fair evaluation of frontier generals; the exhaustion of the court's finances by continuously increasing the number of troops; and unequal treatment between inland troops dispatched to the frontier, frontier troops claiming to be subordinate to the palace armies, and the regular frontier troops.

The main reason that Lu was opposed to sending troops alternately from southern provinces to defend the border was because these troops could hardly adjust to the severe climate and crude living conditions on the frontier. Moreover, stationed regularly in inland provinces, they never experienced the imminent threat of foreign invasion and were thus frightened by their new mission. Since the court treated them like spoiled children, and did not encourage them to accomplish their mission or warn them of punishments to follow if

86 Ibid.: 22.
87 Ibid.
88 CTS, 139: 3804.
they failed, they actually started to calculate their day of return as soon as they arrived on
the frontier. Lu lamented that this not only weakened morale, but also became a stumbling
block in the event of actual combat.89

Meanwhile, Lu Chih was very critical of the court's failure to conduct a fair assessment
of frontier generals. He argued that because frontier generals could seldom execute their
orders in the armies, and the court did not apply the regular system of rewards and
punishments to them either, the result was a paralysis of that system. As he told the
emperor:

When the court intends to reward a general for his merit, it actually worries
that those who have [demonstrated] no merit will rebel; when it intends to
punish a general for committing a crime, it again worries that those who
committed the same crime will become anxious. Because of tolerance and
covering up, crimes are not made known; because of jealousy and
suspicion, merits are not rewarded; the practice of appeasement has actually
gone this far. It therefore causes those who neglect their own lives and
devote themselves to the court to be ridiculed by their peers; those who lead
their troops to advance first to be resented by their subordinates; those who
lose their troops and endanger the state to feel no guilt or fear; and those
who are slow in rescue and fail [to arrive on] time to consider themselves
intelligent and capable. . . . This is why loyal officers have felt pained at
heart, and brave ones have become demoralized.90

The above statement discloses Lu Chih's discontent with the emperor's policy for
dealing with the frontier armies. His emphasis on using rewards and punishments to
evaluate frontier generals, like his insistence on applying them to assess civil officials, was
not intended to strengthen imperial power. Rather, it was oriented toward establishing a
system in which the emperor would have to operate fairly and justly so that both civil and
military officials would not feel alienated and would thus willingly carry out their duties for
the court.

90 Ibid: 16-17.
Under the conditions prevailing at the time, the problem of exhausting the court's finances was almost unavoidable, because, as Lu Chih saw it, the emperor did not investigate the actual situation when frontier reports claimed a lack of sufficient troops. The court simply levied more taxes and enlisted more conscripts. As a result, "villages and towns are drained and the court's levies are increased day by day; [the court] gathers the property of those bankrupt registered families together with the profits from the salt and wine taxes levied by the officials, and employs half of all this income to sustain the frontiers." Apparently, Lu Chih was blaming the emperor for creating such an unnecessary and wasteful burden on the public and the court as well.

Lu Chih's criticism of the unequal treatment between troops dispatched from inland provinces, frontier troops which claimed to be attached to palace armies, and the regular frontier troops was very likely related to his reflections on Li Huai-kuang's 784 revolt. For one thing, as we recall, Li Huai-kuang's rebellion was also triggered by the unequal treatment between his provincial armies and Li Sheng's palace armies. During that time, Lu Chih does not seem to have made any comments about this issue, but it probably attracted his attention later. Now that a similar situation was occurring among the frontier armies, it seems logical that he would try to make certain improvements in order to avoid the outbreak of a similar revolt.

From Lu Chih's point of view, fairness was essential in managing military affairs. Although regular frontier troops, compared with the other troops stationed on the frontier, were most devoted to their duties and suffered most from their services, they nevertheless received nearly three times less clothing and provisions than were issued to troops from inland provinces and troops connected with the palace armies. It was due to this unequal treatment, Lu said, that resentment had arisen. To correct this situation, Lu argued that a fair system of evaluation would have to be established.

91 Ibid.: 17.
92 Ibid.: 21.
This system would clearly state the criteria to be met in carrying out each required task. Consequently, soldiers would know that the grades of their provisions and uniforms were going to be decided by their performance in prescribed tasks. In this way, "the able ones will try to reach [the prescribed criteria]; the incompetent ones will rest their mind [at what they can reach]; and although there will be a difference between high and low, there will be no strife due to discontent." In light of this explanation, we can see that Lu Chih upheld a very consistent standard in terms of evaluating officials. For him, actual individual performance was the obvious basis for advancement or demotion for both civil or military personnel.

Although he raised six problems in dealing with military defense on the frontier, Lu Chih only urged the emperor to correct three of them first. He believed that establishing a single and unified command, entrusting field commanders with delegated power to make on-the-spot decisions, and raising volunteer soldiers as the basis of the frontier armies instead of depending upon the service of troops from inland provinces were the most urgent tasks for the time being. Only after these priority missions were accomplished, could the other three deficiencies then be dealt with.

Since Lu Chih already explained to the emperor how to use his preventive measures to select a trustworthy general so that the throne could delegate proper power to him to make on-the-spot decisions, his next suggestion was to rearrange all the troops in the northwestern border provinces into three sections, each under the rule of one commander-in-chief. Only under the commanders-in-chief could there be generals. In this way, the unnecessary contention of power between generals was reduced, and a single and unified command was thus established.

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93 Ibid.: 20.
94 Ibid.: 25.
95 Ibid.
As for how to substitute volunteer soldiers for troops sent from inland provinces, what Lu Chih had in mind here was to put into practice a policy of establishing military agricultural colonies (t'un-t'ien). The basic idea of this policy was to build up a self-supported and self-sufficient military force. In order to do so, Lu planned to have the governors of those inland provinces recruit strong young men as volunteer soldiers to be permanently stationed on the frontier. They would, of course, be allowed to take their families with them. Because they would be required to become peasants and soldiers at the same time, the court would supply them with seeds and all necessary agricultural equipment. After one year, if they produced surplus grain or other agricultural produce, the government would also purchase it according to the price set up by the practice of "harmonious purchases." Consequently, a dependable frontier force would be established, and the court would also be spared the trouble of sending inland troops to the frontier, especially when these troops' first priority had become preservation of their own lives at all costs.  

This was not the first time that a Chief Minister intended to carry out this sort of t'un-t'ien policy in the border provinces. We mentioned that Li Mi had previously made a similar suggestion during his tenure as Chief Minister in 787. In fact, as early as 781 such a policy was widely discussed among some officials. Later, after the Ho-pei rebellion had been gradually settled, the court even encouraged the policy in some inland provinces. However, the previous suggestions for colonizing the frontier provinces were basically more oriented toward reducing the costs of maintaining the border armies; Lu Chih's main focus was rather to replace opportunistic and unreliable troops from the

\[96\] Ibid.: 24-25.
\[99\] This was certainly Li Mi's main concern see, Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 106; Dalby, "Court politics," in The Cambridge history, 1979: 593; also see TCTC, 232: 7493-94.
Lu Chih's criticisms and suggestions were well received by the emperor, but they were not put into practice. Te-tsung might have been deeply concerned with the efficiency of his frontier armies, but, as Lu Chih himself also noticed, appeasement had been his policy toward frontier generals. Since Lu Chih's suggestions for selecting trustworthy generals to lead the frontier armies could not guarantee their loyalty, it seems inevitable that the emperor would choose to maintain the status quo on the frontier rather than take any reformist measures at the risk of facing uncertain consequences.

Te-tsung's appeasement policy not only ended Lu Chih's efforts at reforming the frontier armies, it may also have caused an opportunity to restore the court's control over the Hsiian-wu military governor (stationed in Pien-chou, in modern Honan) to slip by. This took place toward the end of 793 when one of the subordinate generals in that region, Li Wan-jung, expelled the unpopular governor, Liu Shih-ning, and seized military power himself. Te-tsung was about to accept Wan-jung as the Deputy governor (Liu-hou), a position which would allow him to enjoy all the powers of a genuine military governor without the title, but Lu Chih was opposed to this decision.

As with the Huai-hsi region, Lu first reminded the emperor that the Hsiian-wu area could also cut off the Pien canal supply route to the capital and was strategically vital to the court's economic survival. Because the court had not been able to control the area since Liu Shih-ning became governor in 792, Lu considered his expulsion a good opportunity for the court to regain control over this region. To be sure, Lu admitted that Li Wan-jung

100 TCTC, 234: 7547.
103 Liu Shih-ning was established as governor by the Hsüan-wu troops in 792 after the throne had appointed another official as the governor there. See TCTC, 234: 7528; CTS, 145: 3933-34.
should be rewarded for removing a governor who was unpopular with the soldiers under his command, but because Li's seizure of power was carried out independently and without the court's knowledge, Lu disagreed about the transfer of the governorship to him. Lu argued that this would be tantamount to sanctioning the military usurpation of a governorship.104

Warning that a policy of appeasement would only encourage other military governors to follow Wan-jung's example, Lu Chih suggested that the court should rather seize this opportunity and send a capable minister as governor of that region. At the same time, they should handsomely reward Li Wan-jung and the Hsüan-wu troops. In this way, both Wan-jung and the troops would have no excuse to revolt, and the court could thus restore its control over this area.105

Lu Chih's concern with the Hsüan-wu region was similar to that with regard to the Huai-hsi area. Since the court was no longer under any threat of rebellion as it had been before, Lu believed that no time or circumstances could be more appropriate than the present for the court to restore its authority over this region. However, haunted by the experience of his previous exile, Te-tsung was not willing to risk the present stability for the sake of any unforeseeable results. Thus he refused to accept Lu's suggestion and the court was subsequently in no position to put the Hsüan-wu region under its control. This was because another military revolt eventually broke out there in 799.106

Compared with his achievement in storing grain reserves in the border provinces, Lu Chih's suggestions for improving the efficiency of the frontier armies failed to gain imperial support. The emperor's refusal to change the status quo largely sealed the fate of his efforts in that sphere. Although Te-tsung supported Lu's plan to correct the system of grain reserves, this was accomplished only under the precondition that he would not have

to change the current practice of the "harmonious purchases" of grain nor increase in any way the financial burden on the court. The emperor obviously did not mind having him make certain improvements, but the rule was that they must not disturb the status quo.

Operating within such a constrained situation, Lu Chih however did not seem to think of quitting; he still intended to correct some malpractices in the current tax system. Only this time he spoke not for the bureaucracy nor for the state, but for the people.

**Improving the people's livelihood**

Our discussion of Lu Chih's efforts to store grain reserves in the border provinces already touched upon his concern for the suffering visited on many peasants due to malpractices involved in the process of "harmonious purchases" of grain. We have also seen that chiefly because of his advice, emperor Te-tsung abolished the emergency taxes imposed in the initial stages of the military rebellions. As we also noted before, his sympathy for the poor and needy was not merely an expedient strategy designed for the emperor to win the people's support. It was rather a result of his genuine conviction that "the people are the root of the state." This conviction impelled him to urge the emperor to take other measures to relieve the public misery even after the rebellions were gradually settled.

For example, at the beginning of 785, Lu formulated an edict in which an order was given to reduce salt prices. The reason was that the high price of salt which resulted from tax exactions for military expenditure had severely harmed the common people. As the edict stated:

_Lately the expenses of the armies have increased day by day, and the price of salt has risen daily. It has now reached the point that in some areas one _tou_ (about 0.5 bushel) of rice [is needed to] exchange for one _sheng_ (about 0.05 bushel) of salt. The basic and secondary occupations (i.e., agriculture and trade) have changed places, and the [tax] rules and regulations have also grown stricter. Considering that the people are poor and exhausted, they_
cannot afford to nourish themselves; [because] the five flavors have lost the correct balance, they suffer from a hundred sicknesses so that they die prematurely. This is truly sad and painful.  

Although we can not be sure that this 785 imperial decision to reduce the price of salt was completely due to Lu Chih's influence, however, as the "inner Chief Minister" who repeatedly advised the emperor to relieve the people from heavy tax burdens, Lu would probably not have failed to render his full support to such a decision. He was subsequently able to describe on behalf of the emperor the conditions of the poor and needy in a very sympathetic manner. Indeed, in 786 when the rebellions were almost completely settled, because the population in the capital area suffered most during the military uprising led by Chu Tz'u, Te-tsung decided to relieve the poor people in this region by granting them crop seeds. Instructed by the throne to formulate such an edict, Lu's sympathy for the common people led him to describe their sufferings as follows: ". . . , [people] are hard pressed by famine and starvation; they are distresses and worried and have nothing to depend upon. Some of them depart from their villages and become employed as workers; some of them become beggars on the road and die of exhaustion; their villages and towns are still there, but smoke of [cooking] fires (i. e., human activities) have already run out."  

In spite of his deep concern for the common people and all his previous efforts to improve their conditions during and after the rebellions, Lu Chih's systematic plan for alleviating the common people's misery only materialized in the middle of 794. This was when he submitted his well known memorial aiming at correcting certain defects in the current two-tax system.  

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107 "I chien yen-chia chao," HYCC, 4: 10. I have modified Twitchett's translation of this passage, see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962: 114. For more details on the development of taxing salt, see Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 49-58; for the high price of salt and its impact on the common people, also see HTS, 54: 1379.  


109 See his "Chün-chieh fu-shui hsü pai-hsing liu-t'iao," HYCC, 23: 1-49. As Twitchett points out, this memorial was translated into German in 1933, see S. Balazs, "Beitrag zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte der T'ang-Zeit, part 3," Mitteilungen des Seminars für
While this memorial unquestionably represents Lu Chih's efforts at financial reform, its basic and ultimate goal was to relieve the common people from a heavy tax burden; it was not set out to increase government income. Even the title of the memorial, "On making taxation equitable and thus showing pity for the common people," indicates his primary aspiration. In other words, it was Lu's concern for the common people's suffering that impelled him to engage in financial reform. What, then, were his financial reform proposals?

Lu Chih's efforts at financial reform focused upon improving the current two-tax system (liang-shui fa). The two-tax system has been carefully studied elsewhere; it should be sufficient to outline briefly its basic characteristics here. However, since the two-tax system was introduced by Yang Yen (727-781) to replace the previous tsu-yung-tiao (a multiple head tax) system at the beginning of 780, and since Lu Chih's efforts in reforming the two-tax system require certain understanding of the tsu-yung-tiao system and the famous land tenure system of chün-t'ien (or equal land allocation) which the tsu-yung-tiao system was closely related to, it seems appropriate first to discuss some specific features of the tsu-yung-tiao and chün-t'ien systems and the main reasons which led to their collapse.

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Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin, XXXVI (1933): 1-41; one out of six parts of this memorial was also translated into English in 1960, see William Theodore De Bary et al., Sources of Chinese tradition, Columbia University Press, 1960: 416-23 (Hereafter given as Sources).

110 This is Twitchett's translation of the title of "Chün-chieh fu-shui hsü pai-hsing," see his "Lu Chih," 1962: 116.

The *chün-t'ien* system was a state-controlled system of land tenure and land allocation. This system like many other T'ang institutions such as the *san-sheng* (the three central ministries) system\(^\text{112}\) had been developed under the preceding dynasties and was only adopted later by the founding ruler of T'ang in 624. By enacting the *chün-t'ien* system, the T'ang state, like its predecessors, intended to prohibit land accumulation as well as any illegal private landownership so that the already existing great landholders could not compete with the state for land. The fundamental reason for establishing full control over land was of course to use the *chün-t'ien* system as the foundation of a system of direct taxation, the *tsu-yung-tiao* system. In short, the purpose of enforcing the equal land allocation system was to maintain a stable source of revenue for the state.\(^\text{113}\)

Under the equal land allocation system, the T'ang state would grant a certain amount of land to individual adult males (normally twenty-one to fifty-nine years of age).\(^\text{114}\) These recipients of state-granted land then became the unit of taxation and were obliged to pay taxes and donate supplemental labor services to the state in return. These taxes and labor services constituted the so-called *tsu-yung-tiao* system. This system has been characterized as a complex of head taxes basically levied on individual adult males throughout the T'ang empire from 619 to 780. Since it was assumed that each taxpayer had received an equal land allotment, the taxes levied were at a uniform rate without considering economic realities in different regions. There was a tax in grain (*tsu*), a tax in kind (*tiao*) paid in terms of cloth and a *yung* tax which refers to the payment of a corvée exemption tax.


\(^{114}\) There were other categories of people, such as disabled persons, widows, old men over sixty years of age, bondsmen, Buddhist and Taoist monks and nuns, who were all entitled to reduced grants of land in T'ang times, but these lands were tax-exempt. For more information see, Han Kuo-p'an, Ibid.: 142-48; Twitchett, Ibid.: 4-5.
Because the \textit{yung} and \textit{tiao} liabilities could both be paid in cloth, they are usually treated as a single category (\textit{yung-tiao}). Hence the name of \textit{tsu-yung-tiao}.\LS{115}

Due to the close connection between the \textit{chên-t'ien} and the \textit{tsu-yung-tiao} systems, it is apparent that if the former system collapsed, the latter one would be ruined as well. This was exactly what happened in mid-T'ang. But how did the \textit{chên-t'ien} system disintegrate?

One obvious reason why the \textit{chên-t'ien} system failed was that there was simply not enough land for the T'ang state to carry out its land policy. The problem of land shortage already existed in overpopulated localities such as in the capital region at the beginning of the dynasty. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that members of the imperial family, some officials, the great aristocratic families and the Buddhist houses all managed to accumulate great amounts of fertile land either in the capital region or in other localities.\LS{116} Although taxpayers did not receive the regular amount of the state granted-land, they nevertheless were required to pay the regular amount of taxes. In order to have a better livelihood, a great number of local villagers were forced to migrate elsewhere and subsequently created the problem of vagrancy for the state.\LS{117}

\LS{115} For more details on the relationship between the \textit{tsu-yung-tiao} system and the \textit{chên-t'ien} system and how the \textit{tsu-yung-tiao} system worked, see Han Kuo-p'an, Ibid.: 142-164; Twitchett, Ibid.: 1970: 24-39; Ch'ü Ch'ing-yüan, \textit{T'ang-tai ts'ai-cheng shih}, 1940: 1-10.

\LS{116} For more information on the problem of land accumulation by imperial family members such as Princess T'ai-p'ing, daughter of Empress Wu Tse-t'ien, by official members such as the famous Chief Minister Li Lin-fu and by powerful local merchants and landlords, see Han Kuo-p'an, \textit{Chên-t'ien chih-tu}, 1984: 229-31.

\LS{117} I am fully aware that the terms vagrant and vagrancy reflect the point of view of the T'ang state. However, I have used these terms because it is the common practice in T'ang studies to translate the Chinese terms \textit{fu-hu} and \textit{liu-jen} as vagrant. See, for example Twitchett's usage of these terms. Twitchett points out that there were complex reasons for this migration, such as a search for fertile land in the south, official oppression, and escape from military service. See Twitchett, \textit{Financial administration}, 1970: 12-14, 371, 374; also see Hori Toshikazu, \textit{Kindensei no kenkyû}, 1975: 315-16. However, Han Kuo-p'an and Wang Chung-lo believe that the problem of land shortage created by land accumulation was a very basic cause for migration. See Han Kuo-p'an, Ibid.: 232; Wang Chung-lo, "T'ang-tai liang-shui-fa yen-chiu," \textit{Li-shih yen-chiu}, 6 (1963): 117-18.
The vagrancy problem seriously undermined the official household registers which the chün-t'ien system depended upon. This means that the T'ang government had no official records of the vagrant population, and consequently was unable to tax or to demand corvée labour from these vagrants. In other words, without accurate and regular household registers, the government could not effectively carry out the tsu-yung-tiao taxation. Worse still, the T'ang county officials who were responsible for carrying out the household registration either lacked the necessary staff members to fulfill their duty, or corruptly accumulated land for themselves. Although the severe loss of taxation created by the vagrancy problem forced the court to take corrective measures, since many local officials who were supposed to enforce the practice of the chün-t'ien system were themselves offenders against the law, the problem of vagrancy remained unsolved.

In sum, the problems of land shortage, land accumulation, vagrancy and the staff shortage as well as corruption of the T'ang local administrative apparatus all contributed to the collapse of the chün-t'ien system. After the An Lu-shan rebellion completely destroyed the registration system, it became virtually impossible to enact the chün-t'ien system. With the ruin of the registration and chün-t'ien systems, the tsu-yung-tiao taxation also lost its raison d'être even though in theory it was still supposed to function.

In order to make up for the loss of taxation caused by the vagrancy problem, long before the complete breakdown of the tsu-yung-tiao system, the T'ang government already relied upon various supplementary taxes to maintain regular revenues. As we shall see, two levies, that is, the household levy (hu-shui) and the land levy (ti-shui) of such

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118 Between 721 and 726, that is, during the early years of emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign (713-756), Yü-wen Jung carried out a policy aimed at solving the problem of vagrancy which was successful for a short while. For Yü-wen Jung's policy and its result, see Suzuki Shun, "Ubun Yü no kakko ni tsuite," in Wada Hakasei kanseki kinen Tōyōshi ronsō, Tokyo, 1951: 329-44; also see Pulleyblank, Background, 1982 reprint, pp. 30-32; Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 14-16.

119 In addition to these reasons, another reason, that is, the T'ang government's failure to provide an adequate law to punish offenders of the chün-t'ien system, also led to the breakdown of the system. See Twitchett, Ibid.: 9-11.
supplementary taxes, eventually formed the two basic liabilities of the two-tax system. The household levy was not a tax levied at a uniform rate. It was rather a property tax levied according to an assessment of the wealth of households. The land levy was assessed on actually cultivated lands.\textsuperscript{120} It is from this perspective that a notable modern historian considered these two supplementary taxes as "first steps by which the [T'ang] government began to base its financial system upon actual wealth and productivity instead of upon the theoretically equally endowed taxable adult envisaged by the primitive tsu-yung-tiao system."\textsuperscript{121}

In addition to these two supplementary taxes, the T'ang government also depended upon taxation on the acreage under crops (i.e., "green sprout money" or ch'ing-miao-ch'ien) to maintain its revenue. Meanwhile, various irregular local taxes were also imposed by local authorities at their own will. All these supplementary taxes not only increased the tax burden on the common people, but also created a chaotic structure for the T'ang tax system. Moreover, after the An Lu-shan rebellion broke out, the government began to tax liquor and particularly rely upon a tax levied through the salt monopoly to support its onerous military expenses. Before the launching of the two-tax system, the monopoly tax on salt became the most important indirect tax for the T'ang court. It supplied nearly half of the state revenue. Because of this, the power of the local Salt Commissioner grew enormously. So much so it began to seriously undermine the authority of the regular central financial institutions.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{120} On the nature of the household levy and the land levy and their development before the launching of the two-tax system, see Chü Ch'ing-yüan, T'ang-tai ts'ai-cheng shih, 1943: 7-16; Wang Chung-lo, "T'ang-tai liang-shui-fa yen-chiu," Li-shih yen-chiu, 6 (1963): 119-125; Twitchett, Ibid.: 29-34.

\textsuperscript{121} Twitchett, Ibid.: 34.

\textsuperscript{122} For the liquor tax, see Chü Ch'ing-yüan, Ibid.: 70-72; Twitchett, Ibid.: 59-60. For the history of the imposition of the monopoly tax on salt and for the power encroachment of the Salt Commissioner on the central financial authority, see Chü Ch'ing-yüan, Ibid.: 56-65 & 142-47; Twitchett, Ibid.: 35-36 & 49-54. Also see Twitchett, "The Salt Commissioners after An Lu-shan's rebellion," Asia Major, N. S. iv, part 1 (1959): 60-88, esp., 65-69; Hino Kaisaburô, "Government monopoly on salt
As mentioned before, when emperor Te-tsung ascended the throne in the fifth month of 779, he was determined to limit the provincial powers and restore the central authority. Once Yang Yen's tax reform proposal, intended to reestablish the financial authority of the central bureaucracy and, at the same time, maintain a stable revenue for the state, was available, it undoubtedly was welcomed by the throne. It was against this background that we see the two-tax system replacing the bankrupted tsu-yung-tiao system in 780.

Since the main practices and policies of the two-tax system were developed long before 780, it is generally agreed that this system was not a revolutionary invention. It is treated as a system which was designed to rationalize and unify the multifarious existing taxes (such as liquor tax, monopoly tax on salt, and other supplementary taxes mentioned above) into a simpler tax structure. The basic characteristics of this system can be summarized as follows.

First, the previous tax requirements where taxpayers were liable to various supplementary taxes on top of their normal tsu-yung-tiao obligation were all abolished. Under the two-tax system, taxpayers had only two basic liabilities. They were, as noted above, the household levy (hu-shui) and the land levy (ti-shui). This means the Tang government finally acknowledged that taxes would no longer be levied on all individual adult males at a uniform rate. Instead, hu-shui now made all households the tax unit so as to prevent vagrants, landless townsmen or travelling merchants from evading their tax shares. In addition, it was also levied on a graduated scale of wealth and property. In like manner, ti-shui which was levied on all lands under actual cultivation also forced great

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124 This summary is mainly based upon the most important studies regarding this topic. For references, see Chü Ch'ing-yüan, Ibid.: 31-33; Hino Kaisaburō, Ibid.: 21-54 and his "Yô En no ryôzeihô no genkyo gensoku to sensû; sensû gensoku," also in Ibid.: 57-94; Twitchett, Ibid.: 39-42, especially see p. 265, note 160.
landowners to pay their taxes. This new system, in short, not only enlarged the tax base, but more importantly, also established a progressive taxation as a basic form of the Tang tax.

Second, under the two-tax system, because the land levy was assessed according to lands under actual cultivation, the previous practice was followed and the rates of assessment were fixed in terms of grain. By contrast, the household levy still used cash for both tax assessment and tax payment as before. But because it was now a basic category of taxation rather than a supplementary tax, its usage of cash as the unit for assessment and payment represented a significant change in the history of Chinese taxation. However, as we shall see, even though the government demanded payment in cash, the household levy was often paid in goods. Moreover, still following the previous practice, taxes were also paid according to local conditions in two separate annual instalments (once in summer and once in autumn, hence the name of liang-shui).

Third, although the two-tax system was originally intended to limit provincial power, in the sense that the central government no longer needed to depend upon local authorities to tax immigrant households, nevertheless, since the court still had to rely upon local authorities to carry out its new tax policy, a compromise was unavoidable. As a result, a tax quota system was negotiated between local authorities and the court so that local governments could have a greater degree of freedom to manage local finances while the central government would in return receive a fixed and regular revenue.

As we recall, when the two-tax system was first launched in the second month of 780, the court sent eleven Personnel Evaluation Commissioners (Ch'u-chih shih) to negotiate quotas with local authorities in the eleven major regions. At that time, Lu Chih was able to relate his ideas on financial administration to a Commissioner dispatched to the

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As far as we know, this was Lu's first comment on financial administration.

In Lu Chih's words, government should "set tax standards according to agricultural crop inspection results, levy taxes based upon property assessments, calculate the payment of a corvée exemption (yung) according to an estimate of the number of adult males, and equalize profits based upon levies from merchants." On the whole, Lu's suggestions for tax levies did not seem to contradict the principle of the two-tax system, since he emphasized that tax standards could be varied according to crop production and property values; that is, he did not advocate a uniform rate of taxation, but rather allowed flexibility for local government. Nevertheless, his advocacy of the yung tax certainly was not included in the two-tax system. In light of this, it seems that from the beginning Lu Chih was not quite in complete agreement with the two-tax system.

To be sure, since the 785 Act of Grace -- a document basically favorable to the two-tax system -- was drafted by Lu Chih, we might assume that Lu probably agreed with the imperial position that the two-tax system represented an improvement in fiscal administration, at least in terms of its supposed function in unifying the multifarious existing taxes into a simple tax structure. However, even if he did agree, we should not fail to notice that this same document also pointed out that due to the Ho-pei rebellion, the two-tax system had been abused by corrupt officials:

Formerly taxes were both onerous and multifarious, so that the people were hardly able to survive. Once they were combined [literally, fixed] into liang-shui, quotas were established which were easy to follow. However, when the rising of the armies ensued, the original assessments were overstepped, and the letter of the law was not adhered to. Petty officials became increasingly corrupt and caused trouble to our people. The [people] should now be allowed some respite. All levies and labor services, except

\[126\] See Chapter 1, p. 51.
\[127\] These suggestions on financial administration are preserved only in the New T'ang History; See HTS, 157: 4911.
for the liang-shui, that have been instituted in provinces and prefectures under various circuits on an emergency basis must be abolished.\textsuperscript{128}

In another Act of Grace drafted by Lu and promulgated in the eleventh month of that same year (785), we further learn that abuses of the two-tax system even occurred at the beginning when tax quotas were negotiated between the court and local authorities. The edict reveals that:

In some regions when the [two-tax quotas] were first fixed there were already irregularities. In some regions when household numbers decreased, the old quotas were still maintained; because the level of the quotas was not balanced, [the cases of] deserters grew even worse. We (i.e., the emperor) will commission the Department of Public Revenues (tu-chih) to immediately make an equitable adjustment and arrangement so as to relieve the poor and distressed.\textsuperscript{129}

On the basis of these two edicts, it seems that by the end of 785 if Lu Chih had not conceived of any concrete ideas to improve the two-tax system, he was at least conscious of the suffering these abuses of the two-tax system caused the people. It is likely that even though he might have still considered such a system an improvement in financial administration, he probably already felt the need to correct these abuses, especially if the court failed to do so. And this seems to be exactly the case.

By the end of 787, two years after the above edict was issued, peasants in the capital area still complained bitterly about the court's failure to relieve them from the heavy burden of taxation. We learn that in the twelfth month of that year, the emperor went hunting near the capital. He visited a commoner's house and asked him why he was not happy since 787 was a year of particularly good harvest. This man replied:

The edict's instructions are not trustworthy. Formerly it said that there would be no other tax levies except for the liang-shui; now the court's

\textsuperscript{128} See "Chen-yüan kai-yüan ta-she chih," HYCC, 2: 6. The English translation of this passage is a modified version of Twitchett's, see his "Lu Chih," 1962: 114.
\textsuperscript{129} "Tung-chih ta-li ta-she chih," HYCC, 2: 20.
endless exorbitant demands already exceed the [regular] taxes. Later the edict also said to practice ho-ti, but this was equal to procuring our grain by force, and we have never seen one cent. . . . We are impoverished and can no longer bear any more. Distressed and hard-pressed like this, how can I be happy? Whenever there are edicts proclaiming special relief for us, they are mere scraps of paper. I'm afraid my sagely lord deeply secluded in the nine levels of Heaven (the palace) is totally unaware of these things.\textsuperscript{130}

Although Te-tsung ordered this man to be exempted from tax levies, no measures were taken to improve the overall situation.\textsuperscript{131} It has been pointed out, as Lu himself also noticed, that the two-tax system was put into operation during very unfortunate times.\textsuperscript{132} First, the rebellions that lasted from 781 to 786 not only forced the Tang court to impose all kinds of emergency taxes upon the common people, but also led to a 20 percent increase in the provincial tax quotas fixed under the two-tax system. Even though, due to Lu Chih's efforts, the emergency taxes were abolished afterwards, the increased quotas nonetheless became regular ones and thus put the common people under a much heavier tax burden.\textsuperscript{133}

Second, from 780 to 786 Tang China was in the last phase of a period of growing inflation which had started since 763, but after 786 it went through a stage of progressive deflation. This period of deflation lasted until almost 850. The interaction between inflation and deflation had a serious impact on the common people. Before we explain why this was so, it seems helpful to briefly explain the background of this long period of deflation.

While the inflation between 763 and 786 was no doubt mainly caused by the An Lushan rebellion,\textsuperscript{134} the causes for the almost seventy-year-long deflation are more complex. Although various factors, such as the fall of grain prices brought about by a series of

\textsuperscript{130} TCTC, 233: 7508.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.; CTS,48: 2093; THY, 83: 1537.
\textsuperscript{134} See Ch'üan Han-sheng, "T'ang-tai wu-chia te pien-tung," originally published in Chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu-so chi-k'an (CYYY hereafter), vol. 11; it is now in his Chung-kuo ching-ching shih yen-chiu, vol. 1; 1976: 159-178.
abundant harvests, the reduction of copper coinage manufacturing by the government (due both to the shortage of such metal and to the usage of a great deal of copper for images, bells and various fittings by the Buddhist monasteries), the growing demand for cash money to conduct trade, and the drain of copper cash to foreign countries, were clearly all involved in this long period of deflation, the launching of the two-tax system seems to have played a major role in triggering the deflation.\footnote{For discussions of the causes of this period of deflation, see Ch'üan Han-sheng, Ibid.: 188-92; P'eng Hsin-weï, Chung-kuo ho-pi shih, Shanghai: jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1958: 216-217; Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 77-80. Both Ch'üan Han-sheng and P'eng Hsin-weï assert that the launching of the two-tax system was the major reason for the deflation. Twitchett, by contrast, although acknowledging that the two-tax system was one of the elements, puts more weight on the other factors.}

For one thing, the household levy was supposed to be paid in cash albeit the land levy was paid in grain. This unavoidably increased the popular demand for cash, and at the same time, caused the prices of grain and millet to fall. Moreover, the government required cash payment for the household levy, but nonetheless stored the cash in state treasuries without circulating it back to the market. This not only worsened the problem of cash demand in the market, but also led opportunistic merchants and powerful families to store cash money as well. Consequently, the inflation was replaced by a prolonged period of deflation.\footnote{Ch'üan Han-sheng, Ibid.; P'eng Hsin-weï, Ibid. Although both of these authors fail to mention that under the two-tax system, grain, instead of cash, was the unit of the tax assessment and payment of the land levy, their explanation of why the two-tax system was the main cause for this long period of deflation is quite convincing. For one thing, in order to pay cash for the household levy, it seems that most of the rural population in Tang China had to use their grain or other agricultural products for the exchange of cash money. This itself seems to have been sufficient to cause the prices of their grain and other products to fall.}

But why did such a consequence have a severe impact on the common people? Because when the tax quotas and tax rates were first assessed for the household levy in 780, they were fixed according to an over-inflated currency. Moreover, as explained above, because of the cash payment requirement, the problem of cash shortage became intensified. Under these conditions, the common people apparently had no choice but to
pay their household levies in goods, especially in silk cloth, and the government subsequently had to accept this as a compromise arrangement. When deflation began after 786, however, the government failed to readjust the previously fixed rates. This failure inevitably forced the people to pay more and more goods in order to meet the tax demands.  

From the above discussion, we can understand why it has been pointed out that the two-tax system was carried out during very unfortunate times. Operating under such unfortunate circumstances, it would be unfair to maintain that this system was inferior to the previous *tsu-yung-tiao* system, something Lu Chih was going to imply. After all, at the beginning of its operation, the two-tax system had brought in a sizable revenue for the state. However since the subsequent practice of this system created abuses which greatly threatened the common people's welfare, concerned criticism would seem to have been unavoidable. This was precisely the context within which Lu Chih attacked the two-tax system and proposed to reform it.

Lu Chih had two basic criticisms of the two-tax system. First, its initial conception was already problematic; second, its subsequent operation was also careless in detail. By contrast, he maintained that the previous *tsu-yung-tiao* tax system had more humane qualities. This was because he believed that under this system taxpayers were not taxed unless the state had first granted them a certain proportion of land. Such a claim undoubtedly betrays Lu's misconception or idealization of the *tsu-yung-tiao* system, but it also reveals his position on taxation. Apparently, he believed that taxation was based upon the premise that the state should first make certain that its people had some taxable resources. As he saw it:

140 Twitchett has pointed out Lu Chih's misconception of this system, see Twitchett, *Financial administration*, 1970: 24-28.
The purpose of establishing the state and its offices is to nourish the people; the purpose of taxing the people and obtaining wealth from them is to assist the state. An enlightened ruler will not increase what assists the state and harm what the state nourishes (i.e., the people). Therefore, he should first [let the people take care of] their affairs and then employ their strength when they have leisure; [first] ensure each family is provided for and then tax their surplus wealth.\(^{141}\)

Lu Chih's emphasis on taking the people's livelihood as the first priority of the state reflects a basic Confucian ideal of government. As is well known, Mencius recognized the importance of providing constant means of support for the people. He asserted that "when determining what means of support the people should have, a clear sighted ruler ensures that these are sufficient, on the one hand, for the care of parents, and, on the other, for the support of wife and children, so that the people always have sufficient food in good years and escape starvation in bad; only then does he drive them towards goodness; in this way the people find it easy to follow him."\(^{142}\) Lu Chih believed the conception of the two-tax system failed to come up to the standard implicit in this Confucian ideal.

While vaguely acknowledging that launching the two-tax system in 780 had ameliorated some old imperfections, Lu Chih quickly pointed out that new and graver problems were nevertheless created. The situation was similar, he said, to "[making] a complete paralytic of a man who was before only lame."\(^{143}\) In Lu's view, because the Commissioners who were sent to negotiate the tax quotas with local authorities in 780 decided to "use the highest annual tax rate in each province during the Ta-li period [766-780] as the fixed quota for the two-tax system,"\(^{144}\) it failed completely to relieve the common people of heavy exactions. Lu attacked this practice as follows:

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\(^{142}\) This passage is from the "Liang Hui Wang" chapter of Mencius; see, Lau, trans., Mencius, 1/A, 1970: 58-59.


\(^{144}\) Ibid.: 6. I have slightly modified the English translation presented in Sources, 1960: 419.
This is in effect the adoption of an unlawful expedient as a standard regulation and the incorporation of oppressive exactions of doubtful origin as a regular rule [as regular features of the tax scheme.] This is concentrating on extracting money [from the people]; how can one say that it is relieving [them]? To create a law but not take relieving and enriching the people as its foundation, isn't this a case of incorrect conception?¹⁴⁵

Meanwhile, Lu Chih also blamed this new tax system for neglecting many realities of the situation in its actual operation. He was most critical of the fact that the government never dealt with inequalities involved in the assessment of the household levy. Although theoretically the household levy was assessed according to a progressive rate, as Lu pointed out, since the officials in charge did not bother to discover the actual values of different types of property, false assessments and gross inequalities were unavoidable.¹⁴⁶ In his own words Lu described the consequences and impact of this malpractice as follows:

Therefore, those who range over the land and traffic in commerce are often able to escape their share of the tax burden while those who devote themselves to the basic vocation [of agriculture] and establish fixed homes are constantly harassed by [ever-increasing] demands. This amounts to tempting the people to engage in evil doing (i. e., to circumvent the tax law) and forcing them to avoid the corveé. It is inevitable that productivity should decline and morals deteriorate, depression come to the villages and towns, and the tax collections decrease.¹⁴⁷

Moreover, Lu Chih also criticized the court for its failure to levy taxes in accordance with local differences. This was ironical since one of the basic tenets of the two-tax system was to fix new tax quotas according to local conditions. As Lu had already pointed out, the new tax quotas were fixed on the basis of the highest annual rate during the Ta-li period (766-780). Meanwhile, the 20 percent increase in tax quotas caused by the rebellions in each province had become permanent ones even after the rebellions were settled. In Lu's

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.: 7. This English translation is also modified from De Bary, et al., Sources, 1960: 419.
¹⁴⁷ Ibid.: 8; the translation is modified from De Bary, et al., Sources: 420.
view, these arrangements not only completely ignored the different impacts the military uprisings had on different localities, but also neglected the different demands and needs of those regions.

