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Abstract

This thesis examines the thought of Liu Yü-hsi (772-842), a participant of the mid-T'ang (ca. 750-850) Confucian revival movement. In this study, I have attempted to construct an approximation of Liu's thought through the discussions of two major elements in his thought: Confucianism and Buddhism. In addition, I also discuss his famous philosophical dissertation "T'ien Lun" ("On Heaven") in order to present a basic understanding of Liu's world view.

These discussions reveal that Confucianism occupied a central position in Liu Yü-hsi's thought. His major concern in life was how to "bring benefit to the people" ("chi-wu"). Buddhism, while it occupied an important place in Liu's life, never took charge of his inner life completely. He conceived that Buddhism and Confucianism share a similar goal in their teachings. In particular, Buddhism should form a complement to Confucianism. Hence, he selected elements from various Buddhist schools that best fit his major concern in life. In this way, Buddhism and Confucianism co-exist in a harmonious and connected fashion in his thought.

To achieve the goal of "chi-wu," Liu also believed that humans are totally responsible for their own future. The phenomenal world, according to Liu, is regulated by a pair of concepts -- *shu* (numerical dimensions) and *shih* (conditions). These concepts explain the basic principles behind which events occur in the world. If human beings are to optimize the state of their existence, they have to exert themselves to construct a well-regulated society. Such a society can be achieved by the use of laws that are based on Confucian moral values. Therefore, Liu's thought can be characterized by his social concern.
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Introduction

Liu Yü-hsi (772-842), a famed poet and essayist of his time, is the focus of this study. However, the aim of this thesis is not to study his literary achievement, but, rather, to present the main thrust of his intellectual tendencies.

Ever since the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion (755-786), T'ang intellectuals were confronted with a major crisis. The T'ang empire, in the aftermath of the rebellion, was on the brink of disintegration. The devastation of the rebellion presented the T'ang intellectuals with the task of re-building the empire. Many literary intellectuals, with growing concerns about the situation, sought to re-establish a stable political environment through an attempt to re-establish morality. A major consequence of the efforts of these like-minded intellectuals is manifested in the form of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival. By the early ninth century, this attempt to revitalize Confucianism as the guiding principle of both state and personal affairs reached its apogee with the emergence of cardinal intellectual figures like Han Yü (768-824), Li Ao (774-836), Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819), and Po Chü-i (772-846).

Our protagonist, Liu Yü-hsi, was not only a contemporary of these figures, but was good friend of some of them, and can be viewed as a participant in their movement to revitalize Confucianism. However, he has attracted little attention from scholars in this respect. Most of the studies by Chinese scholars in pre-modern times on Liu's intellectual tendencies focused mainly on his literary

achievements. This is likewise the case in modern studies of Liu, although a number of articles have been published in Chinese on Liu's famous philosophical essay "T'ien Lun" ("On Heaven").

Modern studies of Liu Yü-hsi's thought in Western languages seem minimal. I have not been able to find a single article on Liu Yü-hsi in English. Perhaps Wolfgang Kubin's two-page entry in The Indiana Companion to traditional Chinese literature can be counted as the only English "article" on Liu. H.G. Lamont has written a two-part essay entitled "An early ninth century debate on Heaven: Liu Tsung-yüan's T'ien Shuo and Liu Yü-hsi's T'ien Lun." This essay discusses quite extensively issues concerning the "debate" on Heaven between Han Yü, Liu Tsung-yüan, and Liu Yü-hsi. It also provides some good discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's thought.

Hence our present understanding of Liu Yü-hsi's thought is very limited. The focal point of most of these studies of Liu's thought seems to be on his famous essay "T'ien Lun." There is no doubt that a study of this philosophical discourse should reveal a basic characterization of Liu's intellectual outlook. However, I feel that these studies may, to a certain extant, have decontextualized the significance of this essay from the whole of Liu's thought.

Hence, given the lack of a general understanding of Liu Yü-hsi's thought, a basic contribution of this thesis, I hope, is to provide a fair approximation of Liu's thought. This is the basic motive of my choosing Liu Yü-hsi as the subject of this thesis.

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While the main purpose this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of Liu Yü-hsi's thought, I believe that this study can also enlarge our picture of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement, for the nature of Liu's participation in the movement can provide us a different perspective on how some intellectuals exerted themselves in such a major project to re-vitalize Confucianism as the guiding principle to rebuild the social and political order.

The basic approach of this thesis is simple. After a preliminary reading of Liu's works, I have been able to identify two major elements in his thought: Confucianism and Buddhism. While the former, as a system of political ideology, was relatively dormant during the post-An Lu-shan period, the latter enjoyed general acceptance among the intellectual elite throughout the T'ang dynasty. One can often find among the T'ang intellectuals a tendency to maintain Confucianism as an ideology solely for the assertion of oneself in the worldly affairs, while accepting Buddhism (and/or Taoism) to take charge of one's spirituality. Hence, the notion "Buddhism (and/or Taoism) within and Confucianism without" can be used to characterize the basic intellectual outlook of many T'ang intellectuals.5 In the case of Liu Yü-hsi, this characterization, while adequate, still seems crude.

Hence, in our discussion, we will first demonstrate the significant position that Confucianism has occupied in the whole of Liu's thought. Then we will proceed to discuss his outlook on Buddhism. This should provide a more refined characterization of how his Buddhist outlook is related to his Confucian outlook. After gaining a general understanding of what kind of roles these two major elements play in the whole of Liu Yü-hsi's thought, we can then discuss Liu's famous essay "T'ien Lun" ("On Heaven"). Through a discussion of how Liu views the relationship between Heaven and Humanity, we should be able to demonstrate

the originality of Liu as a thinker. More important, such a discussion should further demonstrate the major concern of Liu Yü-hsi's life.
Chapter One: A biographical sketch of Liu Yü-hsi

Liu Yü-hsi¹ (style-name Meng-te) was born in 772, the seventh year of the Ta-li reign (766-779).² According to his autobiography, his clan had moved South after the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion in 755.³ We do not know precisely where Liu's birthplace was, but based on his writings,⁴ there is no doubt that Liu Yü-hsi's childhood years were spent in the region around Su-chou.⁵


²Liu mentions in a couple of places that he and Po Chü-i were born in the same year. According to Po himself, he was born on the twentieth day of the first month of the seventh year of the Ta-li reign. Since part of the last month of the seventh year of Ta-li falls in 773, there is always a chance that Liu was actually born in 773. However, the chance that Liu was born in 772 is much greater. In converting the Chinese date to the modern one, we use Ch'en Yüan, Erh-shih-shih shuo-jun piao. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1962. See Pien Hsiao-hsüan, Liu Yü-hsi nien-p'u (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1963. Henceforth: Nien-p'u), p. 6, and Chu Chin-ch'eng, Po Chü-i nien-p'u (Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1982), p. 1. Also see p. 187 of Lo Lien-tien, "Liu Meng-te nien-p'u," in Wen-shih-che hsüeh-pao, vol. 8 (July 1958), pp. 181-295.


⁴In 833, when Liu was Prefect of Su-chou, he compiled a collection of his own works. In a preface to this collection, he indicates that he selected one quarter of the forty chapters (t'ung) of his works to make up this collection. This collection, which is known as Liu-shih chüeh, thus contains only ten chapters. According to the Sung scholar, Ch'en Chen-sun, the collection of Liu's work known as Liu Pin-k'o wen-chi has a total of forty chapters (chüan). However, by the early Sung (960-1279), ten chapters had been lost. Sung Ts'zu-tao (1019-1079) collected some of Liu's lost works and compiled a ten chapters supplement to the thirty chüan Liu Pin-k'o wen-chi. However, Ch'en Chen-sun had already expressed doubts that these lost works collected by Sung Ts'zu-tao might not originally been part of the Liu Pin-k'o wen-chi. See Ch'en Chen-sun ed., Chih-chai shu-lū chieh-t'i (Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu edition. Taipei: Commercial Press, 1968), p. 453. Nonetheless, this Sung dynasty edition of the Liu Pin-k'o wen-chi is the earliest edition of
Liu tells us in his autobiography that he is a descendant of the Han imperial house. In particular, Liu claims, his family belongs to the line of the Liu Sheng, a son of Emperor Ching of Han (r. 156 - 141 B.C.). Because Liu Sheng was the feudal prince of Chung Shan, thus Liu Yü-hsi often refers himself as Liu Yül-hsi of

Liu's collected works extant. For a photo reprint of this edition, see Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi (Tokyo: Taian publishing co., reprint 1967). At the end of this edition, there are two postfaces. One was written by Sung Min-chiu (styled Tz'u-tao), the other by Tung Fen in 1138. The second postface indicates that the missing ten chapters were chapters twenty-one to thirty of the Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi. Another Sung edition of Liu's collected works is the Liu Meng-te wen-chi (Ssu-pu ts'ung-kan chi-pien edition. Taipei: Commercial Press, 1967). This edition is a photocopy of the Liu Meng-te wen-chi kept in Fukui-shi Sorankan in Japan. In this edition we can also find a postface by the Japanese sinologist Naito Tora. This edition also contains a total of forty chapters, with the last ten being supplements. Compared with the Sung version of the Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi, the last ten chapters are identical. However, the material of the first thirty chapters of these two versions differs in order. The Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi begins with prose works, while the Liu Meng-te wen-chi begins with poems. These two Sung editions are the two most important versions of Liu's collected works today. Liu's works can also be found in sources like Ch'üan T'ang Wen and Ch'üan T'ang Shih. For more detailed discussion of other versions of Liu's collected works, see Wan Man, Tang-chi hsü-lu (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1980), pp. 201-204.

In modern times, three major versions of Liu's collected works have been published. The earliest one is Liu Yü-hsi chi, Shanghai: Shanghai jen-min, 1975. This version is based on Chu ch'eng, Chieh-i-lu sheng-yü ts'ung-shu edition (1905) of the Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi, and it uses the Sung dynasty edition of Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi and a number of other sources as references. The second version is Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, 3 vols., Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1989. It is also based on the Ch'ing Chieh-i-lu sheng-yü ts'ung-shu edition of Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi. The third version is Liu Yü-hsi chi, 2 vols., Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1990. This version is based on the Sung edition of Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi, and makes reference to five different editions of Liu's collected works, including the Sung edition of Liu Meng-te wen-chi. It is also collated with twenty different sources. This version has a number of advantages over the other two modern versions. First, it makes use of more sources in its collation. Second, it also includes a supplementary selection which contains works of Liu Yül-hsi that are not already included in the Sung edition of Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi. Third, it also points out works that are mistakenly included in the Liu Pin-k'ō wen-chi. Thus, for this study, we will base our discussion on this modern version of Liu Yül-hsi's collected works.

According to Pien Hsiiao-hsiian, Liu was actually born in Su-chou. See his Nien-p'u, pp. 6-7. From the evidence that Pien provides, it is quite possible that Liu did indeed spend his childhood in areas around Su-chou. However, it is a bit far-fetched to conclude that Liu was born there.

See LYHC, p. 590.
Chung Shan. But modern scholars, investigating the discrepancies of certain accounts in the autobiography with those of the records in the dynastic histories, have proved convincingly that not only was there no connection between Liu's family and the Han imperial house, but also that Liu was probably descended from the Hsiung-nu.

It was not an unusual practice for a T'ang intellectual to intentionally falsify his family tree. However, there is not sufficient information to indicate that Liu Yü-hsi intentionally falsified his family tree. T'ang society was extremely hierarchical. A man's social status could be measured, to a certain extent, by what kind of family he was from. In the case of Liu Yü-hsi, his clan associated itself with the Han imperial house.

7For some examples, see LYHC, pp. 587, 588.
8See Yao Wei-yüan, Pei-chao hu-hsing k'ao (Peking: K'o-hstieh ch'u-pan-she, 1958), pp. 48-49. Here Yao expresses his suspicion that Liu Yü-hsi may have been a descendant of the Hsiung-nu. Pien Hsiao-hsüan, agreeing with Yao, has shown quite convincingly that Liu was indeed a descendant of the Hsiung-nu. See his Nien-p'u, pp. 1-2, and his Liu Yü-hsi ts'ung-kao (Ssu-ch'uan: Pa-shu shu-she, 1988), pp. 1-12.
10For a discussion of the role one's family could play in one's political career during the T'ang dynasty, see Sun Kuo-tung's article, "T'ang-Sung chih-chi she-hui meng-ti chih hsiao-yung" in Sun Kuo-tung, T'ang-Sung shih lun-ts'ung, Hong Kong: Lung-meng shu-tien, 1980. While Sun's use of a statistical approach to argue the relative insignificance of the ascendancy of scholar-officials with obscure family background is debatable, his article does note some of the advantages of those who were from prominent families over those who were from less well-to-do families.
11Lo Lien-tien takes this statement literally and believes that Liu's prominent clan was indeed Chung Shan. See his "Liu Yü-hsi nien-p'u," p. 181. Because of his last name, Liu, some of Liu Yü-hsi's friends referred him as 'Liu Yü-hsi of Peng-cheng.' The Liu clan in Peng-ch'eng was the most prominent clan among all the Lius in the T'ang. This complicates the picture further. Liu's biography in the CTS 160:4210 also claims that Peng-ch'eng is his clan, and a similar statement is found in Chi Yün et al., Ssu-k'u chüan-shu chung-mu t'i-yao (40 vols. Taiwan: Commercial Press, 1965), p. 3146.
It seems that Loyang, as Liu mentions in his autobiography, was indeed his native place. Since the times of Liu Liang the Lius had resided in Loyang for seven generations, and their burial ground was originally located in the Pei-shan of Loyang. After the insurrection of An Lu-shan broke out in 755, Liu Yü-hsi's father, Liu Hsü (?-796), was forced to move with his clan to the south. He later served in various offices of the military commissioners, and took up the position of assistant of the Salt Distribution Commissioner (yen-t'ieh shih) in the office in Yung-chiao. Yung-chiao, relatively close to Yang-chou, the headquarters of the Salt Commissioner, was probably one of the places to which Liu Yü-hsi traveled in his childhood.

In his autobiography, Liu also mentions the names of his great grandfather, Liu K'ai, and that of his grandfather, Liu Huang. Liu K'ai is said to have reached the post of Prefect of Po-chou (in modern Shangtung). For Liu Huang, Liu Yü-hsi's account is more detailed. Huang is said to have taken positions such as recorder (chu-pu) in Loyang, aide in palace (tien-chung ch'eng), and attendant censor (shih yü-shih). He was also posthumously given the title Director of the Ministry of

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12Pei-shan was also known as Pei-mang Shan. It was located somewhere north-west of Loyang. Pien Hsiao-hsüan argues convincingly that this ancestor of Liu Yü-hsi is not the Liu Liang in the Chou Shu and Pei Shih. He believes that this Liu Liang must have served the Northern Wei dynasty (386-420). However, we are not able to find any biographical material concerning Liu Liang in the Wei Shu, and thus it is not possible to further verify Pien's claim.

13The salt monopoly was perhaps the most lucrative income source of the T'ang empire after the An Lu-shan rebellion. For a discussion of the salt monopoly, see D. C. Twitchett, Financial administration under the T'ang dynasty (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 50-58. Yung-chiao, in An-hui province, was a major transportation center for salt at the time. Ch'i T'ai-yüan suggests that Liu Hsü was appointed to his position by Liu Yen himself. See his Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 1506.
Sacrifices. Unfortunately, I have been unable to find any biographical information about these ancestors.

In his account of his father's career, Liu Yü-hsi also indicates that when his father retired from office, he travelled back to Che-yu (Che-hsi). On his way there, however, he fell sick and died in Yang-chou. It is not clear exactly what Hsü's destination was, but the government of Che-yu was in Su-chou. Hence this may further suggest that the Lius probably settled in Su-chou, or, at least, that they owned some real-estate there.

The above account gives a rough sketch of Liu Yü-hsi's family background and an approximation of where he resided during his childhood years, since little is certain about this period of his life. While it is not clear to us whether Liu Yü-hsi belonged to any old aristocratic families, it seems safe, based on Liu's own accounts of his immediate patriarchal ancestors, to assume that the Liu's family belonged to the literati class.

Now, we can proceed to discuss Liu's childhood activities. Again, there is little certainty about this early stage of Liu's life, but there are three facts that we are sure about, and they are of importance in our understanding of Liu's later intellectual activities.

The first two concern the intellectual environment in which Liu was situated before he passed his chin-shih examination in 793. Based on our earlier discussion,

14See LYHC, p. 590. Another account of Liu's ancestors can be found in Yuan-ho hsing-tsuan, compiled by Lin Pao. Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu ch'en-pen pieh-chi edition. chüan 5, p. 38a. According to this account, Liu family would belong to a different line of the Han imperial house; also, Liu Yü-hsi's father is said to be a Liu Shu. Since there is little doubt that the Liu clan was unrelated to the Han imperial house, Lin's account seems also unreliable.

15I am able to find a Liu Hsü in the HTS 71a:2250. However, this Liu Hsü is obviously a different person.
we know that Liu Yü-hsi grew up in a region that was financially and culturally flourishing, particularly after the An Lu-shan rebellion. Many talented intellectuals also sought shelter in nearby areas, and some took up careers similar to that of Liu Hsü. The arrival of these intellectuals stimulated the cultural environment. The figures with whom Liu Yü-hsi came into contact before passing the chin-shih examination clearly exerted a great impact on the shaping of his intellectual outlook. Among them, the famous statesman Tu Yu (735-812) was the most notable. His monumental work, Tung Tien, in two hundred chapters


17See Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 1589, for a short list of some of Liu's contemporaries who resided in nearby areas. Ch'üan Te-yü (759-818) also served as an assistant of the Salt Commissioner in Yang-chou. It is quite possible that he and Liu's father, Liu Hsü, knew each other because of the nature of their jobs. See Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 1557.

18See E.G. Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism in T'ang intellectual life," in Arthur F. Wright ed., The Confucian Persuasion, pp. 77-114. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1960), p. 110. It is not easy to answer the question concerning exactly when Liu Yü-hsi first came into contact with Tu Yu. Perhaps we can speculate a little here by using some of the results obtained by modern scholarship. According to his autobiography, Liu served as a secretary of Tu Yu after he passed the chin-shih examination. However, following a thesis of Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, based on a memorial written by Liu for Tu Yu, it seems that Liu had already become acquainted with Tu at an earlier time. For Ch'ü's argument, see his Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, pp. 1485-1487. However, Pien Hsiao-hsüan has dated this memorial in 803. See his Nien p'u, pp. 24-25. Cheng Ho-sheng, in contrast, has dated this in the year 801. See his Tu Yu nien-p'u (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1934), pp. 97-98. In these two cases, Liu was age 31 and 29 respectively. It is not easy to judge which of these different datings of the work is more plausible, but, judging from the tone of Liu in his autobiography, it is quite obvious that Liu Yü-hsi and Tu Yu already knew each other before the year 800, when Liu began formal service in Tu Yu's office. In Liu's account of Tu's inviting Liu to serve as his secretary, Liu remarked that they "knew each other formerly" ("su hsiang-chih"). See
(chüan), reflected clearly his pragmatic approach to the Way of good government.¹⁹ As a mentor of Liu Yü-hsi, Tu Yu might have imbued the young Liu with his political pragmatism.

With respect to his early education, it is quite likely that Liu spent some time studying with famous Buddhist poet-monks like Chiao-ji-an and Ling-ch'ê.²⁰ On another occasion, Liu Yü-hsi recalled that he was very fond of making the acquaintance of literary figures, and he often received praise from these people.²¹ Among the names Liu mentions, we find poet-monks and future statesmen.²² This early contact with men of letters not only proved to be significant in Liu's later success in the chin-shih examination,²³ it also reflected Liu's great passion for

LYHC, p. 591. However, this still leaves the possibility open that Liu met Tu after he passed the examination. According to Ch'ü T'u-i-yüan, Tu Yu and Liu Hsu probably knew each other before Liu Yü-hsi was born. Hence, it is quite possible that Liu Yü-hsi met Tu Yu in his teens. Nonetheless, given the fact that Tu Yu had achieved great fame in the T'ang bureaucracy when Liu was in his teens, we might surmise that even if Liu met Tu Yu after the age of twenty, it is quite likely that the youthful Liu Yü-hsi had looked upon Tu as a model.

¹⁹In his preface to T'ung Tien (5 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1988. Henceforth: TT), Tu Yu remarks that "the priority of the Way of government is in teaching and transforming [the people], and the basis of teaching and transforming [the people] is the provision of enough clothing and food [to the people]...Carrying out the teaching and transforming [the people] depend on the establishment of [proper] official positions. Establishing [proper] official positions, depends on evaluation of the officials' abilities..." See TT, p. 1.
²⁰There is no clear evidence to support such a claim. However, Liu's contact with these monks in his teens is unquestionable. Also, there is no doubt that Liu at least studied the art of poetry writing with these monks. For an account by Liu of his youthful contact with these monks, see LYHC, pp. 239-240. For more discussion of Buddhist influence on Liu's thought, see chapter three.
²¹See LYHC, p. 250
²²In the preface to a poem sent by Chüan Te-yü to Liu Yü-hsi after Liu had passed the chin-shih examination, Chüan clearly indicated that Liu was in his teens when they met for the first time. Liu Yü-hsi also writes about his early acquaintance with Chüan in a letter. See LYHC, p. 121.
²³For a discussion of the attempts of the examinees of the chin-shih examination to establish a good reputation by presenting their works to the examiners and influential people before the examination see Fu Hsüan-tsung, T'ang-tai k'o-chü yü wen-hsüeh (Sian: Shaan-hsi jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1986), pp. 247-286.
literary activities. In addition, it also suggests that the social status of Liu's family must not have been too low.

Another activity that Liu was involved in at this stage of his life was the study of Chinese medicine. He probably started his medical training at the age of seventeen.\textsuperscript{24} His interest in Chinese medicine seems purely to have been a result of his weak constitution.\textsuperscript{25} While it is difficult to associate this interest with the main thrust of Liu's thought, it does, nonetheless, reveal certain traces of Liu's mentality at an early age. At the age of forty-seven, when Liu was Prefect of Lien-chou, he wrote a letter to Hsüeh Ching-hui. In it, he ridiculed those who are ignorant, and those who have a short-sighted view of things:

[I] often think that people usually do not [study] only one medical recipe, and when they get sick they entrust [their bodies, worth] thousands of chin to the hands of incompetent doctors. When they are in extreme peril, then [the doctors] will say that they are just unlucky. Are they really unlucky? There are some who are worse. Because of their youthful and vigorous ch'i, they laugh at those who talk about medicine, and think that it is not something urgent. They speak openly that: "My mouth is eating good food and my stomach is full; what is the use of medicine to me?" The ch'i that they are depending on will disperse in time. [When the vigorous ch'i is gone] then they pray to the spirits and flatter the Buddhas, and they will be contented. If you (Hsüeh Ching-hui) observe again my words, definitely, [you will see that] there are many who [fit my description].\textsuperscript{26}

This passage reveals that Liu Yü-hsi was a very practical person. As we will demonstrate in later chapters, this characteristic of Liu's thought constitutes a central position in his intellectual outlook. Certainly, Liu's attitude toward Chinese

\textsuperscript{25}In a letter to a doctor Hsüeh Ching-hui, Liu recalled vividly a childhood experience that resulted in his pursuing medical knowledge. See \textit{LYHC}, p. 129. In addition, we can see in this letter that Liu's interest in Chinese medicine was a life-long one.
\textsuperscript{26}\textit{LYHC}, pp. 129-130.
At about the age of twenty, Liu traveled to the capital Chang-an, and stayed there for two to three years. There he engaged in literary activities, and also made contacts with influential figures in order to establish a good reputation. In 793 he passed the chin-shih examination on his first attempt, at the age of twenty-two. Only thirty two candidates passed the examination that year, and among them we also find Liu Tsung-yüan. In the same year, Liu Yü-hsi also passed the Erudite Literatus examination (po-hsüeh hung-tz'u). In 795, Liu passed yet another examination, the Preeminent Talent examination (pa-ts'ai). Both these examinations were held by the Ministry of Personnel (li-pu), but the latter was for the actual recruitment of candidates to state office. After passing this examination, Liu was assigned the position of Editor in the Secretariat of the Heir Apparent (t'ai-tzu chiao-shu).

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27 In 818, Liu compiled a text known as Ch'uan-hsin fang in two chiüan. It contains over fifty medical recipes. However this book is no longer extant. For the preface to this text, see LYHC, p. 587. The title of this text can be found in HTS 59:1572. This text has been reconstructed by Feng Han-yung under the title Ch'uan-hsin fang chi-shih (Shanghai: Shanghai k'o-hsüeh chi-shu ch'u-pan-she, 1959). Also see Wu Tso-hsin, "Liu Yü-hsi ti i-hsüeh chu-tso," in Chung-hua wen-shih lun-ts'ung, vol. 14, p. 54. Shanghai: Shanghai k' u-chi, 1980.

28 See LYHC, pp. 76-78, 84.

29 According to Nien-p'u, Liu travelled to Chang-an at the age of nineteen. Lo Lien-tien in "Liu Meng-te nien-p'u" puts it at the age of twenty.

30 Liu recalls his activities before and after he passed the chin-shih examination in a number of places. See LYHC, pp. 289, 591.


34 See Nien-p'u, p. 17.
But Liu Yü-hsi did not stay in this office for long. During the next year, his father died in Yang-chou. Hence, for nearly three years, Liu retired from office in order to observe the mandatory mourning period. In 800, Liu was appointed as personal secretary of Tu Yu, the then Military Commissioner (chieh-tu shih) of the Huai-nan Circuit. He served Tu Yu for about two years, and then was transferred to be the recorder serving in the provincial government of Hui-nan in the capital Chang-an. In the winter of the next year, 803, he was assigned to be an Investigating Censor (chien-ch'a yü-shih). Among his co-workers in the Censorate were Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü.

The next two years mark a major stage in Liu Yü-hsi's life. It was about this time that he came to know Wang Shu-wen (735-806). Of obscure background, Wang served as an attendant official to the Heir Apparent, Li Sung (761-806), the future Shun-tsung emperor (r. 805), because of his skill in the game of chess. Eventually, Wang's ability to gain Li Sung's trust paved the way for his ascendancy to power in 805, though only for a very short time. Wang gathered around him a group of young, talented men, which included Liu Tsung-yüan, Lü Wen (772-811),

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35See Nien-p'u, p. 18.
37The main reason for this transfer was Liu's mother was unhappy living in the Chiang-Huai (Yangtze and Huai rivers) area. See LYHC, p. 591.
38See Nien-p'u, p. 33.
39For his biography, see HTS 168:5124-5126.
40See Han Yü et al., "Shun-tsung shih-lu" in Han Ch'ang-li wen-chi chiao-chu. (Hong Kong: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1984. Henceforth: HCLWC), p. 405; Bernard S. Solomon, The Veritable Record of the T'ang Emperor Shun-Tsung, (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), pp. 3-4. Issues concerning the authorship and authenticity of this text are controversial. Questions concerning authorship should not, however, cause any significant problems in our present discussion. For an argument as to the relative faithfulness of this text as a record of historical events during the Shun-tsung reign, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, pp. 66-67, n. 1.
and Han T'ai. The members of this group engaged in various intellectual activities. Of course, our protagonist, Liu Yü-hsi, was a member of this group, and it is also said that Liu was highly regarded by Wang Shu-wen.

In the first month of 805, Emperor Te-tsung (r. 779-805) died. The crown prince Li Sung ascended the throne three days later as the Shun-tsung emperor. However, prior to Li Sung's enthronement, he was ill and unable to speak. This fact quickened, in a way, Wang Shu-wen's ascendancy to power, and Wang launched a reform movement with the help of the above-mentioned young literati. However, things did not turn out the way Wang Shu-wen's clique anticipated. Within an eight months period, Shun-tsung abdicated, and his eldest son, Li Shun (778-820), ascended the throne. This event marked the formal end of the reform efforts of Wang Shu-wen's clique.

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41This group of young literati shared similar political ideals. See Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, p. 58. For discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's associations with some of these figures, see Pien Hsiao-hsüan, Liu Yü-hsi ts'ung-k'ao, pp. 20, 38-44, 55-60.


43See CTS 160:4210; HTS 168:5128. In both of these texts, Wang is said to have remarked that Liu had the capacity to be a prime minister.

44See HCLWC, p. 404. The date of Te-tsung's death leaves out the exact month. Also see Bernard S. Solomon, The Veritable Record of the T'ang Emperor Shun-tsung, p. 2.

Following our present interest, we will briefly investigate Liu Yü-hsi's involvement in this reform movement. Soon after the enthronement of Li Sung, Liu was recommended by Tu Yu to be his administrative assistant in his duties as the commissioner of the imperial tomb of Te-tsung (Ts'ung-ling). In the third month, Tu Yu was assigned the position of Salt Monopoly Commissioner and the Head of the Minister of Revenue. This was perhaps the most important position in the handling of the state finance. Wang Shu-wen was assigned to be the assistant of Tu Yu. This move allowed the Wang Shu-wen group to gain control of government finance. Liu Yü-hsi's role in this maneuver seems to have been to facilitate cooperation between Tu Yu and Wang Shu-wen, since Liu was probably the only member of the Wang Shu-wen clique who had already established close ties with Tu Yu. Thus, Liu was concurrently assigned to be an assistant of Tu Yu in both affairs of state revenue and the salt monopoly. In addition, he was also assigned the post of vice director of the State Farm Bureau (t'un-t'ien yüan-wai lang).

The positions above were the major posts that Liu Yü-hsi took up before the downfall of Wang Shu-wen's clique. Although the actual downfall of the clique occurred before the abdication of Shun-tsung, it was only after his son, Li Shun, posthumously known as Hsien-tsung, ascended the throne in the eighth month of the year that Liu Yü-hsi and his comrades finally faced their sentences.


46LYHC, p. 591.
47See HCLWC, p. 409.
48LYHC, p. 591.
modern Kuang-tung). 49 A month later, when Liu was on his way to Lien-chou, he was further banished as adjutant (ssu-ma) of Lang-chou (in modern Hunan). 50 While Lang-chou was closer to Chang-an than Lien-chou, 51 the position of adjutant carried no administrative responsibility at all. This marked the beginning of a long period of exile in Liu's life. For the next ten years, Liu remained in Lang-chou. In the eighth month of 806 an imperial edict was decreed which specifically stated that members of the Wang's clique would not be pardoned even if there were a general amnesty. 52 This was clearly a great blow to everyone in this group. However, the period of prolonged exile also allowed Liu Yü-hsi to embark on various intellectual activities.

When he arrived in Lang-chou, Liu resided near the Yüan river, a narrow river flowing into Tung-ting Lake, and not far from his residence, the pavilion to beckon Ch'ü Yüan (Chao-Ch'ü t'ing) was situated. 53 As an adjutant Liu Yü-hsi had no administrative responsibility or power at all. Hence, at the age of thirty-six, and with great political ambitions, Liu experienced bitterly, for the first time in his life, a prolonged period of political idleness.

Intellectually, however, Liu Yü-hsi was far from dormant. Soon he began to travel around and seek intellectual acquaintances. He made friends with Ku T'uan (734?–812) and Tung T'ing (?-812). Ku was particularly praised by Liu for his

49See TCTC, p. 7622; CTS 14:412; LYHC, p. 591.
50See CTS 12:413. There is a slight discrepancy between CTS and TCTC. The latter records that it was in the eleventh month that Liu was further banished to Lang-chou. See TCTC, p. 7623. Together with Liu Yü-hsi, seven other members of Wang's clique faced similar sentences. They were all sent away as Prefects first, and were later banished as adjutants.
51Lien-chou is more than three thousand six hundred li (a measure of length) from Chang-an, while Lang-chou is about two thousand li. See Hu San-sheng's annotation of TCTC, pp. 7622-7623.
52See CTS 14:418.
53See Nien-p'u, p. 51.
knowledge of the Book of Changes (*I-Ching*), and Liu discussed with him matters related to this Confucian classic. Similarly, Tung T'ing was also knowledgeable about this classic; as a result of his discussions with Tung on certain issues in the text, Liu produced a long essay on the concepts of "Nine and Six." Hence, Liu's associations with these two figures seem to be characterized by mutual interest in the Book of Changes.

During his ten years of exile in Lang-chou, Liu Yü-hsi did not sever his ties with other members of Wang Shu-wen's clique. Liu Tsung-yüan, for example, remained Liu Yü-hsi's closest friend until Tsung-yüan's death in 819. They communicated with each other by letter. It is very possible that they engaged in the well-known philosophical discussion about Heaven and human during this period of banishment.

The time in Lang-chou was also a period of literary activity for Liu Yü-hsi. A great number of his most celebrated poetical and prose works were composed at this time. Perhaps because of his frustration in politics, a basic characteristic of his poetry at this period is a blending of sarcasm and nostalgia. Stylistically, he is

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54 In an epitaph, Liu Yü-hsi recalled a visit he paid to Ku soon after he arrived in Lang-chou. In it, he also gave a detailed discussion of Ku's study of the Book of Changes. See *LYHC*, pp. 597-599.
55 For this essay, see *LYHC*, pp. 86-93. Liu also wrote an epitaph for Tung. In it, Liu remarks that Tung was well-versed in the Confucian classics. In addition, he was also a Buddhist. See *LYHC*, pp. 596-597.
56 It seems that this classic exerted a great impact on Liu's intellectual outlook. For a more detailed discussion of the various aspects of Liu's thought that might have been influenced by this classic, see chapter two.
57 This was a major intellectual activity of Liu Yü-hsi. Chapter four of this study is devoted mainly to discussing Liu's conception of Heaven and Humanity.
considered a major innovator in the composing of heptasyllabic quatrains. He not only started a tradition of taking history as the main theme in this sub-genre, but he also employed this form of Chinese poetry to imitate native folk literature of the South.\(^{59}\)

In addition, this was also a time at which Liu's contacts with Buddhist figures intensified.\(^{60}\) As we have already indicated earlier, Liu's associations with Buddhist monks started very early in his life, when he was still in his teens. However, now that Liu was facing a major crisis in his life, his frequent contact with Buddhist figures seems to indicate a natural attempt to seek spiritual consolation. At the same time, Buddhist philosophy might have strengthened his Confucian political ideals.\(^{61}\)

Near the end of the year 814, together with Liu Tsung-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi was summoned back to Chang-an,\(^{62}\) and arrived in the capital in the second month of the next year.\(^{63}\) After ten years of banishment, it is very likely that Liu expected some improvement in his political career. However, some of Liu's political enemies, such as Wu Yüan-heng,\(^{64}\) were still in power, and they soon struck Liu another violent blow. In the third month, Liu was assigned to the position of Prefect of Po-chou (in modern Kuei-chou).\(^{65}\) Although his rank had been raised

\(^{59}\)See Sung Hsin-chang, "Liu Yü-hsi chi'-chüeh lun-ping," in Chung-chou hsüeh-kan, (1992, no. 2), pp. 109-112, and 90. Actually, some of Liu's most famous poems were composed after he left his post in Lang-chou. Some of these, however, recall his experiences while he was in Lang-chou. Also see CTS 160:4210; Nien-p'u, p. 65. For more discussion of his literary activities see chapter two.