Under these conditions, even heavier migrations occurred in those provinces where the residents had previously been taxed on the basis of high tax assessments. This in turn made the tax load much more onerous for the remaining residents since they still had to share the same tax quota. By contrast, the tax burden of the residents in those regions where the previous tax rate had been low grew lighter since newly arrived immigrants helped to share the tax quota. As a result, the distribution of the tax burden became more and more inequitable. 148

In order to make the emperor understand how much misery this new tax system had brought to the common people, Lu Chih further delineated a series of abuses involved in the actual operation of the two-tax system. 149 For example, he reiterated the losses entailed by the fact that the people had to exchange more goods for cash in the payment of taxes due to the interaction of inflation and deflation. As he informed the emperor: "Previously, paying one roll of silk cloth [for taxes] was equal to three thousand and two or three hundred cash; nowadays, paying one roll of silk cloth is equal to one thousand and five or six hundred cash. What was one in the past has become two or more now. Although the government has not increased the tax rate, the people already pay double taxes." 150

Other abuses arose from the fact that, although the two-tax system was only intended to levy land and household taxes, all sorts of other taxes were actually superimposed on top of them. These included double taxation on land: once being assessed the regular land tax and once again being subject to the household tax; 151 the provincial "tribute goods" for the

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149 For a summary of these abuses, see De Bary, et al., Sources, 1960: 421-422.
151 For more detailed discussion on this abuse, see Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 44; also see his "Lu Chih," 1962: 118.
emperor's private treasuries also added an extra burden on the local people. Lu reminded
the emperor that these provincial "tribute goods," that is, these "gorgeous ornaments and an
abundance of fine white silk fabrics do not grow out of the earth, nor do they fall from
Heaven, if they are not [extracted] from the hard labor and the flesh and blood of the
people, where can [provincial governors] obtain them?"  

Obviously Lu Chih was trying to persuade the emperor to stop accepting provincial
"tribute goods" for his private treasuries so that local authorities could lessen their irregular
levies on the people. In short, he was implying that imperial thrift would greatly relieve the
emperor's subjects from these heavy tax burdens. To further illustrate this point of view,
Lu Chih once again cited a passage from the Analects:

Duke Ai [of Lu] asked Yu Jo, "The harvest is bad, and I have not sufficient
to cover expenditure. What should I do?" Yu Jo answered: "What about
taxing the people one part in ten?" Duke Ai said: "I do not have sufficient as
it is when I tax them two parts in ten. How could I possibly tax them one
part in ten?" Yu Jo said: "when the people have enough, how can you not
have enough? When the people do not have enough, how can you have
enough?"

On the one hand, Lu Chih was using this passage to emphasize the basic Confucian
principle of tax making policy, but on the other, his real purpose was to remind the
emperor that he had to "regard the people as the root and wealth as the branches. If the
people are content, there will be a sufficiency of wealth; if the root is firmly established
then the state will be at peace."  

Treating the people as the foundation of the state was,
of course, consistent with Lu Chih's earlier position. It is also due to this position that Lu
came to ask Te-tsung what else could be more urgent than reforming the two-tax system?
In other words, what else could it be more urgent than relieving the people's suffering?

153 Ibid.: 12; the translation is modified from D. C. Lau, trans., Confucius, the analects,
1979, XII: 114.
154 Ibid.: 13. The English translation is adapted from the one in Sources: 422.
Lu Chih's suggestions for reform of the two-tax system, however, were only aimed at correcting the most damaging measures involved in the operation of this system. He did not intend to launch an overall reform. He explained to the emperor why this was the case: "Your majesty is cautious in nature and has often warned against innovations. Since I know that [your majesty] wants to continue the current practices, I dare not seek an overall radical reform; if, for the time being, I only eliminate the worst [measures of this system], it will already bring some degree of relief [to the people]."\textsuperscript{155}

As expected, Lu Chih first suggested that the court's expenses be greatly restrained so as to reduce unnecessary exactions from local provinces. Next he proposed to eliminate the 20 percent increase in the provincial tax quotas and, at the same time, abolish all the irregular levies as well. Moreover, he strongly urged the emperor to stop accepting provincial "tribute goods" for his personal treasuries, because, he admonished, it "decreased virtue and revealed selfishness; injured the customs and damaged the laws."\textsuperscript{156} Lu asserted that this practice "brought the greatest harm" to the people. In order to have a fair estimation of the goods paid for taxes, Lu suggested that when converting the value of goods, such as cloth, into a tax money unit, it should be done in accordance with the monthly average price in the respective localities.\textsuperscript{157}

In addition, Lu also proposed that the court and local authorities work out an accurate number of local households so that tax distribution could become more equitable. This was to be accompanied by classifying all provinces into two categories which would provide another foundation for equitable tax distribution. Since Lu Chih was very much aware that Te-tsung disliked any radical changes, he once again assured the emperor that all these

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.; I have made a slight modification of the English translation given in Sources: 422.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.: 18.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid.: 13-19. A summarized translation of Lu Chih's suggestions is also available in De Bary, et al. Sources, 1960: 422-23.
suggestions not only would not disturb the people, but also would not change the current system.\textsuperscript{158}

Although he was conscious that he could only try out reformist measures within the limits of the existing tax system of which the emperor approved, Lu Chih nevertheless continued to push those limits so that he could bring forth more of what he believed to be corrective measures to that system. For instance, in order to prevent the common people from suffering further financial losses caused by a depreciation in the value of tax goods, Lu requested that the throne substitute rolls of cloth for cash money as the unit of assessing tax quotas.\textsuperscript{159}

One major reason for using cash as the unit of tax assessment for the household levy under the two-tax system was because the growth of trade after the beginning of the eighth century increased the need to conduct trade in cash.\textsuperscript{160} From this perspective, Lu's suggestion to replace cash with goods as the basic unit for assessing taxes seems to be a regress to a more primitive economic situation. However, since there was not enough cash circulating in the mid-T'ang market, cash-assessed taxation did not necessarily reflect substantial progress in the economy. As has been pointed out, "T'ang China's coinage was neither sufficient nor stable enough to provide the basic medium for taxation, and it is debatable whether assessments in terms of a highly unstable currency marked any real progress."\textsuperscript{161} From this point of view then, Lu Chih's suggestion may very well have

\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{159} "Chiin-chieh fu-shui, part 2: Ch'ing liang-shui i pu-po wei o pu chi ch'ien-shu," HYCC, 23: 20-34.


\textsuperscript{161} See Twitchett, \textit{Financial administration}, 1970: 42, especially see his modification of the view that the two-tax system represented the beginning of money taxation in China. For scholars who consider Lu's suggestion practical, see Li Hsueh-hua, "Kuan-y\'u Lu Chih lun liang-shui-fa te chi-ko wen-t\'i," \textit{Chung-kuo she-hui ching-chi shih yen-chiu}, 3 (1982): 78; Chou Yen-pin, "Ch'ien-p'ing Lu Chih te ching-chi ssu-hsiang," \textit{Ching-...
represented a practical adjustment to relieve the people from the contemporary conditions of deflation.

Promising that he would not make radical changes in the two-tax system, Lu Chih proposed that the court and local authorities re-negotiate new tax quotas. This was to be accomplished in the following three stages: Assessing the cash values of all cloth rolls paid at the initial operating stage of the two-tax system. Comparing this assessment with present prices in local regions, averaging all these prices and selecting a medium price as the new quota. Afterwards, converting this price quota into numbers of cloth rolls which then would become a fixed rate paid by local provinces.162

Under this corrective tax design, Lu Chih maintained, local populations could pay their taxes either in silk cloth or in other types of cloth without worrying about losses caused by deflation. Lu said that this design was a modified version of the yung-tiao measures through which the living conditions of the people could be improved. In Lu's words, the result would be: "when the value of goods becomes very low, the goods paid by the people, however, will not be increased; when the value becomes very high, the taxes received by the government will not be decreased. Thus, each family will be provided for and the state will have a sufficiency; conditions will be equitable and the laws will be carried out."163

Although Lu Chih stressed that he was only restoring part of the previous measures of the tsu-yung-tiao system, instead of inventing a new system, to correct the defects in the present tax practice, it is apparent that this corrective design which was intended to abolish the use of cash money as the basic unit of tax assessment would undermine one of the most important changes brought about by the two-tax system. Perhaps because of this, Lu

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himself sensed that his proposed undertaking would definitely invite challenges. He even organized what he believed to be the possible criticisms into three points and refuted them in his memorial.

The first one he thought about was that the officials in charge of revenues might complain that abolishing cash as a basic unit of tax assessment would eliminate a reliable means for government accounting. For Lu, this would not constitute a major problem since the biggest expenses of the government, such as military provisions and clothing, had always been paid in goods. The only expense calculated on the basis of cash was the monthly payment of the bureaucrats. Regarding this problem, Lu Chih admitted that because official emolument was increasing and state granaries were not abundant, if one completely followed the ancient rule of using grain as official payment, it would not be sufficient. What he then suggested was to fix a regular amount of emolument for each grade (or rank) of officials and clerks assessed on the basis of a cash value. Later this cash amount would be converted into numbers of cloth rolls for actual payment, and this would then become a permanent practice.

Another criticism of his reforms that Lu Chih thought about was a possible claim that the government would not have enough cash to conduct the "harmonious purchase and sale" of grain. To this worry, Lu's reply was very simple. He insisted that since the government controlled the minting of money, it had the power and privilege to manipulate the amount of cash in order to stabilize the prices of goods. The last possible criticism was probably of the sort which Lu thought the emperor might actually agree with. This was that some officials might argue that even though the two-tax system had brought an increase to the state treasury, the government still felt itself in want; if the tax income was to

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164 Ibid.
165 Ibid.: 26-27.
remain more or less the same, how could the government sustain its annual expenditures?¹⁶⁶

Lu Chih's answer reveals once again his fundamental position on taxation. From his point of view, officials who might present such an argument showed no sympathy for the people precisely because the revenue increase brought by the two-tax system was at the expense of the people's welfare. In addition, since the government still felt itself in want under the conditions of abundant harvest and relative peace prevailing in recent years, then even if tax levies were increased again, the result would be the same. Lu argued that the only solution was to eliminate all unnecessary and excessive expenses. He believed that only when the government knew how to be frugal could it have a sufficiency. In addition to re-emphasizing the passage in the Analects regarding the Confucian position on taxation, Lu also expressed his own point of view this way:

As for growing things, soil fertility will reach a definite extreme; and for making things, human power has an utmost limit. If a limit is set on taking and spending is restrained, then there will always be a sufficiency. If [however] there is no limit on taking and no restraint on spending, then there will always be a deficit. It is for Heaven to decide the abundance or failure of growing things, but it is for human beings to control the amount of things for use. Thus, the sage kings established the rule of measuring expenditure by income, so even though they encountered calamities, the people would not become impoverished. Since [their] governance and teaching has declined, things have become just the opposite: measuring income by expenditure; there is no sympathy for the people who have nothing.¹⁶⁷

Lu Chih's refutation of these three possible criticisms demonstrates that he basically advocated a frugal government managed in accordance with the Confucian principle of benevolence. Because "measuring income by expenditure" was the operational principle of the two-tax system,¹⁶⁸ and because Lu's criticism was that this very principle threatened

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.: 28-29.
¹⁶⁷ Ibid.: 30. Italics added.
¹⁶⁸ See HTS, 145: 4724; THY, 83: 1536.
the people's livelihood, his fundamental reason for disagreeing with this system is thus extremely clear. It is essentially on the basis of harm done to the people that we see Lu proposing all his measures to reform the two-tax system. In short, his concern for the people propelled him to seek what he believed to be the most realistic solution to contemporary problems.

Two other measures accompanied Lu's proposition to abolish cash-assessed taxation. They include his request to evaluate local tax officials according to their actual achievements in distributing the tax burden more equitably among the local population and reducing the numbers of migrants, and his petition to extend the time limit for tax collection.\(^{169}\) Lu's effort in reforming the two-tax system also reached an end with these two suggestions.

In the meantime, however, Lu further proposed two other important plans to ameliorate the economic conditions of the common people. First, he pleaded with the emperor to allow using the annual tea tax as a fund for the "harmonious purchase" of grain the purpose of which was to fill up the relief granaries so that there would be a smaller death toll during times of famine.\(^{170}\)

Compared with Lu's many different policies to relieve public suffering, his suggestion in regard to filling up the relief granaries was intended more to offer the people immediate protection from future calamities and to prevent their life from deteriorating further than to immediately elevate their living conditions. He had repeatedly spoken about the disastrous impact military revolts and severe tax exactions had on the people. His description of the people's suffering during times of drought and flood would explain why he considered it imperative to fill up the relief granaries. In his own words, Lu said:

> Whenever unseasonable weather occurs and the annual harvest fails to be adequate, the government's stock of grain is only enough for military provisions. If supplies are still deficient, the government still has to take


\(^{170}\) See "Part 5, ch'ing i shui ch'a-chien chih i-ts'ang i pei shui-han,\" Ibid.: 41-46.
more from the people; how can it have time to relieve the people from a severe famine? If the people suffer from small deficiencies, they will only seek a loan with interest; if they suffer from extreme exhaustion, they then will sell their land and houses. If fortunately they happen to have a year of good harvest, they will then be able to pay their debts. When the harvest is just completed, their stock of grain is already depleted; they will then hold the [old] IOUs in their hands, carry bags on their shoulders, and go borrowing [grain] again. While their loan interests are calculated one on top of another, they still frequently lack sufficient food. If a severe famine occurs, they will then be forced to drift from place to place; husbands and wives will desert each other; and parents and children will separate. They plead to be slaves and servants but still cannot get themselves sold. Some of them drift as beggars in the villages and some of them hang themselves by the roads. When natural calamities occur, some places always suffer. I estimated the number of victimized places and found it frequently to be around ten or twenty provinces each year. If your majesty were to see those victimized provinces in your capacity as the people's parent, it would certainly make you have great sympathy for them; and if there is fortunately a way to rescue them, how could you discard it without thinking about it? Now the tax exactions are already numerous; man power is already exhausted; bad harvests never end and there is never a surplus. To levy the people for the purpose of gathering grain can never be accomplished. Establishing a foundation for saving [grain] is a task that has to be achieved through the government's assistance.171

In this long statement full of detailed observation, Lu Chih not only showed his profound sympathy for the people's misery, he also demonstrated his acute awareness of what kind of life the common people actually led. He pointed out flatly that it was impossible to fill the granaries by levying another tax on the people, and that it was the government's duty to engage in this grain storage undertaking. However, he probably knew that the emperor did not intend to make any concrete improvements; thus he told the emperor that he could accomplish the task of saving more grain without cutting into the government's regular expenditures.172

What Lu had in mind, as noted above, was to use the tea tax as a fund for the "harmonious purchases" of grain. On the one hand, this could help the government to fill its relief granaries, and on the other hand, since the tea tax was to be used to purchase grain from the peasants when there was a surplus, it could also protect the peasants from huge

171 Ibid.: 44-45.
172 Ibid.: 45.
losses by stabilizing grain prices. It has been argued that the tea tax was Lu's "only permanent contribution to the financial system," and that it is "somewhat ironical" because Lu was basically opposed to the taxation of property and trade.\textsuperscript{173} In light of the following discussion, it would appear difficult to continue to support this assertion.

In the first place, we know the imposition of the tea tax was proposed to the throne in 792 by the Salt Commissioner Chang P'ang, not by Lu Chih, and was carried out at the beginning of 793.\textsuperscript{174} Moreover, since Lu Chih told the emperor that "recently an official petitioned for a tax on tea,"\textsuperscript{175} he obviously did not think that he should take credit for this practice. However, it is very likely that Lu was not opposed to Chang's proposal.

For one thing, Chang's intention was to use the tea tax to make up for the revenue losses incurred by the emergency policy of rescuing flood victims by reducing their regular tax load in the summer of 792. Furthermore, Chang also suggested that afterwards the tea tax could be used for future relief purposes.\textsuperscript{176} Since Lu Chih was the one who had requested the emperor to relieve flood victims by reducing their tax load in 792,\textsuperscript{177} and since Chang's proposal could balance the government's revenues, and at the same time, was intended to benefit the people in the future,\textsuperscript{178} it seems that Lu would have had every reason to support Chang's proposal. In any event, it would seem that the tea tax was in reality Chang P'ang's, not Lu Chih's, permanent contribution to the financial system, although Lu might very well have indirectly promoted its practice.

Secondly, Lu Chih does not seem to have been opposed to the taxation of trade. As a matter of fact, our previous discussion showed that as early as 780 Lu had already suggested to a Commissioner who was responsible for the negotiation of the two-tax quota

\textsuperscript{174} CTS., 13: 376 and 49: 2128; TCTC, 234: 7539-40; THY, 84: 1546.
\textsuperscript{175} "Part 5, ch'ing i shui-ch'a ch'ien chih i-ts'ang i-pei shui-han," HYCC, 23: 45.
\textsuperscript{176} CTS, 49: 2128; TCTC, 234: 7539-40.
\textsuperscript{177} See "Ch'ing ch'ien shih-ch'en hsüan-fu chu-tao tsao-shui chou-hsien chuang," HYCC, 18: 16.
\textsuperscript{178} According to the Sung historian Ssu-ma Kuang, the tea tax was never used for flood relief. See TCTC, 234: 7540.
that the government should equalize profits by taxing merchants.\textsuperscript{179} Like most Confucians, Lu viewed agriculture as the foundation of the economy, but his pragmatist approach to government probably led him to recognize the necessity of trade. Meanwhile, his Confucian concern for the common people also helps explain why he advocated levies on merchants.

Once we know the background of the imposition of the tea tax, we can also understand why Lu Chih had to inform the emperor specifically that his request to use the tea tax as a fund for filling the relief granaries would not contradict the intended purpose of this tax.\textsuperscript{180}

Another of Lu Chih's plans, which was also his last reformist financial proposal aimed at improving the poor people's livelihood, dealt with the problem of the extreme disparity between the rich and the poor.\textsuperscript{181} According to Lu, the accumulation of land by the rich was primarily responsible for this problem. We have seen how he attempted to relieve the poor from their heavy tax burdens and from living on loans during times of natural calamities; in this instance he intended to restrict the rich landlords' exploitation of the poor peasants.

On principle Lu Chih believed that "families which live on official emoluments must not contend for profits with the common people."\textsuperscript{182} However, he said that this principle had been violated both in previous dynasties and during the T'ang. This meant that "families which live on official emoluments" had joined in the contention for land which brought great harm to the poor.\textsuperscript{183} In other words, members of the official bureaucracy and of the imperial clans were both engaged in land accumulation.

\textsuperscript{179} See note 127 in this chapter.
\textsuperscript{180} "Part 5, Ch'ing i shui-ch'a chien chih i-ts'ang i pei shui-han," HYCC, 23: 45.
\textsuperscript{181} "Part 6, lun chien-ping chih chia ssu-lian chung yü kung-shui," Ibid.: 46-49.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.: 46.
In Lu Chih's view, the situation surrounding land accumulation was growing even worse during his time. He believed this was mainly due to the fact that in his time, the land tenure system of *chūn-t'ien* had completely broken down. Because of this, it was impossible for the state to exercise its control over the land; thus the problem of excess land accumulation was greatly exacerbated.  

Despite the fact that even Lu Chih seems to imply that the *chūn-t'ien* system only worked in ancient times, he still believed its collapse caused the problem of land accumulation to go out of control. He probably never considered the possibility that the reverse might have been the case. Be that as it may, what Lu Chih intended here was not to restore the *chūn-t'ien* system, but rather to restrict land accumulation and reduce its deleterious effect on the poor. In addition to pointing out that the collapse of the *chūn-t'ien* system lifted the restriction on land accumulation, Lu particularly indicated that it was the extraordinarily heavy rent collected by the rich that led to the extreme disparity between rich and poor. According to Lu's account:

The rich accumulate land up to several tens of thousands of *mou* (1 *mou* is about 0.133 acres.) while the poor have no shelter to accommodate even their feet. They subject themselves to the powerful families and function as their private chattel. They borrow seeds and food from the rich, rent their huts in the fields, and serve diligently all year round without a single day of rest in order to pay back all they have borrowed, and still they constantly worry about not having enough. The families who own the fields simply sit idle and live on rent. This is how far the extreme disparity between rich and poor has developed. The heavy rents charged by the rich and their forced deadline for rent [payment] are worse than the government levies. At present within the metropolitan region, the government taxes five *sheng* for one *mou* of arable land, but the rent charged by private families reaches to nearly one *shih* for one *mou*; this is twenty times higher than the government levy. Even falling to the middle [landlord] range, the rent is still half the above amount; that is [still] ten times more than the government levy.

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185 Ibid.
186 1 *mou* = a strip one *pu* wide by 240 *pu* long; 1 *shih* = 1.75 bushels = 300 *sheng*, see Twitchett, *Financial administration*, 1970: xiii.
While anxious to correct this injustice being inflicted upon the poor, Lu Chih nevertheless recognized that he could not rely upon the old chün-t'ien system for a solution. In fact, he made it clear that "it had been a long time since this system (i.e., chün-t'ien) died out. It would be truly difficult to attempt to restore and improve it all of a sudden. Things like eliminating such evils and transforming the people should be done gradually."\(^{188}\) Recognizing the real difficulty of restoring the chün-t'ien system, Lu Chih was forced to find a solution which would be more pertinent to the present time and circumstances. What was his corrective plan then?

He proposed to place all the land occupied by the rich under government regulation. This was to be accomplished by limiting the land holdings of the rich land owners and forcing them to lower their rents.\(^{189}\) He insisted that this rent reduction must be regulated in such a way that it would benefit the poor, and that it was important for that reason to put this regulation into practice. As a result, he believed this practice would "slightly harm those who have a surplus and slightly favor those who do not have enough. While the harm done will not make the rich lose their wealth, the benefit given will nonetheless aid the poor."\(^{190}\) In Lu's view, this was an absolutely correct way for "pacifying the rich and relieving the poor (an-fu hsü-p'in)," two goals of benevolent government recommended in the Chou li classic (The Rites of Chou).\(^{191}\)

Lu Chih's suggestion to reduce land rents has been praised as an unprecedented method in the history of Chinese economic thought.\(^{192}\) Prior to the T'ang, there were officials

\(^{188}\) Ibid: 48.

\(^{189}\) Ibid.

\(^{190}\) Ibid.

\(^{191}\) Ibid.; These two goals, "pacifying (stabilizing) the rich and relieving the poor (an-fu hsü-p'in)" appear in the "Ti-kuan, or Earthly officers" chapter of the Chou li. See, Chou li, with the commentary by Lin Yin, Taipei: Commercial Press edition, 1974: 99. The translation is mine.

\(^{192}\) See Hu Chi-ch'uang, Chung-kuo ching-chi ssu-hsiang shih, vol., 2, 1963: 426-427; Chou Yen-pin, "Ch'ien-p'ing Lu Chih te ching-chi ssu-hsiang," Ching-chi k'o-hsüeh,
trying to solve the problem of excess land accumulation, but their solutions were basically aimed at having the government limit the actual land holdings of rich land owners.\footnote{3 (1982): 55-56; Li Chin-pao, "Lu Chih ching-chi ssu-hsiang yen-chiu," Che-chiang hsüeh-k’an, 3 (1983): 68-69.} An attempt at imposing a tax on large fields (ta-t’ien) was even made as an emergency measure in 783 during the Ho-pei rebellion.\footnote{Ibid. Tung Chung-shu (179 B C. -104) in the Former Han dynasty and Hsün Yüeh (148-209) in the Later Han are the two famous examples.} However, the primary goal of this measure was to ensure that the government could obtain more financial support in fighting against the rebels. It was not intended for the improvement of the poor people’s livelihood. From this perspective, Lu Chih’s plan to reduce land rents is certainly unique. The interesting question for us to answer here is how did he come up with such an unprecedented idea?

The answer to this question lies in Lu Chih’s Confucian pragmatist approach. On the one hand, his fundamental concern for the livelihood of the poor drove him to search for a solution to the problems caused by excess land accumulation. On the other hand, however, in order to design a feasible plan, he also had to recognize that it was impossible to restore the old chün-t’ien system, even though he maintained that such a system had provided land for the poor and prevented excess land accumulation in former times. As a consequence, he proposed a policy which he asserted was in accordance with the teaching of the canonical Chou li. That is, under the guidance of this Confucian classic, he worked out a plan which he insisted could not only relieve the poor, but also avoid alienating the rich. In short, through his Confucian pragmatist approach, he believed he had found a solution to the problem of excess land accumulation which was both benevolent and practical.

With this proposed solution to the problem of land accumulation, Lu Chih’s reformist suggestions for ameliorating the livelihood of the poor also came to an end. Although Lu’s subsequent fall from power may explain why all his suggestions to relieve the suffering of the poor had no lasting results, we can not, however, exclude the possibility that the

\footnote{See Twitchett, Financial administration, 1970: 22. Also see THY, 84: 1545; TFYK, 495: 26.}
emperor did not appreciate his suggestions in the first place. As we recall, in spite of his repeated assurances to the emperor that he would not make radical changes in the two-tax system, his suggestion to substitute goods for cash as the basic unit of tax assessment and payment already eliminated an important feature of that system. He might have thought that this was the most feasible method under the circumstances, but the emperor, as Lu himself also feared, might have felt otherwise.

Moreover, since all of Lu Chih's proposals indicate that he not only had no intention of increasing the government's tax income, but also planned to make the government measure its expenditure by its income, it is difficult to imagine that the emperor would have given his support to such proposals at a time when he remained obsessed with the financial hardships of his exile. Most importantly, due to the two-tax system, the government no longer needed to rely upon the previous tsu-yung-tiao taxation, which was closely related to the chün-tʻien system, for its regular revenues. This means the emperor might not have felt any urgent need to adopt Lu's solution to the problem of land accumulation no matter how feasible that solution seemed to be. The fact that Te-tsung never even tried Lu's suggestion to improve the situation of land accumulation after Lu's fall actually demonstrates that he probably did not appreciate Lu's policies to relieve the suffering of the poor.

The above discussion has concentrated on Lu Chih's efforts in the public domain. In the process of persuading the emperor to accept his reformist policies regarding the bureaucracy, defense of the frontier, and the people's livelihood, Lu Chih repeatedly pleaded for imperial support by assuring the emperor that he had no intention of going beyond the limits of the current system. This constant petitioning and assuring the throne reveals once again Lu's understanding that the fundamental key for realizing his policies

was in the hands of the emperor. For this reason he carried out an unceasing effort to transform the emperor's personal conduct.

**Transforming the imperial virtue and conduct**

All of Lu Chih's reformist policies depended upon the emperor's personal approval for their realization, and many of his suggestions involved a change in imperial attitude and conduct. For example, his claim that the emperor should entrust his ministers or generals with delegated responsibility and power required the emperor to be trusting; his request that the throne should stop accepting provincial "tribute goods" demanded that the emperor be honest; his proposition that the emperor should take measures to relieve the poor also called upon the emperor to act in a benevolent manner. One can hardly miss the similarity between these requests and Lu's earlier advice to the throne. This means that his suggestions for the transformation of the imperial attitude and conduct continued to center on the improvement of the emperor's virtue and his behavior in regard to the officials and the common people.

Since Lu Chih's basic position in these areas is quite clear to us now, we shall only examine a few more incidents to further demonstrate the consistent and continuous nature of his position. This will establish a linkage between Lu's approach in this particular regard and his eventual fall from power. In order to do so, we must turn our focus back to the fifth month of 792, to the time when Lu Chih requested that the emperor not listen to the small men's opinions and prevent the secondary heads of various bureaus from recommending their own candidates for subordinate posts.

In addition to defending his own policy and advising the emperor not to adopt the small men's opinions on the ground that they only aimed at short range profits without considering long term prospects, Lu Chih further urged Te-tsung to imitate the conduct of Duke Huan of Ch'i in the Spring and Autumn period. Lu implied that Duke Huan's
success as the first hegemon in his time lay precisely in the fact that he had accepted Kuan Chung's advice not to discuss policies with small men. The emperor could distinguish small men from gentlemen, Lu maintained, by following the sage's own method:

Once Tzu-kung asked Confucius, "All in the village like him. What do you think of that?" The Master said, "That is not enough." "All in the village dislike him. What do you think of that?" The Master said, "That is not enough either. Those in his village who are good like him and those who are bad dislike him. That would be better."

On the basis of this Confucian teaching, Lu Chih then asked the emperor to conduct a thorough investigation to find out whether or not the criticism levelled at him was true. Lu believed this to be the correct way for the emperor to establish a fair judgement which would be supported by actual evidence instead of by a far-fetched accusation. If the emperor does not, according to Lu, "distinguish whether [the small men's] slander is true or false, nor examine the strong and weak points in their criticism, their gossiping words will reach everywhere. This will cause people like me (Lu Chih) not to know where to stand (literally: to place our hands and feet)."

Although Te-tsung failed to adopt Lu's advice, this request for a thorough investigation of actual situations continued to be Lu Chih's most often used means of protest against the emperor's own judgement and in defense of what he believed to be his or other official's innocence and correctness. This can be further demonstrated by an examination of another similar incident.

At the beginning of 793, Te-tsung gave Lu Chih confidential instructions to make a secret arrangement so that two officials who were brothers could be demoted and banished to remote regions. Te-tsung gave two reasons for these instructions. The first was that

197 Ibid.: 13. The passage is in chapter 13 (Tzu lu) of the Analects; for the English translation, see Lau, trans., Confucius, the Analects, 1979: 122.
198 Ibid.
their late father had once said something offensive to the throne. The second was that he believed they probably had disloyal intentions because their given names were identical to those of the ancient sage kings. This seems to have created quite an embarrassing situation for Lu Chih.

For one thing, the emperor's secret instructions clearly revealed that Te-tsung still regarded Lu as his confidant, but the emperor's order obviously contradicted Lu's position on the imperial treatment of officials. To explain to the emperor why the imperial treatment of these two officials was inappropriate, Lu Chih emphasized the fact that the ancient sage kings had constantly insisted on making the rules for rewards and punishments clear to the public. As Lu explained:

> With regard to the way of governing the state and educating the people, it lies in rewarding one person's goodness so as to make all those under Heaven who are doing good works feel encouraged, and in punishing one person's evil doing so as to give all those under Heaven who are doing evil things a warning. This is why it has to be in the court that ranks are conferred and it has to be in the market-place that punishments are inflicted. This is for fear that the multitude will not see them, and these activities will not be manifested. Rulers will thus carry out these practices without a guilty conscience, and the multitude will hear them without suspicious discussions; those who are rewarded will receive them without embarrassment, and those who receive punishments will accept them without complaint. This is how the sage kings proclaimed and manifested the codes and regulations for rewards and punishments and shared them publicly with all under Heaven.

Once having established that meting out rewards and punishments in public was prescribed by the ancient sage kings, Lu Chih immediately petitioned Te-tsung to allow a public investigation of the case of those two brothers. The investigation, moreover, had to

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200 Ibid.
201 These two passages appear in the "Wang-chih " (Royal regulations) chapter of The records of rites. The English translation is a modified version of Legge's translation, see Legge, trans., The li ki, in The sacred books of the east, vol., xxvii, 1966: 215.
be conducted in accordance with the rules recorded in the code of rewards and punishments. Two points deserve our attention.

First, Lu Chih considered rewards and punishments a necessary means for conducting a fair and just evaluation, and more importantly, for preventing the emperor's arbitrary treatment of officials. His concern for the appropriate application of rewards and punishments was such that he presented three memorials to urge the implementation of a promised but much delayed imperial pardon to several officials banished to remote areas. In his petition, Lu particularly requested the emperor to make his pardon more generous. This was because, as Lu asserted, "punishments should be light and pardons should be lenient. The purpose is to manifest the principle of benevolence and altruism (jen shu chih tao) and to extend the favor of your virtue and kindness." Judging from these statements, it is evident that Lu's view of rewards and punishments was in fundamental disagreement with that of the Legalists.

Secondly, in pleading for a public investigation, Lu's intention was also to warn the emperor that secret demotion and banishment violated the way of a benevolent ruler (wang the chih tao). A benevolent ruler had to "observe three impartialities." He had to behave as impartially as "Heaven which covers everything, as Earth which bears everything, and as the Sun and Moon which shine on everything." The similarity between this analogy and the one Lu made during the court's exile, when he claimed that Heaven would not eliminate all growth due to the existence of some bad trees, is quite remarkable. They both carry the same implication: the emperor should live up to his title as "the Son of Heaven."

To be sure, prompting the emperor to treat his official subjects on the basis of the principle of benevolence and altruism is basically in agreement with Lu Chih's earlier position in this regard. The same principles were also demanded by him in the imperial treatment of the common people.

As we recall, in the summer of 792, the populace of more than forty provinces in the T'ang empire suffered from a devastating flood. Meanwhile, twenty thousand people were drowned. We have mentioned that Te-tsung ordered the reduction of that year's taxes as a flood relief measure. However, what we have not discussed is that it was mainly due to Lu Chih's persuasion that this imperial decision was finally made.

According to Lu, when the court first learned of the disastrous damage brought about by the flood, he repeatedly urged the throne to provide generous relief to the victims. However, Te-tsung was opposed to Lu's suggestion. This was because the imperial understanding was that the flood damage was actually quite limited, and he believed giving generous relief would only encourage false reports from local officials trying to make a profit out of flood relief. Lu Chih refuted the emperor on the following grounds.

First, Lu told the emperor that the imperial understanding was founded on inaccurate information, because he had verified the flood reports by comparing them with information obtained from travelers. If the emperor had any suspicion, he should send envoys to investigate instead of ignoring the relief plan. Implying that the emperor should have taken the people's welfare as his first priority, Lu further cited a passage from the Li chi to remind Te-tsung of his proper role as emperor:

Once Tzu-hsia asked Confucius: "What the sovereign must be, who can be called 'the parent of the people.'" Confucius said, "When evil is impending

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in any part of the kingdom, he must have a foreknowledge of it: -- such an one is he whom we denominate 'the parent of the people.'"208

Based upon this Confucian conception of the benevolent ruler, Lu Chih immediately stated that the way of governing the people was like setting one's mind on nourishing one's children. Although one lived a stable and comfortable life, he always worried that his children might suffer from impoverishment. Lu maintained that the reason the ancient sage kings could govern all under Heaven as one family was precisely because they had always treated the people with the loving care of a parent. That is, they had constantly taken the people's welfare into consideration.209

The analogy of ruler and state to parent and family is of course a typical concept in Confucian political thought. Although it may be criticized as embodying a certain amount of paternalistic moral elitism, its basic meaning -- that a good ruler should keep the people's welfare in mind -- is crystal clear. This was exactly the message Lu Chih was trying to convey to the emperor.

Secondly, Lu advised the emperor not to let the imperial unwillingness to spend state revenues on relief become the cause of losing the support of the people. He requested the throne either to exempt the flood victims from tax levies, or to reduce their normal share of the taxes. As Lu put it, "what is required is only the expenditure [of wealth] and what will be won is the people's hearts (support). If [your majesty] does not lose the support of the people, why worry about a deficiency in revenues?"210 Besides, Lu emphasized, the cost of flood relief would not constitute a huge burden on state finances.

It is true that Te-tsung eventually followed Lu's suggestion to relieve the flood victims by reducing their tax load. However, the emperor wanted to exclude one of the flooded

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208 Ibid.; this passage appears in the "Kung-tzu hsien chü, or Confucius at home at leisure" chapter of The records of rites. For the English translation, see Legge, trans., The li ki, in The sacred books of China, vol., xxviii, 1885: 278.

209 Ibid.: 15-16.

210 Ibid.: 16.
regions from this tax reduction. Due to the fact that the Huai-hsi region had not paid their
taxes to the court, the emperor instructed Lu Chih to exclude it as a relief beneficiary.\(^{211}\)
As one might expect, Lu was strongly opposed to carrying out these instructions. He
immediately started his second round of persuasion on this matter.

He began his rebuttal by indirectly pointing out that sage kings, such as the legendary
King Yü of the Hsia dynasty (2205? - 1766 B.C.?), would not have endorsed what the
emperor had in mind. The main reason was simply that "when the people could not
preserve their homes, the sage kings felt as if they had pushed them into the ditch."\(^{212}\) Lu
maintained that their concern for the people was due to the fact that "there is no man within
the borders of the land who is not the king's subject."\(^{213}\) Under this premise, Lu made it
clear that if there were people who did not respect their sovereign's rule, it would be the
sovereign's fault for not having extended his virtuous influence to them. If the sovereign
always provided good relief for his people when they were in distress, then no one would
be abandoned.\(^{214}\)

The background of Lu's implied criticism was that the Huai-hsi region had been the
rebel governor Li Hsi-lieh's stronghold. While Li Hsi-lieh was suppressed, conditions in
the region itself had nevertheless not been completely restored to normal. This means the
T'ang court could neither appoint its own candidate as the governor there, nor could it
receive taxes regularly from this area. In fact, three months after Li Hsi-lieh's subordinate
general Ch'en Hsien-ch'i murdered him and was appointed as the governor of the Huai-hsi
region by the T'ang court in the fourth month of 786, another of Li's previous subordinate
officer murdered Ch'en and thus made himself the Huai-hsi governor. From then on, this

\(^{211}\) "Lun Huai-hsi kuan-nei shui-sun ch'u ch'ing t'ung chu-tao ch'ien hsüan-wei-shih
chuang," HYCC, 18: 17.
\(^{212}\) Ibid.
\(^{213}\) Ibid.: 18; this famous passage appears in the "Hsiao-ya pei-shan" chapter of *The book
of odes*. It also appears in the "Wan chang"chapter of *Mencius*. For the English
translation (I have changed "on" to "within"), see Lau, trans., *Mencius*, 5/A, 1970:
142.
\(^{214}\) Ibid.
region remained quite independent of central control until 817 when emperor Hsien-tsung (reigned from 806-820) temporarily restored the court's authority over the provincial powers.215

Despite the fact that the court lost its control over the Huai-hsi region, Lu Chih insisted that it would be unfair to blame the people in Huai-hsi for their delinquent taxes. If the emperor refused to relieve the Huai-hsi area, Lu warned, it would cause the people there to despair and even provide them with another excuse for revolt. In short, it would amount to "deserting the people and strengthening their enmity."216

According to Lu Chih, there were many officials who suggested to the throne that the famine brought by the flood in Huai-hsi provided a good opportunity for the court. They encouraged the court to take advantage of this situation and send a punitive force to bring Huai-hsi under the court's complete control.217 Lu disagreed with such a view. For one thing, he believed that it was against the principle of a benevolent government for the court to send such forces to Huai-hsi. He told the emperor that "calculating profits (li) and forgetting righteousness (i) will always lose the support of the people."218 Consequently, he urged Te-tsung to treat the Huai-hsi people in accord with the principle of altruism. As he put it:

I believe the way of a [benevolent] ruler is quite different from that of opposing states. It is only through virtue (te) and righteousness (i) that he can cherish and pacify ten thousand states. He would rather allow people to take advantage of him than take advantage of them. Therefore, he can make hundreds and millions of people give their hearts to him and people from far and near follow and be transformed by him.219

217 Ibid.: 19.
218 Ibid.
219 Ibid. Italics added.
We have discussed Lu Chih's application of the Confucian approach to governance from different perspectives, but the above statement is the epitome of his own interpretation of that approach. By reversing the famous words supposed to have been uttered by Ts'ao Ts'ao, Lu not only advocates the principles of benevolence and altruism as imperatives for winning the people's hearts, but even more significantly, he makes Mencius' conception of "humane government" shine with a burning clarity by requiring that the emperor's moral obligation to the people be absolute.