\(^{60}\)See Nien-p'u, p. 66.

\(^{61}\)For a detailed discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's Confucian outlook, see chapter two. For a discussion of Buddhist elements in his thought, see chapter three.


\(^{63}\)See Nien-p'u, p. 80.

\(^{64}\)See Pien Hsiao-hsüan, Liu Yü-hsi lun-ts'ung, pp. 128-129.

\(^{65}\)See CTS 15:452; TCTC, pp. 7708-7710.
from adjutant to Prefect, Po-chou was said to be "uninhabitable by humans." Hence, in receiving such an assignment Liu Yü-hsi was extremely frustrated. However with the help of Pei Tu (765-839), Liu was re-assigned the position of Prefect of Lien-chou, a position to which he had first been assigned ten years ago. Compared with his previous post in Lang-chou, Lien-chou was even further south.

Liu Tsung-yüan, facing a similar fate, was sent away as Prefect of Liu-chou (in modern Kuang-hsi). The two Lius traveled together from Chang-an until they parted from each other at Heng-yang (in modern Hunan) by the Hsiang river. There the two poets exchanged poems to commemorate the event. In one of the poems, Liu Tsung-yüan echoed the wish that they could be together if they could escape harsh punishment for their previous involvement in political reform:

For twenty years, we have had the same experiences in ten thousand different affairs.
Today, at a forked road, we suddenly go east and west.
If the imperial grace allows us to return to the farmland,
in our old age, we should be neighbors.

66This phrase was allegedly used by Liu Tsung-yüan. See TCTC, p. 7709.
67See LYHC, p. 217.
68For a discussion as to why Liu was assigned to Po-chou, and of those who were involved in helping Liu to obtain a better assignment, see Nien-p'u, pp. 81-83. Pien Hsiao-hsüan has indicated that Pei Tu was related to Lu Po and Lu Hsiang, both members of the clan to which Liu's mother belonged. See his Liu Yü-hsi ts'ung-k'ao, pp. 17-18, 214-216.
69In a poem in which Liu Yü-hsi commemorates Liu Tsung-yüan, when the former arrived at Heng-yang once again one year after the latter died, Liu Yü-hsi recalls, in his preface, their parting by the Hsiang river five years previously. See LYHC, p. 407.
However this wish of Liu Tsung-yüan never become reality, for he died four years later in 819, and therefore this was the last time these two T'ang literati and good friends saw each other.

Liu Yü-hsi's stay in Lien-chou lasted about four and a half years. In 819, his mother died. Hence he had to retire from office for close to three years to observe the mourning period. On his way back to Loyang, having buried his mother there, he received more bad news. Liu Tsung-yüan had passed away in the eleventh month.

During the period before his friend's death, Liu Yü-hsi continued to communicate with Liu Tsung-yüan on matters related to literature. He compiled about fifty medical prescriptions in two chapters called the Ch'uan-hsin fang.\(^7\) In addition, his contacts with Buddhist monks continued.\(^7\) Liu also came into contact with the aboriginal peoples in the south. Together with his earlier ten years exile in Lang-chou, this period enabled Liu to have the opportunity to observe the very different life-style of a different people, and this provided him a source for his literary creativity. He started to write about the life of these people in his poetry.\(^7\)

In the winter of 821, at the age of fifty, his mourning period over, Liu was assigned the position of Prefect of K'uei-chou (in modern Ssu-ch'uan). There he stayed for about two and a half years until he was transferred to the position of Prefect of Ho-chou (in modern An-hui). Within this period, Liu composed his famous "Chu-chih tz'u" ("Bamboo songs") and other poems that reflect the life of

\(^7\)See Nien-p'u, pp. 94-95.
\(^7\)For a list of some of the Buddhist figures Liu associated with at this period, see Nien-p'u, pp. 97-98.
the native people with whom he had previously come into contact. It is also at this time that Wei Hsüan, the son of Wei Chih-i (c. 765-807) and the son-in-law of Yuan Chen (779-831), came to study with Liu.

In the preface of Liu Pin-k'ou chia-hua lu (Record of Counselor Liu's best stories) Wei recalled that he "and others (chu-tzu) rose and rested together...in the spare time after [Liu Yü-hsi] discussed the classics and histories, [he] sometimes chatted about [stories] of some literati of the present dynasty." Hence, it seems that Liu took in a number of students while he was in Kuei-chou.

In the winter of 826, Liu's duties as Prefect of Ho-chou were terminated and he returned to Loyang. On his way back, Liu met Po Chü-i in Yang-chou. Soon after he arrived in Loyang, Liu was assigned to the post of director of the branch office of the bureau of receptions (chu-k'ou lang-chung), belonging to the Department of State Affairs (shang-shu sheng), in Loyang. A year later, he went to Chang-an and was transferred to the position of scholar of the Academy of Scholarly Worthies (chi-hsien tien hsüeh-shih). In 829, he was also given the position of director of the ministry of rites (li-pu lang-chung). He remained in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies for four years, and was responsible for the compilation of some two thousand chapters (chüan) of scholarly works.

In the ten month of 831, at the age of sixty, Liu was sent away as Prefect of Su-chou. On the sixth day of the second month of 832, Liu arrived in Su-chou.

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74 For some of these poems, see LYHC, pp. 358-359, 364.
75 See Nien-p'u, p. 107. About thirty years later, Wei compiled the Liu Pin-k'o chia-hua lu in which he collected a number of stories that he had heard from Liu. This book also contains information pertaining to Liu's ideas about various issues. For a good discussion of this text, see T'ang Lan, "Liu Pin-k'o chia-hua lu ti chiao-chi yü pien-wei" in Wen Shih, vol. 4 (June 1965), pp. 75-106.
76 See Liu Pin-k'o chia-hua lu, p. 1a.
77 See Nien-p'u, pp. 128-129.
78 See Nien-p'u, p. 134.
79 See Nien-p'u, p. 154.
80 See LYHC, p. 186.
Instead of returning to a place of prosperity, Liu found himself facing a great flood, and therefore was immediately busy facilitating relief efforts. Because of his hard work, he was given the right to wear a purple goldfish ornament (chin-yü tai) in 833.

Liu’s stay in Su-chou lasted for about two and a half years. During this period, he exchanged many poems with Po Chü-i. Perhaps because Yuan Chen had died in 831, the literary interchange between Liu and Po increased. It was also in this period that Liu compiled a collection of his own works known as Liu-shih chi-lüeh.

From 835 to the autumn of 836, Liu was Prefect of Ju-chou (in modern Honan). Because of a disease of his feet, he was transferred to the position of Advisor to the Heir Apparent (t'ai-tzu pin-k'o) in the branch office in Loyang. This was the last position he took in his life. Hence he was also known as Liu Pin-k’o. This period can perhaps be characterized as a time of retirement. In Loyang, he found companions like Po Chü-i and Pei Tu, and they traveled and composed poems together.

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81 See CTS 17b:544. Both Su-chou and Hu-chou suffered from serious flooding. The government released two hundred and twenty thousand piculs (tan) of grain to relieve the distress of these regions.

82 Liu sent two memorials to the central government reflecting his concern for the well-being of the people in Su-chou. See LYHC, pp. 186-187.

83 See Nien-p’u, p. 179. This ornament was usually given to certain members of the imperial house or high ranking officials. There were two kinds of ornament, one decorated in gold color, the other in silver. The golden one was only for officials with ranks higher than the third grade. The silver one was for those with ranks between fourth and fifth. See Tang hui-yao, compiled by Wang P’u et al. (16 vols. Taipei: Commercial Press, 1968. Henceforth THY), pp. 579-580; TT, pp. 1769-1770.

84 For the dating of this collection, see Nien-p’u, p. 180.

85 He was given other titles in later years, however, they are all honorary in nature.

In 842, at the age of seventy-one, Liu wrote his autobiography. In it, he remarks about his family background and recounts some major events in his life.87 A specific remark that he makes in this autobiography is his opinion of Wang Shu-wen and his reform movement. After more than thirty years, Liu's final statement about Wang is that "what he has done, people do not think is improper."88 At the end of his biography, Liu wrote his own epitaph. It reads as follows:

[That I] have not died young and poor,
is a blessing from Heaven.
[I have experienced] many difficulties.
This is because of my misfortune.
The ability with which Heaven has endowed me
I have not been allowed to perform.
Some people may utter slander about me;
But my heart has no blemishes.
I lie [on a bed] under the northern window;
[I am near to] the end of my time.
To be buried in the familial burial ground
Is similar to the time when [I am] alive.
The soul can travel everywhere.
Can I possibly know about this?89

Interestingly, although Liu begins the epitaph with a sense of contentment, the rest of this poem conveys precisely the opposite feeling. Liu Yü-hsi was well aware he was near the end of his life. Perhaps the very act of writing his own biography just a few months before his own death signifies the self-assertive nature of Liu's personality. His recalling of Wang Shu-wen in this autobiography is significant because it shows how seriously Liu considered his participation in

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87This work is, of course, one of the most important sources for the study of the life of Liu Yü-hsi. Some historians have also made use of it in the study of the political situation during the transition period of Shun-tsung and Hsien-tsung. For one example of such a study, see Ch'en Yin-k'o, "Shun-tsung shih-lu yü hsü Hsüan-kuai-lu," in CYKWC 3, pp. 74-81.
88LYHC, p. 591.
89LYHC, p. 592.
the 805 reform movement. In a way, this movement best represented Liu Yü-hsi's political ideals and ambitions. Hence its failure also translated into Liu's failure to fulfill a major goal in his life. The epitaph precisely reflects Liu Yü-hsi's frustration regarding his unfulfilled life, a frustration that was buried with Liu when he died in the seventh month of 842, at the age of seventy-one. 

90See CTS 160:4213; Nien-p'ü, p. 229.
Chapter Two: Liu Yü-hsi as a Confucian

In a letter to Tou Ch'ün (760-814), written between the years 813 and 814,1

Liu Yü-hsi wrote:

The swift-footed Liu Tzu-liang arrived, and I received your letter and your teachings. [You] consider me a person who longed to be a Confucian. These words of high regard expressed, the official robe cannot now be [considered] precious. In this world, those who wear the Confucian clothing and hat, talk in the language of antiquity, and take up the positions of instructors in schools, are not rare. [But] if one seeks for those who know why [things] are so, how many are there? Even if there are some, it is not necessary that they would not rail at [those who do no understand why things are so]. Now, for those who are holding the bow, aiming the arrow, and shooting [it] at an [empty] space, they all regard themselves as Yi.2 [If you] put them into a Tse-kung,3 then they are silent and do not dare to talk. Why it this so? Because there is a target one cannot be cheated. Now, the Confucians attack one another with armor and arrow. They quarrel with each other with noises like those of the cicadas. [This situation] is not different from those who draw back the bow to the full and shoot the arrow into empty space. What is their target?4

In this passage we can discern at least two points concerning Liu's views of Confucianism. First, we can detect his strong affinity to Confucianism.5 Second,

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1 According to the title of this letter Tou had already taken up the position of Military Commissioner in Yung-chou (in modern Kuang-hsi); and according to his biography in the CTS 155:4121 he only took up such a position in the last two years of his life, that is, from 813 to 814.
2 Yi refers to Hou Yi, the legendary archer.
3 Tse-kung is the place where archers competed with each other in ancient times in order to be selected to serve the government. Here the word is used metaphorically to represent the equivalent of an examination hall.
4 LYHC. p. 126.
5 Ch'ü T'ui-yüan has pointed that because Tou Ch'ün was hostile to many major figures of the Wang Shu-wen clique, including Liu Yü-hsi, the words Liu used in this letter are very superficial, and thus, one should not take the content of this letter at face value. See his Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, pp. 263-265. For Tou's hostility to Liu, also see Pien Hsiao-hsüan, Liu Yü-hsi ts'ung-k'ao, pp. 93-96. However, it seems to us that Liu's pride in being
Liu clearly expresses his dissatisfaction with the behavior of some of the so-called Confucians of his time. Reflecting this by using the analogy of the arrow and bow, he expounds upon one of the Confucian doctrines: Rectification of Names (*cheng-ming*). Liu's basic dissatisfaction with his Confucian contemporaries is that they do not have any conception of exactly what the duties of being a Confucian are. Not only have they missed their target, but they simply do not have any idea of what and where their target is. This leads us to the question of what actually is the target to which Liu refers. Liu provides a hint regarding the answer to this question in the same letter as he continues to write:

> That which is called upon to nurture sagacity and the myriad citizens is the proper meaning of the I. [And one] should not go against it. If one accepts wholeheartedly to wait in order to bring benefit to the people (*chi-wu*), then, to nurture oneself and to nurture the people are not two different Ways.  

This passage provides us a number of clues to what Liu considered a true Confucian should do, but the overall, underlying message stresses the political aspects of Confucianism. It is perhaps the idea of "bringing benefit to the people" (*chi-wu*) that best characterizes Liu Yü-hsi's Confucianism. But before we engage ourselves in a detailed discussion of this particular aspect of Liu's Confucianism, a Confucian, as expressed in this letter, is consistently echoed throughout his oeuvre. Also, even if Tou and Liu were unable to reconcile their political differences, this still does not constitute a logical reason for us to suspect the reliability of Liu's words. For examples in which Liu identifies himself as a Confucian or mentions that his family has a long tradition of Confucian study, see *LYHC*, pp. 171, 186, 191, and 590.

6 Liu Yü-hsi had used this analogy in other places. For another example, see *LYHC*, pp. 254-255. For a discussion of the doctrine of Rectification of Names, see Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (tr. by Derk Bodde. 2 vols. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1952), vol. 1, pp. 59-62. Liu made direct reference to this doctrine in a memorial, although this memorial was written for Tu Yu. See *LYHC*, p. 135.

we should first consider whether there are directions other than political concerns in his conception of Confucianism.

While Confucianism in pre-An Lu-shan rebellion T'ang China continued to act as a "pillar of the Chinese social and cultural order," and was by and large an ideology that dealt with one's this-worldly endeavors, it was intellectually less prominent than Buddhism and Taoism, which attracted more interest from all quarters of T'ang intellectual society. T'ang scholars' attitudes toward canonical studies were complex. Since it was necessary for them to concentrate on the Confucian classics in order to pass civil examinations, and thus possibly enter officialdom, the activities of Confucian classicists were mainly confined to the philological and exegetical study of the classics. However, after the An Lu-shan rebellion, a dramatic change emerged in the attitude of T'ang's intellectuals to canonical study in particular, and Confucianism in general.

The devastation of the An Lu-shan insurrection brought about a sense of urgency among many T'ang intellectuals. Many began to see a need to re-build the empire, and hoped for a renewal of state control in divided T'ang China. Clearly, Confucianism stood out as relevant in this environment because a major concern

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10This is shown by the "new" approach to canonical study by figures like Tan Chu (724-770), Chao K'uang (fl. 770-780), and Lu Ch'ün (also known as Lu Chih). While Tan and Chao were not active in the capital Ch'ang-an and were not well known to the intellectual elite, Tan's disciple, Lu Ch'un, was a participant in the Wang Shu-wen clique. Also, there is clear evidence to show that people like Liu Tsung-yüan, Lü Wen, and Han Yeh studied the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, under Lu's instruction. See LTYC, p. 819. For a discussion of Tan, Chao, and Lu's approach to the *Annals*, see Chang Ch'ün, "Tan-Chao-Lu san-chia Ch'un-ch'i chiu-chhü-shuo" in *Ch'ien Mu hsien-sheng pa-shih-sui chi-nien lun-wen-chi*, pp. 149-159. Hong Kong: Hsin-ya yen-chiu-so, 1974.
of this school of thought is the Way of government. However, there was no dramatic change in the intellectuals' attitude toward Buddhism and/or Taoism.\footnote{Han Yü is also known for his vehement opposition to Buddhism. However, anti-Buddhist sentiment of this kind is rarely found among the majority of those who were participating in the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement. For a discussion of this issue, see Lo Lien-tien, "Lun T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung" in his T'ang-tai wen-hsiieh lun-chi (2 vols. Taipei: Hsieh-sheng shu-chu, 1989), vol. 1, pp. 3-31; Sun Ch'ang-wu, T'ang-tai wen-hsiieh yü fo-chiao (Sian: Shaan-hsi jen-min, 1985), pp. 1-24.}

The *ku-wen* (ancient-style prose) movement was a particular example of the utilization of Confucian values by intellectuals in an attempt to achieve unity in the state. More specifically, the *ku-wen* movement was a manifestation of the Confucian revival movement.\footnote{A number of studies on the *ku-wen* movement are available. See Ch'ien Mu, "Tsa-lun T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung" in Ch'ien Mu, Chung-kuo hsüeh-shu ssu-hsiang-shih ts'ung (8 vols. Taipei: Hood-sheng shu-hsiau, 1978), vol. 4, pp. 16-70; Liu Kuo-ying, T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung lun-ka k'ao (Sian: Shaan-hsi jen-min, 1984; Sun Ch'ang-wu, T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung t'ung-lun, T'ien-ching: Pai-hua wen-i, 1984.} A defining feature of this movement was the assertion of a connection between composition (*wen*) and the Confucian Way (*tao*).\footnote{For a discussion of how major literary intellectuals sought to re-establish political and social order after the An Lu-shan rebellion through the efforts to restore *wen*, see Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours*: intellectual transition in T'ang and Sung China, pp. 108-147. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992.} For example, Han Yü, a leader of the movement in early ninth century, consistently emphasized that the *tao* he was talking about was exclusively the Confucian Way; he also emphasized a close relationship between *wen* and *tao*.\footnote{For a discussion of Han Yü's position in the T'ang intellectual scene, particularly his contributions to the establishment of the "orthodox" lineage of the Confucian tradition, see Ch'en Yin-k'o, "Lun Han Yü" in CYKWC 2, pp. 285-297. We should point out that the "orthodox" lineage that Han refers to is a fabrication by Han himself. For a study of the connection between Han's identification of *wen* and *tao*, see Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press), chapter 4.} Another leader of the movement, Liu Tsung-yüan, put forward the slogan "literature illuminates the Way" ("wen i ming tao").\footnote{For Liu Tsung-yüan's theory of literature and its connection with the *tao*, see Ch'en Joshui, *Liu Tsung-yüan*, pp. 127-134.}
differed among individual intellectuals, but, generally speaking, tao referred to the Confucian Way, an all-embracing concept which included all the values sanctioned by Confucianism.

Another movement that emerged in the first half of the ninth century, parallel to that of the ku-wen movement, was the New Yüeh-fu (ballad style poetry) movement. The defining feature of this movement was its promotion of realistic reflection of social problems through usage of simple language in the writing of ballad-style poetry.16

The ku-wen movement and the New Yüeh-fu movement demonstrate the efforts of many of the T'ang Confucian intellectuals to re-establish proper state order during the century after the An Lu-shan rebellion. We can now proceed to examine if any of these intellectual activities occupied a place in Liu Yü-hsi’s intellectual interests. This should allow us to establish a basic understanding of Liu's Confucianism before we embark upon a discussion of Liu's major Confucian concerns.

Nowhere in Liu's extant works does he show any interest in philological study of the classics. Indeed, since philological study of the Confucian classics was by and large an unattractive academic endeavor throughout the T'ang, it seems quite unsurprising that Liu was indifferent to this particular area of Confucian

16The best known leaders of this movement were Po Chü-i, a close friend of Liu in the later part of his life, and Yüan Chen. For a discussion of this movement, see Ch'en Yin-k'o, Yüan-Po-shih chien-cheng kao, in CYKWC 6, pp. 117-120. This movement can be traced as least back to the time of Yüan Chieh (719-772), who advocated the didactic function of ballad-style poetry. See Yüan Tzu-shan chi, ed. by Sun Wang (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1960. Henceforth: YTSC), pp. 18-22; David McMullen, "Historical and literary theory in the mid-eighth century" (in pp. 307-342, Dennis Twitchett and Arthur F. Wright ed. Perspectives on the T'ang. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 340. Obviously the theory he put forward differs somewhat from that of Po Chü-i and Yüan Chen, but Yüan and Po would agree with Yüan Chieh on the sociopolitical function of this sub-genre.
scholarship. Regarding exegesis, we know that some of Liu Yü-hsi’s good friends, including Liu Tsung-yüan, Lü Wen (772-811), and Han Yeh, studied the Spring and Autumn Annals with Lu Ch’un (d. 805). The major thrust of their approach was to reveal the "underlying" meanings of this classic. While Liu Yü-hsi was surely aware of this intellectual activity among his friends, there is no evidence indicating that he was one of Lu's disciples, or that he was influenced by Lu's approach to the Annals.

The only account that indicates Liu's involvement in canonical study is found in the Liu Pin-k'o chia-hua lu (Record of Counselor Liu's best stories):

Together with Liu Pa and Han Chi, we visited Shih Shih-kai to listen [to his lecture on] Mao's commentary of the Book of Poetry (Shih-Ching)...  

Apart from the Book of Poetry, Shih was also known by his contemporaries as a scholar on the Annals. Therefore, it is quite possible that Liu had also studied the

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17 Both Liu Yü-hsi and Lu Ch’un were members of the Wang Shu-wen clique. However, while Liu and Lu probably shared similar political ideals, there is no evidence, whether from other people's works or from Liu's own writings, to suggest any close personal tie between the two. Pien Hsiao-hsüan has also noted this. See his Liu Yü-hsi ts'ung-k'ao, p. 130. In a preface to the collection of works of Lü Wen, Liu remarks that Lü studied the Spring and Autumn Annals with Lu Ch’un, but this is the only time Liu mentions Lu's name in his works. See LYHC, p. 235.

18 Liu Pa is Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Chi is Han T'ai. For the identification of these two persons see Ts'en Chung-mien, T'ang-jen hang-ti lu (wai san-chung) (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü), pp. 77 and 180.

19 This particular entry is no longer extant in the Liu Pin-k'o chia-hua lu, but it is found in Wang Tang’s T'ang Yü Lin, p. 50. Liu's study of the Book of Poetry under Shih Shih-kai probably lasted only for a very short period of time, since it was in the year 802 that he returned to Ch'ang-an, where Shih lectured on the Confucian classics, and Shih promptly died in the tenth month of this year. For more detail see Nien p'u, pp. 28-29.

20 In a tomb inscription written for Shih by Han Yü, Shih is said to "illuminate in the Mao's and Cheng's commentaries of the Book of Poetry, and penetrate Tso's commentary of the Spring and Autumn Annals. See HCLWC, p. 203. Also see HTS 200:5705. We may also note that, according to the short account of Shih in the HTS, Shih's approach to the Annals is similar to that of the Tan Chu, Chao K'uang, and Lu Ch'un.
Annals with Shih. Even if this is the case, however, it seems that he had very little interest in the exegetic study of the Confucian canon. While he may have had nothing against canonical study, unlike his friend Liu Tsung-yüan who wrote a substantial number of critiques of this subject, Liu wrote very little concerning this aspect of Confucian intellectual endeavors. The only piece of his extant works where he discusses extensively a part of the Confucian canon is his "Pien-I chiu-liu lun" ("Debating on the theory of Nine and Six in the Book of Changes.")

In his involvement in the ku-wen movement, Liu's outlook was quite different from that of Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yüan. Perhaps he acted more as a writer experimenting with a new style, rather than as a ku-wen theorist. However, he did have something to say on the relationship between wen and tao, and what he said should further our understanding of his views on Confucianism.

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21For a discussion of Liu Tsung-yüan's canonical studies, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, pp. 134-144.
22LYHC, pp. 86-93. In the Book of Changes, "Nine" refers to the yang line in the trigram, and "Six" the yin line. For a brief explanation of this concept of "Nine" and "Six," see Chang Chi-ch'eng, L-hsieh ta-tzu-tien (Peking: Hua-hsia ch'u-pan-she, 1992), p. 388. When Liu was banished to Lang-chou, he became acquainted with a local scholar named Ku Tuan simply because he was said to be an expert in the Book of Changes. See LYHC, pp. 597-599. Liu's interest in this particular classic seems to reflect his interest in abstract thinking. More detailed discussion on the connection between this classic and Liu's world view, and its possible influence on Liu's political ideology, will be given later in this chapter.
23Perhaps we should also point out that despite the implications of the word "movement," the ku-wen movement, even in the ninth century, was not an organized movement in any sense. It rather consisted of sentiments shared by many original thinkers and men of letters that formed the motivating force that pushed for a resurgence of Confucian values in government.
In a letter to Ch'üan Te-yü, written probably in the year 793, Liu expresses some of his views on wen, which also provide us a hint regarding what he meant by the word tao:

Now that the Way (tao) does not yet extended to the people, what [I have] accumulated is aspiration. As a tool to express one's aspiration, what better to use than composition (wen)?...It is not that I am really interested in its passages and sentences, and fondness of excessive euphemism. [For] the customs of the time and the prevailing practices upheld by most people [are things that I] regard defects, [and I] cannot [follow them].

In this passage, Liu, like many who were participating in the ku-wen movement, attacks euphemism in literary writing. However, this is perhaps the only place in his works that reflects an anti-euphemistic sentiment. This is something difficult to account for, since nowhere in his works does he give a clear reason for his stance. Perhaps, if we may speculate, it is because ornateness was no longer a serious problem in the writing of poetry or composition by Liu's time.

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25 For a discussion on the dating of this letter, see Nien-p'u, pp. 16-17. Ch'ü T'ui-yüan holds a similar view to that of Pien on the dating of this letter; however, he also points out the possibility that this letter might have been written before Liu passed the chin-shih examination in 793. See his Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 250. It seems to me that the evidence provided by Ch'ü is rather speculative. However, as Ch'ü also points out, the tone of this letter seems to suggest that it was written before the Preeminent Talent examination in 795, or before its writer took office.

26 LYHC, p. 121.

27 The attack on ornateness, particularly that of the tradition from the Ch'i (479-502) and Liang (502-557) dynasties, emerged before the T'ang dynasty. See Liu K'ai-jung, T'ang-tai hsiao-shuo yen-chiu (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1947), pp. 18-21. Perhaps the most noted early figure in the T'ang ku-wen movement is Ch'en Tzu-ang (656-695), who similarly attacked the defects of euphemism of the Ch'i and Liang poetic tradition. See Chen Tzu-ang chi (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chu, 1960), p. 15. Another figure is Yüan Chieh, a pivotal figure who turned the fu-ku sentiments into the sentiments of a movement. For an example of how he expressed his dislike of euphemism in poetry, see his "preface to the Ch'ieh-chung Chi" in YTSC, p. 100.
What is more important in this passage is the idea that a basic function of literature is to express one's aspirations. This idea actually emerged very early in the history of Chinese literature, and it is repeatedly echoed in Chinese classics. In the Book of Documents (Shang Shu), we read: "Poetry is the expression of earnest thought; singing is the prolonged utterance of that expression." Similar theses can also be found in the Book of Poetry and the Book of Rites (Li Chi).

Liu may be merely repeating an age-old message; however, because he was at the same time a poet, a position that he was both conscious of and serious about, this prevents him from completely disregarding the aesthetic value of literary style. This may be another reason, although not a major one, why he did not often attack the defects of ornateness and euphemism in literature. Nevertheless, euphemism is still, to Liu, something that should be avoided because euphemism in poetry implies an essentially empty sequence of words.

Liu once expressed his conception of good poetry explicitly:

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29In the "Great Preface" of the Book of Poetry we read: "The poem is that to which what is intently on the mind goes. In the mind it is 'being intent;' coming out in language, it is a poem. The affections are stirred within and take on form in words. If words alone are inadequate, we speak them out in sighs. If sighing is inadequate, we sing them. If singing them is inadequate, unconsciously our hands dance them and our feet tap them," following Stephen Owen, Readings in Chinese Literary Thought (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 40-41. In the chapter "Record of Music" ("Yüeh chi") in the Book of Rites we read similar idea concerning the relationship between poetry and one's inner feelings: "All tones that arise are generated from the human mind. ..." as translated by Stephen Owen, ibid, pp. 50-51.
30From his childhood years, Liu was actively involved in literary activity. In LYHC, p. 250, there is a line which clearly depicts his interest in poetry when he was young: "In the beginning when I was a child, I lived in regions around the rivers and lakes. I was happy to be acquainted with those who were good at writing poetry." Also see LYHC, p. 239. This work describes Liu's relationship with the famous poet-monk and literary theorist Chiao-juan. We can see that Liu's major activities at that time was to participate in the writing and chanting of poetry. One example which reflects his concerns regarding style in writing of poetry can be found in Liu Pin-k'o chia-hua lu, pp. 2a-2b, where Liu discusses the usage of unusual diction.
In a few words, a hundred ideas can be illuminated; sitting still while the thoughts roam far afield, [one] can bring ten thousand scenes under control. Those who are good at poetry are capable of this. The styles of feng and ya\textsuperscript{31} have changed but the hsing (evocative image)\textsuperscript{32} remains the same. The tunes of the past and in the present are different, yet their principles subtly agree with each other. Those who can penetrate [the writing of] poetry can achieve this. Being good at poetry comes from one's ability, and being able to penetrate [the principle of] poetry comes from one's wisdom. When these two are in turn employed together, then the way of poetry is complete. I always hold onto this way of criticism as a commonly shared correct standard ...\textsuperscript{33}

Here, two points stand out in Liu's characterization of good poetry. One of them concerns the external features of a poem. To Liu, a good poem should be a compact unit which can convey all its meaning in a minimal number of words. Although this emphasis on style is not the most important element in his theory, it does reflect Liu's concerns about the significance of stylistic maturity in good poetry. Ch'an sentiment is also detectable in this passage as part of Liu's theory of good poetry.\textsuperscript{34}

The main purpose of writing poetry, to Liu, is the expression of one's inner feelings. While the poetic styles feng and ya have changed over the centuries, hsing, the deep meaning, retains its central position in a poem. But unlike

\textsuperscript{31}The Book of Poetry contains three parts. They are feng, ya, and sung. Feng refers to "folksongs and lyrics collected from thirteen different localities." Ya refers to "lyrics of a more polished type, and narratives," and sung refers to "ceremonial and sacrificial songs, which accompanied dance." See Vincent Yu-chung Shih tr., The literary mind and the carving of dragons (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1983), p. 41, n. 2.

\textsuperscript{32}The translation of the term hsing is highly problematic. The translation "evocative image" used here follows Vincent Shih. One translation of this term provided by Stephen Owen is "affective image." Both these translations carry similar connotations. As Owen has pointed out: "In the tradition of interpretation that grew up around the Book of Songs, hsing refers to an 'affective image' which will elicit a particular response from the reader." See his Readings in Chinese Literary Thought, p. 587.

\textsuperscript{33}LYHC, p. 237.

\textsuperscript{34}This aspect of Liu's thought will be discussed in chapter three of this study.
composition, which emphasizes a deep meaning in a clear manner, a poem should express the deep meaning in a subtle way. According to Liu:

Poetry is what composition has accumulated! When the meaning is there but the words are lost, that is why subtlety is difficult to achieve.35

So, proper diction is necessary in achieving subtlety in poetry. Compactness is, in particular, a measure of how efficiently the poet uses diction in order to subtly express the poem's meaning.

This brings us to the second concern of Liu's theory, the concept of hsing (evocative image). Hsing is perhaps the most important standard in Liu's evaluation of good poetry. The concept of hsing has a long tradition in Chinese literary theory, and is highly charged with ambiguity.36 While there are different interpretations of this notion, it is generally correct to understand hsing as a level of meaning that is inspirational in nature. Unlike the interpretation given by Liu Hsieh (465-522). Liu Yü-hsi's concept of hsing operates in an opposite direction -- subtlety is the consequence of hsing, not hsing of subtlety. This probably is closer to Chung Hung's (469-518) interpretation. It is the extra layer of meaning which lingers after words have been exhausted that creates a subtle effect in the reader's mind.

35LYHC, p. 238.
36For a discussion on the meaning(s) of the concept hsing see James J.Y. Liu, Chinese Theories of Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 106-111. For the convenience of our discussion, I will quote two interpretations of this notion. According to Liu Hsieh's Wen-hsin tiao-lung, "...hsing responds to stimulus...we formulate our ideas according to the subtle influence we receive." (See Vincent Yu-chung Shih tr. The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons, p. 276). From the preface of Chung Hung's Shih Pin, "Now there are three modes of expression in poetry: one is called the evocative image (hsing), another is comparison (pi), and the third is direct description (fu). The evocative image yields a meaning beyond words;..." Translation taken from Chia-ying Yeh and Jan W.Walls "Theory, standards, and practice of criticizing poetry in Chung Hung's Shih-pin" in Ronald C. Miao ed. Studies in Chinese poetry and poetics (San Francisco: Chinese materials center, 1978), p. 52.
The above discussion of Liu Yu-hsi's evaluation of good poetry reveals that poetry, to Liu, expresses one's inner feelings subtly. Although he seems to privilege content over form, he acknowledges the need for balance between content and form, because form assists in bringing out the meaning of a poem. Thus, Liu feels that good poetry should be a union of form and content. However, these inner feelings may or may not be personal in nature. On a different occasion Liu again expresses his conception of a direct link between poetry and composition:

The fineness and subtlety of one's mind, when expressed, is manifest in the form of composition. The subtlety of composition, when chanted out, is manifest in the form of poetry.