The fact that Te-tsung finally adopted Lu Chih's advice in providing relief to the Huai-hsi people does not mean he accepted the Confucian principles as the norm of government. Just as during his time in exile, it would seem that the emperor's decision to relieve the Huai-hsi people was still basically related to his fear of causing another revolt rather than to a genuine concern for the people. In other words, Te-tsung was probably still manipulating the Confucian teachings as a means to preserve his own rule. As has been amply shown in our previous discussion of his policies for improving the people's livelihood, the same thing certainly cannot be said about Lu Chih.

In spite of this small victory in changing the imperial mind regarding the policy of flood relief, Lu Chih's efforts to prevent the emperor from accepting provincial "tribute goods" failed completely. In this specific aspect, moreover, the conflict between Te-tsung and Lu Chih actually reached the point of no return.

In the sixth month of 792, two months after Lu became Chief Minister and one month before the disastrous flood, Lu Chih presented a memorial requesting that the emperor stop accepting provincial "tribute goods." Lu had advised Te-tsung not to keep public funds

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220 Ts'ao Ts'ao was supposed to have said that "I would rather take advantage of other people than allow them to take advantage of me." See Pei Sung-chih's commentary in San kuo chih (The history of the Three Kingdoms), compiled by Ch'en Shou, Chung-hua shu-chih 1959 edition, ch., 1: 5.

221 On a discussion of Mencius' idea of humane government, see Wing-tsit Chan, A source, 1963: 50-61.

222 This is his "Lun Ling-nan ch'ing yü An-nan chih Shih-po chung-shih chuang," HYCC, 18: 19-21.
in his personal treasuries during the time of exile, but this is very likely his first memorial concerned with restraining the emperor's personal greed since he became Chief Minister.

The background to this memorial was that the governor of Ling-nan region (in modern Kwangtung and Kwangsi) requested the emperor to send a eunuch and establish him as Commissioner for Overseas Trade (Shih-po chung-shih) in An-nan (or Annam, today's Hanoi in Vietnam).\(^{223}\)

It has been pointed out that the Tang Commissioner for Overseas Trade that we know of was established at least before 714 at Annam.\(^{224}\) The establishment of this office indicates that the Tang government recognized both the need to regulate the foreign trade conducted at port cities in southern China, and the chance to bring in more state revenue by taxing foreign trade.\(^{225}\) The responsibility of the Commissioner for Overseas Trade then was similar to that of a customs officer or tax-collector. The Commissioner also acted as official purchaser of goods, especially of luxury goods, for the government or for the imperial household.\(^{226}\) Among those port cities, Canton and Annam were the two most

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\(^{224}\) We do not know when exactly this office was established, but since the earliest information which mentioned the title of this office appeared in the second month of 714 when an official attacked the corruption of the Commissioner at Annam, its establishment could not be later than 714. For more information, see K'ung Pao-K'ang, "Wo-kuo ku-tai shih-pochih-tu ch'u-t'an," and Lu Jen, "Lun shih-po-ssu hsing-chih he li-shih ts'o-yung te pien-hua," both of these articles are in Hai-chiao shih yen-chiu, vol. 13 (1988): 1-13, especially see p. 2 and 5; Lü Ssu-mien, *Sui T'ang Wu-tai shih*, Shanghai: Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she, 1984 edition, 909; Fang Hao, *Chung hsi chiao-t'ung shih*, Taipei: Hsien-tai kuo-min chih-shih chi-\-pen ts'ung-shu, 1953: 28-29; Wang Gung-wu, "The Nanhai trade," *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXXI, part 2 (1958): 78. Also see CTS, 8: 174; THY, 62: 1078; TFYK, 546: 6548.

\(^{225}\) Wang Gung-wu, Ibid.

prosperous and were often rivals during the T'ang when trade in one port became threatening to the other.\textsuperscript{227}

Although eunuchs were appointed to the position of Commissioner for Overseas Trade, it seems that at least before emperor Te-tsung's reign (779-805) the regular procedure was to have provincial prefects or governors concurrently assume the responsibility of this position unless they preferred not to do so.\textsuperscript{228} Because of this concurrent responsibility, the post of Ling-nan governor became a very lucrative one. Many officials who became the governor of the Ling-nan region were said to have accumulated a great deal of wealth through illegal means.\textsuperscript{229} Within this context, we shall now discuss why the Ling-nan governor requested emperor Te-tsung to establish a eunuch as the Commissioner for Overseas Trade at Annam in the sixth month of 792.

The name of the governor of the Ling-nan region at this time is not mentioned in Lu Chih's memorial, but we are quite sure that it was Li Fu (739-797).\textsuperscript{230} Li Fu had served in this position since the fifth month of 787.\textsuperscript{231} Despite the fact that he was known for his administrative ability and for being a very capable official, he was criticized by his


\textsuperscript{228} It is true that in 763 the position of Commissioner for Overseas Trade was occupied by a eunuch who drove out the local governor and plundered the city of Canton toward the end of that year. However, this seems to be quite an exceptional case. Most of the time, local governors or prefects would concurrently take over the responsibilities of this position. However, after 805, probably because foreign trade grew increasingly prosperous in the port cities, the court seems to have appointed other officials who were under the jurisdiction of the local governors to assume the position of Commissioner for Overseas Trade. Consequently, local governors were responsible for domestic affairs while the Commissioner handled foreign trade affairs. See Lu Jen, "Lun shih-po-ssu hsing-chih . . .," Hai-chiao-shih yen-chiu (1988): 6; Shen Fu-wei, Ibid.: 23-24; Lü Ssu-mien, Sui T'ang Wu-tai shih, 1984: 909; Chang Hsing-lang, Chung hsi chiao-t'ung shih-liao hui-pien, 6 vols., Fu-jen ta-hsüeh ch'u-pan, vol. 3, 1930: 181; Kuwabara Jitsuô, translated by Yang Lien, T'ang Sung mao-i-kang yen-chiu, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1963: 6. Also see CTS, 11: 274; TCTC, 223: 7157.


\textsuperscript{230} See Yü Hsien-hao, T'ang tz'u-shih k'ao, vol. 5, 1987: 2761. Also see CTS, 12: 356.

\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.
contemporaries for having accumulated a great amount of wealth during his long service as provincial governor. This criticism shows that Li Fu was probably not exactly an incorruptible official. Moreover, since Li's longest tenure as local governor was in Ling-nan, and since the post of governor in Ling-nan was one of the most lucrative positions, it is likely that he accumulated most of his wealth during his service there.

The question that one immediately wants to ask is: if Li Fu liked to accumulate wealth for himself, why did he request the emperor to establish a eunuch as the Commissioner for Overseas Trade in Annam? Wouldn't this interfere with his opportunities to accumulate wealth? According to Li Fu himself, the reason for his request was that most of the foreign ships had recently started to trade at Annam instead of conducting trade at their usual port of Canton where he was obviously stationed.

From Li's explanation, it seems that the shift of foreign trade from Canton to Annam made him feel it was difficult to control and tax most of the goods coming from abroad. However, since Annam, just like Canton, was under the jurisdiction of the Ling-nan governor, Li Fu surely could have sent his own subordinate official to either tax or purchase foreign goods in Annam instead of having a eunuch dispatched from the court. Another comment Li made at the time may provide a clue to this puzzle.

In his request to the throne, Li also said that "sending tribute is an important thing," and he was "truly afraid of lacking tribute [goods]." Thus, he asked the emperor to send a eunuch together with his subordinate official to purchase and tax foreign goods in Annam. Li told Te-tsung that this arrangement could avoid any swindle taking place in Annam.

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232 For this criticism and Li Fu's life, see CTS, 112: 3337-38; HTS, 78: 3533.
233 Li Fu's service in Ling-nan lasted till at least the eighth month of 792. In the ninth month of that year, new governor was appointed. See Yü Hsien-hao, T'ang tz'u-shih k'o., vol. 5, 1987: 2761-62; also CTS, 13: 375.
235 Ibid.
236 Ibid.
On the basis of Li's comments and suggestion, it seems that he was very conscious of the emperor's demand for provincial tribute. His fear of not being able to send enough tribute was no doubt related to the fact that he could not exert a direct control over tax matters in Annam. It is true that Li's own subordinate official could perform the required duty alone in Annam. However, he probably realized that since his own subordinate official, once in Annam, would not be under his direct supervision, if anything should happen there, it could reduce the tax amount collected in Annam, and at the same time, jeopardize his tribute to the throne. With a eunuch's presence, at least he would not need to assume direct responsibility for any potential tax loss.

Although no other evidence can verify the above inference, one thing we can be sure of is that emperor Te-tsung agreed with Li Fu's request to establish a eunuch as the Commissioner for Overseas Trade in Annam and instructed Lu Chih to facilitate it right away.  

Lu's objection to this plan was based on two grounds. First, he believed the reason foreign ships stopped trading at Canton was either because the official tax imposition at Canton was too heavy, or because officials in Canton failed to treat foreign merchants with due respect. This clearly shows Lu Chih's suspicion of the Ling-nan governor's integrity. Secondly, Lu maintained that if the court needed money for military defense, it could follow the routine procedures for obtaining provincial support. Those who were loyal to the court would certainly provide their tribute without worrying about being remiss in their duties.

Lu went on to argue that if the emperor adopted the governor's suggestion to establish a eunuch at Annam to ensure tax collection, it would not only demonstrate that the throne agreed that its regular officials needed to be supervised by eunuchs when conducting government affairs in the provinces, but worst of all, it would also "display a covetous

237 Ibid.
disposition to all under Heaven and openly invite the use of bribery at court."²³⁹ Lu consequently requested that the throne abandon the plan proposed by the Ling-nan governor. On the surface, Lu Chih was no doubt blaming the governor of Ling-nan for both failing to handle foreign trade properly at Canton and for his intention to corrupt the throne, but his implied target was no doubt the emperor. If Lu had succeeded, he could have eliminated in one stroke two imperial practices which he had opposed ever since the time of exile: the imperial demand for provincial tribute money for personal use and reliance upon eunuchs to oversee regular officials.

Although we do not know Te-tsung's actual reaction to Lu's plea, he could not have felt very pleased with his newly appointed Chief Minister. As mentioned before, when Te-tsung gave Lu secret instructions at the beginning of 793, besides ordering Lu to arrange for the banishment of the two brothers, he also gave Lu to know that he was not pleased with his opposition to the acceptance of provincial "tribute."²⁴⁰

As we recall, the emperor told Lu Chih that he found him "unnecessarily careful and pure," on the grounds that Lu rejected all the presents offered him by local governors. Meanwhile, the emperor instructed Lu to accept some small gifts if he really felt he could not accept money or other presents. In reply, Lu Chih explained that his opposition to this sort of behavior was based upon his concern that he had not yet reduced the heavy tax levies and improved the people's livelihood. In addition to this basic reason, he specifically pointed out that the emperor's acceptance of provincial "tributes" contradicted the imperial policy of punishing officials who committed the crime of bribery.

For example, Lu said, whenever the emperor issued a general amnesty, even those who had been sentenced to death were pardoned, but officials who committed bribery never received such grace. This proved that the emperor himself considered bribery the most

²³⁹ Ibid.: 21. This is a slightly modified version of Twitchett's translation, see Twitchett, "Lu Chih," 1962.
²⁴⁰ See "Hsieh mi-chih yin lun so-hsüan shih chuang," HYCC, 20: 6. Also see our discussion in chapter 1, p. 61.
harmful crime. Furthermore, if regular officials were not supposed to take bribes, Lu queried, on what grounds could the emperor and his Chief Minister actually engage in such practice?²⁴¹ Confronting the throne in such a manner, Lu then defended himself by stating directly that imperial acceptance of bribery would lead to a decline of ethical norms. He told the emperor:

If the ruler above likes profits, then officials below will think about amassing wealth. If the ruler on high seeks bribes, then officials below will put forth their energies in grabbing the common people's wealth. None feel shameful in their hearts, but simply indulge in personal desires; one after another they long to imitate each other, and this practice becomes a custom. Day by day, people's families are harmed and rules and regulations are ruined. This situation [cannot be improved] by exhortation to propriety and righteousness or punishment based on rules and laws. This is [again] because the way of honor and integrity has declined.²⁴²

It is clear that Lu Chih's statement was derived from the Confucian doctrine that rulers ought to set themselves up as moral exemplars for their subjects.²⁴³ He believed that because the emperor demanded provincial "tributes," a chain of irregular exactions starting from the provinces and reaching down to counties and villages thus followed. The ultimate source of their "tributes" could not be anything else but the "flesh and blood (literally, livers, brains, muscles and marrow) of the exhausted people."²⁴⁴ He insisted that the fundamental reason why provincial officials carried on this practice was because they felt they had to do it in order to "insure their lives and preserve their offices."²⁴⁵ Thus, if the emperor rectified his conduct, provincial officials could feel secure in discontinuing their "tributes" and the irregular exactions on the people could also end.

²⁴² Ibid.: 9.
²⁴³ Here of course, we are referring to Confucius' famous analogy of "wind and grass." See the "Yen Yuan" chapter of Lun yü.
²⁴⁵ Ibid.: 10.
It is noteworthy here that the rationale behind Lu Chih's efforts to transform the imperial conduct was closely connected to his later efforts at reform of the two-tax system, because they were all intended for the improvement of the public well-being. Despite the fact that Te-tsung ignored his advice again, Lu Chih nonetheless continued pleading with the throne to stop accepting "tributes." We remember that two months after this confrontation with the throne, we see Lu remonstrating unsuccessfully with the emperor once more, urging him not to confiscate the previous Chief Minister Tou Shen's property and slaves as personal imperial possessions. While encountering setbacks one after another in his attempts to restrain the emperor's personal greed, Lu remained firm in his own position.

Probably in the summer of that same year (793), T'ien Hsü, then the governor of Wei-po and also a relative of Te-tsung, sent Lu Chih a letter together with a handsome amount of gifts. His intention was to have Lu compose a tomb inscription for his late father, Tien Ch'eng-tz'u (705 - 779). Ch'eng-tz'u had served An Lu-shan as a subordinated general and was reinstated as governor of Wei-po after the An Lu-shan rebellion. From Lu's account, we find that the emperor had not only already instructed him to compose such an inscription six months before, but also demanded him to satisfy T'ien Hsü's request as part of the imperial appeasement policy. In explaining his deliberate procrastination, Lu revealed his frustration about this event.

On the one hand, he believed that the motive for composing a tomb inscription should accord with Confucius' principle in compiling the Spring and Autumn Annals. That is, to

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246 T'ien Hsü murdered the previous rebel governor T'ien Yüeh and took over military power in Wei-po in the third month of 784. A month later, in order to settle the Ho-pei rebellions, the court accepted him as the new governor of Wei-po. By the first month of 785, intending to further pacify the rebel governors, the court married a princess to T'ien Hsü and thus made him an imperial relative. See HTS, 210: 5932-33; TCTC, 230: 7413 and 7422.


apply the method of "praise and blame" in historical writing so as to elevate loyalty and righteousness and condemn villains and disloyal subjects. Lu particularly quoted Mencius' saying that "Confucius compiled the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and struck terror into the hearts of rebellious subjects and undutiful sons." On the other hand, however, he felt he had to violate the principle of "praise and blame" precisely because he was instructed to compose a tomb inscription for a rebellious subject. Since, he wrote, he had not been feeling at ease in his mind, he had been simply unable to compose one word.

Under these circumstances, it seems that Lu was caught in a dilemma. Apparently, he did not feel that his previous advice to the emperor to adopt a compromise policy in the settlement of the Ho-pei rebellion was the same as his own engagement in composing a personal tomb inscription now, especially if he had to offer dishonest praise and accept handsome bribes. Nevertheless, Lu found a way to extricate himself from this difficult position. He told the emperor that he had politely asked Tien Hsü's envoy to take back the handsome presents on the grounds that he had no personal reason to accept such gifts since what he was going to compose would be based purely upon the emperor's instructions. In this way, Lu went on, he had neither promised a definite date for accomplishing the job, nor had he rejected Tien's request in toto. Thus he did not think he had offended this military governor.

We do not know the after effects of this incident, but Lu Chih's solution to this problem clearly demonstrates how his Confucian pragmatist approach helped him to confront an embarrassing situation. That is, while resolutely preserving his personal integrity, Lu nevertheless also ensured that his personal behavior would not jeopardize the state's interests. This incident proves once more that as a Chief Minister who observed

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250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
certain ethical principles and intended to bring the imperial conduct around to matching those principles Lu Chih suffered constant frustration.

Repeated experience of frustration, however, still did not stop Lu from pursuing what he considered morally correct governance. In the fifth month of 794, we see Lu setting out again to urge the emperor to end the practice of provincial "tributes" as a part of his reformist proposals concerned with transforming the emperor's conduct and improving the people's livelihood. And as we already learned, he lost again. By this time, Lu Chih must have realized that all but two of his proposed policies that we know of, whether they concerned affairs in the public domain or the imperial conduct, had been completely rejected by the throne. Meanwhile, as mentioned before, his arch-opponent P'ei Yen-ling not only mismanaged state finances and mistreated border armies, but also continued to use irregular means to feed the emperor's personal treasuries.

Apparently, from Lu's point of view, P'ei Yen-ling fully represented his concept of a "small man" who harmed the public well-being and encouraged imperial greed. Consequently, toward the end of 794, he finally presented another memorial to Te-tsung that directly attacked P'ei Yen-ling and indirectly attempted once more to plead with the emperor to improve his personal conduct. In this memorial Lu Chih re-emphasized what he had always said to the emperor in terms of how to treat the officials, how to take the people's welfare into consideration, and how to restrain his personal greed. One passage summarizes his basic position:

As for the person who governs all under Heaven, he should treat righteousness as the root and profit as the branches; should treat the people as fundamental and wealth as incidental. When the root flourishes, its branches will then naturally become elevated; when the branches become too large, the tree will fall over and be uprooted. From ancient times to the present, it has never been the case that a ruler came to the point where he did not have abundant resources, nor sufficient wealth and consequently lost his throne and state simply because he had established virtue and righteousness, increased the number of [his] people, and made them contented.252

When he had said everything he felt he had to, Lu Chih then directly challenged the throne by urging the emperor to conduct a public investigation of his criticisms of Pei Yen-ling. This time Lu was conscious that he had probably put himself in a precarious position, but he was also certain that he had to speak up because "silently obeying imperial instructions has gradually become the custom." In order to convince the emperor that his remonstrance was out of loyal concern for the state, Lu disclosed his inner struggle in the following words:

I have been raised from my lowly station to occupy the office of Chief Minister. Since my position is already extremely high, and since I am also greatly beholden for your favor, how could I be unaware that watching the current trends and chiming in with other people's views will be sufficient to maintain your previous favor; following numerous others and drifting with them will avoid severe blame; using illness as a pretext for acquiring relief from my office will bring me a reputation for knowing the right moment; and associating with wicked people and being accepted by them by perfunctorily discharging my duties will eliminate any worries about being hated by them? Why should I be in a hurry to look for trouble and be the only one confronting jackals and wolves, and thus defy your eminence's wishes and become a target for those slanderers below? This is truly because by introspection I find myself to be an ordinary and ignorant person, capable of doing nothing, but I have always received your deep understanding that I am simply being honest and straightforward. It has been twelve years since I started serving intimately in your presence (literally: around your screen). Since your sagely kindness has tolerated me because of my honesty and straightforwardness, I have also been proud of myself because of this. I was with your majesty when you experienced the grave danger of leaving the capital (moving into exile) and I have witnessed your majesty going through the hardships of restoration. Even when I think of it now, my heart still beats rapidly. This is why I am terrified that the carts might be overturned again and I bemoan sadly that the palaces might be destroyed. All of these feelings are agitating in my heart, and even if I want to stop them I can not silence myself.

While Lu Chih's long self disclosure makes it difficult for one to doubt his sincerity, by this time, Te-tsung probably felt just as frustrated by Lu as Lu was by the throne. It is very

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253 Ibid.: 22.
likely that even if the emperor still appreciated Lu as his long cherished confidant, once Lu's repeated efforts to restrain the ruler's personal greed became persistently annoying, and once Lu's request for the dismissal of P'ei Yen-ling, whom he trusted to acquire money and goods for his personal treasuries, became a pressing issue, he was ready to remove Lu from the position of Chief Minister without hesitation. Thus ended Lu's Sisyphean efforts.

Closing remarks

In our examination of the reformist policies Lu Chih proposed during his tenure as Chief Minister, we find them basically consistent with the advice he earlier presented to the throne during its time of exile. This consistency is manifest not only in his continued advocacy of treating officials with sincerity and trust by providing them with delegated responsibility and authority, but also in his persistent efforts to restrain the imperial greed and to improve the common people's livelihood. In other words, what he advocated earlier remained his primary concern and served as the perennial frame of reference for his unflagging pursuit of an ideal government in the later stage of his political life.

In our analysis of Lu Chih's memorials, we find that although he never presented systematic philosophical discussions regarding his conception of an ideal government, such a concept is, nevertheless, latent in almost all of his memorials. It functioned as a mariner's compass guiding all his reformist efforts in the same direction. Once that direction becomes clear to us, Lu's conception of an ideal government is also apparent.

For Lu Chih, an ideal government was one which was established on the premise that "the people are the foundation of the state." In order to consolidate that foundation, a frugal government was required in the sense that it would not impose unreasonable tax exactions on the people. Moreover, Lu maintained that such a government should operate according to the principles of "virtue, righteousness, altruism and benevolence." Only in
this way, would a government treat its people as "the root or the foundation" and "profits" and "wealth" as "branches or incidental elements."

However, what deserves our attention is that Lu Chih was not opposed to "profits" and "wealth" per se, he only objected to seeking imperial personal profits and wealth at the expense of the people's well-being. After all, we remember that Lu maintained that the government should not only "use wealth to assemble people," but also nourish the people and improve the people's livelihood. To a certain extent, this is similar to Mencius' idea that a ruler was responsible for increasing the material abundance of the people's lives, but profit itself should never become his main concern. In short, Lu's ideal government is fundamentally in line with the Confucian concept of a "humane government."

Admittedly, Lu Chih's vision of Confucian government embodied nothing but those basic Confucian principles which most of the traditional Chinese scholars were familiar with. It contained little innovation in terms of enriching Confucianism as a system of thought. However, the key which distinguishes Lu as an unusual Confucian statesman lies not in the Confucian principles he was advocating, but in his sincere belief in Confucian political ideals and in his genuine commitment to his own belief. His conviction and commitment were manifested as much in his employment of the Confucian classics as living guides for conducting government affairs as in his tenacious efforts to realize his ideals.

Yet, Lu Chih's unrelenting pursuit of Confucian political ideals never caused him to abandon his pragmatist sensibility in designing his reformist policies. In order to establish a fair system for evaluating the bureaucracy, he repeatedly emphasized the necessity to discard previous precedents in order to adjust to the present time and circumstances. He arranged a compromise between two views of the system of grain transportation so as to

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fill the frontier granaries without allowing the transportation system to fall into desuetude. He worked out a solution to the problem of excess land accumulation which would relieve the poor without intimidating the rich, and would accommodate the present situation while also fulfilling the goals prescribed by the Confucian classics. Even his suggestion to replace cash with goods as the basic unit for the two-tax assessment and collection would be proven realistic in solving the problem of deflation. Indeed, a similar suggestion was repeatedly brought up in later times and was actually put into practice during the reign of emperor Mu-tsung (reigned 820-24). Lu Chih can be considered extremely practical and farsighted in this regard.

Despite the fact that he paid constant attention to the feasibility of his reformist policies, Lu Chih seems never to have worried as much about whether or not his advice for improving the emperor's personal conduct was practical. For him, as for most Confucian scholars, the first and foremost duty of the emperor was to fulfill his moral obligations to the people as "the Son of Heaven." They also believed that only by fulfilling these obligations could the emperor preserve a stable state. Needless to say, sharing similar beliefs did not necessarily mean that they would persistently rectify the imperial conduct at the risk of their own interests. From this perspective, Lu Chih was certainly unique in that his political behavior was the embodiment of his political beliefs. A person with such a commitment to Confucian political ideals would probably worry less about his self interests than about the results of his political endeavors.

Indeed, when Lu Chih finally challenged the throne about displacing Pei Yen-ling, he showed little fear of being the only one to confront "jackals and wolves" in the ranks of an

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256 Since we shall discuss those who made similar suggestion in the next chapter, we should only point out here that although Han Yü (768-825), Li Ao and Yang Yü-ling (753-830) have all made similar suggestion, it was due to Yang Yü-ling's effort that it was finally put into practice. See Han Yü, "Ch'ien ch'ing wu chung chuang," CTW, 549: 7; Li Ao, "Shu kai shui-fa," CTW, 634: 13; for Yang Yü-ling's proposal and its result, see HTS, 52: 1360-61. Also see, Hu Chi-ch'uang, Chung-kuo ching-chi ssu-hsiang shih, vol., 2, 1963: 441, 460 & 477.
otherwise silent majority. In his long self disclosure, Lu Chih made it clear that he was conscious of the risks in front of him, but his concern for the public welfare impelled him to speak up for a higher ethical good. He even stated that what he was then doing "is wrong as a plan for consolidating my own position, but as a concern that your majesty will take precautions against calamity, is nevertheless loyal."\(^{257}\)

Evidently, Lu Chih was ready to sacrifice his own political life for the sake of the public well-being. It is precisely in this willingness to defy the imperial wishes for the purpose of realizing the Confucian Way that we find Lu bringing out what it ultimately means to be a Confucian statesman. His choice of being one who "finds himself in the right, and goes forward even against men in the thousands"\(^{258}\) made him a quintessential Confucian. To be sure, Lu Chih could have drifted with the crowd, but then he would have "betrayed" his Confucian convictions and the goals he had always sought by means of his Confucian pragmatist approach.

From the beginning to the end of his political life at emperor Te-tsung's court, Lu Chih remained consistent in his approach to government. His Confucian pragmatist approach had contributed significantly to the re-establishment of the court's stability. However, he was not content with preserving a status quo in which the public welfare was still far from ideal. In order to improve the public well-being, Lu continued his previous efforts to enact his vision of Confucian government, but this was in complete conflict with the imperial wishes.

By contrast, Te-tsung had relied heavily upon Lu's advice during the exile, but once the historical conditions changed, we see him obsessed with the full preservation of what he saw as stability. He was not willing to allow Lu Chih's reformist policies to go against his wishes, not even when Lu repeatedly guaranteed that those policies would not upset the

\(^{257}\) "Lun P'ei Yen-ling chien-tu shu i-shou," HYCC, 24: 23.
\(^{258}\) This is the famous passage in the "Kung-sun Ch'ou" chapter of *Mencius* where Mencius was discussing the cultivation of courage. For the English translation, see Lau, trans., *Mencius*, 2A/ 2, 1970: 77.
status quo. Lu Chih knew perfectly well of the emperor's opposition, and he also knew the price of being the only one to confront "jackals and wolves," but his sense of calling thrust him on to continuously fight the battle he believed in. This lone pursuit of Confucian political ideals made him a quixotic fighter "who [kept] working towards a goal the realization of which he knows to be hopeless (chih ch'i pu-k'o erh wei-chih che)." As might be expected, the political life of such a quixotic fighter was doomed to a tragic end.

259 This is the well known description of Confucius by the gatekeeper at the Stone Gate. The passage is in the "Hsien wen" chapter of the Analects. For the English translation, see Lau, trans., Confucius, the analects, XIV/38, 1979: 130.
Significance

Chapter Four: Significance in mid-T'ang

Lu Chih was banished to Chung-chou in the fourth month of 795. Although one of the policies adopted by emperor Shun-tsung (reigned 805-806) immediately after ascending the throne in 805 was to summon Lu Chih and some other exiled officials back to the court, Lu's untimely death forever deprived him of a chance to reappear on the mid-T'ang political stage. Emperor Shun-tsung's recall of Lu deserves our attention, because Shun-tsung himself was disabled at this time. He suffered a stroke, was unable to speak, and his court was dominated by the so-called Wang Shu-wen clique.¹

Modern historians generally agree that the Wang Shu-wen clique was a reformist group. Its reformist nature is most strongly reflected in the policies it intended to carry out. The group mainly led by Wang Shu-wen, a man with a humble family background chosen to be a Han-lin scholar due to his talent for chess, also contained eight idealistic middle-level officials, among whom was the acclaimed ku-wen writer Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819).

The immediate policies of the Wang Shu-wen group were aimed at correcting the bureaucratic corruption and the eunuchs' abuses of power which had accumulated since the latter half of emperor Te-tsung's reign. They also intended to abolish the practice of sending provincial "tributes" to the throne.² This no doubt reminds us of Lu Chih's

¹ See TCTC, 236: 7606-7610; SL, 1: 2-4; also see Bernard S. Solomon, tr., *The veritable record of the T'ang emperor Shun-tsung* (hereafter *Veritable record*), Harvard University Press, 1955: 3-4.

indefatigable efforts along the same line. Furthermore, it was this group that arranged for
Lu Chih to be given a chance to return to the court in the third month of 805.\(^3\)

The fact that after a passage of ten year's time the Wang Shu-wen group still made Lu
Chih's rehabilitation one of their top priorities indicates that Lu's political undertakings had
gained respect from these reformist-minded officials. It also implies that Lu's political life
was not without significance in mid-T'ang history.

Since extant sources prohibit any claims of Lu's conspicuous influence on his
contemporaries, our exploration of the meaning of Lu's life will basically focus upon
comparisons between Lu's approach to government and his policies and those of his
contemporaries. Finding similarities and differences between Lu Chih and his
contemporaries with regard to their political convictions and endeavors will not only
provide us with a deeper understanding of the spirit of Lu's time, but more importantly, of
his proper place in that time.

**The mid-T'ang milieu**

As mentioned previously, the An Lu-shan rebellion, which began in 755 and lasted to
763, irrevocably altered the configuration of the theretofore unified T'ang empire.
Politically, the empire in the post-rebellion era was divided between a much weakened
central government and powerful provincial forces. Emperor Te-tsung's ventures to
restore imperial authority only resulted in a series of military uprisings which in turn
brought grave suffering to the public and led to a subsequent exile for the court. Despite
the fact that emperor Hsien-tsung managed to suppress all the rebellious governors and
temporarily established the so-called Yüan-ho restoration (*Yüan-ho chung-hsing*) in 817,\(^4\)

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\(^3\) See Bernard Solomon, tr., *Veritable record*, 1955: 18; SL, 2: 6; TCTC, 236: 7611.

\(^4\) For emperor Hsien-tsung's restoration, see C. A. Peterson, "Court and province," *The Cambridge history*, 1979: 523-39; also see his "The restoration completed; Emperor
provincial powers remained a constant threat to the central government throughout the latter half of T'ang history.

Socially, the An Lu-shan rebellion depopulated large areas in Ho-nan, especially in the Lo-yang region, decimated the territorial base of many prestigious clans, and inadvertently contributed to an acceleration of the bureaucratization of T'ang aristocratic families.\(^5\) Meanwhile, considerable numbers of these dislocated clans escaped and took refuge in the relatively peaceful lands of the south.\(^6\)

Economically, due to the fact that the Ho-pei region was beyond the court's control in the post-An Lu-shan rebellion era, the T'ang state grew more than ever dependent upon the lower Yangtze region of the southeast to provide grain and other tax supplies for its survival.\(^7\) Lu Chih's recommendation to concentrate all the loyalist forces to deal with the Huai-hsi rebels during the second Ho-pei rebellion proves this point.

Meanwhile, the second Ho-pei rebellion further impoverished the peasant population that had just survived the An Lu-shan rebellion. Worse still, although the implementation of the two-tax system provided a stable revenue for the state, as Lu Chih's criticism of this system demonstrated, its operation actually increased the peasants' tax burden. In short, it did not relieve the peasants' plight in any substantial way.\(^8\)

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\(^2\) Significance

\(^3\) On the problem of depopulation in the north see, C. A. Peterson, Ibid.: 485; also see a widely cited letter composed by Liu Yen (715-780) to Yüan Tsai (d. 777), the former being a famous financial expert and the latter the most powerful Chief Minister during emperor Tai-tsung's reign. See CTS, 123: 3512-13.


\(^6\) On a detailed discussion of the plight of the peasant population in the mid-T'ang, see Wu Chang-ch'üan, T'ang-tai nung-min wen-t'i yen-chiu, Taipei: Chung-kuo hsüeh-shu chu-tso chiang-chu wei-yüan hui, 1963: 94-132 & 162-82.
While the Tang state was forced to undergo these violent disruptions as a result of the An Lu-shan rebellion, many concerned mid-T'ang scholar officials were also moved to find ways to rebuild their shattered empire and alleviate the miseries of the general population. Their serious attempts in this regard created an intellectual milieu in which a vital movement gradually came into being. This was the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement. As is well known, it was precisely through this revival that the rise of full-blown Neo-Confucianism became possible in the coming age of the Sung dynasty.9

Since Lu Chih's adult life ran parallel with the development of the mid-Tang revival of Confucianism, and since Lu's political pursuits unequivocally qualify him to be considered a genuine Confucian -- a person sincerely committed to the improvement of the public weal under the guidance of his Confucian convictions -- a brief delineation of the Confucian revival movement is most pertinent to our examination of Lu's significance in this era.

**The mid-T’ang Confucian revival movement**

Prior to the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion in 755, Buddhism was definitely the dominant force in Tang China, both as a religious faith and an intellectual movement. It actually remained the most creative intellectual force throughout the T'ang.10 Another less dominant but nonetheless powerful intellectual system was Taoism. Its other-worldly

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9 Several impressive book-length studies in English which deal with mid-eighth century Tang intellectuals and the mid-T’ang Confucian revival movement are: David McMullen, "Yüan Chieh (719-772) and the early ku-wen movement (Yüan Chieh hereafter)," Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1968; Timothy Hugh Barrett, "Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in the thought of Li Ao (Li Ao hereafter)," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1978; Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang search for unity*, 1986; Ch'en Jo-shui, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987. Barrett's dissertation has recently been published by Oxford University Press, but I have not yet had an opportunity to read it.

orientation attracted huge followers among T'ang literary men.\textsuperscript{11} By contrast, 
Confucianism before the An Lu-shan rebellion, though alive mainly as a cultural force, was 
rather ossified as a philosophical system.\textsuperscript{12}

To be sure, the early T'ang rulers Tai-tsung and Kao-tsung, realizing the inextricable 
relation between the teaching of Confucianism and the exercise of imperial government, 
gave great support to the establishment of the canonical texts of the Confucian classics for 
use in the civil service examinations. With imperial support, other Confucian scholarly 
projects, such as the compilation of previous dynastic histories and ritual codes, also 
flourished. While the Confucian learned tradition was thus well preserved, only a small 
number of Confucian scholars participated in these activities. They exerted little influence 
on an intellectual climate where Confucianism enjoyed minimum attraction. Moreover, 
since most of the Confucian scholars in the early T'ang and the first half of the middle 
T'ang were concerned primarily with classical exegesis and ritual programs,\textsuperscript{13} they had 
neither the intellectual vision nor the intention to reinvigorate a heretofore uninspiring 
Confucianism.

\textsuperscript{11} On this matter, see Ch'en Jo-shui, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 12-13; 
Timothy Barrett, "Li Ao," 1978: 9-10; for examples of poems which express a longing 
for a Taoist spiritual world, see Stephen Owen, \textit{The great age of Chinese poetry: the 
High T'ang}, Yale University Press, 1981: 41-6. For a detailed account of the general 
development of Taoism in the T'ang, see Jen Chi-yü, ed., \textit{Chung-kuo tao-chiao shih}, 
dokyo shisoshi kenkyû}, Tôkyô, Hirakawa Shuppan, 1990, section two. For the 
history and nature of Mao Shan Taoism and its influence on T'ang officials and 
aristocracy, see Michel Strickmann, "The Mao Shan revelations, Taoism and the 
Shan in T'ang time}, Monograph no. 1, Society for the Study of Chinese Religions, 
1980.

\textsuperscript{12} Confucian values such as filial piety were, however, very much alive in T'ang society, 
see Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 14-15. Confucianism was also alive in the official education, 
see Kao Ming-shih, "T'ang-tai chiao-yü te te-se," \textit{Yu-shih yüeh-k'ân}, vol. 47, 5 
(1978): 63-64.

\textsuperscript{13} For the imperial patronage of canonical scholarship and other scholarly projects in 
the early T'ang, and for the exegetical characteristic of Confucianism before the An Lu- 
shan rebellion, see David McMullen, \textit{State and scholars}, 1988: ch., 3, 4 and 5, esp., 
see 71-85 and 114; Ch'en Jo-shui, Ibid.: 13-15; Kao Ming-shih, Ibid.: 64. Also see 
When the An Lu-shan rebellion destroyed the political unity of the T'ang and brought devastation to the general population, a resurgence of Confucian consciousness manifested in an intellectual search for ways out of the post-rebellion predicaments emerged in the mid-T'ang intellectual environment. This revival of Confucian consciousness went through various stages and expressed itself in different intellectual activities during the mid-eighth and ninth centuries.

In the mid-eighth century, around the time of the An Lu-shan rebellion, one such activity was characterized by the works of poets like Tu Fu (712-770), often regarded as China's greatest poet, and Yüan Chieh (719-772), also treated as "the most adventurous san-wen (or prose) writer" at the inception of the ku-wen movement. Because Tu Fu's

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14 Although some scholar officials seemed to have started advocating ku-wen writing before the An Lu-shan rebellion, modern historians generally agree that the social and political crises caused by the An Lu-shan rebellion led directly to the ku-wen movement which, as we shall see, represented the first stage of the mid-T'ang revival of Confucianism. See Chen Yin-k'o, "Lun Han Yü," Li-shih yen-chiu, 2 (1954): 111; Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism," 1960: 83-84; Hayashida Shinnosuke, "Tōdai kobun undō no keisei katei," Nippon Chūgoku gakkai hō, 29 (1977): 107; Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 19-26. Of course, the fundamental reasons for the rise of the Confucian revival movement were complicated. For example, the origin of this revival movement was also connected with the poetic movement initiated by Chen Tzu-ang (661-702) in the seventh century. Although the poetic movement exerted a great influence on the ku-wen movement, the ku-wen movement nonetheless had a more distinct Confucian outlook. This means, as our discussion in this chapter will also testify, the social and political problems in the post-An Lu-shan rebellion period functioned as the most important element that directly gave rise to the mid-T'ang Confucian revival. For Chen Tzu-ang's influence, see Ch'ien Mu, "Tsa-lun T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung," Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao, 3, no. 1 (1957): 123-25; Lo Ken-tse, Chung-kuo wen-hsüan p'i-p'ing shih (Pi-p'ing shih hereafter), vol. 2; Shanghai: Ku-tien wen-hsüeh ch'u-pan-she, 1957: 113 & 120-22; Sun Ch'ang-wu, T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung t'ung-lun (Ku-wen t'ung-lun hereafter); Tientsin: Pai-hua wen-i chu-pan-she, 1984: 3-4 and 19; Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 26-27, esp., see note 67.

15 Although there are many studies dealing with the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement, Chen Jo-shui's study of Liu Tsung-yüan and the origin of the Neo-Confucianism puts more emphasis on demonstrating how the different intellectual activities in the mid-T'ang gave rise to the revival of Confucianism and examines the formation and the essential features of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival. See Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 19-29.

16 See William Hung, Tu Fu, China's greatest poet, New York, 1952.

sympathy for public suffering is a celebrated fact, and because we shall specifically compare Yuan Chieh's social and political concerns with those of Lu Chih, it seems sufficient to point out here that their efforts at promoting Confucian ideals failed to arouse much attention in their own time.