Here Liu provides a more detailed characterization of the link between poetry and composition. It is the mind of the author that links both of these sub-genres. Clearly, then, both poetry and composition serve to reveal inner feelings. Yet, it is still difficult to tell whether these inner feelings, when expressed in the form of poetry, are personal or not.

A general survey of Liu's poems does lead to the conclusion that the majority of them express Liu's personal feelings. Perhaps the place where Liu expresses his awareness of this function of poetry most clearly is in the preface to a collection of poems written by Ling-hu ch'u (766-837) and Liu himself:

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38 LYHC, p. 233.
39 After Ling-hu Ch'u was banished to Heng-chou, Liu Yu-hsi exchanged poems with Ling-hu. Later, after the death of Ling-hu, Liu collected and compiled these poems into three chapters, known as Peng-yang ch'ang-ho chi. This work is no longer extant. For the postface of this work by Liu, see LYHC, pp. 588-589. For a discussion of Liu's relationship with Ling-hu, see Pien Hsiao-hsüan, "Liu Yu-hsi yu Ling-hu Ch'u" in Chung-hua wen-shih lun-ts'ung, vol. 13 (January 1980), pp. 211-239. Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1980. Pien also reconstructs the Peng-yang ch'ang-ho chi in this article.
When I was young, I also always used my ability in poetry to climb up and travel around. In the middle of my journeys I encountered dangers. I drifted about, and gained no opportunities. And the ch'i in my bosom turns into frustration and undulation. It disperses into the form of poetry in order to send away my melancholy. It is sad like the sound of the burned paulownia lute and of the ku-chu music. And my poetry is also well-known in the world.

This probably explains why there is in no place in Liu's writings in which he tries to advocate a connection between poetry and tao. However, Liu consistently suggests an organic relationship between tao and composition. In the preface to Li Chiang's (764-830) collected works, Liu expounds that:

Heaven endows the great man with the ch'i of righteousness. It is necessary to refine this ch'i in order to make it glorious in the world. Essence and harmony are obscurely accumulated within. With sounds like the jangle of bells, when ch'i is sent out and transgresses the boundary, it is manifested in the form of composition (wen). The greatness and smallness of a composition depend on the passage and the remaining of the tao. That is why for those who have obtained their positions compositions are not empty words...

The idea of composition as an expression of one's inner feelings is echoed here again. However, these inner feelings are not characterized strictly as personal ones.

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40 "To climb up and travel around" is used metaphorically; it clearly refers to moving up the ladder of officialdom, and establishing of ties with scholar-officials through Liu's poetic ability.
41 LYHC, pp. 587-588.
42 This is a salient feature of the ku-wen movement. Perhaps Liu Tsung-yüan's idea that "literature is to illuminate the Way" ("wen i ming tao") is the best illustration of this. The idea that literature can illuminate the Way can be found in early writings. For example, Liu Hsieh, the author of Wen-hsin tiao-lung, had already used this idea in the famous chapter "The Essentials of the Way" ("Yüan Tao") when he said: "From these things we know that tao is handed down in writing through sages, and that sages make Tao manifest in their writings." Translation is taken from Vincent Yu-chung Shih, The literary mind and the carving of dragons, p. 12. For a discussion concerning the connection between wen and tao, see Mou Jun-sun, "T'ang-tai nan-pei hsüeh-jen lun-hsüeh chih i-ch'ü yü ying-hsiang" (in pp. 50-88, Hsiang-kang chung-wen ta-hsüeh chung-kuo wen-hua yenchiu-so hsüeh-pao, vol. 1, September 1968), pp. 60-65.
43 LYHC, p. 224.
The correspondence between composition (wen) and tao is obvious. It is also clear that the tao that Liu refers to is defined politically.

While this feature of Liu's characterization of the correlation between wen and tao can be found among many ku-wen writers, Liu is different from many of them in the sense that he never attempts to posit a connection between the tao and the teachings of the Confucian sages like Yao, Shun, Confucius, and Mencius. He has practically nothing to say about this lineage. However, at the same time, he never disregards the importance of Confucian moral values. Rather, he simply takes them for granted:

Loyalty and filial piety, to humans, are like food and clothing. [One] cannot depart from them for a moment. Why [is it necessary] for me to exert myself [about this]? Humanity, righteousness, tao, and virtues are not something that can be achieved by giving instructions...45

Therefore, to Liu, moral values like loyalty, filial piety, humanity, and righteousness are not something that one can acquire simply through learning. They are things that one must practice in one's everyday activities, just as one eats food and wears clothes. Apart from this reference, Liu hardly ever dwells on the

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44The advocacy of an "orthodox" lineage of Confucian tradition is a specific feature of ku-wen theorists like Han Yü. However, it is by and large a creation by these ku-wen advocates. As a consequence of such a creation and its correlation with the tao as illuminated by wen, wen is now sanctioned with the mission to bring harmony to the socio-political order and to the world. This concept of orthodoxy is not something that has been passed down since the time of Confucius; rather, it is an invention of the ku-wen advocates. One of the most salient contributions of Han Yü in this movement is precisely his attempt to manufacture an "orthodox" lineage for the Confucian tradition. In his famous work "Yüan tao" ("The Essentials of the Way"), Han stated that "Yao taught it to Shun, Shun to Yü, Yü to T'ang, and T'ang to Kings Wen and Wu and Duke of Chou. These men taught it to Confucius and Confucius to Mencius, but when Mencius died it was no longer handed down." See Wm. Theodore de Bary et al., Source of Chinese Tradition (2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), vol. 1, p. 379. For a discussion of this aspect, see Ch'n Yin-k'o, "Lun Han Yü" in CYKWC 2, pp. 285-297, and Charles Hartman, Han Yü and the T'ang search for unity, p. 147.

45LYHC, p. 252.
issues concerning Confucian moral values and their relation to self-cultivation in any great detail. It seems, therefore, he pays little attention to "abstract" moral concepts in Confucianism even if they are embedded in the tao.

For Liu, tao is something that concerns both one's private and public endeavors. From his letter to Ch'üan Te-yü mentioned earlier, it is obvious that the tao Liu was referring to does carry such a connotation. Another aspect of Liu's characterization of tao that may have been different from that of some of his contemporaries is that his tao is not necessarily identifiable with that of the concept of "antiquity." He once criticized the idea that antiquity is faultless:

Tseng Tzu once said: "The way that a gentleman loves others is through virtue, and the way in which the small man loves others is through excessive indulgence." Saying that the ancients are all frugal and sagacious, then these words should not be uttered by [those who resided in regions] between the Chu river and the Ssu river. Perhaps those who were upheld by those in the Three Dynasties (Hsia, Shang, Chou) are not without faults...

His suggestion that "antiquity" is not necessarily without faults further implies that it is not necessarily a symbol of ideal human existence. This passage may also suggest that Liu is more of a practical person than a theorist or idealist. This can be said of his involvement in the ku-wen movement. His major contribution was in his participation in experiments in a new compositional style; during his own time, he stood out as a major prose writer.49

46 For a discussion of Liu Tsung-yüan's and Han Yü's usage of the terms tao and ku, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, pp. 84-89.
47 These two rivers are in Shangtung. Because Confucius resided by these two rivers, the term Chu-Ssu has been used as a synonym of Confucianism.
48 LYHC, p. 132. The idea that "the Three Dynasties are not without fault" can be found in Ssu-ma Chien's Shih Chi (10 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1987. Henceforth: SC) 8:393-394.
49 In a preface to the collected works of Wei Ch'un (d. 828), Liu quoted Li Ao's (774-836) words that apart from Li Ao himself and Han Yü, only Liu Tsung-yüan and Liu Yü-hsi could be considered their equals. See LYHC, p. 228. This clearly indicates Liu's awareness of his prominent position in literary circles. Chao Lin, a T'ang scholar,
As to his involvement in the New Yüeh-fu movement, it seems that he was never a participant. It is true that Liu was a close friend of Po Ch'ü-i, and was acquainted with Yüan Chen, both leaders of the New Yüeh-fu movement. In addition, Liu exchanged numerous poems with Po; but, there is no evidence showing their discussion of issues related to the New Yüeh-fu movement. In fact, practically all the poems exchanged between the two concern matters related to their personal affairs or their interest in Buddhism.50

In the collected works of Liu there are two chapters of poems written in the ballad style.51 These poems, in general, reflect little of the social problems or the sufferings of the populace. Some of them are basically landscape poems, while some, even if they convey a sense of suffering, operate subtly and at a personal level.52


50The poems exchanged between these two poets were compiled into a collection known as Liu-Po ch'ang-ho chi. However, this collection is no longer extant. Some of these poems are found in their collected works. Hanabusa Hideki has reconstructed this collection: see his Hakukyo Kenkyu (Kyoto: Sekai shiso sha, 1971), pp. 286-329. In this reconstruction, more than two hundred titles are included. Such a large number of poems should allow one to draw a conclusion with a high level of confidence. After reading these poems, we are drawn to conclude that they were little concerned with the socio-political situation at the time. The preface of this collection can be found in Po Ch'ü-i's collected works. See Po Ch'ü-i chi chien-chiao (6 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1988), p. 3711. For a discussion of the difference between Liu's poetic style and that of Po Chü-i and Yüan Chen, see Pien Hsiao-hsüan and Wu Ju-yu, Liu Yü-hsi (Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1980), pp. 92-96. For a discussion of Liu's poetic, see Ch'en Yin-k'o, CYKWC vol. 6, appendix 5, pp. 339-345.

51LYHC, pp. 337-364.

52Wu Ju-yu has suggested that some of Liu's yüeh-fu poems are related to the New yüeh-fu movement. However, Wu seems to base his reasoning on the fact that Liu's poems were written roughly at the time when Po and Yüan were advocating the New yüeh-fu movement.
Furthermore, some poems are written with the intention to imitate Ch'ü Yüan. In the preface to the "Bamboo Branch Song" ("Chu-chih tz'u"), Liu wrote:

When the great Ch'u (a warring state kingdom) poet Ch'ü Yüan (332-295 B.C.) was banished to Hunan, [he heard] country songs to invoke gods and regarded them as fearfully crude. So he composed the "Nine Songs." Today, the inhabitants of Hunan use these songs when they dance and beat drums in festivals. Therefore I have composed the nine chapters of "The Bamboo Branch" and made the good singers sing them.53

In a sense, these poems do reflect the lives of the people in areas remote from the center of Han culture, but they are not written in the style that Po and Yüan had advocated. For example, Yüan, in a summary of Po's New yüeh-fu poetry, indicated clearly that the first line of a poem should point out the theme, while the intention of the poet should be expressed at the poem's end.54 If we look at Liu's yüeh-fu or "Bamboo Branch songs," we discover that many of them begin by pointing out the setting (time-space) rather than indicating the theme of the poem.55 Thus, stylistically, Liu's yüeh-fu poetry differs from that of Yüan and Po.

movement. I do not find this very persuasive. Although Wu does acknowledge the fact that Liu's approach in writing poetry is quite different from that of Po, the examples which he uses in his argument are too allegorical to be useful in concluding whether they indeed serve to reflect the sufferings of the populace. In fact, I find those poems serve more as a means to express Liu's own frustrations. For Wu's argument, see his Liu Yü-hsi chuan-lun (Sian: Shaan-hsi jen-min, 1988), p. 12.


54See Ch'en Yin-k'o, CYKWC 6, p. 119.

These features of Liu's ballad poetry therefore reflect first his lack of intention to expose the sufferings of the populace, and second, his lack of intention to employ straightforward language in the writing of ballad poetry.

Now we can begin a detailed discussion of Liu's political concerns and how they are related to Confucianism. However, in order to understand Liu's political ideology, it is necessary for us to know first the sources from which he drew his inspiration.

In an attempt to define Confucianism, particularly the political aspect of it, Liu wrote:

Confucianism [attempts to] govern the living beings with the Middle Way (chung-tao), rarely talking about human nature (hsing) and fate (ming). Hence it ceases to flourish as the world declines.56

Here Liu defines Confucianism in terms of its connection with the way of government. We can see that Liu mentions specifically the notion of the Middle Way in such a definition. This notion of the Middle Way was expounded by Confucius himself, and appeared in a number of Confucian classics.57 To Liu, the Middle Way is the underlying principle in the Confucian approach to government, and he was aware of the importance of such a concept in Confucian political ideology from his early years.58

56LYHC, p. 57. Translation taken from Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, p. 121.
57For a discussion of the meaning of chung and its usage in Confucian classics, see Ch'en Man-ming, Chung-Yung Susu-hsiang yen-chiu (Taipei: Wen-chin ch'u-pan-she, 1980), pp. 2-16.
58In an essay written for the chin-shih examination in 793, Liu quoted a line from the Book of Documents: "My Way is one that sincerely holds fast the Mean." (Translation taken from James Legge, Chinese Classics, vol. 3, pp. 62-63.) For the identification of this prose work as an essay written in the chin-shih examination, see Hsü Sung, Teng-k'o chi-k'ao (3 vols. Taipei: Ching-sheng wen-wu. 1972), pp. 840, 846-847. Clearly, it is not possible for us to use this essay as a strong evidence to support our argument that Middle Way constitutes the center of Liu's political ideology because the ideas expressed in this essay are very much dictated by its title, which is "A rhapsody on the balance of power"
While Liu does, in a number of places, emphasize the idea of the Middle Way in the approach of government, he writes practically nothing about the sources from which he draws this idea. Therefore, it is not possible for us to pinpoint precisely the sources of this specific aspect of his political ideology, although we can say with confidence that Liu's political ideology was very much influenced by the Confucian classics. However, we may still be able to draw parallels between this aspect of Liu's Confucianism and some of the Confucian classics. This will show clearly the close connection between Liu's political thought and the Confucian classics, and further explicate the nature of his political ideology.

In a preface to a poem given to a monk called Ch'ün-su, Liu made specific reference to a Confucian classic, The Doctrine of the Mean (Chung Yung), as a text which had provided him insights into the "deep mystery":

In the past I studied the chapter Chung Yung in the Book of Rites. When I [read] up to the line "Without effort, hit what is right, and apprehend, without the exercise of thought," I was terrified and realized the virtue of the sages. [They] study until they reach the point of not needing to study. However, this kind of saying is just like telling the workman the subtle method of [building a] house, [but] to seek for the path and method in order to carry it out to all over the world, it is not easy to be obtained... So I realized the deep mystery in the Chung Yung... 

("P'ing ch'iian-heng fu"). However, we can use the essay as a supplementary reference documenting his awareness of such an idea in his early years. Also, we can use it to trace the sources in which he obtained this idea of the Middle Way. The line "sincerely hold fast the Mean" is taken directly from the chapter "The counsels of the Great Yu" in the Book of Documents; a similar line can be found in the Analects. See James Legge tr., Chinese Classics, vol. 1, p. 350. We can also note that in a preface to a poem written by Ch'üan Te-yü, Ch'üan recorded the account that Liu had studied the Book of Poetry and the Book of Documents since he was a child. See Ch'üan T'ang Wen (compiled by Tung Kao et al. 20 vols. Taipei: Hui-wen shu-chü, 1943. Henceforth: CTW), p. 6345. 59See James Legge tr., The Chinese Classics, vol. 1, p. 413. 60LYHC, p. 389.
Exactly what "deep mystery" Liu is referring to is unclear, nor does this passage provide any strong connection between the text *The Doctrine of the Mean* and Liu's political thought, or the idea of of the Middle Way. However, two implications raised by it provide us with some insight into the matter.

First, according to Liu in the above passage, his uneasiness with the line "Without effort, hit what is right, and apprehend, without the exercise of thought" arises precisely from its impractical nature. The line thematizes the central concept of *The Doctrine of the Mean* -- Sincerity. It reads as follow:

Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity is he who, without effort, hits upon what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought; he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He who attains sincerity is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast.61

Sincerity, in this characterization, is clearly an ontological concept which is highly ambiguous.62 It is not something that can be understood and attained by everybody. Those who can apprehend Sincerity "without the exercise of thought" are the sages. Perhaps it is the ambiguity in this characterization of Sincerity that Liu finds it difficult to use it in actually dealing with concrete real-life situations. Yet this, in a way, reflects exactly what Liu was seeking for -- the "path and method" of government.

Second, although Liu expressed his dissatisfaction with *The Doctrine of the Mean*, there is no doubt that this particular text did exert an influence upon him. This text, as its title may suggest, dwells upon the notion of *chung*, a notion which, unlike sincerity, is something that one can employ in dealing with real-life problems.

For example, in his criticism of antiquity mentioned earlier, Liu further states that: "I abhor the demerits [of the prevailing practices] and [I want to] save [the world] and return it to the Middle Way." What Liu is saying here is that he is against those who blindly follow prevailing practices or established rules. To Liu, the restoration of the Middle Way is a solution to the problem.