The prose reform campaign initiated by Hsiao Ying-shih (717-768), Li Hua (715-766), Chia Chih (718-768), and Tu-ku Chi (725-777) in this same period is generally accepted as the precursor of the ku-wen movement which flourished in the early ninth century. The Hsiao group advocated using ancient prose, that is, a simple and vigorous classic style of writing, to replace the ornate and rhetorical parallel prose (p’ien-wen) which had dominated literary writing since the third century.

It is true that the Hsiao Ying-shih group's basic concern was prose reform, but they firmly maintained that the highest goal of literary works was to transmit Confucian moral values. They perceived that using the style of the "ancient" prose they could not only correct the "modern" style of literary writing, but more importantly, help to solve contemporary social and political problems. Their interest in studying Confucian classics for their fundamental meaning, actually regarding them as practical guidelines for social and political order, undoubtedly establishes this group as one of the representatives of the early mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement.

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19 Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 21.
The revival of Confucian consciousness was also reflected in critical studies of the Confucian classics. This refers to the so-called "critical scholarship" of the *Spring and Autumn Annals (Ch'un-ch'iu)* launched by T'an Chu (724-770) and Chao Kuang (fl. 770-780) in 761. Their critical approach to the study of the Annals made them question or even reject the standard commentaries provided by the extant exegesis of the classics. They insisted that only by examining the Annals itself could one grasp the sage's fundamental teaching. Like the Hsiao Ying-shih group, they also intended to erect Confucian principles as the guiding norms for social and political action. Although their influence was first confined to the lower Yangtze region, their works and propositions were later disseminated in the capital by their follower Lu Ch'un (737-805), a member of Lu Chih's clan, around the 780s.22

Despite the fact that Liang Su (753-793), Lu Chih's advisor in the 792 doctoral examinations, continued to champion the prose reform movement after 780, and that Lu Ch'un began to introduce critical studies of the classics in the capital around the same time, they did not break any new ground as far as the revival of Confucianism is concerned.23 In fact, from 780 to 800, that is, the period of Lu Chih's rise and fall in the center of the mid-Tang political stage, the Confucian revival movement seems to have remained restricted to carrying forward the predecessors' causes.

Nevertheless, when another generation of scholar officials represented by the illustrious ku-wen writers Han Yü (768-824) and Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819) together with Li Ao

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23 Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 27.
(774?-836?) emerged on the scene around the turn of the ninth century, the Confucian revival finally developed into an independent movement. This means it no longer needed to cloak itself in the on-going prose reform movement or in critical studies of the Confucian classics, despite the fact that this new generation of intellectuals were influenced by both their ku-wen predecessors and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* school.

While this new generation of intellectuals also regarded the Confucian doctrines as guiding principles for social and political action, the major difference between them and their predecessors was that they not only began to reflect seriously upon some basic Confucian concepts, but also started to use their own terms to interpret the Confucian principles. At this point, the meaning of the "ku-Tao," or the "Way in antiquity" became more definitive. It was conceptualized as the Confucian moral Way, that is, the way of benevolence and righteousness, transmitted from the sage kings Yao, Shun, King Wen, and King Wu to the Duke of Chou and finally down to Confucius and Mencius. Han Yu of course was the one who first established this notion of "the succession of the Way (Tao-t'ung)."

Yet, it has been noted that distinctions even existed between Han Yu, Li Ao and Liu Tsung-yuan. The most conspicuous one was precisely their differing conceptions of the

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25 Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 28, ch. 4 and 5, especially see his concluding remarks on the Confucian revival movement in late-Tang on p. 252. For example, Liu Tsung-yuan was influenced by the critical approach to the Confucian classics advocated by Lu Ch'un of the *Spring and autumn annals* school around 804. Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism," 1960: 96; Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven, part I," 1973: 196-97.

While Liu Tsung-yüan primarily perceived the Confucian Tao as the Way to improve the public good, Han Yü and Li Ao expanded their notion of the Tao to include a Way of enhancing the spiritual world of human beings. For Han and Li, the Confucian moral Way was sufficient enough to sustain the inner life of human beings, and there was no need for individuals to search for spiritual solace in Buddhism or Taoism.

It was largely through this expanded conception of the Tao advocated by Han Yü and Li Ao that the link between the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement and Sung Neo-Confucianism was finally established, but Liu Tsung-yüan's perception of Confucianism nonetheless represented the mainstream of the resurgence of Confucian consciousness in the mid-T'ang. This means Han Yü and Li Ao, whose Confucianism was culturally exclusive but spiritually inclusive, embodied only a minority voice in their own time.

By contrast, Liu Tsung-yüan and the majority of mid-T'ang scholar officials, who committed themselves to the Confucian revival movement, treated Confucianism primarily as a philosophy for public good. Their private life was still permeated with Buddhism and Taoism. Their mentality has been aptly characterized as "Confucianism without and Taoism and Buddhism within."

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27 For Liu Tsung-yüan's conception of the Confucian Way and its difference from that of Han Yü and Li Ao, see Chen Jo-shui, Ibid., ch. 4; also see David McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 261; for Han Yü's conception of the Confucian Tao, see Charles Hartman's discussion on Han Yü's famous essay "Yüan Tao, or On the origin of the Way," in his Han Yü, Ibid., esp., 150.

28 Han Yü's anti-Buddhist and anti-Taoist mentality is a well known fact, and Hartman also has dealt with it carefully, see his Han Yü, Ibid. Barrett's study of Li Ao has also established Li as a true defender of Confucianism in the face of the challenge of Buddhism and Taoism. See Barrett, "Li Ao," 1978, ch., 3 & 4.

29 McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 261 and 105-112; Ch'en Jo-shui, Ibid.: 167.

30 For more details see Charles Hartman, Han Yü, 1986: 84-86 and 135; for Li Ao's anti-Buddhism, see Barrett, "Li Ao," 1978, ch. 3. Contrary to their culturally exclusive attitude, Buddhism and Taoism were well received by Liu Tsung-yüan and other mid-T'ang Confucian thinkers. For example, Hsiao Ying-shih, Li Hua and Liang Su were all interested in Buddhism while Yüan Chieh and Tu-ku Chi took an interest in Taoism. See McMullen, "Historical and literary theory," in Perspectives on T'ang, 1973: 311-13; Sun Ch'ang-wu, "Han Liu i-ch'ien te 'ku-wen' lun," Wen hsüeh p'ing-lun ts'ung-k'om, 16 (1982): 284; this article was recollected in his T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung t'ung-lun, 1984, ch. 4; also see Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 231-41.

31 Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 252.
In spite of the difference existing among this new generation of intellectuals, one important common denominator which drove them all to the mid-T’ang Confucian revival movement was their concern for the social and political challenges of their time. It is precisely within this context that we shall compare Lu Chih with the leading figures of this movement. However, in order to assess Lu Chih's political life from a more complete perspective, it is first necessary to compare Lu Chih's political undertakings with those of the notable Confucian court officials in the pre-An Lu-shan rebellion period as well as with those of the renowned Chief Ministers in his own time.

Notable Confucian court officials before the An Lu-shan rebellion

Although a recent study expresses the view that "prior to the middle of the eighth century, no individual could legitimately be referred to as a Confucian thinker,"32 Confucian teachings were never excluded from the education of the government official. They remained the basic framework of reference for the operation of imperial government, even though they lacked the vital intellectual force to compete with Buddhism and Taoism. As a matter of fact, judging by their bureaucratic conduct and official advice on decision-making, many court officials who served during this period could rightfully be identified as Confucian bureaucrats.33 For the following reasons, we can single out Wei Cheng (580-643), Chang Yüeh (667-730) and Chang Chiu-ling (678-740) for comparison among these Confucian bureaucrats.

First, although Wei Cheng's rise in early T'ang political life was not without opportunism, his seventeen years' service under emperor T'ai-tsung's reign has been

32 Ibid.: 14.
considered the prime motive force behind T'ai-tsung's "good rule of the Chen-kuan reign." Since Lu Chih frequently praised emperor T'ai-tsung's administration as one of the model reigns before his own time, and since Wei Cheng, like Lu Chih, always played the role of intrepid remonstrator, it seems appropriate to use Wei as a subject for comparison.

Second, like Lu Chih, both Chang Yüeh and Chang Chiu-ling entered the bureaucracy through the examination system. Unlike Lu, however, they did not belong to the top level of the elite class. Instead, they came from the provincial elite strata. Their entrance to the bureaucracy, as noted before, was due to the fact that the early T'ang rulers, especially empress Wu, had intended to curb the power and prestige of the old aristocratic families from the "Kuan-lung bloc" by bringing examination graduates into the bureaucracy. Chang Yüeh started his political career during empress Wu's reign, but his service under emperor Hsüan-tsung's rule marked the most important stage of his official life. As the patron of Chang Chiu-ling, Chang Yüeh also introduced Chiu-ling to Hsüan-tsung's court.

Both Changs were known for their literary talent. Because of this, Hsüan-tsung selected them to be scholars of the Chi-hsien yüan (or the Academy of Scholarly Worthies). Chang Yüeh even controlled the Chi-hsien yüan at one time. Before 738 when the Han-lin

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36 From 690 to 705 Chang Yüeh served in Empress Wu's court. Before Hsüan-tsung ascended the throne in 713, Chang Yüeh had served another two monarchs, namely Chung-tsung (reigned 705-10) and Jui-tsung (reigned 710-12). See Wang Yü-hsiu, Ibid.: 16-17 and 46-47. Also see CTS, 3049-51.
Academy of Scholars (Han-lin hsüeh-shih yüan) came into being, the function of the Chi-hsien yüan scholars resembled somewhat that of the later Han-lin scholars. This means, scholars in the Chi-hsien yüan used to serve as Hsüan-tsung's private advisors and were given the responsibility of drafting imperial edicts.\textsuperscript{37}

In addition to the fact that their positions in the Chi-hsien yüan ran parallel to Lu Chih's role as emperor Te-tsung's Han-lin scholar, also like Lu Chih, both Changs served as Chief Minister under Hsüan-tsung.\textsuperscript{38} Their important positions in Hsüan-tsung's court and career patterns similar to Lu Chih's make them obvious candidates for comparison.

Although a recent study deconstructs the traditional Chinese myth that Wei Cheng was a paragon of Confucian ministers whose moral rectitude helped to ensure emperor T'ai-tsung's good rule, it simultaneously depicts Wei as a Confucian bureaucrat who fervently proclaimed Confucian principles in his remonstrances to the emperor.\textsuperscript{39} The Confucian principles which Wei Cheng employed most and that also had the greatest impact on the throne were in the domain of transforming the imperial conduct.

Throughout his seventeen-years' service under emperor T'ai-tsung, Wei Cheng persistently exhorted T'ai-tsung to be a benevolent ruler. He insisted that Tai-tsung had to be frugal, humble, maintain constant vigilance, treat his official subjects with sincerity and


\textsuperscript{38} Chang Yüeh had previously risen to the position of Chief Minister during Jui-tsung's rule before he assumed this position in Hsüan-tsung's court in 713 and again in 725; Chang Chiu-ling became Chief Minister in 733. See Chen Tsu-yen, \textit{Chang Yüeh nien-p'\r{u}}, 1984: 29 and 69; Yang Ch'eng-tsu, \textit{Chang Chiu-ling nien-p'\r{u}}, 1964: 70; also see HTS, 61: 1678 and 62: 1687 & 1689.

\textsuperscript{39} Wechsler, \textit{Mirror to the Son of Heaven}, 1974: 4-7 and ch. 5-6.
respect, and most importantly, accept remonstrances and rely upon his subordinates' advice
to manage government affairs.⁴⁰

For example, in order to restrain T'ai-tsung's increasing desires for extravagance, Wei
Cheng advised the throne this way:

... If while in a position of security he (i.e. the ruler) does not think of
peril (chü an ssu wei), if he does not abstain from extravagance by means of
frugality, if his virtue is not made substantial, or if his mind cannot
overcome his desires, this is (also) like digging up the roots and seeking to
grow a large tree, or blocking up the source and desiring far-flowing
water.⁴¹

To emphasize the importance of accepting remonstrances and of treating officials with
sincerity and trust Wei further stated:

It has been more than ten years since Your Majesty came to the throne and
peace returned. ... But the Way and its power (tao-te) have not yet
become substantial, and benevolence and righteousness are not yet far
reaching. Why is this? It is because you have not yet employed sincerity
and trust to the utmost in dealing with your subordinates, and because
although there has been the diligence of an excellent beginning, we do not
yet see the beauty of a successful conclusion.⁴²

It is evident that Wei Cheng's endeavors to transform T'ai-tsung's personal conduct
and to improve the imperial treatment of his subordinates are in complete agreement with
Lu Chih's later efforts in this regard. Yet, there are differences which set them apart.

It has been demonstrated that Wei Cheng's first and foremost concern was to increase
and guard the bureaucratic role in decision-making against the imperial abuses of power so

⁴⁰ Wechsler, Ibid.: 143-53. Wechsler also demonstrates that most of the Confucian
bureaucrats in T'ai-tsung's reign shared this view. See his "The Confucian impact on
⁴¹ See Wu Ching, ed., Chen-kuan cheng-yao (CKCY hereafter), Shanghai ku-chi ch'u-
pan-she 1978 edition, I: 8; also see CTS, 71: 2551-52. The English version of this
passage is from Wechsler's translation in Mirror to the Son of Heaven, 1974: 144.
⁴² CKCY, 5: 180-81; CTS, 71: 2555-56; TCTC, 195: 6131. For the English translation,
see Wechsler, Ibid.: 146.
that the life of the dynasty could be prolonged.43 The principle of remonstrance prescribed by Confucianism was thus employed by Wei as the sole weapon to achieve that end.

Wei Cheng, of course, did advise the throne to take the people's livelihood into consideration. Once he urged T'ai-tsung not to perform the Feng and Shan sacrifices, rituals carried out at Mount T'ai to make a symbolic announcement to Heaven and Earth of the emperor's successful rule, on the ground that to do so would inflict economic difficulties upon the ordinary people. Yet as has been pointed out, Wei was always worried more about the government's economic welfare than about that of the people. In other words, the well-being of the people did not actually occupy a central place in Wei's Confucian consciousness.44

In short, political concerns, not social concerns, came first on Wei Cheng's Confucian agenda. Such a position obviously contradicts Lu Chih's basic conviction that the people's welfare was the raison d'être of the state rather than vice versa.

Meanwhile, we should pay further attention to the very crucial fact that Wei Cheng served under a comparatively enlightened ruler who was partially responsible for making Wei a celebrated Confucian hero in Chinese historiography. Although emperor T'ai-tsung grew tired of remonstrances in the latter days of his reign, it seems undeniable that if from the beginning T'ai-tsung had not been so obsessed with his historical image as a benevolent ruler, and had not deliberately encouraged his officials to perform their remonstrating duty as Confucian ministers, it is doubtful whether Wei Cheng would have performed his part of that duty so tenaciously.45 After all, Wei himself once admitted that "Your majesty leads

43 Wechsler, Ibid.: ch. 8, esp., p. 186-87.
44 Ibid., especially see p. 175. On a discussion of the nature and the development of the Feng and Shan sacrifices, see Howard Wechsler, Offerings of jade and silk: ritual and symbol in the legitimation of the T'ang dynasty, Yale University Press, 1985: 170-93, esp., 170-73.
45 This is one of the themes in Wechsler's study of Wei Cheng, see his Mirror to the Son of Heaven, 1974: 79-89 and 195-96.
me and makes me speak up and that is why I dare to remonstrate. If your majesty did not accept remonstrances, how would I dare to offend you so frequently?"\(^{46}\)

In sum, Tai-tsun's personality and his search for fame in history created an unusually favorable context in which Wei Cheng was induced to exercise his Confucian duty. If the historical context had been different, Wei might not have had the opportunity, nor the intention, to carry out his conception of Confucianism. From this point of view, striving against a monarch who openly acknowledged his antipathy toward remonstrances makes Lu Chih's pursuit of the Confucian ideal of humane government appear all the more sincere.

The first half of Hsüan-tsung's reign established another period of peace and prosperity in T'ang China. It was a golden age that would end tragically with the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion. Nevertheless, during their official service, like Wei Cheng before them, Chang Yüeh and Chang Chiu-ling operated in an ambience where the newly-ascended Hsüan-tsung also aspired to be an enlightened ruler.\(^{47}\) For the sake of clarity, we shall first examine the two Changs' political convictions and their approaches to government individually, and then compare the similarities and differences between their concerns with those of Lu Chih.

Under Hsüan-tsung, Chang Yüeh was able to implement certain reform policies. Most of these policies set out to strengthen the control of the centralized government.\(^{48}\) While Chang Yüeh occasionally mentioned the hardships of the ordinary people in his writings,

\(^{46}\) See CTS, 71: 2549; also see HTS, 97: 3871 for a slightly different version.


\(^{48}\) For example, Chang Yüeh helped to establish the short-lived Mounted Archers (*K'üo-ch'i*) to replace the old system of guard units manned by militia forces so as to strengthen the capital defenses. He also helped to strengthen the power and consolidate the position of Chief Minister. See Pulleyblank, *The background of the rebellion of An Lu-shan*, 1982: 65-66; Twitchett, "Hsüan-tsung," *The Cambridge history*, 1979: 376.
his expressed concern in this regard reveals that the people's welfare was not his first consideration. A work that illustrates this point is a memorial he presented to empress Wu in 700, just about a year after he formally entered the bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{49}

In order to urge the empress to return to the capital from her summer palace without further delay, Chang Yüeh stated that the imperial stay in the summer palace had brought suffering to the local people because their houses had been occupied by the imperial entourage. However, judging by the other reasons that he adduced to support his argument, it is obvious that Chang Yüeh was equally, if not more, concerned with the difficulties of transporting grain and other necessary supplies to the summer palace and with the fact that the empress's absence from the capital might provide opportunities for revolt.\textsuperscript{50} In other words, Chang Yüeh did not consider the improvement of the people's livelihood his foremost official duty.

From this point of view, he was more in line with Wei Cheng than with Lu Chih. But unlike Wei Cheng, and also unlike Lu Chih, the transformation of the imperial personal conduct did not loom large in Chang Yüeh's consciousness.

For one thing, Chang Yüeh believed not only in the theory of interaction between Heaven and men, but in omen lore and predestination. He once stated that "the one which produces virtue is called Heaven, and which grants the time is called destiny. Heaven has its predetermined destiny, how can it disappear?"\textsuperscript{51} Since he asserted that Heaven had its predetermined destiny, Chang Yüeh evidently neglected the importance of human endeavors in relation to the doctrine of the Heavenly Mandate. To some extent, such an attitude necessarily obviated both the need for the emperor to act benevolently, and the need for Chang Yüeh to transform the imperial conduct.


\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{51} Chang Yüeh, "Shang-ta chiu-kung shu sheng sung," in CYKC, 6: 66; also see CTW, 221: 13.
To be sure, in terms of selecting certain candidates for important government positions, Chang Yüeh frequently expressed opinions contrary to the imperial decisions. However, since his disapproval of the imperial candidates was often voiced on the ground that these candidates lacked literary polish, it is difficult not to consider his efforts in this respect a consolidation of his own political power as a member of a group of literati rather than an act aimed at the public good. Furthermore, even though he sometimes did advise emperor Hsüan-tsung to behave properly, his remonstrances remained formalistic. It seems that what Chang Yüeh was most concerned with was the study of rites and how to employ his knowledge of rites to enhance the imperial prestige and authority.

Chang Yüeh's interest in rites can be shown in his detailed discussions of various problems and procedures regarding rituals and rites in several memorials. His knowledge of rites and rituals won him an ad hoc position as Commissioner for Ritual Ceremony (Li-i shih) during the imperial sacrificial ceremony to Heaven (Chiao-ssu) in

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52 For examples see TCTC, 213: 6771; CTS, 97: 3054-55.

53 Chang Yüeh was involved in a power struggle with a group of officials who were members of the aristocratic families without examination degrees. See Pulleyblank, Background . . ., 1982: 48-54; Twitchett, "Hsüan-tsung," The Cambridge history, 1979: 382-89; also see TCTC, Ibid.; CTS, Ibid.

54 For example, Chang Yüeh once requested Hsüan-tsung not to hold inner palace carousals till after midnight simply on the ground that it was not sanctioned by the Confucian classics. See Chang Yüeh, "Chien nei-yen chih yeh piao," CYKC, 9: 105; also in CTW, 222: 10-11; in addition, Chang also presented another memorial in order to show Hsüan-tsung the mistake of using force to settle the problem of border defense. See Chang Yüeh, "Chin tou-yang piao," in CYKC, 9: 105-06; also see CTS, 97: 3055. However, on both occasions, Chang Yüeh showed no particular interest in carrying forward his own suggestions.

723. It also led to his being assigned, even after his retirement, to direct the compilation of a new ritual code, later known as the K'ai-yüan li.

Chang Yüeh had great enthusiasm for the most important and most opulent state rituals. In 723, it was partly through Chang Yüeh's efforts that Hsüan-tsung performed the Chiao sacrifice. On this occasion, as just noted, he served as the Commissioner for Ritual Ceremony. His concerns for ritual matters had earlier impelled him to advise the throne to perform a long-discontinued sacrificial ceremony to the earth deity Hou-t'u in 722. By 724, he again put forward to the throne the suggestion of performing the Feng and Shan sacrifices. It was mainly through his arrangement that Hsüan-tsung finally performed these sacrifices in 725.

Chang Yüeh's repeated pleas for the performance of state rituals reveal his unequivocal concern for these rituals, and it is probably also due to such concern that The Old T'ang History describes his goal as an official as "adorning a time of peace and prosperity." The first half of Hsüan-tsung's reign was indeed a prosperous period in Tang China; nevertheless one of Chang Yüeh's colleagues who also showed great interest in state rituals was not without reservation about performing the lavish Feng and Shan sacrifices. Surely, a Confucian court official, if preoccupied with the improvement of the public good like Lu Chih or with the restraint of the imperial power like Wei Cheng, would almost certainly (as Wei Cheng actually did) oppose the imperial performance of the most extravagant rituals.

56 See CTS, 21: 833. Also see Wang Yü-hsiu, Chang Yüeh yen-chiu, 1981: 245. As we shall see immediately, Chang Chiu-ling had already urged the emperor to perform this ritual ceremony in 716.
59 CTS, 97: 3054; THY, 10A: 213;.
60 See CTS, 23: 891 and 97: 3054; TCTC, 212: 6762 and 6766; TFYK, 36: 396.
61 CTS, 97: 3057.
62 Yüan Ch'ien-yao (d. 731) was the colleague in question. See CTS, 97: 3054 & 98: 3070; TCTC, 212: 6762.
It seems that Chang Yüeh, like most of his official colleagues, simply believed that only the most opulent sacrificial ceremonies like the Feng and Shan rituals had sufficient grandeur to symbolize the greatness of Hsüan-tsung's reign. Nevertheless, it was exactly during the Feng and Shan sacrifices that Chang Yüeh failed to observe the usual ethical norms of official conduct. Perhaps intending to strengthen his position in the bureaucracy, he actually practiced favoritism by promoting exclusively his own adherents and clerks who had been arranged by him to take part in the sacrifices.63 Such misconduct can hardly qualify Chang Yüeh as an honest official. Bearing this in mind, we shall proceed to examine Chang Chiu-ling's approach to government.

As Chang Yüeh's protégé, Chang Chiu-ling shared much common ground with his patron. First, like Chang Yüeh, many of his policies were aimed at strengthening the control of the central government. An example can be found in his view of the bureaucracy. He once suggested that "appointments which are close to the people (i.e., provincial governors and local magistrates) should be obtained by virtuous [candidates], and the way of employing competent people lies in paying attention to their selection."64 Although his emphasis on appointing capable and talented people as officials was obvious, his real concern here was how to improve the central government's control over the quality of officials engaged in local administration.

Likewise, in an essay which recorded how he had become responsible for opening up a road for vehicular traffic over the Ta-yü-ling Pass in the Ling-nan region between 713 and 716, Chang Chiu-ling asserted that the new road would ease the hardships of local residents.65 Yet, as has been pointed out elsewhere, his sympathy for the residents of his

63 CTS, 99: 3098;
65 See Chang Chiu-ling, "K'ai Ta-yü-ling lu chi," in CCCC, 11: 7A-8B; also see CTW, 291: 1-2. The Ta-yü-ling refers to a part of the Nan-shan (Southern Mountains) chain
own native province ran parallel with his intention to use the new road to extend the court’s control and influence to this comparatively backward area. Bringing the periphery under the grip of the center actually functioned as an essential motive behind many of his policies.

Second, Chang Chiu-ling’s perception of the doctrine of the Heavenly Mandate was also quite close to that of Chang Yüeh. He once wrote that "Heaven is the lord of the hundred gods and the supreme foundation from which kings [on earth] receive their mandate." On another occasion, he again stated that "I hear that it is Heaven which inspires sages (i.e., rulers), and it (Heaven) naturally has a way to make the sages realize this, [I also hear] that sages are the ones who receive the mandate, and there must be some clear proof to demonstrate this. That is why gods do not speak but we know their meaning, and when the time is about to arrive there will be portents [revealed beforehand]." If emperors are preordained to receive the Heavenly Mandate, it is difficult to see the necessity for them to behave benevolently. This probably explains why transforming the imperial conduct was not Chang Chiu-ling’s focal concern either.

Third, like Chang Yüeh, Chang Chiu-ling also took a serious interest in state rituals.

As noted above, long before Chang Yüeh made a similar suggestion in 723, Chang Chiu-ling once presented a five-chapter record of historical precedents as a birthday present to emperor Hsüan-tsung intending to remind the emperor to use the past rules as a mirror for the present reign. See his "Chin Ch’ien-ch’iu-chieh chin-ching-lu piao," CCC, 8: 3B-4A. Except for this memorial, as far as I can discover, Chang Chiu-ling did not present any other memorials with specific regard to transforming the imperial personal conduct.
ling had already urged Hsüan-tsung to perform the Chiao ritual to Heaven in 716. This Chiao ritual (or the suburban sacrifice) was very similar to the Feng and Shan sacrifices though embodying less grandeur; it symbolized the ruler's assertion of his legitimacy in the human domain.\(^{71}\)

To Chang Chiu-líng, performance of the Chiao ritual was indeed a necessary vehicle to increase the emperor's personal prestige and authority. As he urged the emperor to perform this ritual, he stated plainly that it would "exhibit the beauty of [Hsüan-tsung's] accomplishments and virtue and show gratitude to the [good] heart of the gods as a recompense. Every possible thing will be done to illuminate your achievements."\(^{72}\) For the time being, Hsüan-tsung did not accept his suggestion, but he saw his proposal carried out in 723, thanks to his patron Chang Yüeh's efforts.\(^{73}\)

Despite the fact that common ground can be found between Chang Chiu-líng and Chang Yüeh, a significant difference also existed between these two figures. That is, while Chang Chiu-líng also shared with Chang Yüeh an aversion to officials lacking literary finesse,\(^{74}\) he never seemed to have violated the ethical norms of official conduct as Chang Yüeh did. As a matter of fact, it was Chang Chiu-líng who actually cautioned Chang Yüeh not to proceed with his blatantly unfair practice of personal favoritism, but his advice was

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\(^{71}\) See Chang Chiu-líng, "Ch'ing hsing Chiao-li shu," in CCCC, 10: 18B-19B. This memorial also appears in CTW but under the title of "Ch'ing Chiao chien Shang-ti i." See CTW, 290: 1; also see CTS, 99: 3097-98. For the nature and history of the Chiao ritual, see Wechsler, Offerings of jade and silk, 1985: 107-117.

\(^{72}\) "Ch'ing hsing Chiao-li shu," CCCC, Ibid.: 19A; also see CTS, Ibid.: 3097. This specific passage does not appear in CTW. See CTW, Ibid. The first part of this English translation (i.e. up to [As for us]) is based upon Chen Jo-shui's translation while the latter half is my own. See Chen Jo-shui, "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 144.

\(^{73}\) Chang Yüeh mentioned that this ceremony was carried out in 723, see his "Ta T'ang ssu Feng Shan sung," in CYKC, 7: 78; also see CTS, 21: 833; Herbert, Under the brilliant emperor, 1978: 19.

to no avail. In light of this, we can see that, unlike his patron Chang Yüeh, Chang Chiu-ling was an official who tried to maintain his personal integrity.

It is true that Chang Chiu-ling's insistence on being an honest official was close to Lu Chih's position, but except for this one aspect, the above examination of the two Changs' approaches to government reveals that there existed a conspicuous gulf between their concerns and those of Lu Chih.

One obvious distinction between Lu Chih and the two Changs is reflected in their conception of the Mandate of Heaven. Although Lu Chih did not completely transcend the influence of the Han theory of interaction between Heaven and men, as discussed before, he refuted Te-tsung's idea that the second Ho-pei rebellion was preordained by Heaven, and made specific efforts to explain that the virtuous conduct of the ruler constituted the foundation for receiving the Mandate of Heaven.

By contrast, it is evident that neither Chang Yüeh nor Chang Chiu-ling regarded human endeavor in relation to the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven as the core of that doctrine. Their comments that the Mandate of Heaven was somehow predetermined corresponded to their interest in increasing the imperial authority through performing the state rituals, in the sense that the predetermined Mandate also added a mysterious aura to the emperor's position. This was without doubt quite the opposite of Lu Chih's position.

Furthermore, despite the fact that Lu Chih also had some interest in ritual matters, his rationale contrasts sharply with theirs.

In the summer of 784 when Te-tsung was able to return to the capital from exile, Lu Chih stated the necessity of restoring the temples and altars for performing sacrifices to the imperial ancestors and for state rituals. His reasons were that those temples had been

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75 CTS, 99: 3098; Twitchett, Ibid.: 388.
76 See Lu Chih, "Hsing-yüan lun tz'u Hun Chen chao-shu wei chü san-shih nei-jen teng ichuang," HYCC, 16: 18. Also see CTS, 139: 3799; McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 325, note 158.
Lu Chih

neglected during the imperial exile, and that the emperor should express gratitude to his
ancestors for their protection of the court from the rebel forces. Obviously, at this
particular juncture, Lu was trying not only to remind Te-tsung to fulfill his Confucian duty
of filial piety, but more importantly, to re-assert the legitimacy of the T'ang ruling house in
the face of the rebel challenge.

Like Chang Yüeh and Chang Chiu-ling, Lu Chih showed a similar interest in the
political function of ritual matters, but his reasons for performing rituals were clearly
different from theirs. As far as we know, this was the only occasion when Lu Chih ever
mentioned ritual matters to Te-tsung. In light of these factors, we can see that Chang
Yüeh's and Chang Chiu-ling's interest in enhancing the imperial authority through the
Chiao, or the Feng and Shan rituals share no real common ground with that of Lu Chih.

In sum, the part of Confucianism in which Chang Yüeh and Chang Chiu-ling took
most interest was basically its ritualistic aspect. While some of the two Changs' policies
and behavior revealed certain Confucian sentiments, that was usually not their focus. Their
political convictions show limited inclination to achieve what Lu Chih was committed to
pursuing. This becomes even more obvious if we also take Chang Yüeh's personal
misconduct into consideration. By contrast with both of them, the ritualistic
Confucianism which Chang Yüeh and Chang Chiu-ling so strongly emphasized occupied a
minimal place in Lu Chih's Confucian consciousness.

77 "Hsing-yüan lun tz'u Hun Chen chao-shu . . .," Ibid.: 18; CTS, Ibid.
78 For the private and public characteristics of the imperial ancestral cult, see Wechsler,
Offerings of jade and silk, 1985: 123-41, esp., 140.
79 This refers to Chang Yüeh's misconduct in the Feng and Shan sacrifices. Moreover, he
was also accused of accepting bribes and consulting astrologers; both charges seem to
be justifiable. See CTS, 97: 3054-55; TCTC, 213: 6771. A modern Chinese scholar
tries to defend Chang Yüeh's integrity, but her defense does not deal with the
information recorded in CTS and in TCTC. Moreover, she also admits Chang Yüeh's
mismanagement of the Feng and Shan sacrifices. See Wang Yü-hsiu, Chang Yüeh
80 An interest in ritualistic Confucianism, of course, continued throughout the dynasty,
and ritual texts continued to be produced. See Daniel L Overmyer, "Attitudes toward
The above discussion demonstrates that the affinity between Lu Chih and the notable Confucian court officials before the An Lu-shan rebellion was limited. This resulted partly from the different historical contexts where a specific emperor such as Tai-tsung provided incentives for his officials to remonstrate, and partly from differences in individual political convictions. Since the An Lu-shan rebellion forced concerned scholar officials to confront similar social and political challenges of their time, before we compare Lu Chih with the leading figures of the Confucian revival movement, we shall first examine whether or not there was any common ground shared between Lu Chih and his contemporary Chief Ministers, men who have not been seriously considered Confucian court officials, but who nevertheless showed concern for the problems of their time. Li Mi (722-89) and Tu Yu (735-812) seem to represent two ideal types.

Renowned Chief Ministers in Lu Chih's time

As mentioned before, Li Mi put forth many policies to improve government finances during his tenure as Chief Minister between 787 and 789. When he was summoned by Te-tsung to serve the throne during the court's exile, Li Mi was already a veteran official. He had served two previous emperors, and, probably due to his Taoist inclination, survived various power struggles by self-enforced retirement.\(^{81}\)

Motivated by financial concerns, Li Mi once proposed to abolish the supernumerary official posts, especially those in the local government created during previous reigns.\(^{82}\) However, he also made it clear that because governmental affairs had increased ten times
more than before, even though the number of the tax households decreased, the regular official positions still had to be filled.\textsuperscript{83} 

Although, during his tenure as Chief Minister, Lu Chih did not seem to have advocated the elimination of supernumerary official posts, he did talk about abolishing unnecessary official positions in 780 as one of the essential steps toward simplifying bureaucratic operations during his service in the local government of Wei-nan county.\textsuperscript{84} However, we have to point out that unlike Li Mi, Lu's argument for abolishing supernumerary official posts was based more upon his concern for administrative efficiency than upon financial concerns. On the other hand, when Lu Chih pleaded with Te-tsung not to leave the regular official positions vacant in 794 on the ground that the court needed officials to deal with regular affairs, his request was certainly in agreement with Li Mi's view on the same issue.\textsuperscript{85} 

Li Mi, like Lu Chih, also advised emperor Te-tsung not to attribute the court's exile to a preordained destiny. He told Te-tsung that "as for fate, it is a statement of something that has already happened. Rulers [should] create [their own] destiny; they should not talk about fate. If they talk about fate, then they can no longer reward the good and punish the evil."\textsuperscript{86} This exclusion of fate from state governing sounds very much like a Confucian message. It seems that Li Mi kept his Taoist interest strictly confined to his private life. Nevertheless, his Taoist inclinations seem to have played a part on one crucial occasion in his public life.

On the basis of the extant sources, it seems that Li Mi did not try out any measures to improve the people's livelihood during his service in Te-tsung's court, but, like Lu Chih, he had been worried about the imperial demand for provincial tributes. Li Mi's solution to

\textsuperscript{83} CTS, 130; 3622; HTS, 139: 4635. 
\textsuperscript{84} HTS, 157: 4911-12. 
\textsuperscript{85} Lu Chih's argument for filling the regular official positions has been dealt with in the section on "establishing a capable and just bureaucracy" in the previous chapter. 
\textsuperscript{86} HTS, 139: 4637. A similar passage with slightly different wording also appears in TCTC: 233: 7512.
this problem, carried out in 787, was to provide Te-tsung with one million strings of cash annually for his palace expenditure, and at the same time, request that the throne stop the practice of accepting tributes. However, when Te-tsung violated his own promise and resumed his old practice a few months later, Li Mi felt "disconsolate but did not dare to say anything."

Li Mi's decision not to speak up represents a tacit admission that his earlier arrangement with the emperor was a failure. But what made Li Mi lose the courage to speak up again? There can be many answers to this question, yet the Taoist interest in preserving one's life seems to have exerted some influence on Li Mi's consciousness. After all, he had chosen self-imposed retirement in several power struggles to avoid confrontations with other ministers during previous reigns. In a struggle where a Chief Minister knows his odds of winning over the emperor are near zero, silence would seem to be a natural weapon for self protection. In comparison, Lu Chih's unrelenting remonstrance against Te-tsung's conduct even at the risk of his own political life demonstrates the profound influence of Confucian principles on his consciousness.

Tu Yu, though much older than Lu Chih, was not appointed as a titular Chief Minister until near the end of Te-tsung's reign in 803. He was also granted the high honorific rank of Ssu-k'ung (or Minister of Works) at about the same time. From 803 to 812, he continued to serve in the court as a senior statesman and was given further high honorific ranks with various titles. Prior to 803, however, he had spent most of his official life in provincial government, except for a short period when Yang Yen became Chief Minister in 779.

87 HTS, Ibid.: 4637; TCTC, 233.; 7501.
88 TCTC, 233: 7510.
89 For Tu Yu's life, see CTS, 147: 3978-84; HTS, 166: 5085-90; also see Cheng Ho-sheng, T'ang Tu Chün-ch'ing hsien-sheng Yu nien-p'ú (Tu Yu nien-p'ú hereafter), Taipei: Commercial Press, 1980; Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism," 1960: 100-01.
As we remember, Lu Chih once recommended Tu Yu as one of the candidates to head the Department of the Public Revenue, but emperor Te-tsung rejected Lu's suggestion and chose P'ei Yen-ling to fill that post. Instead of having a Taoist inclination, Tu Yu has been regarded as a "Neo-Legalist" and as Lu Chih's opposite counterpart. This is chiefly because Tu Yu's extant work, the encyclopedic T'ung-tien (or Comprehensive compendium on institutions), is focused upon the history of governmental institutions and exhibits an appreciation of some aspects of Legalist thought. Moreover, his unreserved support of the two-tax system made him an apparent opposite to Lu Chih.

In order to balance the government revenues, Tu Yu, like Li Mi, also advocated abolishing the supernumerary official posts, but unlike Li or Lu Chih, Tu Yu did not seem to have ever insisted on filling the regular official positions. Tu Yu argued that since the government revenues in the post An Lu-shan period decreased drastically, it could no longer afford to keep these supernumerary officials. He meant that when the times changed, the bureaucracy needed to adapt to the new conditions as well. He stated: "... establishing institution should be in accordance with the times; when problems occur, one should accommodate and adjust without necessarily following the old customs."

As a person who constantly addressed the importance of "understanding the changes of the times" and "examining the changes of the times," Lu Chih unquestionably would have supported Tu Yu when Tu called for accommodation to new circumstances. Lu Chih's criticism of those officials who clung to the ancient classics and refused to adapt to contemporary reality was undoubtedly in harmony with another statement of Tu Yu's: "whenever one consults the books of the ancients, it is because one wishes to discover new

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90 On a discussion of the nature of Tu's T'ung-tien, see Ch'ü Lin-tung, "Lun 'T'ung-tien' te fang-fa he chih-ch'ü," Li-shih yen-chiu, 5 (1984): 112-128; Pulleyblank, Ibid.: 98-101; McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 203. We shall discuss his interest in some aspects of the Legalist thoughts soon.
91 See Pulleyblank, Ibid.: 105-06.
92 See TT, 40: 231A; or see the CTW version entitled "Sheng kuan i," CTW, 477: 8-9.
93 TT, Ibid.: 231B.
meanings and regulate affairs in accordance with the present time [and circumstances]."94

As far as adapting to the changed times and conditions is concerned, we can see that Lu Chih's once underestimated pragmatist sensibility was as great as, if not greater than, Tu Yu's frequently praised inclination in that direction.95

Despite the fact that Tu Yu viewed the elimination of supernumerary posts as a necessary way to reduce the financial burden of the state, he suggested that senior officials in provincial governments ought to recommend to the court capable members from among the supernumerary officials. Tu believed this would prevent virtuous and talented members from being neglected. He further asserted that if the recommendation was false, the court could punish the provincial sponsors by laying criminal charges.96

Tu Yu was apparently in harmony with Lu Chih in this matter since both of them agreed that virtuous and talented people should be selected to fill the official positions. Indeed, Tu Yu said that, "... setting up offices and posts lies in scrutinizing the talent for those offices; scrutinizing the talent for those offices lies in being finely attentive to selection."97 But it is in the area of how to proceed with the selection that Tu Yu and Lu Chih part company.