One basic definition of Chung provided by The Doctrine of the Mean is as follows:

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63LYHC, pp. 132-133. Another example where Liu makes reference to the concept of chung-tao can be found in LYHC, p. 249. For a discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's usage of chung-tao, also see Fang Chieh "Liu Tsung-yüan ti ssu-hsiang pei-ching" (in Shu-mu chi-kan, vol. 15 (June 1981), no. 1, pp. 9-36), pp. 30-31. However, to Fang, Liu's idea of chung-tao is influenced by the canonical study of the Annals. The reason that Fang provides for such an argument is that Liu was an admirer of Lü Wen. It is true that Liu's admiration Lü is clearly displayed in Liu's writing, but this does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that Liu's conception of chung-tao directly results from study of the Annals. I therefore cannot agree with Fang in this respect. See H. G. Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, p. 45. Sun Ch'ang-wu also argues that Liu was influenced by Lu Ch'un's approach to the interpretation of the Annals. Sun supports his argument with Liu's statement that "[When] reading a text one should observe it meanings; when admiring a person of virtue one should admire his heart." See Sun's T'ang-tai ku-wen yün-tung t'ung-lun, p. 268. For Liu's statement, see LYHC, p. 64. A similar idea can also be found in LYHC, p. 235. While this may imply the possibility that Liu did share a similar view to Liu's on the approaches to canonical study, this is still not sufficient evidence to allow us to confirm a direct or even an indirect influence from Lu. Another argument may further strengthen our doubts about such an influence. In a letter to, probably, Yüan Yü, during the discussion of issues concerning the Annals, Liu Tsung-yüan lists those who were connected with Lu's approach to the Annals. Only Han Yeh, Han T'ai, Lü Wen, and Ling Chun are mentioned, and Liu Yü-hsi is not included in the list. If Liu also studied the Annals with Lu or any of these people, then it seems strange that Liu Tsung-yüan did not mention Liu Yü-hsi in the letter. Also, as a close friend of Liu who had communicated with Liu Yü-hsi throughout his life after the abortive reform in 805, Liu Tsung-yüan never once discussed the Annals with Liu Yü-hsi in any great detail. The above should suggest at least that Liu Yü-hsi was not someone who paid much attention to canonical study of the Annals. However, it cannot be asserted that the Annals necessarily exerts no influence on Liu's political thought because all the intellectuals in T'ang, particularly those who were candidates of the chin-shih examination, needed to be well-versed in all the Confucian classics. For the letter by Liu Tsung-yüan, see LTYC, pp. 818-820.
[The state that exists] before the feelings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, and joy are aroused is called equilibrium (chung, centrality, mean). When these feelings are aroused and each and all attain due measure and degree, [the state] is called harmony (ho). Equilibrium is the great foundation of the world, and harmony its universal path. When equilibrium and harmony are realized in the highest degree, heaven and earth will attain their proper order and all things will flourish.⁶⁴

Here chung (equilibrium) appears to be a measure of one's mental state. It is a state prior to the emergence of one's inner feelings. That is why the name chung is used, implying a state in which there is no leaning to one side. When one's actions are carried out according to the principle of chung, these actions are in a state of ho (harmony). Thus chung, in this passage, has no strong connection with concrete political philosophy. However, if "all things will flourish" when one brings about a state of chung-ho in the world, the implication is that there is a possible linkage between the notion of chung and that of the well-being of the world. Hence, chung-ho, as a manifestation of Sincerity in Man (Sage), does impose an outward exertion of oneself to bring benefits to all creatures in the world.

Therefore, in a theoretical plan, chung-ho may constitute an underlying political principle in The Doctrine of the Mean. But how can one follow the principle of chung-ho? The answer is by acting flexibly:

Chung-ni (Confucius) said, "The superior man [exemplifies] the Mean (chung-yung). The inferior man acts contrary to the Mean. The superior man [exemplifies] the Mean because, as a superior man, he can maintain the Mean at any time. The inferior man [acts contrary to] the Mean because, as an inferior man, he has no caution."⁶⁵


To "maintain the Mean at any time" ("shih-chung") is perhaps one of the most important concepts from the Confucian classics that influences Liu Yü-hsi's political thought and world views. Since chung is a standard that changes with time, so one must always modify one's actions with the changing of time and in changing accord with chung. While one's actions are not rigidly prescribed, they must always be in accordance with a state of chung-ho that corresponds to their time.

An example which reflects the idea of not insisting upon a rigidly fixed cause of action can also be found in The Doctrine of the Mean:

Confucius said, "To be stupid and like to use his own judgment, to be in a humble station and like to dictate, to live in the present world and go back to the ways of antiquity - people of this sort bring calamity on themselves...." 

This example also suggests the possibility of The Doctrine of Mean directly influencing Liu's idea that antiquity may not be faultless.

A similar message can also be found in Mencius:

Tzu-mo holds on to the middle, half way between the two extremes. Holding on to the middle is closer to being right, but to do this without the proper measure (ch'üan) is no different from holding to one extreme.

This passage provides a further qualification, ch'üan, to the concept of the Middle Way. Liu personally did not discuss ch'üan in detail. But, he did use ch'üan,

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69See Hu Chih-k'uei, "Kung-Meng-Hsün yung-'chung' ssu-hsiang fang-fa ti yen-chiu" in Yu-shih hsieh-pao, vol. 4, no. 1-2 (October 1961). In this article, Hu also points out that the ideas of chung, shih, and ch'üan are more developed in Hsün-tzu's thought than in Confucius or Mencius. We will discuss the philosophical impact of Hsün-tzu's thought on Liu's intellectual outlook at greater length in chapter four.
together with the concept of *ching* (constancy), to praise Yüan Yü's ability to govern.\(^{70}\) Liu Tsung-yüan once provided a definition to these two concepts and how they are related:

That which is *ching*, is constant (*chang*). *Ch'üan* is that which [allows one to] arrive at the *ching*. These are all matters of benevolence and wisdom. To depart from them [is to] stir up confusion! *Ching* without *ch'üan* will be conservative. *Ch'üan* without *ching* will be perverse. These two are names that are artificially imposed. [*The term* proper (*tang*) can totally [explicate their meanings.] That which is Proper is the Way of the Great Centrality (*ta-chung*)...\(^{71}\)

To Liu Tsung-yüan, the concept of constancy is also closely tied to the Middle Way.\(^{72}\) And, in this passage, *ching* and *ch'üan* are not two separate concepts; they must always be employed together.

Although we are not suggesting that Liu Yü-hsi necessarily shared Liu Tsung-yüan's understanding of these two concepts, Liu Tsung-yüan's definition -- which is in general agreement with Mencius' characterization of the Middle Way -- can serve as an exemplification of how some of Liu Yü-hsi's friends may have understood the meaning of the Middle Way. It is also clear from the above discussion that the notion *chung-tao* occupies an important position in Confucian philosophy.

Liu Tsung-yüan and some other members of the Wang Shu-wen clique, like Liu Yü-hsi himself, also considered the Middle Way an extremely important concept in Confucianism. One rather unique item of vocabulary that Liu Yü-hsi

\(^{70}\)See *LYHC*, p. 123.
\(^{71}\) *LTYC*, p. 91. We may also note that in the second chapter of the *Han-shih wai-chuan*, annotated by Lai Yen-yüan. Taipei: Commercial Press, 1972. Mencius is said to have given his definition of the terms *ching* and *ch'üan*. See *Han-shih wai-chuan chin-chu chin-i*, p. 41. Liu Tsung-yüan's definition of these two terms is similar to Mencius.
\(^{72}\)See *LTYC*, p. 88.
chose to use is the term *ta-chung* (Great Centrality). Among Liu's friends, Liu Tsung-yüan is perhaps the one who used it with the highest frequency.\(^{73}\)

Another member of the Wang Shu-wen clique, Lü Wen, who was highly respected by the two Lius, was considered by Liu Tsung-yüan a man who had great insight into the Middle Way.\(^{74}\) In addition, it is interesting to note that in the eulogy written for Lü by Liu Tsung-yüan, Liu remarks that he and Lü have discussed the deep meaning of the concept *shih-chung* in matters related to the Way of government.\(^{75}\) Furthermore, Liu Tsung-yüan, in a tomb inscription written for Lu Ch'un, describes Lu as a person who illuminated the "Great Centrality."\(^{76}\) It seems, therefore, that Middle Way was considered by Liu Yü-hsi and some of his friends an important way to achieve good government.

The notion *ta-chung*, unlike the term *chung-tao*, is rarely found in Confucian classics.\(^{77}\) It appears in the Kung An-kuo's (second century B.C.) commentary on the *Book of Documents*, it is used to define the term "kingly perfection"\(^{78}\) (*huang-chi*), and it is discussed in great detail in Kung Ying-ta's (574-648) sub-

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\(^{73}\)For a discussion of the importance of the Middle Way or Great Centrality in Liu Tsung-yüan's political thought, see Chen Jo-shui, *Liu Tsung-yüan*, pp. 92-94.


\(^{75}\) See *LTYC*, p. 220.

\(^{76}\) See *LTYC*, p. 209.

\(^{77}\)This term appears once in the *Book of Changes*. However, its usage basically refers to the position of a line under discussion in the trigram. Thus *chung*, in this case, refers to the fact that the particular line under discussion is situated at the center of the trigram. See Kung Ying-ta sub-commentary to this term in the *Shang-shu cheng-i* in *Shih-san-ching chu-shu* vol. 1, p. 30b. Also see Huang P'ei-yung, "Lun I-chüan ti 'chung,' 'cheng,' 'ying'" in Ch'ü Wan-li hsien-sheng ch'i-chih yung-ch'ing lun-wen-chi, pp. 501-510. Taipei: Lien-ching, 1977.

commentary on the classic. There are at least two texts in which the notion *ta-chung* is used during the Han dynasty in the discussion of matters related to the Way of good government. It seems very likely that Kung An-kuo’s commentary on the *Book of Documents* serves as the textual source of the notion *ta-chung* for Liu Yü-hsi and others.

Liu Yü-hsi uses the term *ta-chung* only twice in his writings. However, in both of these occurrences, it is used precisely to describe Confucian political ideology. In one incident, it describes the teachings of Confucius in general, while in the other it describes a famous Confucian at the end of the Sui dynasty, Wang T'ung (584?-617). It is difficult to tell if Wang himself ever made use of the term *ta-chung* because some of his works are no longer extant. But a survey of his *Chung Shuo* (*Discourses on the Mean*) does show that Wang repeatedly

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80 One usage can be found in the biography of Chou Chü in Fang Yeh, *Hou Han Shu* (12 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1987. Henceforth: HHS) 51:2025. The second usage is by the Confucian scholar Kung Kuang, who used the term *ta-chung* together with the term *huang-chi* in the discussion of the political implications of an eclipse. See Pan Ku et al. *Han Shu* (12 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1987. Henceforth: HS) 51:3359. Because Kung An-kuo was the great grand uncle of Kung Kuang, it is very likely that Kung Kuang’s usage of these notions was directly adopted from Kung An-kuo’s commentary on the *Book of Documents*.

81 *LYHC*, pp. 43 and 56.

82 Issues concerning the authorship of *Chung shuo* and the person Wang T'ung are highly controversial. But modern scholarship seems to agree that Wang T'ung is indeed the author of *Chung shuo*. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that Liu Yü-hsi never suspected the authenticity of this text and the identity of its author. For a general discussion of the controversy, see Howard J. Wechsler, "The Confucian teacher Wang T'ung (584?-617): one thousand years of controversy" in *T'oung Pao*, vol. LXIII (1977), pp. 225-272.
expounded the ideas huang-chi, chung-tao, and ch‘üan. It is therefore also possible that Wang's works might have inspired Liu's understanding of the notion of ta-chung. At the least, it is quite clear that Liu Yü-hsi's conception of the Middle Way as a political ideology was indeed inspired by the Confucian classics.

Possessing poetic abilities, Liu tends to convey his ideas subtly. Liu's idea of acting according to the Middle Way may perhaps be best illustrated in his fable "Chien-yao"("To discern about medicine"). It tells a story in which Liu obtains a kind of medicine, poisonous in nature, from a doctor to cure his measles. However, when he recovers, he continues to take the medicine. Now that his sickness has gone, the medicine becomes harmful to his body, and so he becomes sick again. Hence he returns to the doctor and is given a different kind of medicine to alleviate the situation.

At the end of the fable, Liu writes:

Master Liu sighed and said, 'Good is the doctor! He uses poison in attacking the measles, and mild (ho) [medication] in pacifying one's spirit. If they change [their order] then these two [scenarios] will turn into problems. This is clear. If [one] follows the previous [examples] to cope with changes, and ignores the concepts of restraint and letting go, is this only the fault of small men like us in the taking care of our bodies?'

The rhetorical question at the end of the passage clearly suggests the process Liu is referring to applies widely to all human's affairs. It is hard to prove that Liu intended to expound the concept of chung-ho in this piece, yet, nevertheless, one

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84LYHC, p. 77.
85The term ho, in this particular context, probably carries with it a special connotation in the theory of Chinese medicine. Liu was well-trained in the tradition of Chinese medicine; hence, it is not rendered "harmony."
86LYHC, p. 77.
underlying teaching of this fable is that one should not go to the extreme. Liu thus expounds a flexible approach in the handling of problems, and urges his readers not to stick blindly to established ways. This clearly agrees with the concept of *chüan*.

This feature of Liu Yü-hsi's political ideology is echoed in a letter sent to a prime minister in 823, in which Liu advises his correspondent how to solve a problem in the educational system. Liu remarks that "it is not that the educational officials do not want to bring prosperity [back to the schools], it is that they are worried that there is no money to provide for their needs." Thus, the problem to Liu is one that should be dealt with financially by the central government. The basic cause of insufficient funding for educational institutions, according to Liu, is that a huge amount of money was used in the *shih-tien* ritual that are performed all over the state each year. Liu thus criticizes the memorial of Hsü Ching-tsung (592-672) and others in 646 which advised the state to appoint three offertory officials for the *shih-tien* ritual in every prefecture and district, and its suggestion of using sacrificial animals in the ritual. This meant that a huge amount of funds had to be re-distributed from the existing funding for education to pay for offertory officials and sacrificial animals. Although Emperor Hsüan tsung (r. 712-755) had stopped the practice of using animals, and substituted them with dry meats in the *shih-tien*

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87 According to the letter, Liu was the Prefect of K'uei-chou (in modern Ssu-ch'uan) at the time. It was only during the years 822 to 824 that Liu occupied such a position. See Nien-p'u, pp. 106-114. In a memorial dated on the seventh day, eleventh month of the year 823, Liu mentions that he has dispatched a person called Fung Sui to deliver report(s) on his advice on government. In the letter under discussion, only the day and month are stated, and they match with those of the memorial. Therefore, it is quite likely that this letter was delivered by Fung Sui, and possibly was written in 823. For the memorial, see LYHC, pp. 178-180. Also see Lo Lien-tien, "Liu Meng-te nien-p'u," pp. 250-251.

88LYHC, p. 252.
ritual in 723, and this was later issued as a legal order, Li Lin-fu (d. 752) later, according to Liu, ordered Wang Ching-ts'ung (679-740) to revoke this order and thus Hsü's policy was re-adopted. Liu's basic disagreement with this policy was that it diverted existing funding allocated for educational purposes to the carrying out of the shih-tien ritual.

To solve the problem, Liu proposes:

...to stop using sacrificial animals, clothing and money in the ceremonies in all prefectures and townships under Heaven. If there are students, then, in spring and autumn, follow the imperial decree of the Kai-yuan reign (713-741), and use wines, dry meat mixed with ginger and cassia, the dried meat of birds and fishes, and dried nuts to show respect in the ceremony. And the provincial government offices should follow the old rules. Then, confiscate the funds [for the carrying out of these rules]. Half [will go to] improving the province that it belongs to, to increase [the number of] schools. Send [the other half] to the state's schools. This amount will not below tens of thousands. [This amount can be used in the] construction of school buildings, purchase of equipment, enriching of the food supplied, and to increase [the numbers of] clerks to look after [the schools]. In the case of all Confucian instructors, their salaries should be increased. For papers, brushes, lead powder and yellow ochre, according to the provinces where they are produced, let them all be calculated as income...
So, instead of seeking financial resources from without, Liu scrutinizes the internal defects of the system. In doing so, he pinpoints the expenses that divert a great portion of existing funding to things that are unnecessary or impractical. The improper policies carried out since the time of Li Lin-fu, Liu argues, have forced educational institutions to finance the *shih-tien* ritual. Therefore, Liu proposes to re-distribute properly the existing funding to the area that was supposed to be the target of education: the training of able persons to run the state.

Here, Liu's line of reasoning is not moralistic or didactic in its outlook. It is rather a practical approach to the problem. Ever since the An Lu-shan rebellion, one major problem that the T'ang empire had to face was the provision of sufficient funds to run its daily operations. So, being practical, Liu's approach was one that did not require any further effort to relocate resources to finance his plan. All his plan required was a re-consideration of the distribution of a financial budget that was already in place. Therefore, we can see, in this specific example, not only Liu's interest in practical solutions to problems in the educational system of his day, but also his views on the purpose of the education. This, again, reflects the political aspects of Liu's Confucianism: the major function of the education institute, run by Confucian scholars, should be to train capable persons to run the state efficiently.