As a member of an eminent Kuan-chung aristocratic clan, Tu Yu did not enter the bureaucracy through the examination system.98 It is possible that his personal background

94 TT, 12: 68A. The English translation of this passage is a modified version of Pulleyblank's translation, see Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism," 1960: 101.
95 As noted before, Lu Chih has been considered either a conservative statesman or a Confucian idealist who did not appreciate the principle of expediency. Tu Yu, by contrast, has been distinguished from his contemporaries as someone who understood the importance of adapting to new times and conditions. See Pulleyblank, Ibid.: 94 & 99-100; McMullen, State and scholars, 1988: 239.
96 TT, 40: 231A.
98 Tu Yu entered the officialdom through the protective yin privilege. See CTS, 147: 3978; HTS, 166: 5085.
may have led him to regard the examination system, especially the *chin-shih* examination, as an inappropriate channel to recruit official candidates. Many of Tu Yu's contemporaries shared a similar view. They all basically considered a talent for composing poetry and prose, the prerequisite for passing the *chin-shih* examination, irrelevant to practical government affairs. They held several different views of how to improve the situation. Some preferred to maintain the examination system while demanding a change in the subjects examined; but others believed the best way was to replace the examination system with the recommendation method practiced in the Han dynasty. Tu Yu embraced the latter position.

As we remember, Lu Chih only intended to apply the recommendation method to the official placement process. He did not propose to abolish the examination system. The fact that Lu Chih himself was a *chin-shih* degree holder may have played a part in his position to preserve the existing system, but judging by his constant emphasis on fairness in official appointment, it is equally possible that he considered the examination system a fair channel for candidates to enter the bureaucracy for the first time. This was actually one of the reasons stated by those who preferred to change the subjects examined while leaving the system otherwise intact.

In addition to examining their similarities and differences regarding the improvement of the bureaucracy, we shall also explore whether or not Lu Chih's views on the imperial role were identical to those of Tu Yu.

Tu Yu never particularly focused on the transformation of imperial conduct. During his service in the court as titular Chief Minister from 803 to 812, Tu Yu hardly exercised any

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100 For example, Chao K'uang, one of the leading figures of the critical scholarship, proposed to use classical studies instead of poetry and prose writings as the subject of the examinations. For Chao K'uang's and other different opinions regarding this problem in mid-Tang, see TT, 17: Ibid., 18: 101-04; also see HTS, 45: 1178-79; Pulleyblank, Ibid.; McMullen, *State and scholars*, 1988: 241-43.

101 Chao K'uang was a case in point. See TT, 17: Ibid.; Pulleyblank, Ibid.
effort in matters which involved rectifying the imperial conduct. His principal concern, as shown in the *T'ung-tien*, was to encourage the throne to apply the relevant governmental policies from previous dynasties to contemporary conditions. In other words, he believed that administrative changes were essential in solving the problems of his time.

Judging by many of his reformist policies, Lu Chih evidently had an equal interest in administrative changes. Yet, because of his career experience, he recognized that the emperor was, whenever he chose to be, the final arbiter of all administrative decisions; thus Lu never excluded the transformation of the imperial conduct from his pursuit of good government. Meanwhile, since in his comments on the history of administrative changes Tu Yu did occasionally reveal his perception of the imperial role, and since his perception was related to some of his basic political convictions, a further comparison between this aspect of his thought and that of Lu Chih is possible.

For one thing, Tu Yu demonstrated that he, like Lu Chih, believed that human effort, not fate, was the key to good government. As Lu Chih advised Te-tsung not to attribute the second Ho-pei rebellion to a predetermined destiny, Tu Yu also commented that the An Lu-shan rebellion "was surely [caused by] human affairs; how could it be just the timing of Heaven?" While pointing out the government's military policy as the main cause of the rebellion, Tu Yu concurrently implied that emperor Hsiian-tsung's failure to observe his imperial role caused "ministers who talked about profits" and "generals who sought rewards" to manage financial and military affairs and subsequently sowed the seeds for the An Lu-shan rebellion.

Many of Tu Yu's comments show that he perceived the role of the emperor to be a benevolent one. Tu once disclosed his perception this way: "The sage kings in antiquity

102 This has been pointed out by David McMullen's recent studies, see McMullen, *State and scholars*, 1988: 261; also see his "Views of the state," 1987: 72-74.
103 *TT*, 12: 71B. The English translation is McMullen's, from "Views of the state," 1987: 69.
104 *TT*, 148: 773B; also see McMullen, Ibid.
105 *TT*, ibid., and 12: 71B.
'considered that righteousness was profit, not that profit was profit.' They preferred to store up [wealth] among the people, not to hoard [it] in treasuries and depositories. [For] 'when the people do not have enough, how can the ruler have enough?"'  

If presented without attribution, this statement could very well be taken for a piece of Lu Chih's typical advice to emperor Te-tsung. Not only is the basic concept of a benevolent ruler manifested in this statement identical to Lu Chih's, but the second quotation from the Analects is also exactly the same one cited by Lu Chih in 794. Even the issue which both Tu Yu and Lu Chih were discussing when they quoted these exact same lines from the Analects turns out to be the same: taxation.  

Maintaining that the ancient sage kings had regarded the people's livelihood as their moral obligation, Tu Yu made it clear that the Confucian principle of light taxation ought to be the guideline for the formulation of contemporary tax policy. He cited Confucius' and Mencius' position on light taxation as evidence. Meanwhile, he also placed the light tax policy proposed in the book of Kuan tzu, a work usually considered a forerunner of Legalist thought, side by side with similar policies supported by Confucius and Mencius.  

Tu Yu's interest in the Kuan tzu was such that in the introduction to the T'ung-tien where he stresses that a good government ought to take the people's material life as its

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106 TT, 4: 25A. The English translation of this passage is a modified version of McMullen's translation. See McMullen, "Views of the state," 1987: 73. McMullen locates the first quotation from the Li-chi chu-shu, SPPY edition, 60: 6A-7B; the second is from the Analects, 12: 9.  

107 TT, Ibid. It has been pointed out that Tu Yu had suspected that Kuan Tzu, the person, or rather Kuan Chung, was not the author of the Kuan tzu, the book. For the sake of convenience, whenever the name of Kuan Tzu is used here, it refers to the person so named in the book Kuan tzu, not the real historical person Kuan Chung. On a discussion of whether or not Kuan Chung was the author of the Kuan tzu, of why Kuan Chung has been regarded as the pioneer of the Legalist school, see Allyn Rickett, tr., Guanzi, political, economic, and philosophical essays from early China (Guanzi hereafter), Princeton University Press, 1985: 8-24. For Kuan Tzu's economic policy, see Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, translated by Mote, A history of Chinese political thought, 1979: 355-61.
priority, he again drew a parallel between Confucius' and Kuan Tzu's views on this issue.

As Tu Yu saw it:

The priority in the way of good government lies in implementing moral transformation. The basis of moral transformation lies in having a sufficiency of food and clothes. . . ., Kuan Tzu said, 'When the granaries are full, [the people] will know propriety and moderation. When their food and clothing is adequate, they will know the [distinction between] honor and shame.' Confucius said, 'When they (i. e. the people) have been made rich, instruct them.' This [need for a sufficiency of food and clothes] is what these texts meant.108

The above statement shows that Tu Yu obviously believed that the Kuan tzu position on light taxation and on the people's material well-being was synonymous with that of the Confucian thinkers. Tu Yu himself admitted that "Kuan Tzu's wisdom was infinite. Using the small state of Ch'i [he] set all under Heaven straight. [It] was on the basis of benevolence and righteousness that [Kuan Tzu] helped [Ch'i] achieve its hegemony."109

Lu Chih never seems to have relied upon Kuan Tzu's economic policies in discussing his own financial proposals, but, with a focus on Kuan Chung's political approach to government, he did give Kuan Chung credit for his advice to Duke Huan of Ch'i to employ and trust capable officials .110 What is clear then, at least up to this point, is that Tu Yu's alleged position regarding the imperial policy on light taxation and the imperial duty to provide a material sufficiency for the people stand as equivalents to Lu Chih's pursuit of improvement in the people's livelihood.

108 See TT, 1: 9A. The English translation of this passage is McMullen's translation. However, I have replaced McMullen's translation of Kuan Tzu's famous lines with Allyn Rickett's translation. See McMullen, "Views of state," 1987: 68; Rickett, tr., Guanzi, 1985: 51. Kuan Tzu's lines are from the "Mu-min or On shepherding the people" chapter of the Kuan tzu . See Kuan tzu chi-ch'eng, Chu tzu chi-ch'eng edition, ch. 1: 1. Confucius' saying is from the "Tzu Lu" chapter of the Analects, the line quoted here was a paraphrase by Tu Yu.

109 TT, 12: 68B.

110 Lu Chih, "Ch'ing hsü t'ai sheng chang-kuan chü-chien shu-li chuang," HYCC, 18: 8.
Nevertheless, a seemingly contradictory attitude appears in Tu Yu's view of the imperial role. For instance, Tu Yu, on the one hand, maintained that the emperor's role was a benevolent one; but on the other hand, following Kuan Tzu's concept of elevating the ruler, he advocated that the ruler ought to be exalted.\textsuperscript{111} Of course, during a time when the central government was in decline, one can accept the argument that Tu Yu's elevation of the ruler's position served merely as an expedient call, and consequently had no bearing on his theoretical position.\textsuperscript{112} This becomes especially so when one discovers that on another occasion Tu Yu expressed the view that establishing the ruler's position was "to bring good government to the world by means of the one person (i.e. the ruler). It was not to offer the world to the one person."\textsuperscript{113}

What deserves our attention is the fact that Tu Yu's willingness to elevate the ruler's position for the sake of consolidating the central power finds no parallel in Lu Chih's approach to government. Even though Lu Chih's entire official life was oriented toward the restoration of the T'ang state, he never mentioned in his extant works that the emperor ought to be exalted. Quite the contrary, he always insisted that humble imperial behavior was a necessary condition for winning popular support for the court. Even when he applied his principle of expediency to political maneuvers, Lu Chih constantly requested the throne to compromise his exalted position for the sake of achieving a higher ethical good, be it for the people or for the state.

This crucial difference between Lu Chih and Tu Yu seems to function as the underlying cause of their divergent views with regard to the two-tax system.

\textsuperscript{111} TT, 31: 177B. Also see McMullen, "Views of the state," 1987: 73. For Kuan Tzu's concept of elevating the ruler, see Kung-ch'\'ian Hsiao, translated by Mote, A history of Chinese political thought, 1979: 325-26.

\textsuperscript{112} This is McMullen's interpretation of Tu Yu's inconsistent view on the ruler's position. See McMullen, Ibid.

\textsuperscript{113} TT, 171: 907A. The English translation is McMullen's translation. See McMullen, Ibid.: 74.
Tu Yu's support of the two-tax system was based upon two usual reasons. First, the implementation of the two-tax system provided a regular income for the state. Second, it could solve the problem of vagrancy. Tu Yu said that the implementation of the two-tax system had "more than doubled" the income from taxes. "Thus, it gives to taxation a regular rule, and the people know [that there is] a definite regulation. The grasping clerks can not carry on fraudulent dealings; the crafty people are all covered in the household registration. It (the two-tax system) is indeed a timely system and a good plan for correcting [previous] abuses."\(^{114}\)

What Tu Yu appreciated most about the two-tax system was that it could stabilize the state revenues by increasing the number of taxpayers.\(^{115}\) He was not disturbed by the problem which concerned Lu Chih most. That is, the heavy tax burden on the common people created by a situation where they had to pay a fixed quota, which was assessed previously on the basis of a much inflated currency, in terms of greatly depreciated current commodity prices.

Surely, having occupied various financial positions himself,\(^{116}\) Tu Yu could not possibly fail to notice the problems, such as the shortage of cash and the influence of deflation, involved in the operation of the two-tax system. From this perspective, we can see that Tu Yu's concern for the economic well-being of the state was so strong that he did not feel any urgent need to correct the social evils created by the "changed times and circumstances" in implementing the two-tax system. This shows that Tu's concerns for accommodation to the changes of time and circumstances were first and foremost oriented toward strengthening the state power, not toward relieving the people's plight.

\(^{114}\) TT, 7: 42C.

\(^{115}\) Both Ch'u Ch'ing-yüan and Wang Shou-nan agree that Tu Yu's support of the two-tax system was based upon his concern with the financial stability of the state. See Ch'ü Ch'ing-yüan, T'ang-tai ts'ai-cheng shih, 1943: 37; Wang Shou-nan, Sui T'ang shih, 1986: 591.

\(^{116}\) See CTS, 147: 3978; HTS, 166: 5086.
Once Tu Yu's paramount concern for the economic well-being of the state is clear, we can then clarify why he also had a seemingly contradictory attitude toward Shang Yang's land policy. Indeed, apart from his interest in Kuan Tzu's economic policies, Tu Yu further paid serious attention to the economic policies of Shang Yang, one of the most notable Legalists.\footnote{For Shang Yang's economic policies, see Li Yu-ning, *Shang Yang's reforms and state control in China*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1977: chapters 3 & 4.}

On one occasion when Tu Yu was reviewing the land policies of former dynasties, he put Mencius and Shang Yang side by side as if some common ground existed between the land policies of these philosophically opposed thinkers.\footnote{TT, 1: 10A.} Tu Yu certainly knew that Shang Yang initiated land reform in the Ch'in state during the Warring States period (403 B.C. - 221) by abolishing the very well-field (ching-t'ien) system that Mencius held in high regard.\footnote{For Shang Yang's land reform and the nature of the well-field system, see Li Yu-ning, *Shang Yang's reforms*, 1977: ch. 4, esp. 51-58; for Mencius' view on the well-field system, see the following discussion.} In fact, Tu specifically quoted Mencius' comments on the well-field system as follows:

> Benevolent government must begin with land demarcation. When boundaries are not properly drawn, the division of land according to the well-field system and the yield of grain used for paying officials cannot be equitable. For this reason, despotic rulers and corrupt officials always neglect the boundaries. Once the boundaries are correctly fixed, there will be no difficulty in settling the distribution of land and the determination of emolument.\footnote{TT, 1: 10A. This passage is from the first part of the "T'eng Wen-kung" chapter in the *Mencius*. For the English translation, see Lau, tr., *Mencius*, 3/A, 1970: 99.}

If Tu Yu appreciated Mencius' view on the well-field system, as he clearly implied by citing the above comments from the *Mencius*, why did he immediately put forth Shang Yang's policy which was deliberately aimed at abolishing the well-field system? The answer to this question seems to be related to the result of Shang Yang's land reform in the
Ch'in state. Tu Yu quoted a passage which said that Shang Yang "abolished the well-field [system] and regulated the pathways [of the land], let [the peasants] cultivate land but not limit its size. Within a few years, the [Ch'in] state [became] rich, the army [grew] powerful, and was [thus] invincible in all the world."\textsuperscript{121}

Evidently, the reason Shang Yang's land reform attracted Tu Yu's attention was precisely because it had opened up new land for agricultural cultivation, brought wealth and power to Ch'in, and made it the most powerful state of its time. Furthermore, it is precisely due to his emphasis on agricultural cultivation that Tu Yu put Mencius' view of the well-field system together with Shang Yang's antithetical land policy. As is well known both the Confucians and the Legalists firmly believed that agriculture was the basis of the economy. Tu Yu made his point that while Mencius' land policy could lead to a stable and agrarian economy, Shang Yang's could make a state invincible in all the world.

Except for the increase in agricultural production, Tu Yu does not seem to have particularly approved of Shang Yang's land reform. He even criticized Shang Yang's land policy in the following way for creating certain social ills:

\ldots though obtaining temporary profits, nevertheless causing the excessive land accumulation to rise. \ldots According to the principle of the \textit{Spring and Autumn Annals}, the feudal lords should not monopolize enfeoffment, and officials should not monopolize land property. If the powerful people accumulate land to the point of exceeding the regulation and become as rich as Dukes and Marquis, this is [tantamount to] monopolizing enfeoffment; if land purchase and sale is left up to individuals, it is [similar to] land monopoly. [Under these circumstances,] would it not be difficult to do away with vagrancy?\textsuperscript{122}

It seems that Tu Yu held conflicting views of Shang Yang's land policy since, on the one hand, he found it appealing in terms of strengthening the state power, but on the other hand, he also saw it creating damaging problems as well. Here Tu Yu's principal concern for the state helps us to see that the rationale behind both his praise \textit{and} criticism of Shang

\textsuperscript{121} TT, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} TT, 1: 9B.
Yang's land policy was actually the same. That is, both his praise and blame were closely related to the fact that Shang Yang's land policy simultaneously strengthened and damaged the power of the state. As noted above, Tu Yu's attack was made on the basis of his belief that Shang Yang's land reform destroyed the state's control of the land and gave rise to the problem of vagrancy.

Although Tu mentioned various efforts to restrict excessive land accumulation in different periods, which included the chün-t'ien system, he clearly considered that only with the implementation of the two-tax system was the problem of vagrancy finally solved, and the state's finances finally stabilized. When he stated that the problem of vagrancy was solved due to the implementation of the two-tax system, it seems that he also lost interest in the problem of excessive land accumulation. Compared with Lu Chih's efforts to reduce land rents so as to ameliorate the peasants' suffering, we can see that Tu Yu's sympathy for the peasants paled in comparison to his concern for the economic well-being of the state.

This explains why when Tu Yu specifically singled out Kuan Chung and Shang Yang as "the worthy ones (hsien-che)," his argument was made precisely on the basis that Kuan Chung and Shang Yang had helped their sovereigns to "enrich the state and strengthen the armies (fu-kuo ch'iang-ping)." Considering the weakened central power in the post-An Lu-shan period, it is likely that Tu Yu's concern for state power differed from the Legalists' but was similar to Hsün Tzu's position, again functioning only as an expedient necessity. After all, this longing for a unified empire was so prevalent in the

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123 TT, 1: 10 C-13A.
124 Except for Kuan Chung and Shang Yang, Tu Yu also included as worthy ones four other ministers from previous dynasties, all famous for their administrative abilities. See TT, 12: 71C.
125 TT, Ibid., for Kuan Chung's and Shang Yang's contributions to the Ch'i and Ch'in states, see Charles Hucker, China's imperial past: An introduction to Chinese history and culture, Stanford University Press, 1975: 35-42; also see Li Yu-ning, Shang Yang's reforms, 1977.
126 It is well known that although Hsün Tzu talked about elevating the ruler and enriching the state, he never neglected the people's livelihood. See Kung-ch'iian Hsiao, translated by Mote, A history of Chinese political thought, 1979: 193 & 322-23.
contemporary consciousness, that even Han Yu, the most notable representative of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement, gave Shang Yang credit for his ability to strengthen the Ch'in state.¹²⁷

Meanwhile, it is due exactly to this longing for a powerful and centralized state that Tu Yu praised the first imperial Ch'in dynasty for its substitution of "the prefectual or the commandery and county system (chüan hsien chih-tu)" for the ancient "feudal system (or feng-chien)." For Tu Yu, one important merit of the establishment of the commandery system was that it could reduce periods of chaos during dynastic changes to a minimum better than the feng-chien system.¹²⁸

To be sure, Tu Yu's comment that "to set up [feudal] states benefits one house, [but] to establish commanderies benefits ten thousand surnames"¹²⁹ reveals that he believed such a centralized system could spare the common people from suffering greater disorder when dynastic changes took place. Yet, his real concern here was to point out that only a centralized system could gather a large population for the state, and with a large population the government would become safe and stable. As Tu Yu put it: "there is security in a multitude of people and danger in a small number."¹³⁰ In other words, the stability and security of the state was still his first and foremost concern.

Be that as it may, since Tu Yu noticed the public misery during dynastic changes, his sympathy for the people in this regard was consistent with his general position on light taxation and on regulating the government expenditure for the sake of "pacifying the people."¹³¹ This means that while the search for a powerful state was unequivocally his primary concern, Tu Yu had no intention of leaving the people's welfare completely

¹²⁷ See Hartman, Han Yu, 1986: 130; for Han Yu's comments on Shang Yang, see his "Chin-shih ts'e-wen shih-san shou," HCLCC, 14: 6A.
¹²⁸ See McMullen, "Views of the state," 1987: 79-80. For Tu Yu's own comments on the prefectual system in relation to the feudal system, see TT, 31: 177.
¹²⁹ TT, Ibid.: 177B. Also see McMullen, Ibid; Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism," 1960: 103.
¹³⁰ TT, Ibid.: 177A.
¹³¹ TT, 12: 71C.
unattended. It is probably from this perspective that the *Old T'ang History* describes Tu as a man most concerned with "methods of enriching the state and pacifying the people."\(^{132}\)

What we have to point out is that against the identical historical background, although Lu Chih himself was personally responsible for the task of re-establishing mid-T'ang stability, he never said in his extant works that the state's interests could actually come before the people's welfare, not even as an expediency. For Lu Chih, the people were the foundation of the state. Only when the people's welfare was taken care of, could the state ensure its stability and prosperity. That is why when he was asked by Te-tsung to present his advice regarding the court's predicament during the second Ho-peii rebellion, Lu continuously requested the throne to abolish all the emergency taxes so as to consolidate the foundation of the state in 783.

On the whole, both Li Mi and Tu Yu shared some common ground with Lu Chih in terms of their views on improving the bureaucracy. Lu Chih, Li Mi and Tu Yu all talked about abolishing unnecessary official appointments at one time or another. While administrative efficiency motivated Lu Chih's suggestion, the state's financial burden was the chief concern of Li Mi and Tu Yu.

Unlike Lu Chih, in addition to the fact that he did not offer any notable policies regarding the people's livelihood, Li Mi's Taoist inclinations also made a difference in his political behavior. That is, his refraining from continuous remonstrance does not harmonize at all with Lu Chih's unyielding pursuit of his political ideals.

Lu Chih and Tu Yu also shared similar views on other matters. They both agreed that adapting to changing times and circumstances was absolutely necessary, and that historical precedents should only be employed when they were feasible in the present conditions. They further agreed that bureaucratic positions were for virtuous and talented people, and that the recommendation method ought to be used to select such candidates. The disparity

\(^{132}\) CTS, 147: 3982.
in their positions becomes obvious only when the same recommendation method they proposed was to be used at different stages of the selection process.

Meanwhile, if we do not distinguish their different points of emphasis, Tu Yu's comments on realizing a benevolent imperial role by reducing taxes, and by ensuring a sufficiency of the people's material conditions certainly makes him sound like a spokesman for Lu Chih's ideas. However, once the nuances of Tu Yu's position on enriching the state and his contradictory remarks on the imperial role are fully disclosed, he is seen to have political views quite distinct from Lu Chih's consistent position on similar issues. The gap between them looms even larger when their differing priorities in regard to the two-tax system are revealed.

In sum, although Tu Yu, like Lu Chih, was undoubtedly a Confucian scholar official, due to the decline of the central government in the post-An Lu-shan era, his concern for the state propelled him to put his concern for the people in a subordinate position. And this ultimately set him apart from Lu Chih. Another major dissimilarity which calls for attention is that while Tu Yu hardly tried to put his political convictions into practice during his service as Chief Minister in the court, Lu Chih's entire official life at court was committed to the realization of his Confucian political convictions. In other words, Tu Yu's Confucian consciousness remained largely at the level of a conceptual discussion in contrast to Lu Chih's actual efforts at reform.

Lu Chih and the leading figures of the mid-Tang Confucian revival

The above comparison focuses on characters who were not only learned scholars but also served in the Tang court at one time or another as Chief Minister. Although similarities are found between these Chief Ministers and Lu Chih, the essential differences overshadow areas of agreement. In order to discover Lu Chih's closest intellectual
counterparts, we shall now examine whether or not common ground existed between him and some leading figures of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement.

Unlike Lu Chih, most of the leading figures of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement never occupied the highest bureaucratic position at court. Most of these intellectual leaders served a great deal of time in provincial government.\textsuperscript{133} Their provincial experience often provided them with first hand understanding of current problems and intensified their social and political concerns. For the sake of convenience, we shall examine their concerns along with those of Lu Chih according to their connection with the state, the bureaucracy, the imperial conduct and the people's livelihood.

The meaning of the state used here is distinctly different from the Western concept of "sovereign state."\textsuperscript{134} It is employed to convey the traditional Chinese concept of "t'ien- hsia," or "under Heaven" as was derived from the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven. That is, the state is regarded as meaning "an all embracing socio-political order" centering on the Son of Heaven.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{133} The careers of Yuan Chieh, Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü are three well known examples. Yuan Chieh started his official career around 759 at the age of forty. He spent almost the entire 13 years of his official life in the provinces. Han Yü served nearly 14 years in provincial governments out of his 32 years in official life. Liu Tsung-yüan also spent 16 years in local services out of his 22 years in official life. See Sun Wang, Yuan Tzu-shan nien-p'u, 1962; Shih Tzu-yü, Liu Tsung-yüan nien-p'u, 1958; Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, 1977:396-404.


On the state

One consensus shared by almost all the representatives of the Confucian revival movement was their concern for the restoration of a unified empire amidst the powerful provincial governors. Their concern for the state led them to reflect upon basic problems such as the principles of government.

As we recall, Lu Chih believed that righteousness and expediency were two complementary principles which ought to be observed in establishing a state. To Lu, the principle of righteousness was the moral foundation of a benevolent government, while the principle of expediency was to be applied in order to grasp the opportune moment and ward off danger to the state. The principle of expediency, furthermore, was not political trickery. It was intended for accommodation to specific times and circumstances so that a higher ethical standard could be further achieved.

Many leading figures of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival held views of the state similar to Lu Chih's, although their form of expression might be slightly different. One very basic concept of the state shared by almost all the leading figures was that it had to be governed by the principles of benevolence and righteousness. For example, Yuan Chieh, whose early thinking betrayed some elements of Taoist orientation, once asserted that "the way of establishing an ordered government lay first in using benevolence and wisdom."¹³⁶ In a memorial to emperor Tai-tsung around 765, Tu-ku Chi also insisted that the emperor should try to "employ the hearts of Yao and Confucius as [his own] heart [in governing]."¹³⁷ Tu-ku Chi's intention to use Confucian moral principles as criteria for

¹³⁶ Yuan Chieh, "Er feng shih-lun," in Yüan Tz'u-shan chi (YTSC hereafter), edited by Sun Wang, Shanghai: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1960: 10. For Yuan's life and his role in the ku-wen movement, see McMullen, "Yüan Chieh," 1968; Sun Wang, Yüan Tz'ü-shan nien-p'ü, Shanghai: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1962; HTS, 143: 4681-86. McMullen points out that Yuan Chieh's Taoist orientation was probably influenced by the fact that the present ruler took an intense interest in Taoism. See McMullen, Ibid.: 11.

¹³⁷ See Tu-ku Chi, "Chien piao," in his Pi ling chi (PLC hereafter), SPTK edition, 4: 21A. The same essay also appears in CTW, but under the title of "Chih-chien piao,"
government is fairly obvious. When Han Yu expressed his view on government, he made it clear that benevolence and righteousness was the correct way of governing. As he stated:

... no way is greater than that of benevolence and righteousness, no teachings straighter than those on ritual, music, chastisement, and government. Spread these over the empire, and all creatures will obtain what is right for them; apply them to your own self, and your body will find rest and your spirit peace. Yao passed them on to Shun, Shun to Yu, Yu to Tang, Tang to Wen and Wu, and Wen and Wu to the Duke of Chou and Confucius.\textsuperscript{138}

We can see that Han Yu not only applied the Way of benevolence and righteousness to the governance of the state, but also intended it for the spiritual cultivation of human life.

Li Ao, Han Yu's follower, held the identical view on "the succession of the Way". He stressed that his Way was the Way of Yao, Shun, Wen, Wu and Confucius, and that "a gentleman (chün-tzu) will do nothing except for benevolence and righteousness."\textsuperscript{139} While Li Ao championed benevolence and righteousness as moral prerequisites for a gentleman's personal cultivation, he stated that if he could serve the government, he would definitely extend benevolence and righteousness and put them into practice in the world.\textsuperscript{140}

Liu Tsung-yüan equally believed that the state should not deviate from the Confucian moral Way. He maintained that "office is a vehicle of the Way. It would be wrong for them (office and the Way) to be separated."\textsuperscript{141} His perception of the Way was, however, also influenced by Han Yu. As pointed out elsewhere, Liu claimed that the Way he upheld

\textsuperscript{138}Han Yu, "Sung fu-t'u Wen-ch'ang shih hsü," in HCLCC, 20: 4A. The English translation of this passage is from Hartman's translation except that I have used "benevolence and righteousness (jen i)" to replace his translation of "humanity and justice" in this particular context. See Hartman, Han Yu, 1986: 148-49.

\textsuperscript{139}Li Ao, "Ta Hou Kao ti erh shu," in \textit{Li Wen-kung chi} (LWKC hereafter), SPTK edition, 7: 31A.

\textsuperscript{140}Ibid.

was the way transmitted by Yao and Shun down to Confucius.\(^{142}\) For Liu Tsung-yüan, then, the way of benevolence and righteousness was inseparable from the way of governing.

The difference between Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü and Li Ao, as mentioned already, was that Liu confined the Confucian moral Way primarily to public life. This is perhaps why he constantly used the term "Ta-chung (Great Centrality)" or "Ta-chung chih-tao (the Way of Great Centrality)" to label the Confucian Way.\(^{143}\) He even made "benevolence, righteousness, rites, wisdom and sincerity" the content of "the Way of Centrality," and asserted that these five virtues were methods to prevent government from degeneration.\(^{144}\)

Meanwhile, it is well noted that Liu Tsung-yüan, like Tu Yu, insisted that the commandery system, not the feng-chien system, constituted the foundation of a peaceful and ordered empire. According to Liu, it was only through the establishment of the commandery system that an empire which intended to benefit all under Heaven was possible.\(^{145}\) Thus, from the institutional point of view, Liu regarded the commandery system as a basic instrument for the realization of a benevolent and righteous state.

In his most celebrated work, "On the transformation of the world by human culture (Jen-wen hua-ch'eng lun)," Lü Wen (772-811), Liu Tsung-yüan's comrade in the Wang Shu-wen group as well as a notable mid-T'ang thinker,\(^{146}\) also indicated that "the ruler

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\(^{144}\) Liu Tsung-yüan, "Shih-ling lun hsia," Ibid.


\(^{146}\) For Lü Wen's life and his relationship with Liu Tsung-yüan during their participation in the Wang Shu-wen group, see Ma Ch'eng-su, Lü Ho-shu hsüeh-p'u, Taipei, 1977:
treating his ministers with benevolence while the ministers serve the ruler with righteousness" constituted "the culture of the court." To Lü Wen, benevolence and righteousness were two necessary pillars that lay the foundation of a proper polity.

Although it is evident that all these major representatives of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival voiced views similar to Lu Chih's regarding the moral basis of the state, their position in relation to the principle of expediency does not seem to be as uniformly identical as one might have expected.

Both Yüan Chieh and Tu-ku Chi once wrote that practicing expediency meant deviating from the correct way of governance. In an earlier essay written in 752, before the An Lu-shan rebellion, Yüan blamed rulers who intended to save the world by practicing expediency for causing moral degradation. While the influence of Taoist non-interference can still be detected, Yüan Chieh's Confucian consciousness was nevertheless prevalent. He said that rulers who were anxious to save the world, "saved it with expediency. Expediency [involves] waste and evil, and the world thus also became wasteful and evil." By the same token, Tu-ku Chi disapproved of applying expediency to government because "the way of expediency is to regard disagreement with the classics as practicality; this deviates even farther from moral virtue."

This antipathy toward expediency probably led Yüan Chieh to voice his negative opinion of Kuan Chung in 757. Yüan, unlike Lu Chih, or unlike most of the mid-T'ang Confucian revivalists, not only discredited Kuan Chung's contribution to the accomplishment of Duke Huan of Ch'i, but also held Kuan Chung responsible for the

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147 Lü Wen, "Jen-wen hua-ch'eng lun," in Lü ho-shu wen-ch'i (LHSWC hereafter), SPTK edition, 10: 54B.
149 Tu-ku Chi, "Ta Yang Pen ch'u-shih shu," in PLC, 18: 114B.
150 Yüan Chieh, "Lun Kuan Chung," YTSC, 6: 87-88; also see McMullen, "Historical and literary theory . . .," Perspective, 1973: 328; McMullen, "Yüan Chieh," 1968: 73.
Significance

Yüan Chieh was not trying to defend the feudal system. He was rather worried about maintaining the unity of the T'ang empire in the midst of the An Lu-shan rebellion. Using Kuan Chung as a negative example of misplaced loyalty, Yüan Chieh made loyalty an absolute virtue for official subjects.

Lu Chih never thought of loyalty the way Yüan did. As a matter of fact, we remember that Lu encouraged Te-tsung to pardon an official accused of treason on the ground that this official's surrender to the rebels was not out of his own free will, and that this official's failure to commit suicide during his captivity did not then make him a criminal deserving the death penalty. Lu Chih was evidently more willing to judge a person's loyalty in accordance with the actual historical situation confronting the person.

Up to 757, although Yüan Chieh disagreed on moral grounds with practicing expediency in government, and although he attacked Kuan Chung's displaced loyalty for the sake of preserving T'ang unity, this does not mean that Yüan lacked an understanding of the importance of accommodation to changing times and circumstances. On the contrary, in 764, during his service as Prefect in Tao-chou (in modern Hunan), Yüan actually said that "if [a Prefect] does not accommodate to changes so as to satisfy the needs of the time, . . . a revolt will then arise."\footnote{152}

Clearly, in terms of maintaining order in the provinces, Yüan Chieh stood with Lu Chih in advocating the necessity of adapting to new situations. He parted company with Lu Chih on the application of expediency because, unlike Lu Chih, he did not visualize expediency as a complementary principle which could help the state to pursue a higher ethical good with the minimum possible loss. Be that as it may, the fact remains that both Yüan and Lu shared a similar concern for T'ang stability.

As already noted, it was precisely this concern for the state that led Han Yü to commend Shang Yang's methods of strengthening the power of the Ch'in state. The same

\footnote{151} McMullen, Ibid.: 329.
\footnote{152} Yüan Chieh, "Hsieh Shang piao," YTSC, 8: 124.
reason further motivated Han Yü, Li Ao and Liu Tsung-yüan to praise Kuan Chung for his equally competent administration that aided the Ch'i state to become a hegemon in the Spring and Autumn period. Moreover, it was also due to this concern that Han, Li and Liu all emphasized the necessity of adapting to changing times and circumstances.

Han Yü, for instance, when discussing the best possible military strategy in 815, stressed the importance of "estimating and examining the circumstances, and of pursuing benefits by taking advantage of the times." Han also attributed a colleague's military victory to the fact of his ability to "adapt to the opportune moment in conducting affairs." When Han recommended a close friend to a provincial governor, he praised this friend as a person who "recognizes the times [and circumstances] and knows how to [adapt] to changes, and does not have only one specific talent like the Confucian scholars or literati."

It has been noted, however, that there were "conservative" and even "reactionary" sides to Han Yü's thought. Part of the evidence for this claim is Han Yü's resistance to change. In 794 when Han Yü was taking a placement examination for a second time after being unjustly rejected in the previous year, his composition expressed an opinion contrary to the court's intention of allowing students at the state academy directorate to substitute for acolytes (chái-lang) in important state rituals. The court's reason for this plan

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154 Han Yü, "Lun Huai-hsi shih-i chuang," HCLCC, 40: 8B.
155 Han Yü, "Yü Eh-chou Liu Chung-ch'en shu yu i-shou," HCLCC, 19: 3B. Han's colleague was Liu Kung-ch'ō (768-832) who voluntarily pleaded with the court to let him fight against the rebellious Huai-hsi governor in 815. See TCTC, 239: 7708; CTS, 165: 4302; also see Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, 1977: 88.
156 Han Yü, "Yü Yüan hsiang-kung shu," Ibid.19: 2A. This close friend was Fan Tsung-shih (d. 824). For his relationship with Han Yü, see Ch'ien Chi-po, Han Yü chih, 1958: 73-74. Also see McMullen, "Han Yü: An alternative picture (Han Yü hereafter)," a review article in HJAS, vol. 49, 2 (December 1989): 621-22.
157 This is McMullen's comment on Han Yü's thought; in McMullen, Ibid.: 623.
Significance

was that it would be economical and convenient (sheng pien).\(^{158}\) Han Yu argued that while acolytes were usually assigned to perform menial and physical tasks in state rituals, the students at the state academy were supposed to concentrate on cultivation of their virtue and intellectual skills. He maintained that "what acolytes now perform is physical labor; what the students do is [cultivate their] virtue and skill. Selecting [the students] on the basis of [their] virtue and skill, but making them do physical labor like servants is tantamount to causing the gentlemen to submit to the duties of small men. This, in addition, is not the way for the state to elevate Confucian scholars and encourage learning, or to lead the people to do good [things]."\(^{159}\)

Han then contended that even though the tasks performed by acolytes in the state rituals were menial, they had to be accomplished with special care so as to express the utmost respect. If students were to replace acolytes, they would be unable to concentrate their minds on both jobs; consequently they would both neglect their studies and fail to perform acolytes' tasks with the required standard of excellence. Toward the end of his essay, Han stated emphatically that "in general, any alteration in regulations or change in administrative statutes, if it does not produce a tenfold advantage over the old ones (the regulations being replaced), should not be undertaken, not to mention if the result does not even equal that of the older [regulations]."\(^{160}\)

\(^{158}\) Ibid.: 622. Teng-k'o chi-k'ao agrees that this examination took place in 794 while T'ang hui-yao records both the court's intention to execute this policy and one opposite position in 796. See Teng-k'o chi-k'ao, 13: 493; THY, 59: 1026. However, I have followed Hartman's study and accepted that Han took this placement examination first in 793, then in 794 and again in 795. Hartman also explains why Han was unjustly rejected in the 793 examination. See Hartman, Han Yu, 1986: 29-30. Lo Lien-t'ien also believes that this examination was held in 794, see his Han Yu yen-chiu, 1977: 45. Considering the fact that Han went to Lo-yang at the end of 795, and by the fall of 796 he also obtained his first appointment through personal recommendation in Pien-chou (in modern Honan), it seems that the placement examination held at the capital more likely took place in 794. For Han Yu's essay, see "Sheng shih hsüeh-sheng tai chai-lang i," HCLCC, 14: 13B-15A.

\(^{159}\) "Sheng shih hsüeh-sheng . . . ," Ibid.: 14B.

\(^{160}\) Han Yu, Ibid.: 14B-15A. The English translation is a modified version of McMullen's translation, Ibid.: 623.
Han Yu's essay clearly reflects the Mencian idea that "there are affairs of great men, and there are affairs of small men. . . . There are those who use their minds and there are those who use their muscles."\(^{161}\) There is no doubt that Han Yu, just like Mencius, assumed an obvious elitist attitude toward social hierarchy, but his cautious attitude on changes in administrative practice does not make him a person who was opposed to changes per se. Han's position on this particular occasion may be conservative, but it does not appear as "reactionary" as it has sometimes seemed to be.