Liu's political pragmatics of practical and flexible action characterize his political stance as reformist. Being flexible, he looked at each situation independently. While Liu held that antiquity might not be faultless, he did not go so far as to reject all the possible merits of the ancients. He had once stated that:

The Way of the Three Kings is like going around in a cycle. It is not that it must be changed. It is merely to examine on things that must be aided. Did the faults of the Sui dynasty only lie in its established regulations? [Of
course not!] It is only that the established regulations did not correspond to the real situations. What is the harm in following them?92

Flexibility thus does not necessarily imply change. To say that the fault of the Sui dynasty lay in its inability to police the established regulations again properly reflects Liu's seriousness regarding the doctrine of Rectification of Names.

In his preface to Lü Wen's collected works, Liu characterized Lü's ambition to be one that "assists the kingly way and brings about [well-being] to the people (chi-wu)."93 This characterization of Lü's thought reflects also the main thrust of Liu's political ideology. As we have already seen earlier in Liu's letter to Tou Ch'ün, the idea of chi-wu is the final goal of Liu's political endeavor.94 Clearly, the major feature of Liu's Confucianism is his expounding of the idea of the Way of good government. In a letter to the Perfect of Jao-chou (in modern Chiang-hsi)95, Liu expressed in great detail his conception of the Way of good government:

92LYHC, p. 63.
93LYHC, p. 235.
94This idea of chi-wu is repeatedly expounded by Liu. For other examples where he made use of this term, see LYHC, pp. 30, 131 and 220,
95According to the Nien-p'u, this letter was written when Liu was in Lang-chou in the position of adjutant (806-814). Chü T'ui-yüan suggested that this letter might have been written later when Liu had the position of Prefect in Lien-chou. However, his argument is again rather speculative in nature. See his Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 261. There are at least two different theories about the identity of the Prefect of Jao-chou. One asserts that this Perfect was Yüan Yü: see Chü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, pp. 260-262 and Chang Shih-chao, Liu-wen chih-yao (14 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1971), pp. 965-966, 1003. The other affirms Yüan Hung was Prefect. See Yü Hsien-hao, T'ang t'zu-shih k'ao (5 vols. Nanking: Chiang-su ku-chi, 1987), vol. 4, p. 2033 and Pien Hsiao-hsüan, Liu Yü-hsi t'ung k'ao, pp. 185-186. All of them agree that the letter was written between 812 and 814. It seems that Yü Hsien-hao presupposes Yüan Hung to be the receiver of the letter, and he, therefore, basing his assumptions on this rather groundless presupposition, regards Yüan Hung as being the Perfect of Jao-chou between these few years. Pien also believes that Yüan Hung was the reciever. Although he provides a number of points to support this belief, they are all circumstantial in nature. Chang Shih-chao argues the possibility that Yüan Yü might have stayed on as Prefect of Jao-chou for more than six or seven years. If we add to this the evidence that Yüan transferred from the position of Prefect of Jao-chou to that of the Prefect of Hang-chou in
Perhaps the different policies [that are carried out] in years of good and bad harvest depend on the [corresponding] times. The fact that different laws apply to the barbarians and the Chinese is linked to [differences] in customs. Accordance with the times consists of [the ability to provide] correct observations. Accordance with customs consists of [the ability to provide] convenience [to the people]. [If one is] unable to grasp the proper way of taxation and distribution [of resources], then, even when there is a year of good harvest, [the consequence] is like flood and drought. [If one is] unable to know the meaning of daily usage and needs [of the people] and the sharing of the fruits of harvests (le-cheng),\textsuperscript{96} even if the common people are [living] peacefully, [the consequence] is just like times when families are forcibly separated. [If the] promise regarding "moving the wooden pole"\textsuperscript{97} is always carried out, then people will not be confused. This is the prerequisite of good government. [If one is able] to encourage [the people] through the model of putting out a cup of clear water,\textsuperscript{98} the people will know to respect [the officials]. This is the foundation of good government. [If the] information box\textsuperscript{99} [for the reporting of corruption] is used, then the wicked [officials] will not dare to deceive [their superiors]. This is something that assists the way of government. [But], it is necessary that the looseness and flexibility, the strength and weakness [of these

\textsuperscript{820} it seems quite possible that he was the receiver of the letter. On page 1003, Chang claims to be certain that Yüan Yü was indeed the receiver, but he does not attempt to substantiate his claim. Nevertheless, the identification of the Prefect of Jao-chou should pose no difficulty in our understanding of Liu's ideas as expressed in the letter. For convenience, we will thus take Yüan Yü to be the receiver of the letter in our discussion. In addition, Liu Tsung-yüan also wrote a letter to the Prefect after Liu Yü-hsi in which he discusses with Yüan the same topic and expresses his agreement with Liu Yü-hsi's ideas on the Way of good government. See LTYC, pp. 831-833.

\textsuperscript{96} We should note that the term le-cheng is probably taken from the first chapter of Shang-chiin Shu. See Chu shih-ch'e, Shang-chiin-shu chieh-ku ting-pen (Peking: Ku-chi chu-pan-she, 1956), p. 2.

\textsuperscript{97} This story is from the biography of Shang Yang in SC. It tells that Shang Yang, erecting a wooden pole at the south gate of the city, promised the citizens that whoever could move the pole to the north gate would be given ten chin (unit of monetary currency). At the beginning, no one dared to move the pole. Then Shang raised the reward to fifty chin. After this, one man did move the pole to the north gate. Shang therefore rewarded him with the promised amount in order to show the people that they would not be cheated. See SC 66:2231.

\textsuperscript{98} This story is from the biography of P'ang Ts'an in HHS 51:1689. When P'ang arrived in Han-yang to take up the position of governor he went to visit a virtuous person, Jen T'ang. However, Jen did not talk to P'ang but simply put out a bundle of shallots and a cup of clear water. P'ang soon realized the hidden meaning that Jen wanted to convey. In particular, by putting out a cup of clear water, Jen advised P'ang not to become corrupt.

\textsuperscript{99} This story is in the biography of Chao Kuang-han in HS 76:3200.
approaches] should apply in accordance to the changing situations only... When the people are satisfied [with what they need], they will long for stability. When stability [is achieved] then they will be concerned with personal well-being and will be afraid of the laws. When [the people are] destitute then they will contemplate improper acts. [When they] contemplate improper acts, then they will be compelled [to seek for] profit and disrespect the prohibitions. That is why people [living during the time of] Emperors Wen and Ching [in Han] enriched their lives. And those who were officials all manifested benevolence and reciprocity. People living during the reigns of Emperors Wu and Hsuan were drafted for labor service. Those who were officials, were all known for their ferocity. The alternate usage of lenient and fierce [policies] is like the rotation of refinement and substance. It is necessary to examine the problems in order to solve them. [One] ought to examine oneself carefully in the assistance and deprivation of [the people].\textsuperscript{100}

This passage clearly displays Liu Yū-hsi's conception of the Way of good government. We can discern three major points. The first point emphasizes the need for a flexible approach to government. This emphasis is based on the understanding that real-life situations do not always arise from identical causes. Since Chinese society was agrarian in nature, seasonal climatic changes dictated the customs. And differences in customs, as Liu understood it, were the basic reasons why different kinds of laws were adopted by the Chinese and by the barbarians. Therefore, a basic requirement of good government, for Liu, is that it act in accordance with customs. If the officials are ignorant of this, the consequence of their policies will be disastrous, notwithstanding the fact that might be a good harvest in any particular year.

The second point outlines detailed requirements for good government on the part of the officials: trustworthiness, frugality, and a concern for the people's well-being. In addition, Liu also suggests that people should be provided a channel through which they can convey their dissatisfaction with bad officials. This will in turn help to stop any improper acts by the officials. All Liu's suggestions are

\textsuperscript{100}LYHC, p. 124.
targeted at the officials, reflecting his acknowledgement that a high institutional moral standard is necessary in the Way of good government.

The third point expresses Liu's understanding of why people disobey laws. According to Liu, the failure to provide for peoples' basic material needs induces instability among the populace. One implication of this is that law is less important than moral standards. This further implies that while Liu's political ideology is one that contains legalist elements, these elements never outweigh the influence of Confucianism.101 Law is required only when the people are unable to

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101A number of articles published in the PRC, particularly during the mid-seventies, portrayed Liu as a legalist, and stated that his intellectual outlook was diametrically opposite to that of a Confucian. For examples, see Wen Chün, "Lun Liu Yū-hsi ti cheng-chih shih" in Pei-ching ta-hsüeh hsüeh-pao, 1974, no. 4, pp. 46-51; Ching Tang, "Liu Yū-hsi ti ch'ung-fa ssu-hsiang ho ke-hsin ching-shen" in Wen Wu, (September 1974), no. 9, pp. 13-19, 44. This characterization of Liu is crude, simplistic, and politically motivated. For a refutation of this characterization of Liu's intellectual outlook, see Ch'en Yün-chi, "Lun Liu Yū-hsi chi-ch'i wen-hsiieh cheng-chiu" in Tang-ying fo-chiao pien-ssu-lu (Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1988), pp. 204-232. However, E.G. Pulleyblank in his article, "Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in T'ang intellectual life," has suggested that Liu belonged to the Legalist intellectual tradition which was "drawn upon and introduced in Confucian dress." (See p. 114 of his article). Without doubt, it is true that Liu did draw inspiration from Legalism. On a number of occasions, Liu makes reference to Han Fei (d. 233 B.C.) or his works. For two examples, see LYHC, pp. 116 and 133. In the first example, Liu makes reference to Han Fei's "Ku Fen"("Lonely exasperation"). His sympathy with this particular piece clearly reflects his frustration due to the failure of the 805 reform. In the second example, Liu quotes a line directly from the chapter "Hsien Hsüeh" ("The illustrious Schools"), and here Liu is certainly borrowing ideas from Legalism. However, he is still arguing against the conception that antiquity necessarily exemplifies perfect human existence. Thus, he uses a quotation from Han Fei to push for his idea of practicality and flexibility. Indeed, this usage may be one reason for Liu's interest in Legalism. It is also true that this aspect of Liu's thought might have been influenced by Tu Yu. Liu's hostility to merchants in his works may also provide an argument for a Legalist characterization of Liu's thought. (see Pulleyblank's article) For a discussion of status of merchant and particularly Liu's hostility toward mercantile activities see Dennis Twitchett, "Merchant, Trade and Government in Late T'ang" in Asia Major, new series, vol. XIV, part I, pp. 63-95. However, it seems to me that Liu's adoption of Legalist ideology is for the purpose of serving his Confucian political goal. As we have already mentioned, laws are, to Liu, of a second order of importance rather than a primary approach in the Way of good government. Also, it seems that while Liu does focus his discussion on the proper method of rule, the underlying purpose of his
obtain their basic needs, and it is the responsibility of the government to provide
the populace with these basic needs. If the government is incapable of providing
the people with a basic living standard, social disorder will naturally result.

We have already mentioned above Liu's requirement of a high moral
standard from officials. This aspect is expanded further in the following letter:

The Grand Historian said: "[In the case of] those who have cultivated
themselves, their governance has not been chaotic." However, there are
some who have cultivated themselves but are unable to govern properly.
There are none who are unable to [cultivate] themselves and able to
govern the people properly. Now, [speaking of] those who are said to be
intent on good governing, all of them know that the people are burdened
with taxation, and tired out through labor. They say, "[In] the way of
governing, nothing comes before simplicity, frugality, and following the
laws." The ability of some of them may be restricted by narrow-mindedness.
Their intellect is restricted by weakness of character. They
cannot consider [the situations] of profit and loss, and rid the people of
their burdens. [They] consider ignorance as simplicity, personal purity as
frugality, and the following the evil practices of the past as the following
of laws. So, within their own households, their minds [might be] set clear,
and their power is transferred to the hands of the clerks. When the year is
good, and affairs are simple, they are able to govern by luck. In a bad year,
when the affairs that need to be taken care of are numerous, then [the
populace] will become disaffected in a destructive manner. Therefore it is
said that there are some who are cultivated but unable to govern. What you
have said on the way of government is reasonable and closely related to
the actual situations...Cultivation does not stop at one's own body, [but] it
must bring benefit to the people (chi-wu).102

This passage expresses an interesting idea on the issue of self-cultivation in
the way of good government. While Liu has previously acknowledged the
endeavor is to advocate the interests of the ruled. Liu's conception of a proper way to
good government requires a balance between the ability and moral cultivation of the
officials. Thus, while I do acknowledge specific legalist elements in Liu political
ideology, I cannot accept a relatively strict characterization of Liu as a Legalist. For
information on Liu's contemporaries' interest in Legalism, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-
yüan, p. 120, n. 84. We will discuss in more detail the role of the concept fe plays in Liu's
thought in chapter four.

102LYHC, p. 124.
importance of a high moral standard on the part of the officials, this passage seems to suggest that self-cultivation is not, in the last analysis, directly related to the way of good government. However, a closer look at the way Liu defines the term "cultivation" may lead us to a different conclusion.

As in the letter to Tou Ch'ün, but now in greater detail, Liu attacks the prevailing practices of officials. Instead of following the proper way of government -- simplicity, frugality, and the upholding of laws - these people distort the way of government, yet still consider themselves able persons in the governing of the people. They simply miss the target: to them, self-cultivation, becomes solely a personal affair. But to Liu, the purpose of self-cultivation is not at all a personal matter. The final goal of cultivation is to bring well-being to the people. Thus Liu defines self-cultivation as both a private and a public matter.

The idea of a close connection between self-cultivation and conduct of government is expounded in various Confucian classics. In The Doctrine of the Mean we read the following passage:

There is therefore the conduct of government depends upon men. The right men are obtained by the ruler's character. The cultivation of the person is to be done through the Way, and the cultivation of the Way is to be done through humanity. Humanity (jen) is [the distinguishing characteristic of] man, and the greatest application of it is in being affectionate toward relatives...Therefore the superior man must not fail to cultivate his personal life. Wishing to cultivate his personal life, he must not fail to serve his parents. Wishing to serve his parents, he must not fail to know man. Wishing to know man, he must not fail to know Heaven.103

Clearly, Liu's advocacy of the need for self-cultivation in order to run the government properly is not unique. However, Liu's idea of self-cultivation does not go as far as that of The Doctrine of the Mean. While his concepts as expressed

in the letter to Yuan Yü about self-cultivation do carry a certain moralistic weight, he never associates self-cultivation with the "knowing" of Heaven.\textsuperscript{104}

Here, self-cultivation is clearly a process of developing one's mind. However Liu posits another dimension in the connection between self and others. Apart from the need to prepare oneself mentally in the proper governing of the populace, Liu seems to perceive also the subsidiary importance of physical cultivation of the body. In the letter to Tou Ch'ún quoted earlier, Liu remarks that "to nourish oneself and to nourish the people are not two different ways." Here the word "nourish" (yang) refers to the fostering of better physical health rather than mental improvement. Liu's idea can perhaps be related to his life-long interest in medicine.\textsuperscript{105} Also, the fact that some of Liu's best and most respected friends died at young age might have had enough psychological impact on Liu to cause him to consider seriously the need for a physically sound body in order to carry out his Way of government.\textsuperscript{106} Thus, self-cultivation, for Liu, is both a personal and impersonal endeavor, though the ultimate purpose of such an endeavor is to bring well-being to the people (chi-wu).