When comparing which government among the ancient Hsia, Shang and Chou dynasties was the best model for the present ruler, Li Ao also made it clear that the rulers of the Three Dynasties did not in the beginning intend to elevate one specific way of governing. The reason, according to Li, that they ended up doing so was because they "adapted to the changed circumstances and practiced expediency."\(^{162}\)

Liu Tsung-yüan's argument that the establishment of the feng-chien system was made necessary by the "conditions and forces (shih)" that ancient sages found themselves subject to is well known.\(^{163}\) This treatise not only demonstrates his belief in the objective development of human history, but also reveals that he viewed human organizations as the outcome of accommodation to various new circumstances. This recognition undoubtedly played a part in Liu's emphasis on the importance of expediency in government.

In 814, Liu wrote an essay attacking the Han Confucian theory of interaction which stressed a fixed coordination between one specific season and the execution of punishments. Although Liu's purpose was to criticize the irrational and superstitious aspects of that theory, part of his argument reveals how he considered expediency

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\(^{161}\) This is from the "T'eng Wen-kung chapter" of the _Mencius_. For the English translation, see Lau, tr., _Mencius_, 3A/4, 1970: 101.

\(^{162}\) Li Ao, "Ti-wang so shang wen," LWKC, 4: 18B.

necessary in government. Contending that what had been the standard of administration was not necessarily an accurate means of carrying out the Confucian moral Way, Liu explained the relation between Ch'ing (standard of conduct, norm or classics) and Ch'üan (expediency) as follows:

What is called ch'ing, is the norm; what is called ch'üan, is to understand the ch'ing thoroughly. These are all matters of the benevolent and wise [people]. If [we] separate [ch'ing and ch'üan] from each other, confusion will arise. Ch'ing without ch'üan will become rigid, and ch'üan without ch'ing will become contrary [to the norm]. These two (ch'ing and ch'üan) are artificial terms; only by [doing everything] to an optimal degree, can we exhaust their efficacy. . . . Knowing ch'ing without understanding ch'üan is [tantamount to] not knowing ch'ing; understanding ch'üan without a knowledge of ch'ing is the same as not knowing ch'üan. . . . Those who know ch'ing, will not damage my Tao (Way) with strange things; those who understand ch'üan, will not use [the rule of] ordinary people to oppose my thought; those who combine [the two] into one and have no doubt in doing so, are the ones who truly believe in the Tao.164

Like Lu Chih, Liu Tsung-yüan apparently did not think that the application of expediency was analogous to political trickery. He showed that a relation of mutual dependence existed between Ch'ing and Ch'üan. Their operation, moreover, had to be under the guidance of the Tao. It seems that when Lu Chih explained his principles of I and Ch'üan, he already anticipated the similar understanding that Liu Tsung-yüan also came to.

To reiterate, the above mentioned leading figures of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival all shared Lu Chih's view that the government had to be operated on the basis of the Confucian principles of benevolence and righteousness. Also like Lu Chih, their belief in a moral foundation for the state did not prevent them from seeing the importance of adapting to changed times and circumstances in conducting governmental affairs. Even Yüan Chieh, although he expressed a negative view on expediency, nonetheless recognized the necessity of accommodating to newly arisen situations in local administration. With the sole

164 Liu Tsung-yüan, "Tuan hsing lun," LHTCC, 3: 16B.
exception of Tu-ku Chi, all of them shared a view of the state that was both Confucian and pragmatic.

**On the bureaucracy**

Due to the fact that appointing capable and virtuous men (hsien-che or hsien-liang) to government was one of the basic tenets of Confucian political thought, as might have been expected, all the leading intellectuals of the revival movement upheld this principle without exception.

Around 759, Yüan Chieh wrote an essay to discuss his views on ideal methods of ruling. He pointed out that one principle the Son of Heaven had to observe was "definitely appointing virtuous and outstanding gentlemen [as his officials]." In his 765 memorial criticizing emperor Tai-tsung's rule, Tu-ku Chi requested the throne to "seek the capable and the virtuous" as a way of improving the government.

When, in his celebrated essay "On feudalism," Liu Tsung-yüan contended that the commandery system was a far better political institution than the ancient feng-chien system, one of his arguments focused on the point that the centralized imperial system could "cause the capable and virtuous men to remain above, and the unworthy to remain below; then [the world] can [have] order and peace." Although Liu's main concern in this essay was the stability of the state, his support for a government run by capable and virtuous men hardly needs emphasis. This can be further verified by his position on official appointment.

In an essay written to discuss the "six violations" of order in the state as recorded in the *Commentary of Tso*, Liu Tsung-yüan considered three of these six violations actually

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166 Tu-ku Chi, "Chien piao," PLC, 4: 21A.
conducive to the principle of government. Liu refuted the idea that appointing distant and new instead of selecting near and old relatives or friends as candidates to office would violate the way of official appointment. He said that "if the near and the old relatives and friends are foolish, but the distant and the new are sage-like and worthy, [appointing the distant and new as officials] and thus alienating [the near and old relatives or friends] indeed greatly [helps] the principle of government."  

In a similar fashion, Li Ao maintained that rulers ought to busy themselves with selecting able and virtuous people for office. Because, Li explained, once they were put in important offices, they would "cause all under Heaven to be transformed." As with Liu Tsung-yüan's view, Li Ao's comment reveals that he was also deeply concerned with the quality of the bureaucracy and its relation to the moral fiber of the government.

Han Yu's support for appointing capable and virtuous men to office has been carefully dealt with elsewhere. We can supply one more example of this support here. Han once told his superior, the governor of the Hsiu-chou region (in the area between the northwest of modern Kiangsu, the southern part of modern Shantung and the northeast of modern Anhui) that he himself would like to be described as a "capable and virtuous" official under the governor's leadership. His position on selecting "capable and virtuous" men to offices should be obvious.

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169 Ibid.: 18B. In this context, I have translated sheng and hsien as sage-like and worthy. "Capable and virtuous" or "worthy" will henceforth be used interchangeably to translate hsien. My translation of Liu's passage has also used Legge's translation of some similar lines in the original Tso Chuan passage. See Legge, trans., Ibid.: 14.

170 Li Ao, "Chien so-chih yü Hsiu-chou Chang p'u-yeh shu," LWKC, 8: 33A.


172 Han Yu, "Shang Chang p'u-yeh shu," Ibid., 17: 2A. This governor is Chang Chien-feng (735-800) who was made the governor in Hsiu-chou in 788. Han Yu was
On the other hand, Han Yü's principle of appointing capable and virtuous men to government was only meant to apply to the bureaucracy itself. He did not intend to apply it to future candidates for emperor. His position on the issue of imperial succession will illustrate this point. Whether the imperial succession should observe the principle of passing the throne to a worthy man (hsien), supposedly practiced by the sage kings Yao and Shun, or follow the imperial tradition of passing the throne through the hereditary line, said to have been initiated by the sage king Yü, appears to have been a controversy during Han's time. Han Yü chose to defend the principle of hereditary succession because he felt it could at least bring less harm and disorder to the state in times when sages or worthies were not available to succeed the imperial line. He argued that "it would be better to pass [the imperial line] to one's son rather than [give rise to] competition and chaos if [it] can not be passed to a sage. Even though [the empire] can not obtain a worthy one, [an emperor's son] can still maintain the laws." Han Yü's position in this respect contradicted his own general principle of appointing capable and virtuous men to office, his justification of this position nonetheless demonstrates that state stability was his primary concern. From this perspective, Han's contradictory attitude toward the same principle ran parallel with Tu Yu's inconsistent views regarding the imperial role. That is, for the sake of state stability, Tu Yu was also willing to elevate the imperial power, albeit in general he maintained that the imperial role ought to be a benevolent one. It seems that Han Yü who is sometimes considered conservative actually shared more common ground with Tu Yu, who is frequently praised for having progressive views on government. After all, they both advocated monarchy,

appointed by him in his provincial government in 799, a year before Chang's death. Chang's life and his relations with Han Yü can be found in CTS, 140: 3828-32; Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, 1977: 55; Hartman, Han Yü, 1986: 40-44.

173 Han Yü, "Tui Yü wen," Ibid., 11: 12A-B. The beginning of this essay shows that Han was apparently responding to a contemporary discussion on the issue in question.

174 Ibid.: 12B. The English translation is a modified version of McMullen's, from "Han Yü," 1989: 608.
both longed to reduce disorder to a minimum, and both demonstrated contradictory attitudes toward the same principle.

Admittedly, Liu Tsung-yüan remained consistent in advocating government by the capable and virtuous as the underlying principle supporting an ordered state. Unlike Han, Liu did not change his theoretical position when it came to the question of imperial succession. This of course does not mean that Liu actually intended to put this specific theoretical belief into practice. Our only intention here is to point out that Liu Tsung-yüan's theoretical position was more progressive than that of Han Yü with regard to applying the principle of employing worthies to the issue of imperial succession.\footnote{In addition to expressing this view in the above mentioned "Feng-chien lun" and "Liu-ni lun," a similar view can also be found in Liu Tsung-yüan's other essays, such as "Chen fu," 1: 16A-21A. However, his discussion in "Feng-chien lun" and "Liu-ni lun" refers to the political situation before China was unified by the Ch'in dynasty in 221 B.C. As we shall see, Liu's progressive ideas often remained at the level of theoretical discussion.}

Almost all the leading figures of the Confucian revival movement shared with Lu Chih the view that capable and virtuous men ought to be selected to office, but due probably to the differences in their official responsibilities, only a few of them provided actual plans to deal with the problem of official assessment as Lu Chih did. Yüan Chieh, Liu Tsung-yüan, and Li Kuan (766?-794?) are three who did so.\footnote{For Li Kuan's birth date, see Ts'en Chung-mien, T'ang-jen hang-ti lu, 1962: 430-34; for Li Kuan's life, see HTS, 203: 5779.}

In 764, during his tenure as Prefect in Tao-chou, Yüan Chieh presented a memorial to the throne. In this memorial Yüan gave his suggestions regarding the assessment of local Prefects. Because Yüan saw how local provinces were ruined during the An Lu-shan rebellion, he required the throne to appoint as local Prefects candidates who were responsible and competent, honest and able to adapt to new circumstances. Meanwhile, he advised the throne to evaluate these Prefects in the following manner:
After one year, ask them how many [people] have returned from exile, and how much land has been reclaimed and cultivated; after two years, ask by how many times the livestock and produce have increased, and by how many times the taxable [households] have increased over the first year; after three years, estimate their merits and faults and definitely distribute rewards and punishments.\textsuperscript{177}

Some points in Yüan Chieh's suggestion for assessing the provincial Prefects remind us of Lu Chih's proposal for examining local officials made to a special Commissioner responsible for negotiating the two-tax quota at the beginning of 780, the time when Lu still served in Wei-nan county. For example Lu Chih presented his methods as follows in a fashion quite similar to Yüan's:

To examine [how local officials] nourish the people by inspecting the growth and decline of the [number of the local] households; to examine [how they] tend to basic agriculture by inspecting the increase and decrease of the [amount of] reclaimed fields, and to examine [whether they are] honest or greedy by inspecting the weight of the tax [burden] and corvée services [they place on the people].\textsuperscript{178}

Although Yüan Chieh never provided an overall plan for evaluating the entire bureaucracy as Lu Chih did, the two of them undeniably shared the view that the evaluation of the local officials had to be made on the basis of their actual achievements. Moreover, both of them equally believed that the local officials ought to be responsible for improving the livelihood of the people under their jurisdiction. Lu Chih actually continued to maintain this position, and in 794 when he suggested a reform of the the two-tax system, as we recall, he again requested the throne to assess local tax officials on the basis of the standards he had prescribed in 780.\textsuperscript{179}

To be sure, like Lu Chih and Yüan Chieh, most of the representatives of the Confucian revival movement also believed that provincial officials were obliged to improve the living

\textsuperscript{177} Yüan Chieh, "Hsieh shang piao," YTSC, 8: 124.
\textsuperscript{178} HTS, 157: 4911.
\textsuperscript{179} Lu Chih's request has been dealt with in chapter 3, p. 230.
conditions of the local population. Since these intellectuals' convictions and policies in relation to the people's livelihood will be dealt with momentarily, for the time being, we shall concentrate our comparison exclusively on the issue of official assessment.

Liu Tsung-yüan did not prescribe specific criteria for official evaluation, but he did insist that the central government should inspect the local officials regularly so as to maintain order in the empire. Like Lu Chih and Yüan Chieh, Liu thought that the practice of rewards and punishments was a necessary part of the inspection of local officials. In Liu's words, with such rewards and punishments, "[if local officials] are guilty [of a crime], or are competent, [the court] is able to demote and reward [them]. If they are appointed in the morning but fail to obey the Way, [the court] can simply dismiss them in the evening; if they receive [appointment] in the evening but fail to observe the law, [the court] can simply dismiss them in the morning."\[^{180}\] Apparently, Liu also believed that actual performance was the key factor in local official assessment.

A recognized *ku-wen* writer himself, Li Kuan was also a close friend to Han Yü.\[^{181}\] As noted before, Li Kuan and Han Yü obtained their *chin-shih* degrees in the spring of 792, the year Lu Chih was responsible for administering the doctoral examinations. Because of this, Li claimed that he was Lu Chih's "disciple (*men-jen*)."\[^{182}\]

According to Li Kuan, he visited Lu Chih a few times, and found his "teacher" to have a "gentle and pleasant appearance," but he did not "discuss anything important" with him.\[^{183}\] This seems to contradict Lu's own words that he had "completely rejected private

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\[^{180}\] Liu Tsung-yüan, "Feng-chien lun," LHTCC, 3: 5B.

\[^{181}\] For Han Yü and Li Kuan's friendship, see Han Yü, "Li Yüan-pin mu-ming," HCLCC, 24: 1A-B; Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, 1977: 138-40.

\[^{182}\] See Li Kuan's "Shang Lu hsiang-kung shu," in *Li Yüan-pin wen-chí* (LYPWC hereafter), 3: 29. It is well known that there were various ways to form teacher-disciple relationships in the mid-Tang, and for a young graduate like Li Kuan to claim a connection with a former examination administrator like Lu Chih was indeed a very common practice. For the rise of such relationship and why it was a common practice in the mid-Tang, see McMullen, *State and scholars*, 1988: 62.

\[^{183}\] See Li Kuan, "Shang Lu hsiang-kung shu," LYPWC, 3: 30, and CTW, 533: 21
relationships" since he became Chief Minister, but the fact that he did not have any
critical discussions with Li indirectly validates that point. This further confirms our image
of Lu Chih's genuinely self-imposed unsociability.

Frustrated by the fact that Lu Chih did not discuss anything important with him during
his visits, Li Kuan presented a letter to Lu putting forth his views on government in the
middle of 793. In this letter, Li Kuan pointed out some problems that he found harmful
to bureaucratic morale. These problems ranged from a discrepancy between the actual
abilities of some officials and their assumed offices to the long waiting period for
advancement and transfer. Li wrote that "if one is appointed to an office he is incapable of
filling, that office is rendered useless; if the office does not match [the official's] ability, the
able [officials] will then complain; quick advancement promotes rash competition, and
delayed transfer creates injustice and biases."186

Li Kuan's criticism of official appointment, advancement and transfer was parallel to
comments presented by Lu Chih both in 792 and 794. Although Li Kuan could not have
influenced the opinions Lu Chih manifested in 792, it is likely that his letter might have
reinforced Lu's determination to push for bureaucratic reform again in 794. In
comparison, however, Li Kuan's comments appear general and contain no concrete
proposals for real improvement, but, we should remember, Lu Chih's discussions carried

184 We have presented this quote in chapter 1, p. 61.
185 See Li Kuan, "Shang Lu hsiang-kung shu," LYPWC, 3: 29-33. We know the date of
this letter because Li Kuan mentioned in this letter that recently Lu Chih had just
recommended two officials, Chia Tan (730-805) and Lu Mai (739-798), to be Chief
Ministers. See, "Shang Lu hsiang-kung shu," Ibid.: 32. Also see Yen I-p'ing, Nien-
p'u, 1975: 152. Since these two officials became Chief Minister in the fifth month of
793, Li's letter could only have been written after that date. For Lu Mai's life, see
CTS, 136: 3753-54; for Chia Tan's, see CTS, 138: 3783-87; for the date of their tenure
as Chief Ministers, see HTS, 62: 1706.
186 Li Kuan, "Shang Lu hsiang-kung shu," LYPWC, 3: 32.
187 This of course does not build up a case of influence between these two people as one
might attempt to do so. One such attempt was made by Yen I-p'ing. See Yen's Nien-
p'u, 1975: 3.
detailed suggestions for reform. Lu even provided what he called a "middle way" to evaluate and regulate officials.\textsuperscript{188}

The fact that Lu Chih was always close to the political center, especially to the imperial power itself, and the fact that he actually assumed the office of Chief Minister undoubtedly contributed to the depth and inclusiveness of his policies regarding official evaluation. Moreover, as we shall see, since most of the representatives of the Confucian revival could not directly communicate with the throne as frequently as Lu did, they did not constantly engage themselves in improving the actual imperial conduct with the kind of high intensity that Lu maintained. Consequently, their efforts in that direction were not as comprehensive or as thorough as Lu's.

However, the following discussion will demonstrate that, in general, different career backgrounds did not prevent Lu Chih and the representatives of the Confucian revival movement from sharing similar perceptions about the imperial conduct.

\textbf{On the imperial conduct}

The leading representatives of Confucian revival all considered the emperor's proper role to be a virtuous one, but only some of them explicitly stated that the imperial legitimacy depended mainly upon the fulfillment of the emperor's moral obligation to the people. That is, only some of them asserted along with Lu Chih the proposition that the ruler's Mandate was not predetermined by Heaven, but was rather predicated upon his efforts to improve the public well-being. And some of them also went further than Lu Chih in their attack on the deleterious influence of the Han theory of interaction between Heaven and men on the present government.\textsuperscript{189}

\textsuperscript{188} See chapter 3, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{189} See Lamont's discussion of this widely accepted view among these intellectuals in contrast to those who still emphasized the interaction between Heaven and men during this time. Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven, . . .," 1973: 195-200.
To downplay supernatural influences on government, Lü Wen once asserted that "Not in Heaven, not in the spirits / Only in the Way should [a minister] put his trust. . . . / Ascendancy and collapse, order and upheaval, depend on virtue, not on cosmic cycles." Tu-ku Chi, though like Lu Chih, still employing the Han Confucian concept of Heaven's warning to remind the throne of his proper duty, clearly intended to have the emperor focus primarily on human affairs.

Neither Yuan Chieh, nor Han Yu or Li Ao specifically discussed the imperial role from the perspective of the Mandate of Heaven. However, both Yuan Chieh and Han Yu did express their views on fate when confronted with personal success and failure. Influenced by the prevalent Taoist thought of his time and by the frustration of his attempts to obtain an official appointment at an early stage of his life, Yuan stated in 752 that "the fate of human beings also comes from this (i.e., non-striving of nature). An early death or a long life, being noble or being humble, how can they be achieved by force? They cannot be forced. They cannot be forced." Such a fatalistic inclination would not have been approved by Lu Chih, at least not from the perspective of public life.

Han Yu sometimes appears to believe in fate and sometimes seems to ignore it completely. For example, on one occasion Han said that "to be worthy or unworthy, that depends upon oneself; to be noble or base, to suffer disaster or receive a blessing, depend upon Heaven." Here Han unequivocally separated human striving for virtuous conduct from Heaven's intervention. Yet in another context where he was discussing the reasons for personal success and failure, Han admitted that "now [I] begin to doubt again. I do not know what Heaven is really all about; I do not know what fate is really all about. Are

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191 Tu-ku Chi, "Chien piao," PLC, 4: 21A.
193 Han Yu, "Yu Wei Chung-hsing shu," HCLCC, 17: 9B.
Significance

[personal success and failure] up to ourselves? Are they not up to ourselves?" Han's sense of doubt toward human efforts at this moment was unquestionably related to his personal frustration in failing to acquire an official appointment. However, when Han wrote a specific essay to examine the origin of spirits (kuei), he again revealed that he was not completely sure of the results of human striving.

In this essay, Han affirmed the existence of the spirits. He stated that the spirits would sometimes reward people, sometimes punish them, and sometimes simply take no notice at all. In other words, Han Yü believed the results of human efforts were sometimes a response from the spirits. He apparently was still under the influence of the theory of interaction between Heaven and men.

Since the Han Confucian cosmological theory occupied a dominant position in the mid-Tang intellectual milieu, Han Yü's belief in it was not particularly unusual. Nevertheless, compared with most of the Confucian revivalists who were determined to de-emphasize the power of the supernatural, or with Tu-ku Chi and Lu Chih who were inclined to appropriate the concept of Heaven's warning, but positively affirmed the primacy of human

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194 Han Yü, "Shang k'ao-kung Ts'ui Yu-pu shu." This essay appears in Ch'ang-li hsien-sheng wai-chi (Wai-chi hereafter), 2: 2B as included in HCLCC and most editions of Han Yü's collective works. Based upon his careful examination, Chu Hsi believed essays contained in the Wai-chi were Han Yü's own writing. For Chu Hsi's explanation, see his Ch'ang-li hsien-sheng chi k'ao-i, Shanghai Ku-chi ch'u-pan-she edition, 1981, Wai-chi section. Also see CTW, 554: 12.

195 This was around 793 when Han first took the placement examination and was unjustly rejected by a contemporary Chief Ministers. See Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, 1977: 43-44; Hartman, Han Yü, 1986: 30-31.

196 See "Yüan kuei," HCLCC, 11: 10A-B. Also see Chen K'e-ming, Han Yü shu-p'ing, 1985: 131-32.

197 This can be further supported by the fact that in 821 Han Yü made specific sacrifices to some river goddesses to express his gratitude to them for their protection of his life during his previous sea voyage. See his "Chi Hsiang-chün fu-jen," HCLCC, 23: 2A-3A. Although Lamont does not consider Han Yü's concept of Heaven as expressed in his letter to Liu Tsung-yüan a clear treatise on the relationship between Heaven and men, it at least shows that Han believed that Heaven had some kind of ability to reward and punish men. This also helps to explain why Han Yü made sacrifices to the river goddesses. See Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven, part II," 1974: 43-44.
efforts, Han Yü's wavering attitude toward the supernatural makes him appear less progressive than the above intellectuals.

Be that as it may, like Lu Chih, none of the above mentioned intellectual figures actually challenged the fundamental presupposition of the Mandate of Heaven. That is, they all tacitly admitted that Heaven would confer its Mandate on a ruler provided that he was benevolent and virtuous. The only leading representative of Confucian revival who reached the point of substantially invalidating that presupposition was Liu Tsung-yüan.198 It has been carefully pointed out that Liu Tsung-yüan's naturalistic notion of Heaven and his concern for the realization of the Confucian moral Way explain why he had an unusual antipathy toward the Han theory of interaction between Heaven and men.199 A few examples will demonstrate how seriously Liu thought the Han theory of interaction violated the Confucian moral Way.

For Liu Tsung-yüan, Heaven and men operate in two independent spheres, they do not interfere with each other's territory as the Han Confucians contended. In his famous debate on Heaven with Liu Yü-hsi (772-824), Liu asserted that "it is not that Heaven takes any part in [the sphere of] men, ... The affairs of each proceed without interfering with the other."200 Precisely due to this disbelief in the interaction theory, Liu strongly opposed carrying out rewards and punishments according to seasonal alternation, a practice of the early Han dynasty. In addition to arguing that such a practice was inhumane to those waiting for punishments, Liu denounced it as just plain wrong. He stated:

199 Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 129-57.
200 See his "Ta Liu Yü-hsi t'ie-lun," LHTCC, 31: 4B and 5A. The translation of the first line is Chen Jo-shui's, in Ibid.: 142, the second line is Lamont's translation, see his "An early ninth century debate on Heaven, part II," 1974: 81. Lamont also translates the entire text of this debate, see Lamont, Ibid., part I and II. For Liu Yü-hsi's life, see Chang Ta-jen, Liu Yü-hsi nien-p'u, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1982; CTS, 160: 4210-13; HTS, 168: 5128-32
As for why sages distributed rewards and punishments, it was not because of anything else, but because they [wanted] to punish [the vicious] and encourage [the worthy]. Rewards should be rapid and then they will have [the effect of] encouragement; punishments should be swift and then they will have [the effect of] a deterrent. It is wrong to insist that the highest principle is to reward in spring and summer, and to punish in autumn and winter.201

On another occasion Liu again criticized the Han Confucian idea of conducting government affairs in accordance with the sequence of the months as is advocated in the "Monthly commands (or Yüeh-ling)," chapter of the *Records of Rites*.202 Such an idea in Liu's view violated the teachings of the ancient sages. He said:

The way of the sages [tells us] not to investigate extreme and strange phenomena and attribute them to spirits, and not to call on Heaven to gain a sense of loftiness. Benefiting the people and dealing properly with business are all of the Way! I see that the theories propounded in the "Monthly commands" carelessly put the Five Events [i.e. humanity, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness], the Five Elements, and everything into correspondence and want governmental measures to be carried out [according to this system]. Does this stray too far away from the Way of the sages? . . . Things like this were merely the chatter of blind astrologers; they were not produced by the sages.203

Since Liu denied that Heaven took any interest in human affairs, he consequently went one step further to question the validity of the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven. Liu's skeptical voice made the most radical statement against the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven in the mid-T'ang. He said that the founding rulers of the T'ang "received their mandate not from Heaven, but from the people. . . . Never has there been one who,

201 Liu Tsung-yüan, "Tuan-hsing lun," LHTCC, 3: 15A. Also see Chen Jo-shui's discussion in Ibid.: 152.
lacking benevolence, has lasted a long time [in power]; never has there been one who, trusting in favorable omens, has enjoyed long life."\textsuperscript{204}

Although Liu's assertion that the mandate to rule was granted by the people, not by Heaven, is indeed unique, he did not completely break away from the Mencian conception of the Heavenly Mandate. That is, as with others among contemporary Confucian revival intellectuals, Liu still occasionally asserted that Heaven would confer its Mandate upon a ruler when he was benevolent and obtained the support of the people.\textsuperscript{205} What is clear is that like Lu Chih and all the other Confucian revival intellectuals, Liu's efforts to re-define the Mandate of Heaven were above all aimed at urging the throne to concentrate on the improvement of public affairs.

In order to achieve that goal, these Confucian revivalists each in his own way shared Lu Chih's views on how to improve the imperial conduct. They all made one or another of the following suggestions: the ruler should accept remonstrance and reject slander; he should restrain eunuchs' involvement in government; he should establish himself as sincere and trustworthy, or he should refuse provincial tributes; and finally, he should relieve the people's suffering.

When first summoned by emperor Su-tsung to serve the court in 759, Yüan Chieh presented three essays to advise the throne to improve his government. Among his various criticisms of the imperial conduct, Yüan first pointed out that the reason that the An Lu-shan rebellion was still not suppressed was that the emperor had already indulged himself in luxury, and actually "forgets danger when it is not yet safe."\textsuperscript{206} To assist the emperor in establishing himself as a trustworthy ruler, Yüan requested that he "belatedly carry out the order previously given and definitely execute the law in the future; further to abolish all the

\textsuperscript{204} See Liu Tsung-yüan, "Chen fu," LHTCC, 1: 20A. The English translation of the first two lines is translated by Chen Jo-shui in Ibid.: 204; the latter part of this passage is adopted from Lamont's translation, in "An early ninth century debate on Heaven, part I," 1973: 201.

\textsuperscript{205} For details, see Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 138-39; Lamont, Ibid.

\textsuperscript{206} Yüan Chieh, "Shih-i shang-p'ien," YTSC, 6: 94.
miscellaneous *corvée* that were levied for no reason, . . . and reject all villains and small men under Heaven."^{207}

In his 765 memorial to emperor Tai-tsung, Tu-ku Chi provided similar advice. He said that although Tai-tsung allowed officials to remonstrate, he never put their suggestions into practice. As a result, Tu-ku stated that the emperor "only has a reputation for tolerating remonstrances, but actually does not produce the reality of listening to the remonstrances." He then urged the throne to rectify his conduct by "avoiding excesses in expenditure and loving the people, and by not allowing eunuchs to disturb governmental affairs."^{208}

Compared with Yuan Chieh and Tu-ku Chi, Li Ao's advice for improving the imperial conduct included one more aspect which occupied an essential place in Lu Chih's advice to emperor Te-tsung. Around 819, right after emperor Hsien-tsung managed to restore dynastic unity, Li Ao presented a memorial which consisted of a six-part discussion of current affairs.^{209}

In addition to consolidating the border defenses, Li Ao believed that rejecting deceptive and wicked subjects, employing loyal and honest ministers, frequently examining the officials in charge of current affairs, and terminating the practice of accepting provincial tributes constituted four other fundamental principles of government. They all obviously depended on the emperor's putting them into practice.

As a result, Li Ao maintained that "the reason that a state can rise is because its ruler can trust his ministers, and ministers can assist their ruler with loyalty and honesty."^{210} He then urged the emperor to employ loyal and honest ministers on the grounds that by so doing a peaceful and ordered state would be achieved. However, Li insisted that the

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209 See his "Lun shih shu piao," in LWKC, 9: 38B-42B. Also see Lo Lien-t'ien's explanation of why this memorial was presented in 819 in his "Li Ao yen-chiu," 1973: 71-72.
210 Li Ao, "Shu yung chung cheng," Ibid.: 40A.
emperor had to reject deceptive and wicked officials so as to protect loyal and honest ministers from unnecessary slander. Moreover, he stated emphatically that if the deceptive and wicked were trusted by the throne, "the great peace will then definitely not come into being and dangerous dealings will secretly take place." Like Lu Chih's criticism of "small men," Li Ao defined the deceptive and wicked as those who "do not know the overall situation, do not consider the future outlook, and simply concentrate on benefitting themselves." Among the deceptive and wicked T'ang ministers whom Li Ao named in this memorial, Lu Chih's arch-opponent P'ei Yen-ling was the last one on the list.

The other request which Li Ao pleaded with the throne to accept was to discontinue the provincial tributes. This, as we remember, was one of Lu Chih's constant worries about the throne. Li's argument was made on a basis similar to Lu Chih's. That is, like Lu, Li also contended that once the provinces stopped sending tributes to the court, the local population's livelihood would certainly be improved. In other words, Li also believed that frugal imperial conduct would help relieve the economic burden of the local population.

To convince the throne of this point, Li asserted that "money and goods [sent up by provinces] are neither rain coming from Heaven, nor water gushing out of a spring; if they are not extracted from the people, where will they be extracted from?" Not only the intention, but also the grammar and rhetoric of Li's statement all reflect the identical point made by Lu in 794. Although there is no evidence to establish any case of influence between them, this demonstrates the close affinity between their convictions with regard to the imperial conduct and their proposals for realizing those convictions.

As with the above intellectuals, Lü Wen, Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yüan also agreed that rulers should rid themselves of slander made by wicked people because slander could cause

\[211\] "Shu ping-ch'ih chien-ning," Ibid.: 40B.
\[212\] Ibid.
\[213\] Ibid.
\[214\] "Shu chüeh chin-hsien," Ibid.: 41B.
\[215\] Lu Chih's statement is presented in chapter 3, p. 224.
the decline of the state. The difference was that they expressed their views not directly to the throne, but in personal treatises. Yet, there is no doubt that their intended audience was the contemporary ruler. Lü Wen said clearly that once rulers listened to the opinions of slanderous ministers, they would simply "sit back, chant poetry, and wait for [the arrival of] the great peace, playing around and procrastinating without realizing [the state is] in decline."\(^{216}\)

Han Yü wrote a specific essay to discuss the origins of slander. In this essay, Han lamented that the present rulers failed to live up to the moral standards set up by the ancient sage kings. Their moral failings, according to Han, caused "an accomplished good to provoke slander and a virtue perfected to attract calumny."\(^{217}\) It is obvious that Han implied that slander and calumny made rulers distrust capable and virtuous ministers. He was warning the present throne of the political danger lurking behind calumny and slander. This is why Han concluded his essay by hoping that "if those who are to work in high places would obtain and accept my ideas (i.e., to cultivate personal moral virtues), then their (i.e., our) state could still approach to good order."\(^{218}\)

Liu Tsung-yüan's aversion toward slander was equally evident in his writings. He once particularly praised a contemporary Prefect for his ability to punish a slanderous subordinate, albeit this Prefect was criticized for being unusually cruel in handling disagreeable officials.\(^{219}\) Liu supported this Prefect because he maintained that one slanderer being punished, the other subordinates of this Prefect could "all obtain self advancement and approach to goodness."\(^{220}\) Liu apparently thought that if rulers rejected slanderers, officials would simultaneously cultivate their own conduct as well.

\(^{216}\) Lü Wen, "Jen-wen hua-ch'eng lun," LHSWC, 10: 55A.
\(^{217}\) Han Yü, "Yüan hui," HCLCC, 11: 8B as translated by Hartman in his Han Yü, 1986: 170.
\(^{218}\) Ibid. See in the same place how Hartman explains the real intention behind Han's essay.
\(^{219}\) Liu Tsung-yüan, "Tu Chien tui," LHTCC, 14: 6B-7B. For Tu Chien (750-809)'s mistreatment of his subordinates, see CTS, 146: 3969; HTS, 172: 5204-05.
\(^{220}\) "Tu Chien tui," Ibid.: 7A.
Generally speaking, Liu Tsung-yüan insisted that rulers should be thrifty and humble. They had to accept advice and make tax shares equitable. Liu considered these virtues prerequisite for preserving the Heavenly Mandate. One specific virtue which Liu thought necessary for the ruler's conduct was the virtue of not allowing the imperial personal attendants, that is, eunuchs, to meddle in public affairs.

To be sure, Tu-ku Chi had already expressed his disapproval of eunuch intervention in government affairs, but he did not further explicate this position. Liu Tsung-yüan made particular efforts to indirectly attack the contemporary practice of using eunuchs to manage court affairs. He wrote an essay singling out the conduct of the Duke Wen of Chin in the Spring and Autumn period as a surrogate target of his criticism. This was because Duke Wen had once asked a eunuch for his opinion about a minister's administrative ability. Liu insisted that Duke Wen's behavior was inappropriate because public affairs should always be consulted publicly in the court, not privately in the inner palace. If done otherwise, Liu warned, it would lead to "the ruination of good [ministers] and the failure of government." Han Yii never asserted that it was the ruler's duty to prevent eunuchs from meddling with the court affairs, but he was clearly opposed to their interference with regular bureaucratic operations. In 809, when Han served at the Bureau of Sacrifices, he was responsible for revoking the eunuchs' control over the Buddhist and Taoist monasteries of the capital. Because of this, Han admitted in late 810 that he had made enemies of the eunuchs. Later in 811 Han again complained to his provincial superior about the practice.

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221 See his "Chin wen," LHTCC, 15: 10A-B and his "T'u-shan ming," 20: 6B. Similar ideas also appear in "Ho she piao," CTW, 571: 22 (LHTCC does not contain this particular memorial.)

222 "T'u-shan ming," Ibid.

223 See Liu Tsung-yüan, "Chin Wen-kung wen shou Yüan i," 4: 1A-2B. For the background of this incident, see Legge, The Chinese classics, vol. 5, 2 parts, The Ch'Un Ts'ew with the Tso chuen, London: Trübner & Co., 1872: 194-96. Chen Jioshui has pointed out that Liu's real purpose in writing this essay was to attack the political situation of his day. See "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 182.

224 Ibid.: 1B.
of employing eunuchs as army supervisors. Han attacked the practice on the grounds that eunuchs had exploited their position to make profits by selling the prestigious soldier positions in the Palace Armies to wealthy local merchants, and that merchant "soldiers" "recruited" in this manner greatly threatened the provincial security.225

Even Han Yu's most daring and celebrated act of advising emperor Hsien-tsung not to receive a Buddhist relic in the palace in 819 was partly aimed at cutting off a major financial source for the eunuchs.226 To be sure, Han himself had flattered a eunuch army supervisor during his first official service in Pien-chou, but this obviously did not stop him from opposing eunuch intervention in regular bureaucratic procedures.227

So far the imperial conduct which the above mentioned representatives of Confucian revival focused upon involved the ruler's relations with the bureaucracy and with the people, and his own cultivation of certain moral virtues connected with concrete behavior, such as being thrifty and humble. However, there was another aspect which Han Yu and Li Ao regarded to be inseparable from the imperial conduct. This was the emperor's inner thoughts.

As is widely acknowledged, Han and Li rediscovered the relevance to Confucian government of the Great Learning (Ta hsūeh) and the Doctrine of the Mean (Chung yung) sections of the Record of Rites. The famous eight-fold progression of the Great Learning,

227 This eunuch was Chü Wen-chen (d. 812), the main force responsible for establishing the future emperor Hsien-tsung in 805 when the Wang Shu-wen group was attempting their reform. In 797, when Han Yu served in Pien-chou, he wrote a poem for Chü, the then army supervisor in Pien-chou. Because this poem and its preface gave Chü unusual praise, Han Yu thus appeared quite flattering. See Han Yu, "Sung Pien-chou chien-chūn Chü Wen-chen hsü," in his Wai-chi, 3: 1A-B as included in HCLCC. Also see, CTW, 556: 10. For Chü Wen-chen's life, see CTS, 184; 4767; HTS, 207: 5868. On the other hand, on the basis that Han Yu was probably instructed to write this poem to Chü, and that Han also had some family connection with Chü, Lo Lien-t'ien has explained why Han's connection with this eunuch was not necessarily flattering behavior as it has been criticized by traditional and modern historians. See Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yu yen-chiu, 1977: 52-53.
from moral cultivation of oneself, to regulation of one's household, to bringing order to the state and, ultimately, to the whole world, led them to perceive the moral cultivation of the ruler's inner thoughts as the basis for the development of a benevolent government.\(^{228}\) The concept of "sincerity (ch'eng)" was especially emphasized by Han and Li as the nucleus of the ruler's moral cultivation.

Although Wei Cheng, Yüan Chieh and Lu Chih all requested that emperors treat their officials sincerely, Lu Chih was the only one who particularly cited the passages in the *Doctrine of the Mean* to assert the necessity of the emperor practicing sincerity.\(^{229}\)

Evidently, Lu had already sought support from the *Doctrine of the Mean* to stress the importance of the emperor's sincere intentions before Han Yü and Li Ao made their claim.\(^{230}\) However, unlike Han Yü and Li Ao, Lu Chih never cited the eight-fold progression of the *Great Learning* in his extant works. This means he did not perceive an inevitable logical causation between imperial moral cultivation and order in the state, despite the fact that, like all the other representatives of Confucian revival, he believed the imperial moral cultivation was a necessary condition for an ordered government.

While it was through the efforts of Han Yü and Li Ao that the Confucian moral Way was extended into the spiritual sphere of human life, for Han and Li spiritual cultivation per

\(^{228}\) See Han Yü, "Yüan Tao," HCLCC, 11: 3B; Li Ao, "Fu-hsing shu chung," LWKC, 2: 10A. Hartman provides an impressive discussion of Han Yü's perception and application of the *Great learning*, see his *Han Yü*, 1986, ch. 2 and 3. Also see Barrett's study of the formation of Li Ao's thought in his "Li Ao,“ 1978, ch. 3 and 4.

\(^{229}\) See chapter 2, p. 129.

\(^{230}\) Lu Chih of course was not the only one in the mid-Tang before Han Yü and Li Ao to take an interest in the *Doctrine of the mean*. Liang Su, the leading figure of the second generation of the *ku-wen* movement, demonstrated great interest in the *Doctrine of the mean* in a passage concerning "exhausting one's nature" in his famous essay "Chih-kuan t'ung-li i" and in other essays such as "Shu ch'u fu." For "Chih-kuan t'ung-li i," see CTW, 517: 15-20, esp., 15-17; for "Shu ch'u fu," see CTW, 517: 6. Furthermore, as pointed out by McMullen, Ch'üan Te-yü, who wrote the Preface to Lu Chih's extant works, had already paid serious attention to the *Doctrine of the mean* in 781. See McMullen, "Han Yü," 1989: 647. For Ch'üan Te-yü's interest in this regard, see his "Hsin-chou Nan-yen ts'ao-i ch'an-shih yen-tso chi," in Ch'üan Ts'ai-chih wen-chi, SPTK edition, 32: 193A, and his "Li-pu ts'e-wen wu-tao," in Ibid.: 40: 237A.
se was not the main concern. Instead, they envisaged spiritual cultivation as serving as an essential element to achieve political and social effects. It is true that Li Ao's treatise on "Returning to one's true nature (Fu-hsing shu)" was a serious philosophical inquiry into Confucian introspective concepts which contributed a great deal to the rise of Sung Neo-Confucianism, but Li himself admitted that this writing was intended to break the monopoly of Buddhism and Taoism in the mid-T'ang intellectual arena by reaffirming the Confucian view of human nature.231

Meanwhile, Han Yü's famous essay, "On the origin of the Way (Yüan Tao)," his most important treatise on social and political thought, has led one modern historian to comment that the principal theme of this essay is actually "the reassertion of the Confucian view of the world, of hierarchy and morality, in the face of what Han characterized as Buddhist and Taoist denial of the value of social and moral activity."232

Indeed, compared with Lu Chih or other Confucian revival intellectuals such as Liu Tsung-yüan, Han Yü was more inclined to accept as given the actual hierarchical relations between the emperor, the bureaucrats, and the common people.233 For example, in "On the origin of the Way," Han Yü makes the following statement:

Thus, the ruler is the one who gives orders; officials are the ones who implement the ruler's orders and bring them to the people, and the people are the ones who provide millet, grain, hemp and silk and make implements and vessels, and circulate goods and money so as to serve their superiors. . . If the people do not provide millet, grain, hemp and silk . . . to serve their superiors, they will then be killed.234

Han's efforts to defend the hierarchical relationship between the emperor and his subjects certainly provides further evidence of his longing for T'ang unity. As we shall

231 Li Ao, "Fu hsing shu shang," LWKC, 2: 9B.
233 One modern Chinese historian even criticizes Han Yü as being "ardently worshiping the imperial power." See Wang Yün-sheng, "Han Yü he Liu Tsung-yüan," Hsin chien-she (Feb, 1963): 56.
234 Han Yü, "Yüan Tao," HCLCC, 11: 3A.
demonstrate in the next section, in actuality Han Yü was by no means insensitive to public suffering, but his concern for T'ang unity was so strong that he felt impelled to consider a strong monarch a necessary condition for pursuing that goal. Still, such a willingness to elevate the emperor to an absolute position for the sake of a unified empire found no echoes in either Lu Chih's or Liu Tsung-yüan's perception of the imperial role.

We recall that Lu Chih constantly reminded emperor Te-tsung that the relationship between a ruler and his subjects was basically reciprocal. Even though he shared the Confucian paternalistic attitude toward the people, Lu made it crystal clear that the people were the foundation of the state, and that the state was obliged to provide them with a material sufficiency. It thus seems highly improbable that Lu would ever have supported Han Yü's suggestion that the state could kill the people if they failed to provide the material necessities of the state.

Meanwhile, Liu Tsung-yüan's radical claim that the ruler's mandate was granted by the people demonstrates that he, more progressive than Lu Chih, already conceptualized the people as the masters of the state. In fact, he did once assert that "[the officials'] duty is to be the people's servants, not to make the people serve them." There is no question that Liu, with such an unusual respect for the people's worth, could not possibly endorse Han Yü's definition of the ruler, the officials, and the people.

To be sure, Han Yü was famous for his near martyrdom due to defending Confucianism and challenging the imperial plan to receive a Buddhist relic with his most-anthologized memorial of 819. However, it has been noted that such an offensive attitude toward the throne was not characteristic of Han's usual official memorials, and that the main rationale behind Han's "Memorial on the Buddha relic (Lun fo-ku piao)" was his disappointment at the throne's indifference to culturally unifying and purifying the empire.

through an exclusive reliance on Confucianism. In other words, unlike Lu Chih, Han Yü never intended to challenge the imperial power for any other reason as long as he perceived that power as the ideal means to realize T'ang unity both politically and culturally.

In sum, despite the fact that the actual suggestions for improving the imperial conduct made by the individual Confucian revivalists were not as inclusive as those of Lu Chih, they all shared Lu's view that the imperial role had to be a benevolent one. It is true that some of them did not particularly emphasize the importance of human striving with regard to the doctrine of the Heavenly Mandate, but, except for Liu Tsung-yüan, none of them refuted the idea that the prerequisite for a ruler to receive the Mandate lay in his benevolent and virtuous conduct. Even though Han Yü was more inclined to elevate the emperor's power to an absolute for the sake of T'ang unity, he never betrayed the idea that the emperor had to act benevolently.

Meanwhile, as noted above, in spite of the fact that Liu Tsung-yüan's conception of the Heavenly Mandate was more progressive than that of his peers, his radical position was confined mainly to theoretical discussion. In other words, Liu made suggestions similar to those of his peers, such as that the ruler should accept remonstrances and reject slander, and that he should relieve the people's suffering. In the final analysis, no basic gap existed between Lu Chih and the Confucian revivalists in terms of their recommendations to improve the imperial conduct.

Bearing this in mind, we shall proceed to our final comparison between Lu Chih and the Confucian revival intellectuals: their sympathy for the people and their efforts to improve the people's livelihood.

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236 Hartman, Han Yü, 1986: 84-85 & 132-35. Also see Han Yü, "Lun fo-ku piao," HCLCC, 39: 3A-5B.
On the people's livelihood

Like Lu Chih, all the leading intellectuals of the Confucian revival expressed great sympathy for public suffering. Also like Lu Chih, they considered reducing heavy tax burdens imperative for enhancing the common people's living conditions. These tax burdens, as mentioned previously, were created first by emergency impositions during the An Lu-shan rebellion and the second Ho-pei rebellion, part of which then became permanent tax levies, and later by the implementation of the two-tax system. In this section, we shall examine how the leading figures of the Confucian revival tried to relieve the public suffering most of them witnessed during their provincial service.

Yüan Chieh, for one, frequently expressed his sympathy for public suffering. He also tried to relieve the onerous tax levies on the local people of his jurisdiction during his tenure at Tao-chou. When first appointed by emperor Su-tsong in 759, he immediately called the throne's attention to the plight of the common people. He told the emperor that "the empire now is decaying, and the people are desperate. Those who bear the [burden of] taxes and corvée are mostly widows and children, the poor and the helpless. They live and die in vagrancy, worrying and suffering on the road."\(^{237}\)

Again in 760 when he saw how the local towns and villages in the Ho-nan area were ruined by the rebellion, he wrote: "A thousand miles of wild grass was once orderly paths and ditches [separating the fields]; ten thousand empty houses were once towns and villages; scattered bones leaning together were once the people; the lonely, the aged, the widowed, and the orphaned are all who survive."\(^{238}\) The popular misery then forced him to request his provincial superior to reduce the tax burdens by retrenching some official positions.\(^{239}\)

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By the time Yüan was appointed to be Prefect of Tao-chou in 763, Tao-chou was devastated after an attack by southern aborigines.\textsuperscript{240} Yüan described what the Tao-chou people's living conditions were like after he arrived there in 764:

\begin{quote}
They breakfast on grasses and roots,  
And dine on the bark of trees;  
Their breath is exhausted by speaking,  
Their words are swift but their feet are slow.\textsuperscript{241}
\end{quote}

He thus pleaded with the throne to allow the Tao-chou people to be exempted from all their required tax payments in arrears, and all the supplementary impositions levied at the time as well.\textsuperscript{242} His memorial was later accepted by the throne and the livelihood of the Tao-chou people was improved through his efforts.\textsuperscript{243}

In his 765 memorial, Tu-ku Chi also urged emperor Tai-tsung to take the people's welfare into serious consideration. He described how the An Lu-shan rebellion devastated the people's lives in this poignantly frank fashion:

\begin{quote}
It has been ten years since the ceaseless fighting [against the An Lu-shan rebellion] started. The people produce nothing on their looms. The dwellings of those who command their own soldiers extend throughout the streets and lanes; their servants and maids [already] grow tired of wine and meat, while the poor in weakness and hunger join their armies, become their servants, and suffer terribly. Inside Ch'ang-an city, killing and plundering occur in broad daylight, but the Mayor dares not make inquiries. . . . [The people] are impoverished and have no place to turn. Now their hearts are longing only for [this year's] wheat crop. If the wheat crop fails, they will exchange their children and eat them.\textsuperscript{244}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{240} For more details on the background of this attack, see McMullen, Ibid.: 164.
\textsuperscript{241} See "Ch'ung-ling hsing," YTSC, 3: 34.
\textsuperscript{243} McMullen, "Yüan Chieh," 1968: 172-75.
\textsuperscript{244} Tu-ku Chi, "Chien-piao," PLC, 4: 21A. Also see HTS, 162: 4991-92.
When Tu-ku Chi was later appointed as Prefect of Hao-chou and Shu-chou (both in modern Anhui), he too, like Yuan Chieh, requested the throne to reduce the tax burdens of the local population as a measure to ameliorate their misery.  

While the central government revenues became stabilized due to the implementation of the two-tax system, the abuses involved in the actual operation of such a tax system nonetheless created more economic difficulties for the common people during Lu Chih's official life at the court. This situation was not improved even when Li Ao, Han Yu and Liu Tsung-yüan entered the political scene at the beginning of the ninth century. As already noted, Li Ao showed his concern for the economic condition of the people when he advised emperor Hsien-tsung to stop the practice of accepting provincial tributes. Moreover, like Lu Chih, or like almost all the Confucian revival intellectuals, Li Ao strongly supported the policy of light taxation.

For Li, the principle of taxing people one part in ten as advocated by Yu Jo in the Analects was the ideal model for taxation. He believed that light taxation would actually enrich the people. He explained it this way: "If taxation is light, the people will then enjoy their life. When the people enjoy their life, the native residents will then not migrate elsewhere and those [who have become] migrants will [actually] come back [and settle on the land again]. . . . The land will thus not remain uncultivated; mulberry trees will increase day by day, . . . and the people will become rich step by step."  

Although the specific idea of enriching the people by light taxation was Li Ao's own conviction, his general position regarding light taxation was certainly in agreement with that of Lu Chih. He even cited those familiar lines from the Analects, "When the people do not have enough, how can the ruler have enough?," to warn the present rulers of their duty to first enhance the people's lives.  

245 See his "Hsieh Shu-chou Tz'u-shih chein chia Ch'ao-san ta-fu piao," Ibid.: 5: 30B.  
246 Li Ao, "Ping-fu shu," LWKC, 3: 13A.  
247 Ibid.: 12B.
economic condition further echoed Lu Chih's position. This is Li's suggestion, in a memorial of 817, to abolish the practice of using cash as the basic unit for tax assessment and payment under the two-tax system.

As with Lu Chih, Li's suggestion was made on the basis that the deflation simply brought too much loss to the common people. The reasons were that the people still had to pay their taxes in goods, and that the value of goods was drastically depreciated according to the exchange rate against the cash value. Li stated:

> It has been forty years since [the tax quota of] the two-tax was first fixed at the beginning of the Chien-chung period [Chien-chung refers to Te-tsung's reign title from 780 to 784]. At that time, [the price of] one roll of silk cloth was equal to four thousand cash; one bushel of rice was equal to two hundred cash. . . . Now the tax quotas are still the same, but [the value of] grain and silk depreciates day by day, and [the value of] cash increases more and more. The price of one roll of silk cloth is now only eight hundred cash, and one bushel of rice is only fifty cash. . . . Compared with the beginning of the Chien-chung period, [the present] tax load has increased three times already. . . . When tracing the fundamental evil of this [tax system], [I believe] it grew out of the fact that [the system still] demands the people to pay cash while the [value of] the cash remains high.248

Once the principal cause was identified, Li Ao then requested the throne to immediately allow the people to pay all their taxes in silk cloth. Meanwhile, he also advised the government to use silk cloth as the basic unit for accounting. This unmistakably reflected Lu Chih's proposal of abolishing cash as the basic unit for tax assessment and payment.

Li Ao's sympathy for the poor was expressed not only in words, but equally in deeds. During his service in Lu-chou (modern Anhui) between 825 and 827, Li actually obtained twelve thousand strings of cash from rich and powerful local landlords by making them pay taxes on all their previously unreported lands. Because of this, the poor were greatly relieved under his jurisdiction.249

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248 Li Ao, "Shu kai shui-fa," LWKC, 9: 41A.
249 HTS, 177: 5282. For the date of Li's service in Lu-chou, see Yü Hsien-hao, T'ang tzu-shih k'ao, vol. 3, 1987: 1543.
Meanwhile, Li was not alone in making the suggestion to replace cash with goods for tax payment. His mentor and close friend Han Yü had earlier supported the same idea. In the winter of 803 when Han was serving at the Censorate, he presented a memorial in which he proposed several methods to bring down the value of cash. One of his methods was intended to allow the people to pay their taxes in goods. Han especially emphasized that the goods could either be silk cloth, cotton thread, or even grass and grain, depending upon the local situation. According to Han, such plans could "make people's [life] convenient. . . and relieve [their] households." Not only was Han's prescription for reducing the people's tax burden equivalent to Lu Chih's, but his emphasis on the differences in local production also corresponded to Lu Chih's similar consideration.

Han Yü revealed his sympathy for the people on other occasions as well. Just about the same time he made the above suggestion, Han and two other colleagues at the Censorate requested the throne to exempt the people of the capital region from the current tax payment due to the crop failure created by that year's severe summer drought and early autumn frost. Han told the emperor how the people from that area had suffered as follows: "Some of them abandoned their children and expelled their wives so that they could seek food for their own mouths; some dismantled their houses and cut down trees so as to pay their taxes. They were freezing and hungry on the road, and fell down and died in the ditches."

Something that particularly attracts our attention in all this is that, unlike Lu Chih, in this memorial Han never held the throne responsible for the people's suffering, and this remained his position throughout his official career. This confirms our claim that,

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250 See Han Yü, "Ch'ien-chung wu-ch'ing chuang," HCLCC, 37: 13B. At the beginning of this memorial, Han showed that he wrote it during his service at the Censorate. Thus we know it must be around the winter of 803 since he only served at the Censorate in the winter of that year. See Lo Lien-t'ien, Han Yü yen-chiu, 1977: 63-64.
251 Han Yü, Ibid.: 13A.
252 See his "Yü-shih t'ai shang lun t'ien-han jen-chi chuang," HCLCC, 37: 8B-9A.
253 Hartman notices Han Yü's consistently reverent attitude toward the four rulers he served throughout his career, see his Han Yü, 1986: 132.
Unlike Lu Chih, Han would never challenge the imperial power for any other reason, not even for the people’s well-being, as long as the throne intended to restore the political and cultural unity of the Tang.

Despite the fact that Han sometimes regarded the people only as providers of the necessary material goods for the ruler, his concern for their plight shown above was nevertheless honest and genuine. This can be further supported by the fact that during his service in the provinces, Han worked to relieve the misery of local children by bringing an end to the practice of child slavery in the area under his jurisdiction.²⁵⁴ His concern for the people actually persisted throughout his career.

In 822, toward the last stage of his life, Han Yü again presented a well thought out memorial in opposition to a proposal aimed at reforming the salt monopoly. Han’s main purpose was to show that neither the government nor the people would benefit from this reform plan which required the officials to market salt directly to the consumer without employing merchants as intermediaries.²⁵⁵ In his argument, Han’s concerns for the people is readily detected. For example, he contended that if the people had to purchase salt by cash directly from the officials, it would force the officials not to sell salt to those who had no cash and thus only bring misery to the poor. As he put it:

I have now made a general estimate of the situation. Of the common people of any given place, many are poor and few rich. Apart from the prefectural town itself, those who buy salt with ready cash will be less than two or three out of ten; most of them will barter [to obtain salt] with miscellaneous goods or grain. . . . If [officials] cannot get ready cash or the highest quality cloth, they will be afraid that they will lose their official profit, and will certainly refuse to sell. After the reform of the system, the poor among the common people will have no means by which to obtain salt to eat. . . . As I see it the suffering and abuse of the common people have lasted for a long while, but if they are not troubled by [government] actions, [the

²⁵⁴ Ibid.: 93 and 103. Also see CTS, 160: 4203.
²⁵⁵ See Han Yü, "Lun pien yen-fa shih-i chuang," HCLCC, 40: 10A-15A. This entire memorial has been translated by Twitchett in his Financial administration, 1970: 165-72. For background information regarding salt monopoly, also see Financial administration, 49-58; Chü Ch'ing-yiian, T'ang-tai ts'ai-cheng shih, 1943: 56-68.
situation] will by degrees naturally improve. It does not depend on a reform of the salt system.\textsuperscript{256}

While Han was undoubtedly trying to relieve the poor from unnecessary changes in the government salt policy, he also took into consideration the interests of the merchants. He disagreed with the reform suggestion that once the salt merchants' profession was taken over by the officials, they should further be prohibited from seeking employment or from handling any profit-making business. In Han's view, if such measure were to be enforced, "the rich merchants and great traders would feel a grudge (against the state), and some would buy up valuable and expensive goods and flee with them to some rebellious region and support the robbers and brigands."\textsuperscript{257}

Before we compare Han Yu's position on merchants with Lu Chih's policy of "pacifying the rich and relieving the poor," we shall first bring in Liu Tsung-yüan's view toward the people's livelihood, since Liu also discussed the problem of the gap between the rich and the poor.

As mentioned above, compared with Lu Chih, and with all the above mentioned Confucian revival intellectuals, Liu Tsung-yüan had the most radical conception of the people. In addition to Liu's beliefs that the people were the masters of the state, and that they, not Heaven, granted the emperor the mandate to rule, Liu also regarded every human being as having equal worth. This can be shown by the fact that he made an analogy between all human beings and some chess pieces which were randomly painted and given various values indiscriminately by a student of his for a game. To Liu, the way the world differentiated people into the noble and the humble was no different from the way his

\textsuperscript{256} Han Yu, Ibid.: 10A-B and 14A as translated by Twitchett in Ibid.: 165-66 and 171.
\textsuperscript{257} Han Yu, Ibid.: 15A as translated by Twitchett, Ibid.: 172.
student graded those chess pieces. In other words, "people were all equal by nature. They were all human beings, and social distinction was artificial and negligible." 

While Liu's progressive conception of the people is unique among his peers, in actuality, his sympathy for public suffering and his efforts to relieve the people's plight largely corresponded with those of his peers. For one thing, like his peers, Liu also fiercely attacked the heavy tax exactions imposed upon the common people. His famous essay, "The snake catcher (Pu she-che shuo)," written during his exile in Yung-chou (modern Hunan), vividly portrays how the local people suffered from heavy tax impositions.

The point of this essay is that the heavy tax exactions were even more poisonous than the most venomous snake. While the snake catcher only needed to risk his life twice a year to catch the most poisonous snakes as a payment for his taxes, the rest of the local population had to live every day under the tyranny of the government clerks. Liu let the snake catcher express the horror of the tax levy thus:

The livelihood of our village and neighborhood has become more difficult day by day. [Our neighbors] exhaust all the produce of their land and everything they bring into their homes [in order to pay taxes.] They howl out loud and become wanderers. They stagger and fall from hunger and thirst, ... often dying in a heap [on the road]. Of my grandfather's former neighbors, less than one out of ten still remains. Of my father's former neighbors, less than two or three out of ten still remain. Of my neighbors during the last twelve years, less than four or five out of ten still remains. The rest either died or moved away. ... Even if I die on my job now, it would still be later than the deaths of my neighbors.

Liu's powerful indictment of the government's indifference to the public's misery and his deep sympathy for such suffering hardly needs further emphasis. Suffice it to point out

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258 Liu Tsung-yüan, "Hsü ch'i," LHTCC, 24: 9B-10B. Also see the detailed discussion on Liu's view in this aspect by Chen Jo-shui in "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 205-10.
259 Liu Tsung-yüan, Ibid. as translated by Chen Jo-shui in his Ibid.: 207.
260 Liu Tsung-yüan, "Pu she-che shuo," LHTCC, 16: 5A-B.
that in 815, a few years before Han Yii ended child slavery in the southern areas under his jurisdiction, Liu had already taken effective measures to free the child slaves in Yung-chou where he served as Prefect.261 This certainly stands as a testimony to his devotion to the improvement of the people's welfare. In fact, Liu's devotion led a recent scholar of Liu's life and thought to conclude that "[the well-being of the people] actually became a main raison d'etre for [Liu's] life."262

Since Liu Tsung-yüan was highly sensitive to the people's plight, he became very conscious of the economic gap between the rich and the poor. When discussing the principles of government in a letter to a friend, Liu wrote that contemporary official corruption was so widespread that many rich families could easily escape their tax duties through bribery. The result was that the tax burden for the poor became even more oppressive. Strongly opposed to such an unequal tax distribution, Liu asserted that the rich ought to be taxed more than the poor so as to make the tax burden equitable and bearable for the poor.263

Just as Liu never intended to overthrow the social hierarchy even though he believed all people to be equal by nature, he had no intention of destroying the rich as an economic class. He only hoped to make the tax distribution more equitable in order to relieve the poor. As he stated: "The rich families are the mother of the poor. They really must not be destroyed. However, if [the government] allows them to enjoy excessive favor and thus make the poor their slaves, this should not be permitted either."264

To convince his friend further that the rich landlords would not engage their wealth in unproductive trades even if the government increased their taxes, Liu explained: "Even though the taxes of the rich are increased, if their actual levies are equal to [only] one tenth

261 CTS, 166: 4214; HTS, 168: 5142.
262 Chen Jo-shui, Ibid.: 219.
264 Liu Tsung-yüan, Ibid.: 2A.
of their [assets], their wealth will still be secure. Even if [the government] forces them, they will not transfer [their wealth to unproductive trades.]”

All of this demonstrates that Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yüan had different views about how to treat the rich, be it the rich merchants or the rich landlords. Liu Tsung-yüan's views were obviously closer to Lu Chih's policy of "pacifying the rich and relieving the poor." While Liu advocated a proper increase in taxes paid by the rich without disturbing their actual financial security, Lu's policy demanded that the rich reasonably reduce land rents in the interest of the poor. They both agreed that if the rich were not pacified, or rather, if the poor were not relieved, social stability would never be possible. Although Li Ao did not particularly discuss this problem, his policy for handling the rich in Lu-chou proves that he also believed that the government ought to moderate the economic gap between the rich and poor.

Han Yü, however, assumed a more sympathetic attitude toward the salt merchants. He undoubtedly demonstrated a more tolerant attitude toward the merchant class than his colleagues through his opposition to the more hostile treatment they proposed in reforming the salt system. Han's worry that salt merchants would join the rebellious local governors and revolt against the state if the reforms were to take place shows that he, just like Lu Chih and Liu Tsung-yüan, considered the support of the rich an important element of social stability.

On the other hand, Han Yü's laissez faire attitude toward both the poor and the rich merchants in this context caused him to ignore a critical problem which both Lu Chih and Liu Tsung-yüan strived to solve. That is, the problem of how to reduce economic inequality between the rich and the poor. Moreover, it also made him neglect the need to restrain the abuses of financial power practiced by the rich merchants, something his colleague had pointed out in their proposed reform of the salt system. In his neglect of

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265 Ibid.
these two areas, it seems that Han not only indirectly supported the idea that the rich and powerful should enjoy certain privileges, but also unconsciously ignored a most important Confucian principle: that government was obliged to relieve the poor. From this point of view, even though Han Yü had a genuine concern for the poor, since his concern could be compromised whenever he felt the stability of the state to be at issue, it was apparently not as deeply rooted in his consciousness as in the consciousness of Lu Chih and Liu Tsung-yüan.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that Han Yü and the other representatives of the Confucian revival all strived during their official lives to relieve the people from their suffering. Their efforts in this regard once again ran parallel with those of Lu Chih. Having established this last parallel, we can see that the closest kindred spirits whom Lu Chih could completely identify with were none other than the intellectual leaders of the Confucian revival. Clearly, it is not only through an affinity between their political concerns, but more importantly, it is through the many similarities between their social concerns that we can positively affirm a fundamental kinship between Lu Chih and the representatives of Confucian revival. With all the common ground shared between Lu Chih and the leading figures of the Confucian revival, there is no question that Lu deserves to be granted an equal place of honor in that most significant movement of mid-T'ang history.

Closing remarks

Our examination of Lu Chih's significance in mid-T'ang history discloses that Lu was intellectually anchored in the same harbor as the major representatives of the Confucian revival movement. Similarities between Lu Chih and the notable court officials of his time or before are largely superficial and one-sided. They are mostly confined to areas of primarily political concern such as how to improve the quality of the bureaucracy or how to
transform the imperial conduct. When we compare their social concerns, that is, their concerns for the improvement of the people's livelihood, many fundamental differences become clearly apparent.

By contrast, though close affinities can be found between Lu Chih's political concerns and those of the Confucian revival intellectuals, since these same concerns were also shared by the notable court officials, they have less relevance to an exposition of Lu's significance in his time. This significance is clearly illuminated, however, when Lu Chih's social concerns are discovered to be almost completely identical to those of the Confucian revival representatives. This does not mean that differences did not exist in their approaches to government, but these differences between Lu and the representatives of the Confucian revival movement are differences in degree, not in kind. In short, there is no fundamental disagreement to break the intellectual chain between Lu and the representatives of Confucian revival.

For one thing, Lu Chih and the Confucian revival intellectuals not only all agreed that government ought to be conducted on the basis of benevolence and righteousness, but they also advocated that it should make accommodations to changes of time and circumstances. It is true that Yuan Chieh and Tu-ku Chi expressed a certain antipathy toward expediency, but Yuan Chieh nevertheless admitted the necessity of local Prefects adapting to a recently changed situation. Comparatively speaking, Tu-ku Chi tended to view the government from the position of a pure moralist. With the exception of Tu-ku Chi, then, the rest of the representatives of Confucian revival examined here all assumed various degrees of pragmatism in their approach to government.

Secondly, while most of them believed that practical considerations were compatible with Confucian principles, it is important to point out again that their pragmatist sensibility was oriented toward the improvement of the people's livelihood or the prevention of the disintegration of the state due to clear and present dangers. Indeed, their concern for the people essentially distinguishes them from the other court officials, and thus brings into
sharp relief one of the cardinal characteristics of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement.

To be sure, Han Yü's longing for T'ang unity occasionally led him to contradict his own position on the imperial role, and at the same time, also led him unconsciously to neglect the Confucian principle that it was the government's moral duty to relieve the poor. From this perspective, Han was very much like Tu Yu who sometimes, also due to expediency, betrayed an inconsistency in his attitudes toward the imperial role and toward the people's livelihood. Yet, unlike Tu Yu, Han Yü did persistently strive to improve the people's well-being during his official life, even though the people's welfare was not his ultimate concern.

The differences in degree between Lu Chih and the representatives of Confucian revival should not, however, escape our attention. Lu Chih's career background provided him a position where, when he received imperial support, he had much more opportunity to realize his political convictions than most of the Confucian revival intellectuals. His early contribution to T'ang stability while serving as a Han-lin scholar offers the best example of the significance of his official position. On the other hand, Lu also occupied a position where, when the emperor refused to back him up, he took more risks by adamantly pursuing his political ideals than most of his contemporary Confucian revivalists. The tragic result of Lu's service as Chief Minister is the ultimate example of the dangers inherent in his perseverance.

While Lu Chih and the representatives of Confucian revival were all genuinely concerned with the people's suffering, Liu Tsung-yüan, however, was far more radical than Lu and the rest of his peers in terms of his conception of the people. Lu Chih admittedly lacked Liu's progressive perception of the people, but he nonetheless asserted more consistently than any of Liu's other peers that the people were the foundation of the state, and that the relation between the ruler and the ruled was a primarily reciprocal one. This implies that his view was actually closer to Liu Tsung-yüan's than to the others in the
sense that both of them always emphasized that the well-being of the people had to come first before that of the state, and especially before that of the emperor.

It is precisely because Lu Chih was sincerely committed to the improvement of the people's livelihood and was driven by a sense of mission to realize his political convictions that we may legitimately claim for him a place in the mid-Tang Confucian revival movement. Just what position, however, should Lu Chih occupy in comparison with the leading figures of this Confucian revival?

Unlike Yüan Chieh and Tu-ku Chi, Lu Chih was not a member of the early *ku-wen* movement, generally accepted as the pioneer form of the mid-Tang Confucian revival movement. Most of Lu's political convictions and his efforts to relieve the people's misery had been championed by the predecessors of the early *ku-wen* movement, despite the fact that Lu's reformist policies were more comprehensive and more thorough than theirs. In other words, we cannot claim for Lu Chih the role of a forerunner laying the foundations for the later development of the Confucian revival movement.

Neither was Lu Chih like Liu Tsung-yüan, Han Yü and Li Ao in breaking new ground for the Confucian revival movement by redefining important Confucian concepts. We have discussed Liu Tsung-yüan's radical conception of the people. We have also contrasted Liu's perception of the Confucian moral Way as the public good with Han Yü's and Li Ao's expansive notion of the culturally exclusive and spiritually inclusive Tao. Lu Chih's lack of conceptual originality deprives him of the chance to be considered on a par with Liu Tsung-yüan, Han Yü and Li Ao as an innovative Confucian thinker.

Be that as it may, since it was not these innovative concepts, as inherently interesting as they are, but rather and much more so the social and political concerns of the mid-T'ang intellectuals that gave rise to the Confucian revival movement, we should evaluate Lu Chih's place in that movement in a different light.

Lu Chih's political life spanned only a short fifteen years between 780 and 795. As we recall, this was the time when the representatives of Confucian revival merely carried on the
cause of their *ku-wen* predecessors. The fact that none of these early representatives of Confucian revival formed any close relations with Lu Chih during this period indicates that it was through his own observation and due to his own political convictions that Lu Chih single-handedly fought to realize his Confucian political ideals.

On the one hand, we can see that, like the representatives of the Confucian revival in this particular period, Lu Chih undoubtedly forwarded the cause of Confucian revival in his persistent efforts to advise emperor Te-tsung on how to conduct a benevolent government. On the other hand, we can also see that Lu's contribution to the Confucian revival did not merely lie in his reassertion of Confucian principles in government. Clearly, it is rather his unrelenting endeavor to realize his Confucian convictions in practice even at a considerable risk to his political life that entitles him to a unique position in comparison to the representatives of the Confucian revival movement.

It is true that all the Confucian revival intellectuals mentioned above tried to realize their convictions during their provincial tours of office. It is also true that some of their memorials to the throne contained suggestions which would not please the throne. None of them, however, continuously expounded their programs with the full knowledge that their advice was in opposition to the imperial wishes. None of them unceasingly spoke up for the well-being of the people against the emperor's indulgence in his personal pleasures. And finally, none of them consciously chose to risk his own personal gain for the sake of the public good. As we have seen, Lu Chih did all three of these things throughout his fifteen-year career.

While Han Yü's memorial to discourage emperor Hsien-tsung from receiving the Buddhist relic earned him the image of a near martyr, this was very much out of Han's usual character as an official who consistently expressed high respect for emperors. Immediately after Han was banished to the south in 819 because of his audacious act, he
presented a long memorial to the throne apologizing humbly and profusely for having offended the emperor.\footnote{See Han Yü, "Ch'ao-chou tz'u-shih hsieh shang piao," HCLCC, 39: 6A-8A. Also see Hartman, *Han Yü*, 1986: 90-91.}

In like manner, during his banishment in Yung-chou as a result of his association with the Wang Shu-wen group, Liu Tsung-yüan also frequently expressed serious doubts about whether or not it was worthwhile to risk one's personal well-being for the public good. He further solicited many powerful officials to plead with the throne to grant him a pardon. At some times Liu was nearly driven into a state of total demoralization. That is, he felt so frustrated by his banishment that he was ready to simply give up office-holding.\footnote{See Chen Jo-shui's detailed discussion in "The dawn of Neo-Confucianism," 1987: 223-27.}

Our point here is not to criticize Han Yü's repudiation of his previous act, or to attack Liu Tsung-yüan's despondent attitude toward holding office. Self-protection and self doubt born of despair are common features of human psychology. Instead, our purpose here is to emphasize again that while Lu Chih was repeatedly frustrated by emperor Te-tsung's rejection of his reformist policies, and while he was actually commanded by the throne to accept provincial bribes, he always stood by his principles, firmly and without the slightest hesitation.

Even during his banishment in Chung-chou, although he led an extremely secluded life in order to avoid slander, Lu Chih never seems to have written any self-repentance or apology designed to win back Te-tsung's favor. As far as we know, he never asked any officials to plead with the throne on his behalf either.\footnote{To be sure, we recall that Lu's friend or maternal relative Wei Kao did appeal to the throne to let Lu Chih replace him as the governor of the Chien-nan region; there is no evidence, however, to believe that he was asked by Lu Chih to do so. Moreover, since Lu Chih knew that the imperial reason for finally executing the previous Chief Minister Tou Shen in his banishment was that Tou had some connection with a provincial governor, it is doubtful that Lu himself would have asked Wei Kao to make a case for him.} This implies that Lu Chih remained not only convinced of the rightness of his own political position, but also
sincerely committed to his Confucian convictions. It was perhaps due precisely to his refusal to apologize to the throne that Te-tsung never again summoned Lu back to court even though the emperor did send his regards to Lu through a new Prefect of Chung-chou in 800.

Although none of the Confucian revival intellectuals had any personal connection with Lu Chih, what Lu Chih stood for was, nevertheless, precisely what they valued most and actually intended to pursue. That is, Lu Chih's political life may be seen to represent the consummation of their ideal type of Confucian minister. For example, Yüan Chieh exclusively honored those whom he called "the ministers for the state (she-chi chih ch'en)" on the ground they were the only officials who would present honest and loyal advice to the throne.269 Tu-ku Chi also highly valued officials who could "employ the way of rightness to improve the contemporary situation."270 Both Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yüan wrote evaluations of Yang Ch'eng who, as we recall, was the only official who dared to challenge Te-tsung's death sentence for Lu Chih. While Han Yü was criticizing Yang Ch'eng for not having performed his duty as a remonstrator during his earlier service, and although Liu Tsung-yüan was, on the contrary, praising Yang for his courageous act of remonstrance during his later service, it is clear that they both respected officials who remonstrated in accordance with the Confucian moral Way.271 We further remember that Liu Tsung-yüan particularly emphasized that officials should not deviate from the Way, and Li Ao also asserted that "a gentleman follows the Way and not the crowd."272

It is apparent from these statements what type of official all of these representatives of the Confucian revival movement held in the utmost respect. Against their criteria, we can see that Lu Chih was not only qualified to be a candidate for their ideal Confucian minister,

270 Tu-ku Chi, "Ku yü-shih chung-ch'eng Lu I shih i," PLC, 6: 34B.
272 Li Ao, "Ts'ung Tao lun," LWKC, 4: 15B.
he was actually a living exemplar of the type. When all the Confucian revival intellectuals tried to reinvigorate Confucianism as the guiding principle of government, Lu Chih also brought Confucian political principles into life through his own solitary endeavor. It is true that Lu Chih failed to break new conceptual ground for the Confucian revival as Han Yü, Li Ao and Liu Tsung-yüan did, but it was nonetheless through his unrelenting efforts to realize his Confucian convictions that a behavior paradigm of the ideal Confucian minister was ultimately established for the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement. Having persistently followed the Way and refused to drift with the crowd, Lu Chih significantly revitalized Confucian governmental principles. His paradigmatic behavior, in the final analysis, epitomized the manifestation of a genuine Confucian conscience in mid-T'ang history.

273 One may well ask why the leading figures of the Confucian revival movement subsequent to Lu Chih -- Han Yü, Li Ao, and Liu Tsung-yüan -- did not cite Lu as an exemplary minister. Although the insufficiency of sources precludes giving an exact answer, we can suggest several partial answers which were mentioned in our previous discussion: Lu Chih consciously distanced himself from contemporary intellectual and social circles, his works were not necessarily accessible, and his policies had a limited impact at the time.
Epilogue

The focal points of this study have been Lu Chih's efforts to rebuild the T'ang empire throughout his official life at the court, and the significance of his endeavors in the context of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement. While his striving to restore the T'ang court's stability in the first stage of his career as a Han-lin scholar achieved substantial success, his pursuit of a benevolent government as Chief Minister in the second stage met with a tragic end. His pursuit of his political ideals, though it ultimately failed, his sincere commitment to his Confucian political convictions, and his adamant undertaking to realize those convictions combine to give us a portrait of a genuine Confucian statesman.

During the turbulent years of the second Ho-pei rebellion, Lu Chih's responses to the social and political problems confronting the court of emperor Te-tsung helped to mollify the people and stabilize the vacillating public mind. They also assisted the throne to formulate crucial military policy decisions which had the impact of lowering the rebels' fighting morale, and, at the same time, dissolved several potential military threats to the court, and so increased the court's chances of winning its military campaigns. Lu's approach to the problems of this chaotic period clearly made a seminal contribution to the restoration of T'ang stability.

Two basic principles underlay Lu Chih's approach to the problems brought to him by emperor Te-tsung during this period. They were the principle of righteousness and the principle of expediency. Lu Chih regarded these two principles as equally necessary to govern a state. While the principle of righteousness constituted the moral foundation of a state, the principle of expediency enabled the government to obtain the maximum possible amount of moral correctness with the minimum possible amount of damage at a specific time and under specific circumstances. The application of expediency could also make the
government recognize the importance of adapting to changed times and circumstances and
thus take the most appropriate actions to preserve and increase the public welfare.

Lu Chih's perception of the complementary relationship between these two principles
functioned as a political compass directing his suggestions to emperor Te-tsung for
improving the public well-being. In Lu's view, applying the principle of expediency to
government did not mean engaging in political trickery. Rather, it was sanctioned by
Confucius himself, and was intended to accomplish a higher ethical goal.

Through the interplay of the principles of righteousness and expediency, we can see
that Lu Chih's approach to government was both moralistic and pragmatic. On the one
hand, he repeatedly asserted that "the people are the root of the state," that it was the
emperor's responsibility to ensure the public welfare, and that fulfillment of public needs
always came before satisfaction of the emperor's desires. A conviction of "the importance
of the people," the fundamental characteristic of Mencian Confucianism, is unquestionably
revealed in Lu's approach to government.

On the other hand, Lu Chih also constantly emphasized the need to adapt to changes of
time and circumstances. Considering his Confucian scholar contemporaries "pedantic," Lu
disagreed with mechanically imitating historical standards without reflecting upon their
appropriateness to newly emerged situations. He insisted on treating the Confucian
classics as a repository of living principles in a living historical context. In short, with his
application of these two complementary principles of righteousness and expediency to the
problems faced by the court during the second Ho-pei rebellion, Lu Chih's approach to
government can be characterized as a Confucian pragmatist approach.

Lu Chih proceeded to employ such a Confucian pragmatist approach in designing his
reformist policies during his tenure as Chief Minister. A fundamental consistency is found
to have existed between Lu's proposed policies during this period and the advice he earlier
presented to the throne in its time of exile. This consistency is manifested in Lu's
continued advocacy of treating both civil and military officials with sincerity and trust by
providing them with delegated responsibility and authority, in his repeated requests to terminate the practice of using eunuchs as army supervisors, and in his persistent efforts to transform the imperial conduct and improve the people's livelihood. In other words, his earlier advice to the throne is consistently reflected in his pursuit of an ideal government during the second stage of his political life.

The ideal government which Lu Chih envisioned embodied the Confucian concept of a "humane government." Maintaining that the government was obliged to nourish the people and improve their living conditions by reducing their heavy tax burdens, Lu not only re-asserted his earlier position that a government had to be established on the premise that "the people are the foundation of the state," but made it especially clear that such a government should operate in accordance with the principles of "virtue, righteousness, altruism and benevolence."

While in search of a Confucian government, Lu Chih at no time discarded his pragmatist sensibility in formulating his policies. In accord with his belief that it was necessary to adjust to the present time and circumstances, Lu solved the problem of filling the frontier granaries without allowing the grain transportation system to fall into desuetude. Although his request to lower the land rents was aimed at relieving the poor, he also made it clear that his land policy would not intimidate the rich. This demonstrates that Lu's proposed solution to the problem of excessive land accumulation was both benevolent and pragmatic. The fact that his proposal to replace cash with goods as the basic unit for the two-tax assessment and collection found a parallel in a similar suggestion made by Han Yu and Li Ao and actually carried out during emperor Mu-tsung's reign again indicates that Lu was both practical and farsighted in his attempts to reduce the people's tax burdens.

Lu Chih's pursuit of Confucian benevolent government in the second stage of his official life at the court proves again that he was neither a Confucian moral crusader whose every action was dictated by inflexible moral standards nor a pure pragmatist whose every policy was intended only to pay lip service to Confucian teachings. Quite the contrary,
almost all of Lu's policies were formulated on the basis of his Confucian concern for the public good. They were intended to meet current needs while maintaining the improvement of the public well-being as their ultimate goal.

Nevertheless, Lu Chih's pursuit of Confucian political ideals had very limited results. The fundamental key to his failure lay in the fact that his reformist policies completely contradicted emperor Te-tsung's wishes. This was because when Lu Chih assumed the position of Chief Minister in 792, Te-tsung had already given up his earlier intention to restore central control over the powerful provincial governors. Still haunted by the previous bitter experience of exile, the emperor adopted an appeasement policy toward powerful local forces and grew obsessed with the preservation of the current stability.

Lu Chih was surely aware of this imperial concern for preserving the status quo, but his commitment to the public good impelled him to try to improve it where he saw the public well-being was still far from ideal. Lu was resolved to continue his earlier endeavors to enact his vision of Confucian government, yet he always tried to explain to the throne why his policies would not upset the status quo. Nonetheless, the shift in the emperor's focal concern from the desperate need to restore court stability to an obsession with preserving the status quo cast an unavoidable shadow over Lu's political endeavors.

Since this shift in the emperor's concern occurred at the beginning of his tenure as Chief Minister and was thus the essential pre-existent condition under which Lu pursued his political goals, other factors, such as Lu's power struggle with his chief opponent Pei Yen-ling, served merely a catalytic function in his political downfall. Just as imperial adoption of Lu's advice was the key to Lu's earlier successful contribution to the court's stability during the time of imperial exile, likewise the emperor's opposition to Lu's reformist policies in a changed historical setting was also the fundamental reason for Lu's ultimate failure to bring about his ideal benevolent government.

In the meantime, Lu Chih's forceful pursuit of better government also went against the general trend of withholding one's critical opinions from the throne. Under such
conditions, Lu knew that he had to decide whether to continue pursuing his ideals in solitude or simply to hold onto the high official position he occupied and observe the people's suffering without taking any action. Lu struggled between his personal gain and the public benefit, between his political career and the people's welfare, and between the temptation to drift with the silent majority and his duty to fulfill his sense of mission. In the end, he chose to risk his political life for the sake of public well-being.

While Lu Chih's vision of Confucian government provided no innovative concepts to enrich Confucianism as a system of thought, his unrelenting pursuit of his Confucian political ideals nonetheless makes him stand out as an unusual statesman. What distinguishes Lu Chih as a unique Confucian, then, is not his proclaimed belief in Confucian political principles, but his sincere commitment to his Confucian political convictions and his unflagging efforts to realize such convictions in practice. It is precisely because his political behavior was the embodiment of his political beliefs, and he was willing to defy the imperial wishes in order to realize the Confucian Way that Lu Chih's political life illustrates what it ultimately means to be a Confucian minister. In a word, Lu's conscious choice to be one who "finds himself in the right, and goes forward even against men in the thousands" made him, beyond any doubt, a quintessential Confucian.

Although Lu Chih's choice to lead a self-imposed unsociable life style partially explains why he was hardly ever mentioned in the writings of his contemporary intellectual leaders, it does not follow that Lu's persistent pursuit of Confucian political ideals occupied no place in the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement. On the contrary, our comparison between Lu Chih's political convictions and policies and those of the mid-T'ang Confucian revivalists reveals that Lu Chih deserves to occupy a place in that movement equal to those Confucian revivalists. It further demonstrates the nature of Lu's contribution to this most important intellectual movement in mid-T'ang history.

It is true that similarities can be detected between Lu Chih and the notable court officials of his time or before. However, these similarities are mostly confined to areas of political
concern such as how to improve the quality of the bureaucracy or how to transform the imperial conduct. When it comes to the area of social concern, that is, concern for the improvement of the people's livelihood, many fundamental differences become apparent.

By contrast, close affinities are not only found between Lu Chih's political concerns and those of the Confucian revival intellectuals, but Lu's social concerns as well are almost completely identical to those of the Confucian revival representatives. Even though there are differences in degree between Lu's approach to government and that of the Confucian revivalists, these differences do not constitute an essential disagreement that would break the intellectual chain between Lu and the leading figures of Confucian revival.

For one thing, the representatives of Confucian revival examined in this study all shared with Lu Chih the view that government should be conducted on the basis of benevolence and righteousness. Except for Tu-ku Chi, all of them also agreed that government ought to operate to meet the needs of the changed times and circumstances. With the exception then, of Tu-ku Chi, who tended to view the government from the position of a pure moralist, the rest of the Confucian revival intellectuals all assumed various degrees of pragmatism in their approach to government.

It is important to point out again that such a pragmatist sensibility embodied in Lu Chih's approach to government as well as in that of the Confucian revivalists was oriented toward the improvement of the people's livelihood or the prevention of the disintegration of the state due to imminent danger. Indeed, their concern for the people's well-being not only distinguishes them from other court officials, but also brings out one of the cardinal characteristics of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement.

In light of this, we can see that our comparison of Lu Chih's Confucian pragmatist approach to government with that of the Confucian revival representatives provides a further example supporting the view that it was essentially due to the social and political concerns of sensitive intellectuals that Confucianism was reinvigorated as a viable system of values in the mid-T'ang. Even though Han Yu and Li Ao did interpret the Confucian
moral Way further as a way to sustain the spiritual life of human beings, like other leading figures of the mid-Tang Confucian revival, their primary concern nonetheless remained how to solve social and political problems. In short, the revived mid-Tang Confucianism was primarily oriented toward an improvement of the public well-being.

While Lu Chih and the representatives of Confucian revival were all genuinely concerned with the people's suffering, Liu Tsung-yüan was far more radical than Lu and the rest of his peers in terms of his conception of the people. Be that as it may, Lu Chih's view regarding the people was closer to Liu Tsung-yüan's than to the other Confucian representatives in the sense that both of them always emphasized that the well-being of the people had to come first before that of the state, and especially before that of the emperor. And it is exactly due to Lu Chih's sincere commitment to the improvement of the people's livelihood, and more importantly, to his unrelenting endeavor to realize his Confucian convictions in practice, even at the risk of his political life, that we may legitimately claim for him a place in the mid-Tang Confucian revival movement.

In the mean time, having persistently followed the Confucian Way and refused to accede to the emperor's personal desires, Lu Chih's political behavior actually provided a living example of the ideal Confucian scholar official whom all of the Confucian revival intellectuals held with the utmost respect. There is no question that Lu reinvigorated Confucian governmental principles through his own solitary pursuit of Confucian political ideals. Admittedly, Lu Chih failed to break new conceptual ground for the Confucian revival, but his political life alone established a behavior paradigm of the ideal Confucian minister for the mid-Tang Confucian revival movement. And this is precisely Lu Chih's unique contribution to that most significant movement in the mid-Tang.

The significance of Lu Chih's political life in the mid-Tang was recognized by the Wang Shu-wen group, but their appreciation of Lu Chih's political endeavors does not mean that other contemporary officials necessarily regarded Lu Chih in the same light.
According to Ch'üan Te-yü's Preface to Lu Chih's extant works, some of Lu's contemporary officials commented that the tragic ending of Lu's political career was not caused by the fact that Lu Chih did not serve at the right time, or under the right ruler. They considered that it was rather because Lu's ability to govern was not as great as that of previous notable Chief Ministers, such as Wei Cheng in T'ai-tsung's reign and others during emperor Hsüan-tsung's rule.¹

Apparently disagreeing with these officials' criticism of Lu Chih, Ch'üan Te-yü refuted them this way:

Although the [Confucian] Way resides in oneself, applying it to the fullest depends upon others. When flying locusts fill the sky, even the Divine Farmer and Lord of Millet cannot produce a good harvest.² When a runaway cart is about to turn over, even Confucius and Mencius would give up their normal way of riding. If the [previous] four gentlemen and Mr. Lu exchanged their times of service [as Chief Ministers], we would be unable to know for certain who would have succeeded and who would have failed. That [Mr. Lu's] service to [emperor Te-tsung] failed to attain the accomplishments [enjoyed by those previous Ministers] in the Chen-kuan and K'ai-yüan reigns (T'ai-tsung's and Hsüan-tsung's reigns) is unfortunate for our own time and not only unfortunate for Mr. Lu. Is it not tantamount to a false accusation to suppose that [Lu's failure] was due to the insufficiency of his Way?³

¹ See Ch'üan Te-yü, "Preface," in HYCC: 4. Also see CTW, 493: 15. The other Chief Ministers mentioned by these officials included emperor T'ai-tsung's confidant Fang Hsüan-ling, and Yao Ch'ung and Sung Ching who served at the beginning of emperor Hsüan-tsung's reign. For Fang Hsüan-ling's life, see CTS, 66: 2459-67; HTS, 96: 3853-59; for Yao Ch'ung's and Sung Ching's life, see CTS, 96: 3021-36; HTS, 124: 4381-94.

² The Divine Farmer, or Shen Nung, is a legendary sage ruler who was supposedly the inventor of the plough. This is recorded in the second section of the "Great treatise or Hsi-tz'u" of the I ching, or The book of changes. Lord of Millet, or Hou Chi, was supposedly half human and half divine, and was claimed as ancestor by the ruling house of the Chou dynasty (1122?-256 B.C.). The legend of Hou Chi can be found in the "Sheng-ming" chapter in the "Ta-ya" section of the Shih ching, or The book of odes.

³ Ch'üan Te-yü, "Preface," Ibid.
Since we do not have any other sources explaining why and under what conditions those officials criticized Lu Chih, we should avoid pointless exploration of their comments. However, Ch'üan Te-yü's reply to those officials' opinion calls for attention.

Ch'üan Te-yü seems to believe that the root of Lu Chih's political failure was Tsetsung's unwillingness to allow Lu to utilize his ability to its fullest in those domains where the emperor lacked serious concern. Thus, Ch'üan implies that Lu's political downfall had nothing to do with his ability in government. Ch'üan's statement touches, to a large extent, upon one of the basic flaws of the traditional Chinese political system. That is, in traditional Chinese political reality, when the emperor chose to be autocratic, except for official remonstrances, no other institutional device existed which could effectively balance or restrain imperial power. This was especially the case after the mid-T'ang when the great clans and aristocratic families were in the process of gradually losing their local territorial base and becoming more and more dependent upon their bureaucratic positions to preserve their social and political privileges.4

It is true that imperial power in traditional China had always to rely upon the mechanism of the bureaucracy for its realization,5 but that power itself was nonetheless ultimate and all inclusive in theory. Furthermore, since in reality emperors could also employ personal attendants or advisors to bypass any inconvenience imposed upon them by the regular bureaucracy, and since the bureaucracy could not stop such practices except through remonstrances, the power of the bureaucracy as a pressure group vis-à-vis the throne was thus greatly weakened. In light of this, although the relationship between the emperor and the bureaucracy could not be anything else but symbiotic, this symbiotic

4 To be sure, the total decline of the great families did not take place until toward the very end of the T'ang dynasty. However, as noted already, since the An Lu-shan rebellion depopulated large areas in Ho-nan and also ruined the territorial bases of many prestigious clans in that region, the decline of many great families did begin in mid-T'ang.

relationship was at best an imbalanced one. After all, whenever serious conflicts arose in this symbiotic relationship, it was the emperor who had the arbitrary power to replace members of the bureaucracy, but the reverse was rarely if ever the case.

From this perspective, Lu Chih's efforts to transform Te-tsung's conduct for the sake of achieving the public good was inevitably doomed by this inherent flaw in the traditional Chinese imperial system. Even though Te-tsung had adopted most of Lu Chih's earlier advice when his court was in peril, after the emperor realized that he could not force Lu Chih to be silent about his Confucian convictions during Lu's tenure as Chief Minister, Lu's reformist policies became step by step a thorn in his side. In order to avoid facing such a constant reminder of his own moral duty to the public good, emperor Te-tsung chose to exercise his arbitrary power to end the political life of his former confidant and advisor whose ability to govern he had once highly appreciated.

Although Lu Chih emphasized the importance of accommodating to the changes in time and circumstances, and although he refused to imitate any historical standard mechanically without a critical reflection upon its appropriateness, one thing Lu apparently believed to be forever unchangeable was the moral obligation of the Son of Heaven toward his subjects. It is precisely in this domain that we see Lu's pragmatist sensibility completely giving way to his principle of righteousness. It was also squarely within this sphere that Lu's tragedy took shape.

Lu Chih was conscious that his pursuit of Confucian benevolent government could never succeed if he failed to transform the imperial conduct on the basis of his Confucian convictions. His career experience undoubtedly proved to him that the imperial role was the fundamental key to the realization of his political ideals. He knew that without imperial support, there would be no reform, pure and simple. He also knew that except for remonstrating with the throne he had no other means to remind the emperor of his moral obligation to the suffering public. He was thus impelled to speak up unceasingly for the people against the imperial wishes.
Lu Chih of course could have done otherwise. He probably understood that whether or not he followed his convictions would make no serious difference in terms of improving the public good as long as emperor Te-tsung refused to reform. He chose to be loyal to his convictions because ultimately he had to listen to the call of his own conscience. As noted before, Lu explained his choice with these words: "I have not betrayed the Son of Heaven on high and I have not betrayed what I have learned in this world; nothing else troubles me."

Although Lu Chih was rehabilitated in 805, the loss for the T'ang state of such a capable and public-spirited minister was already irretrievable. Ch'üan Te-yü does not seem excessive, then, when he laments that Lu's political fate was not only unfortunate for Lu himself, but for their times.

Be that as it may, Lu Chih's political endeavors nevertheless earned him high respect from the literati and scholar officials of subsequent dynasties. For example, in 945 when the Later Chin dynasty historians finished compiling the Old T'ang History, Lu Chih was one of only four T'ang ministers whose lives and deeds were given an entire chapter in the biographical section. This alone implies that by the tenth century Lu Chih already enjoyed quite a high esteem in the minds of many scholar officials. Indeed, there is a passage in the Old T'ang History which says that in recent times Lu had been considered an honest and public-spirited minister. It also laments that although Lu was a Chief Minister who "alone intended to eliminate every ill, and check all villains," his emperor failed to cherish his sincerity.

By the next century, in 1093 the famous Sung poet Su Shih (1036-1101) and several other court officials carefully collected Lu Chih's extant works and presented them to the throne. They commended Lu's advice to emperor Te-tsung for "gathering together the

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6 CTS, 139: 3818.
7 Ibid.: 3819.
splendid essence of ancient and contemporary [memorials], and [constituting] a genuine mirror for government."^8

The notable early Ming Confucian scholar official Hsu Hsüan (1389-1464) once also wrote an essay praising Lu Chih as an outstanding Confucian minister.°9 He put it this way:

As for someone whose learning was pure and honest; who regarded correcting the mind as the first priority in serving the ruler, and practicing righteousness as imperative in discussing [governmental] affairs; and who apparently has the talent to be a state minister, I only find one such person in the [entire] mid-Tang [history], this person is none other than Lu Hsiian-kung, [with the style name of] Ching-yü. . . . If the ruler at that time (i. e., emperor Te-tsung) could have adopted his suggestions, the order of the Three Dynasties could have been restored, not to mention the good rule of the Chen-kuan and K'ai-yüan periods.°10

Huang Tsung-hsi (1610-1695), a leading late Ming Confucian thinker, further regarded Lu Chih as one of the seven model Confucian scholar officials he identified throughout Chinese history.°11 In a 1692 essay written to refute the contemporary idea that the honor of enshrinement in the Confucian temple should be limited to orthodox Neo-Confucian scholars such as Ch'eng I, Ch'eng Hao and Chu Hsi or their heirs, Huang revealed why he held Lu Chih and six others in such high regard:

. . . But if an age is disordered the scholar-official must guard his honor strictly, and is determined not to sacrifice the high standards to which he has

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^8 See "Sung-ch'ao ming-ch'en chin tsou-i cha-tzu," as included in HYCC. It is also included in most editions of Lu Chih's extant works.


Lu Chih dedicated his life, no matter what the tortures and punishments visited on him by the ruler. For him it does not suffice to the fulfillment of duty simply to write commentaries on the Four Books, compile philosophical dialogues, or open a school and gather students. Throughout the ages, past and present, there have been those like . . . Lu Chih of the Tang, . . . -- these seven public-spirited gentlemen, eminently devoted to the public weal and sincere unto death, who accepted the responsibility for all-under-Heaven and labored undaunted in stormy seas. In them the world had a clear standard of rectitude -- men who could actually practice the teachings of Confucius. . . . How incredible then that these seven gentlemen remain unenshrined [in the Confucian temple].

Leaving aside the problem of possible exaggeration in their praise of Lu Chih, it is evident that the compilers of the *Old T'ang History*, Su Shih, Hsüeh Hsüan and Huang Tsung-hsi all considered Lu Chih's political efforts crucial to an ordered government. While Hsüeh Hsüan found Lu Chih the sole Confucian minister in the mid-T'ang, Huang Tsung-hsi went even further by regarding Lu as one of the few exemplary Confucian scholar officials who genuinely practiced the Confucian teachings throughout Chinese history. They apparently saw in Lu Chih's political behavior a true manifestation of the Confucian teaching. In other words, what they valued most about Lu Chih was exactly his striving to realize his Confucian political convictions for the sake of the public welfare.

So long as the imperial political system remained in the sense that the emperor was actually the seat of power, and so long as remonstrances remained the only means for court officials to speak up for the people against the personal desires of the emperors, Lu Chih's political behavior was likely to carry some relevance for those who aspired to take actions benefitting the people. Even in contemporary Chinese political reality, it seems that Lu Chih's efforts to act as the mouthpiece of the people can still find their relevant parallels.

The political campaigns and persecutions during the forty-year history of the People's Republic of China are well known. The T'ien-an men massacre of June fourth 1989 is

only the most recent tragic example of what abuses of autocratic political power can lead to. Admittedly, the contemporary Chinese historical context is completely different from Lu Chih's time. Nevertheless, the fact that there is still no effective institutional device to restrain arbitrary abuses of power by one party or one leader, and that any attempt to speak up for the public good or any sincere commitment to reform still demands one to take great, even ultimate, personal risks reminds us of the political situation in Lu's days.

What strikes us most is that during each political campaign in recent Chinese history, there have always been a few Chinese intellectuals who, like Lu Chih, or like other Confucian scholar officials in the Ming dynasty, were willing to act as spokesmen for the people. Liu Pin-yen (1926- ), China's most acclaimed journalist, is no doubt a typical example. In 1957, Liu Pin-yen became "an enemy" of the Communist Party due to the fact that he had formerly published many articles to criticize Party corruption, and wrote a letter that year to Chairman Mao asking him to correct the Party's abuses of power and to improve the Party's relationship with the people. As a result, Liu's punishment was being forced to live like an "untouchable" for twenty years. He was rehabilitated in 1979, but the Party's continued corruption and social injustice which he witnessed and experienced during the previous twenty years in rural China forced him to continue speaking up after his rehabilitation. Because of his repeated efforts to speak up for the people, Liu was punished again. This time he was expelled from the Party in January 1987.

15 For the history of why Liu Pin-yen was expelled from the Party, see Higher kind of loyalty, 1990: 253-78. For more information on Liu's courageous reportage, see Perry Link, ed., People or monsters and other stories and reportage from China after Mao, Indiana University Press, 1983; for an analysis of his life and work, see Michael S. Duke, Blooming and contending: Chinese literature in the post-Mao era, Indiana University Press, 1985, ch., 4.
After reading Liu Pin-yen's recently published memoir, a western critic raised a central question: "how could a clearsighted man know so much about the underside of Communism without concluding that the system, as well as its leaders, was fatally flawed?" What obviously puzzles this critic most is why Liu Pin-yen never intended to sever his tie with the Communist system as many dissidents in the East European countries did. Of course, detailed research would have to be conducted before we could solve this puzzle. However, to a certain extent, this critic already provides some important clues to her own question by stating that "China's democratic reformers saw themselves as the ultimate insiders, part of a 2,500-year-old tradition of mandarins whose mission was to advise the state. Liu Pin-yen shares this Confucian-cum-Communist yearning to serve." In short, Liu Pin-yen's repeated efforts to reform the Party are closely related to his longing to serve, a salient feature of the Confucian official tradition.

But one might ask a more crucial question: to whom is Liu's service ultimately rendered? After all, not every Communist Party member has the same idea about his or her vocational service, just as the great majority of Lu Chih's contemporary court officials never in their entire career served in a manner such as Lu Chih did, despite the fact that they could all be called Confucian court officials, and none of them would have denied their yearning to serve. The title of Liu Pin-yen's memoir, A higher kind of loyalty, and Lu Chih's sincere commitment to the Confucian conviction that "the people are the root of the state" can shed some light on the crux of this matter.

It is true that, like Lu Chih or like traditional Confucian scholar officials, Liu Pin-yen has always considered himself part of the established system, but Liu, as well as Lu Chih, never regarded the system as being more important than the people's livelihood. Liu wanted to serve, but his ultimate goal was to serve the people, not the Party, nor the Party

17 Emily MacFarquhar, Ibid.
leaders. He was loyal to the Party, but he felt a higher loyalty to the people. Likewise, Lu Chih also longed to serve, such longing made him unsatisfied with simply functioning as a court bureaucrat. It further impelled him to reform the status quo where he saw a great gap between the contemporary situation and his ideal Confucian government. Driven by his Confucian convictions, Lu clearly demonstrated that his first and foremost concern was for the improvement of the people's well-being rather than service to the emperor's personal interests. Thus, in spite of the wide gulf existing between their two completely different historical contexts, we find that the fundamental link connecting Lu Chih and Liu Pin-yen is exactly their ultimate concern for the people and their tenacious efforts to act as the people's spokesmen against the authoritarian powerholders. This parallel between the political behavior of Lu Chih and Liu Pin-yen, in the final analysis, allows us to conclude that although Confucianism has been severely attacked in the twentieth century, the Confucian tradition of speaking out on behalf of the people nonetheless never completely perished from the consciousness of many contemporary Chinese intellectuals.

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Abbreviations

CCCC, Chang Chi-chiang chi.
CHC, The Cambridge history of China, Cambridge University Press (volume titles and dates given with each entry).
CKCY, Chen-kuăn cheng-yao.
CTS, Chiu T'ang-shu.
CTShih, Ch'üan T'ang-shih.
CTW, Ch'üan T'ang-wen.
CYKC, Chang Yen-kung chi.
CYYY, Chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu-so chi-k'an.
HHS, Hou-Han shu.
HJAS, Harvard journal of Asiatic studies.
HYCC, Han-yüan chi-chu.
HCLCC, Han Ch'ang-li ch'üan-chi.
HTS, Hsin T'ang-shu.
LHSWC, Lü Ho-shu wen-chi.
LHTCC, Liu Ho-tung ch'üan-chi.
LWKC, Li Wen-kung chi.
LYPWC, Li Yuan-pin wen-chi.
PLC, P'i ling chi.
SL, Shun-tsung shih-lu.
SPPY, Ssu-pu pei-yao.
SPTK, Ssu-pu ts'ing-k'an.
SS, Sung shih.
TCTC, Tzu-chih t'ung-chien.
TFYK, Ts'e-fu yüan-kuei.
THY, T'ang Hui-yao.
TKCK, Teng-k'o chi-k'ao.
TTCLC, T'ang ta-chao-ling chi.
TT, T'ung-tien.
WYHY, Wen-yüan ying-hua.
YHCHTC, Yüan-ho chün-hsien t'u-chih.
YHHT, Yüan-ho hsing-tsuăn.
YHHTSCC, Yüan-ho hsing-tsuàn ssu-chiao chi.
YTSC, Yüan Ts'ü-shan chi.
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Appendix I: Glossary

Ai-chou 愛州
an-fu hsiü-p'ìn 安富態貧
An Lu-shan 安祿山
chai-lang 實郎
chan-suan mi-shu 占算秘術
Chang Chiu-ling 張九齡
Chang I 張鎰
Chang P'ang 張滂
Chang She 張渙
Chang Yen-shang 張延賞
Chang Yüeh 張説
Ch'ang-an 長安
Ch'ang-chou 常州
Chao Ching 趙憬
Chao-i 昭義
Chao Kuei-hsien 趙貴先
Chao K'uang 趙匡
Chao-tsung 昭宗
Chen-kuan chih-chih 貞觀之治
Ch'en 陳
Ch'en-chou 辰州
ch'eng 誠
Ch'eng-te 成德
chi 畿
chi che, shih chih wei ye 略言
Chi-hsien yüan 集賢院
Chi-shih-chung 給事中
Ch'i 起
Chia Chih 寶至
Chiang-huai 江淮
Chiang Kung-fu 姜公輔
Chiao-jan 皎然
Chiao-ssu 郡祀
Chien-chung 建中
chih-hsing 志行
Chia-hsing 嘉興
Chien-ch'a yü-shih 監察御史
Chien-i ta-fu 諫議大夫
Chien-nan 劍南
Ch'ien Ch'i 銭起
chih chi chih nan ye 知幾之難也
chih ch'i pu-k'o erh wei-chih che 知其不可而為之者
chin-chung 盡忠
chin-shih 進士
Ch'in 禄
Ch'in-fu wen-hsüeh-kuan hsüeh-shih 秦府文學館學生
ching 經
ching-t'ien 井田
ching-yü li-chih 精於吏治
Ching-yüan 墬原
ch'ing-miao-ch'ien 青苗錢
Glossary

chio-pi 九弊
chio-tsu 舊族
Ch’iung-lin k’u 瓊林庫
Chou 周
Chou-li 周禮
Chu Hsi 朱熹
chu-hsing 著姓
Chu-k’o yüan-wai-lang 主客員外郎
Chu-pu 主簿
Chu T’ao 朱濬
Chu Tz’u 朱泚
Ch’u-chih shih 黨陟使
ch’u-hsin 初心
Ch’ü Huan 曲環
Ch’üan 權
ch’üan-ling Tu-chih 權領度支
ch’üan-shu 權術
Ch’üan Te-yü 權德輿
Ch’un-chiu 春秋
chün hsien chih-tu 郡縣制度
chün-t’ein 均田
chün-tzu 君子
Chung-chou 忠州
Chung-shu she-jen 中書舍人
Chung-shu sheng 中書省
Chung-shu shih-lang 中書侍郎
chung-tao 中道
chung-wen ch'ing-ju 重文輕儒
Chung yung 中庸
fei yü jen-shih chih wai, pieh yu T'ien-ming ye 非於人事之外別有天命也
Feng 封
feng-chien 封建
Feng-hsiang 凤翔
Feng-lo Ssu 豐樂寺
Feng-t'ien 奉天
fu 賦
"Fu-hsing shu" "復姓書"
fu-kuo ch'iang-ping 富國強兵
Han 漢
Han-lin 翰林
Han-lin hsüeh-shih 翰林學士
Han-lin hsüeh-shih yüan 翰林學士院
Han-lin kung-feng 翰林供奉
Han-lin tai-chao 翰林待詔
Han-lin yüan 翰林院
Han Yü 韓愈
Hao-chou 濮州
Heng 衡
Ho-chung 河中
Ho-nan 河南
Ho-pei 河北
Ho-shuo 河朔
ho-ti 和諧
ho-t'iao 和諧
Ho-tung 河東
Ho-yin 河陰
Hou-t'u 佑土
Hsiao ching 季經
Hsiang-yang 襄陽
Hsiao Fu 萧復
Hsiao Heng 萧衡
Hsiao-jen 小人
Hsiao Sheng 萧生
Hsiao Sung 萧嵩
Hsiao Ts'un 萧存
Hsiao Ying-shih 潇穎士
Hsien 賢
Hsien-che 賢者
Hsien-liang 賢良
Hsien-tsung 賢宗
Hsienyang 咸陽
Hsin-ch'ang 新昌
Hsin Tang-shu tsai-hsiang shih-hsi piao 新唐書宰相世系表
Hsing-chüan 行範
Hsing pien-chi 性褊急
Hsü-chou 徐州
Hsüan 宣
Hsüan-fu 宣撫
Hsüan-tsung 玄宗
Hsüan-wu 宣武
Hsüeh Hsüan 薛瑄
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<tr>
<th>地点</th>
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<td>仁恕之道</td>
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<td>&quot;jen-wen hua-ch'eng lun&quot;</td>
<td>“人文化成論”</td>
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<td>荊且</td>
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<td>K'ou shuo-pu-ch'u; chih shih hsieh te ch'u</td>
<td>口說不出;只是寫得出</td>
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<td>Ku-Tao</td>
<td>古道</td>
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ku-wen 古文
Kuan Chung 管仲
Kuan-lung 關龍
Kuan-chung 關中
Kuan tzu 管子
Kuei-tsu 貴族
Kun 魯
Kuo-tzu po-shih 國子博士
Li 李
Li Ao 李朝
Li Chi 禮記
Li Chi-fu 李吉甫
Li Chiang 李綽
Li Ch'u-lin 李楚琳
Li Ch'ung 李充
Li Fu 李復
Li Heng 李衡
Li Hsi-lieh 李希烈
Li Hua 李華
Li Huai-kuang 李懷光
Li-i shih 禮儀使
Li Kuan 李觀
Li Ling-yao 李靈曜
Li Mi 李泌
Li Pao-ch'en 李寶臣
Li-pu 李部
Li-pu 禮部
Lu Chih

Li-pu lang-chung 梁部郎中
Li Sheng 李晟
Li Sun 李廙
Li Wan-jung 李萬榮
Li Wei-yüh 李惟岳
Liang 梁
Liang-chou 梁州
Liang Su 梁肜
liang-shui 两税
liang-shui fa 两税法
Ling-nan 嶺南
ling Tu-chih 領度支
Liu Fang 柳芳
Liu-hou 留後
Liu Pin-yen 劉賓鶴
liu-shih 六失
Liu Shih-ning 劉士寧
liu-su 流俗
Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元
Liu Wen-hsi 劉文喜
Liu Yu-hsi 劉禹錫
Lo-yang 洛陽
Lu Ch'an 露淹
Lu Cheng 盧征
Lu Ch'i 盧杞
Lu Ch'i-cheng 陸齊政
Lu Ch'i-wang 盧齊望
Lu Chien-chih 陸傳之
Lu Chien-li 陸簡禮
Lu Chih 陸贔
Lu Ching-yü 陸敬禧
Lu Chiu 陸九
Lu-chou 廬州
Lu Ch'un 陸淳
Lu Feng (or Lu Li) 陸豐（陸澧）
Lu Hsi-sheng 陸希聲
Lu Hsiang-hsien 陸象先
Lu Hsüan-kung 陸宣公
Lu Hsün 陸濁
Lu Huai 陸淮
Lu I 陸庭
Lu Jun (or Lu Chien) 陸潤（陸潤）
Lu K'an 陸侃
Lu K'an-ju 陸侃如
Lu Keng 陸慶
Lu Kuan 陸瓘
Lu Kuei-meng 陸龜蒙
Lu Lun 陸綸
Lu-lung 陸龍
Lu Mi 陸泌
Lu Pa 陸濁
Lu Shan-jen 陸山仁
Lu Shang 陸賞
Lu-shih chi-yen fang 陸氏集驗方
Lu Chih 陸儒
Lu Shu 陸庶
Lu Te-ming 陸德明
Lu Tun-hsin 陸敦信
Lu Wei 陸渭
Lu Yü-ch'ing 陸餘慶
Lu Yüan-fang 陸元方
Lu Yüan-lang 陸元朗
Lü Wen 呂溫
"Lun fo-ku piao" “論佛骨表”
lung-hu pang 龍虎榜
Men-hsia sheng 門下省
men-jen 門人
Meng Tzu 盞子
min wei kuei 民為貴
Ming 明
ming 名
ming-ching 明經
ming-tsu 名族
mo 末
mo-i 末議
Mo tzu 墨子
mou 盧
Mu-tsung 穆宗
Nan-kung 南宮
nei-hsiang 内相
Ou-yang Chan 歐陽詹
Pan Hung 班宏
Glossary

p'an-ni 叛逆
p'an Tu-chih 判度支
Pei-chü wen-yen 備翼文言
P'ei Yao-ch'ing 裴耀卿
P'ei Yen-ling 裴延齡
pen 本
Pi-pu lang-chung 比部郎中
Pi-shu-chien 秘書監
Pi-shu sheng chiao-shu-lang 秘書省校書郎
Pieh-chi 別集
Pieh-chia 別駕
Pien-chou 汴州
p'ien-wen 駃文
p'in 本
Ping-pu shang-shu 兵部尚書
Ping-pu shih-lang 兵部侍郎
P'ing-liang 平涼
P'ing-lu 平壇
p'o ch'ín ju-hsüeh 維勤儒學
po-hsüeh hung-tz'u 博學宏詞
"Pu she-che shuo" "捕蛇者說"
P'ü-ch'eng 蒲城
san-wen 散文
Shan 禪
Shan-chou 陝州
Shan-tung 山東
Shang 商
Lu Chih

Shang shu 尚書
Shang Yang 尚鞅
she-chi chih ch'en 社稷之臣
shen-ch'a ch'ün-ch'ing 察察群情
Shen-ts'e 神策
sheng 升
sheng pien 省便
shih 石
shih 勳
Shih chi 史記
shih-e 十惡
shih-i 時議
Shih-lang 侍郎
Shih-po chung-shih 市舶中使
shih-shih 時勢
shih ta-fu 士大夫
shih-tsu 士族
shih wei tsu-hsing 世為族姓
Shih-yü-shih 侍御史
Shou-chou 寿州
shu 衅
Shou-chou 舒州
Shu-ju hsiao-chung 豐儒小忠
shu-min 廚民
shu-p'an pa-ts'ui 書判拔萃
shu-shih 衙士
Shun 舜
Glossary

Shun-tsung 顺宗
Ssu-K'ung 司空
Ssu-ma Kuang 司馬光
Ssu-nung shao-ch'ing 司農少卿
Su-chou 蘇州
Su Shih 蘇軾
Su so an-chih 素所譜知
Su-tsung 肅宗
Sui 隋
Sung 宋
Sung-shan 嵩山
Ta-chung 大中
Ta-chung chih-tao 大中之道
Ta hsüeh 大學
Ta-li 大曆
Ta-li shih ts'ai-tzu 大曆十才子
ta-t'ien 大田
Ta-ying k'u 大盈庫
Ta-yü-ling 大庾嶺
Tai-pei 岐北
Tai-tsung 代宗
Tai-fu shao-ch'ing 太府少卿
Tai-fu ssu 太府寺
Tai-tsung 太宗
Tai-wei 太尉
Tai-tzu pin-k'o 太子賓客
Tan-t'u 丹徒
T' an Chu 喜助
tang 汝
T' ang 汤
T' ang-an 唐安
Tao 道
Tao che, ku-chin chih cheng-ch'üan ye 道者，古今之正權也
Tao-chou 道州
Tao-t'ung 道統
t'e 德
t'e-li pu-ch'ün 特立不群
t'e-chung tse te-kuo 得象則得國
Te-tsung 德宗
u 第
ti-shui 地税
T' ien-an men 天安門
T' ien-chung shih-yü-shih 殿中侍御史
T' ien Ch'eng-tz'u 田永嗣
t' ien-chieh 天戒
t' ien-ch'ien 天譴
t' ien-hsia 天下
T' ien Hsü 天緒
t' ien-ming 天命
t' ien-ming yu-jen 天命由人
T' ien-pao 天寳
t' ien-tzu 天子
T' ien Yüeh 田悅
tou 斗
Glossary

Tou Shen  薄参
Tso pu-chüeh  左補闕
Tso-tsang k’u  左藏庫
tsu-yung-tiao  祖甫調
Ts’ui Ch’ün  崔群
Ts’ui Tsao  崔造
Ts’ui Yüan-han  崔元翰
tsun-mu jen i  遼慕仁義
tsun Tao  遼道
tu-chih  度支
tu-fu  獨夫
Tu Fu  杜甫
Tu-ku Chi  獨孤及
Tu Yu  杜佑
t’ui-ch’eng  推誠
t’un-t’ien  在田
T’ung-tien  通典
t’ung yü tao che shih wei chün-tz  通於道者為君子
Tzu-hsia  子夏
Tzu-kung  子貢
Tz'u-pu yüan-wai-lang  祠部員外郎
wang che chih tao  王者之道
wang-nien chiao  忘年交
wang-shih  望氏
Wang Shih-ch’ung  王世充
Wang shu-wen  王叔文
Wang Wu-chün  王武俊
wei 威
Wei Cheng 魏徵
Wei Kao 韋皋
Wei-nan 韋南
Wei-po 魏博
Wen 文
Wu 武
Wu chün 吳郡
Wu hsien 吳縣
Wu-hsien nan 吳縣男
Wu shang pu-fu T'ien-tzu, 吳上不負天子,
hsia pu-fu wu so-hsüeh, pu hsü ch'i-t'a 下不負吾所翊, 不恤其它
Wu Tse-t'ien 武則天
Wu Ts'ou 吳湊
Wu Tung-hsüan 吳通玄
Wu Tung-wei 吳通微
wu-wei 無為
Yang Ch'eng 陽城
Yang Yen 楊炎
Yao 堯
Yen-chou 廣州
yin 蔀
yin-pao 涴暴
ying-t'ien 飃田
Yu 佑
Yu Jo 有若
Yu Pu-ch'üeh 右補闕
Yü 高
Yü Ho 庚何
Yü Kung-i 子公果
Yü Shao 于邵
Yüan Chieh 元结
yüan-ch'ing 原情
Yüan-ho ch'un-hsien t'u-chih 元和郡縣圖志
Yüan-ho chung-hsing 元和中興
Yüan-ho hsin-t'ao 元和姓集
"Yüan Tao" "樂道"
"Yüeh-ling" "月令"
Yün-chien 雲間
Yung-chou 永州