Here we have made clear the basic imperative of Liu's conception of Confucianism -- to bring well-being to the populace. But in order to realize such a Confucian goal, Liu stresses the necessity for one to obtain a proper position in officialdom.\textsuperscript{107} After the 805 reform was aborted, Liu, and many others in the Wang Shu-wen clique, were banished to remote areas. For ten years Liu was

\textsuperscript{104} For discussion of Liu's idea of Heaven, see chapter four of this study.
\textsuperscript{105} In his letter to a doctor named Hsuêh Ching-hui, Liu again expressed the importance of nurturing the people. See LYHC, p. 130. For the identification of Hsüeh, see Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 279.
\textsuperscript{106} For example, Lü Wen and Liu Tsung-yüan died at relatively young ages. Liu died in 819 at the age of forty-six, and Lü died in 811 at the age of thirty-nine. We may also note that the letter to Tou was written around 813-814, at most three years after Lü's death.
\textsuperscript{107} For examples, see LYHC, pp. 128, 216, and 224.
assigned the position of marshal, a position that carried no administrative responsibility, in Lang-chou. For the rest of his life, although he took up positions with greater administrative responsibilities, mainly in areas away from the capital, he was given no opportunity to participate in the decision-making process of central government. Politically ambitious, he was intensely frustrated, and developed a way to deal with this frustration: the concept of *shih* (situation). It is rather difficult to give a precise translation of this word; in Liu's usage, it conveys the ideas of "proper situation" and "proper opportunity."108 Liu's works clearly show that this idea played an important role in his world view.109 As we have noted earlier, the concept of *shih-chung* in *The Doctrine of the Mean* exerted an important influence upon Liu's political ideology. It is thus possible that Liu also obtained idea of *shih* from this Confucian text. But the idea of *shih* is also repeatedly expounded in the *Book of Changes*, a text in which Liu showed great interest.110 In particular, the idea of *shih-chung* can also be found in the judgment of the Meng hexagram.111

The idea of *shih* not only provided a way for Liu to theorize about the setbacks in his political career, it also provided a means for him to keep alive his political ambitions. In a rhapsody written while he was banished to Lang-chou, Liu expressed his understanding of *shih* through the mouth of a diviner:

The diviner said, "You called on me rashly, and yet asked me subtle matters. There is right and wrong [for all] under the heaven, and there is right and wrong for each person. There are things that are judged beautiful

109For examples in which Liu expounded the idea of *shih*, see LYHC, pp. 5, 12, 17, 21, 38, 113, 221, 228, 235, 236, and 238.
111See Nan Huai-chin, Chou-I chin-chu chin-i, p. 52.
over here, but are judged ugly over there. There are things that have succeeded in the past, but fail in the present. You have asked me why this is so. This is all determined by situations (shih). Shih! Shih! When it is gone, one cannot call it back. When it is coming, one cannot escape it. Over this long period of time, who can escape it, and who can control it? The poisonous sprout of the monkshood, and the small seedlings of the foxnut, can each, in the proper situations, dominate the other [medical ingredients]. The skill of dragon-slaying cannot be said to be not great, but when there is no use for it at the time, it is inferior to the skill of checking the plumpness of a pig by one's feet...Therefore, it can be said that: Right or wrong are determined by the situation! Certainly, good and bad in oneself originate from the same source. It all depends on one's experience. If this is so, then, I am not proud to be successful and ashamed of failing. When the situation has gone, why think about it? When it is coming, why anticipate it? For the time being, let us carry on in the usual way and wait. Why does one need to divine?" When he finished his words, he held his turtle [shell in his hand] and got up. I retreated and composed the "Rhapsody on why one should divine" ("Ho-pu fu"). Therefore my intention in following the Way is devotedly fixed, and my will to wait for the situation (shih) is strong. When I examine my various internal doubts, they disappear like melting ice.112

One the one hand, this passage clearly shows Liu's conception of the ever-changing nature of the consequence of events. While there are basic principles according to which one should act, these actions by themselves do not determine the consequence. On the other hand, the passage displays the way in which Liu consoled himself with the notion of shih. An important consequence of Liu's conception of shih is its provision of a way for the writer to rid himself of his doubts and frustrations. Furthermore, Liu's characterization of shih contains a flavor of fatalism, since it is something that is outside individual control. However, while the coming and going of shih is uncontrollable by any individual, this does not necessarily imply that future opportunities may never arise. It is precisely the unpredictability of the coming and going of shih that provides Liu with a sense of

112LYHC, p. 12.
hope. While he was banished far away from the capital Ch'ang-an, Liu thus never gave up the hope of a future opportunity to serve in the central government.113

We have seen in the above paragraph how the idea of shih influenced Liu psychologically. This idea may appear to exert its influence mostly at a personal level; but within his basic world view, it also helps to strengthen Liu's confidence in his political thought. Therefore, while the idea shih helps to release Liu's frustration, it also serves to strengthen his faith in public spiritedness. Hence, shih exerts its influence on Liu both inwardly and outwardly. There is another instance in Liu's works that reflects a possible influence from the Book of Changes, and which shows clearly a bi-directional linkage between a personal and public concern. "In addition to the observation of things, I thereupon observe my life."114

The possible connection with the Book of Changes is that the term "observe my life" ("kuan wo sheng") is from the Kuan/Contemplation (View) hexagram:

Six in the third place:
   a) Contemplation of my life decides the choice between advance and retreat.
   b) "Contemplation of my life decides the choice between advance and retreat." The right way is not lost.

Nine in the fifth place:
   a) Contemplation of my life. The superior man is without blame.
   b) "Contemplation of my life," that is, contemplation of the people.

Nine at the top:
   a) Contemplation of his life. The superior man is without blame.
   b) "Contemplation of his life." This will is not yet pacified.115

113For some other examples which show Liu's positive outlook see LYHC, pp. 4-5, 17-18, and 258.
114LYHC, p. 8.
The ideas expounded above clearly closely resemble aspects of Liu's worldview. Although the phrase "kuan wo sheng" only occurs once in his extant works it is difficult for us to miss the inward and outward implication of tao.\textsuperscript{116}

Apart from this important influence from the Book of Changes, it is also evident that Liu made frequent use of this Confucian classic in his discussions of political issues.\textsuperscript{117} The Book of Changes thus serves as both a comforting agent in the relief of Liu's frustrations, and a source of his political ideology.

To recapitulate, the central feature of Liu's Confucianism, as we have shown, is its political nature; the purpose of such political endeavor is to bring prosperity to the populace (chi-wu). Drawing his political ideology from such Confucian classics as The Doctrine of the Mean and the Book of Changes, and partly from Legalist texts, Liu expounds a practical approach to politics, having little to say about the moral aspect of Confucianism. He identifies, in a specific way, certain kinds of compositions (wen) and the tao. Instead of "illuminating" or "conveying" the essence of tao, Liu perceives wen as the actual tool that could bring about the well-being of the people. In Liu's thought, tao is not a synonym for "antiquity." To Liu, the fulfillment of the tao is both a private and public matter. When he suffered from political setbacks, he drew upon the Confucian classics for the wisdom that

\textsuperscript{116}In a poem written after Liu read the collected works of Chang Chiu-ling (673-740), we read the lines: "The sayings of the sages value highly the principle of loyalty and reciprocity; the ultimate Way concerns the observation of oneself." \textsc{LYHC}, p. 263. K'ung Ying-ta identified sheng as tao. See \textsc{Chou-i Cheng-i}, under the line "six in the third place" in \textsc{Shih-san-ching chu-shu}, vol. 1, p. 24c.

\textsuperscript{117}One example, already mentioned earlier, is found in the letter to Tou Ch'ün. There Liu clearly indicated that he was making use of the I/The Corners of the Mouth (providing nourishment) hexagram in his discussion of bringing well-being to the populace when he said, "The proper meanings of the I [hexagram is something that one] must follow. For other examples where he made use of the Book of Changes see \textsc{LYHC}, p. 11 (T'ai/peace and the Pi/standstill hexagrams), 110 (Hsiao Kuo/Proponderance of the small), 123 (Ch'en/(shock,thunder)).
provided him the comfort he so desperately needed. At the same time, such wisdom also provided him with the motivation to exert himself politically, and to fulfill his Confucian belief when opportunities (shih) arose.
Chapter 3: Buddhist sentiments in Liu Yü-hsi's thought

In the twelfth month of 814, after ten years of exile in Lang-chou, Liu Yü-hsi was summoned back to the capital Chang-an. Only two months later Liu found himself facing yet another humiliation. This time, in spite of being assigned to the higher-ranking position of Prefect, he was sent to an even more remote area: Lien-chou (in modern Ssu-ch'uan). In a memorial "giving thanks" for such an assignment, Liu states that he studied only the Buddhist sutras in his spare time, "in the hope of prolonging the life of the emperor." This statement is quite clearly formulaic, but is nonetheless interesting, since it gives insight into Liu's activities related to Buddhism.

Buddhism was introduced into China during the early part of the first century AD, and it flourished during the T'ang. A number of major Chinese Buddhist schools emerged in this dynasty. As we have already noted in earlier chapters, Buddhism took charge, to a great extent, of both the spiritual and mental life of

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1See Nien-p'u, p. 66.
2As we have noted in chapter one, Liu was originally assigned the position of Prefect of Po-chou (in modern Kuei-chou), a place which was said to be unfit for human habitation. I think Liu's gratitude for the re-assignment was genuine. For Liu's frustration in this particular political setback, see his letter to Chang Hung-ching in LYHC, p. 218.
3See LYHC, p. 582. The reigning emperor to whom Liu addressed his memorial was Hsien-tsung (r. 805-820), who was a devout patron of Buddhism. For a description of his devotion to Buddhism, see Stanley Weinstein, Buddhism under the T'ang (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 99-105.
4A number of stories concerning the origin of Chinese Buddhism exist, but most of them have been proved to be legendary in nature. For an examination of these legends and the theory that Chinese Buddhism began during the early years of the first century AD, see T'ang Yung-t'ung, Han-Wei liang-Chin Nan-pei-ch'ao fo-chiao shih (2 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1979), chapters one to three.
5These Buddhist schools include the Wei-shih, Hua-yen and Ch'an. The T'ien-tai school began shortly before the T'ang. For a brief discussion of the major schools of Buddhist thought in the Sui and T'ang dynasties, see T'ang Yung-t'ung, Sui-T'ang fo-chiao shih-kao (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1982), pp. 105-223.
T'ang intellectuals. It is therefore not surprising to discover that Liu Yü-hsi was attracted to this religion and philosophy.

There is no information pertaining to a connection between Liu's family and Buddhism. Liu's own connections with Buddhism can be dated back to his early teens. We have already noted that Liu's earlier years were spent in an area near Su-chou. This area was one of the regions where Buddhism flourished in the T'ang dynasty, particularly after the An Lu-shan rebellion. Thus Liu's early contact with Buddhism, and even the nature of his Buddhist thought, were related to his close proximity to the major centers of Buddhist activity.

In a preface written for the collected works of the poet-monk Ling-ch'e, Liu recalled his encounter with Ling-ch'e and another famous poet-monk Chiao-jan:

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6 The state attitude towards Buddhism and Taoism during the T'ang was complex in nature. Generally speaking, the position of these two religions depend very much on the personal interest of each individual emperor. For a discussion of the oscillating nature of the T'ang court's policies towards Buddhism and Taoism, see Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*.

7 See chapter one of this study.

8 According to Yen Keng-wang, the region in which the majority of famous Buddhist monks were active was clearly shifted from the north to the south after the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion. The demarcation line which Yen uses to divide the T'ang into two periods is the Ta-li reign (766-779). Yen also points out that in the early period, it was the Fa-hsiang school that was most representative of Buddhism in China, while in the later period, it was the Ch'an school that took precedence over the other schools. Statistically speaking, coastal cities, like Hang-chou and Su-chou, contained a relatively high number of famous monks. See Yen's article, "T'ang-tai fo-chih ti-li fen-pu" in *Min-chu ping-lun*, vol. 4 (1953), pp. 680-682. Using the An Lu-shan rebellion as a demarcation line, Hsin Te-yung provides a more detailed statistical analysis of the geographical distribution of famous monks active in the T'ang dynasty and also the distribution of their hometowns. See his "T'ang kao-seng chi-kuan chi chu-hsi-ti feng-pu" in Shih Nien-hai ed. *T'ang-shih lun-ts'ung*, vol. 4, Sian: San-Ch'in chu-pan-she, 1988, pp. 287-306. Giving us more information, Hsin's article further supports Yen's conclusion of the shift of Buddhist centers from north to south in the T'ang dynasty. For a study of the geographical distribution of Ch'an Buddhist monks in the T'ang, see Li Chieh-hua, "T'ang-Sung Ch'an-tsung chih ti-li fen-pu" in *Hsin-ya hsüeh-pao*, vol. 13 (October 1979), pp. 211-362.
Previously, the supreme one (Ling-ch'e) was in Wu-hsing (in modern Che-chiang), residing in the mount Ho, with Chou-kung (Chiao-jan) as his companion. At that time, with my hair in bangs (mao), I carried brushes and an ink stone to accompany them in their chanting [of poetry]. They both said that I was a promising young man...⁹

Liu's description of his hair style as mao, that is, hair in a fringe or bangs, suggests that he was young when he met the monks. This tells us that Liu's contact with Buddhism began at a rather young age, and also provides us with hints as to the nature of Liu's early association with Buddhism. In the whole of Liu's preface, not a single word can be found on Ling-ch'e's or Chiao-jan's Buddhist sentiments; rather, Liu assesses their poetic achievement.¹⁰ This reflects that a basic feature of Liu's early association with Buddhism can be characterized by his interest in the literary activities of Buddhist figures. Because of the lack of textual evidence, we have no information pertaining to Liu's childhood interest in the doctrinal aspect of this religion. However, the above passage may suggest a possibility that some members of Liu's family might be devout patrons of Buddhism. If not, it is quite difficult to explain why the young Liu Yü-hsi could study with these two famous poet-monks.

From the way in which Liu describes himself in the passage above, there is no doubt that he was probably in his early teens when he traveled to Mount Ho.¹¹ Mount Ho, located in the Wu-hsing prefecture in Che-chiang province, is not far from Su-chou, and it is quite possible for us to conjecture here that Liu Yü-hsi actually received part of his education, not just instruction in poetry, from monks

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⁹LYHC, p. 239.
¹¹Pien Hsiao-hsüan has tentatively dated this event as happening when Liu was ten. See his Nien-p'u, p. 9.
like Chiao-jan and Ling-ch'e.\textsuperscript{12} This education characterizes Liu's early contact with Buddhism. While he might not have been strongly attracted to the doctrinal aspect of Buddhism at this stage, Liu would have certainly been thoroughly exposed to the teachings of Buddhism in such an environment.

There is ample evidence pointing to the fact that Liu's contact with Buddhist figures increased after he was banished from the capital after 805. A major reason for this was the setback he had suffered in his political ambition. Liu once attempted to deny that his interest in Buddhism arose totally from his political decline in fortune:

...Those who do not understand me, will ridicule me, saying it is only after [encountering] difficulties that I became reliant on Buddhism. They said that there are two [different] Ways [for me]. [One's] enlightenment does not depend on others but on one's mind only. The consummation of enlightenment is like that of the mute who enjoys a sacrificial feast. Certainly he knows of the taste but is unable to describe it in words so that it can be heard by [other] ears. The mouth and the ears are only inches

\textsuperscript{12}We know very little detail about Liu's early education. Modern scholarship has shown beyond doubt that Buddhist and Taoist temples, particularly after the An Lu-shan rebellion, provided educational facilities to many. Detailed studies of this issue are those of Yen Keng-wang, "T'ang-jen hsi-yeh shan-lin ssu-yüan chih feng-shan" in his Tangshih yen-chiu lun-ts'ung, pp. 367-424. Hong Kong: Hsin-ya yen-chiu-so, 1969. and Kao Ming-shih, "T'ang-tai ssu-hsüeh ti fa-chan" in Wen-shih-che hsüeh-pao, vol. 20 (June 1971), pp. 219-289. Yen's article notes that Li Tuan (d. 785?), one of the Ten Tallents of the Ta-Li reign resided in Lu Shan when young, and studied with Chiao-jan. If this is really the case, then it is not impossible that, given the fame of Chiao-jan and the proximity of mount Ho, Liu Yü-hsi would have travelled there to study under this famous poet-monk. See p. 391 of Yen's article. In Kao's article, the author contends that both Liu Tsung-yüan and Liu Yü-hsi were students of Wei Chih-i when they were young. I am skeptical of Kao's view, because it is based on a tomb inscription written by Tu Mu (803-852) for Niu Seng-ju (779-847). According to this inscription, the two Lius were said to be meng-hsia of Wei. This term, meng-hsia, can be understood as disciple. However, it was used very loosely by scholar-officials in medieval China to express their relationship with their protégé. Wei Chih-i was indeed the mentor of the two Lius. It is therefore rather risky to conclude that the two Lius actually studied under Wei. For Kao's statement, see his article, p. 231. For the tomb inscription by Tu Mu, see his Fan-ch'uan wen-chi (Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1978), p. 114.
apart, and yet it is not possible to make them (ears) hear. That the others are unable to understand me is natural.\textsuperscript{13}

A number of points can be discerned in this passage regarding Liu's views on Buddhism in general. First, while ostensibly Liu is stating that his interest in Buddhism has nothing to do with his political setbacks, this passage, nonetheless, suggests the possibility that his contemporaries were aware of an increase in his interest in Buddhism after his banishment from the capital in 805.\textsuperscript{14} Second, the process to enlightenment is a personal one, and it does not require assistance from others. Third, it seems that Liu is also denying that he adheres to two different Ways: the Buddhist Way, and, probably, the Confucian Way. If the third point is valid, then the validity of the second point seems to be questionable, for, if Liu Yu-hsi really thinks that there is no difference between the Buddhist and the Confucian Way, that it would be difficult to see how he reconciles differences between the purely personal endeavor of oneself in achieving enlightenment, as he has characterized in this passage, on the one hand, and the assertion of oneself in public affairs in order to fulfill the Confucian goal on the other. An answer to this question can probably reveal the true nature of Liu's Buddhist sentiments.

For the first point, we can see that after Liu had been exiled to Lang-chou for about nine years, he expressed his frustration at being banished for so long to such a remote place, depicting clearly that his appreciation of Buddhism had much to do with his frustration:

I worked for examinations and officialdom for twenty years; from them I received one hundred worries, but not a single gain. After this, I understand that what the world calls the Way is nothing but dangerous

\textsuperscript{13}LYHC, p. 389.
\textsuperscript{14}For a partial listing of Liu's association with Buddhist monks, particularly in Lang-chou, see Nien-p'iu, p. 66.
roads, and that only the teaching of living in the [mundane] world can best satisfy one's mind. Thus, on my mat and beside my ink-slab, there are many books with [Sanskrit] horizontal lines and [Buddhist] four-line hymns; those people whom I am always prepared to welcome are the companions of priests and monks.15

Hence, it is obvious that Liu's appreciation of Buddhism, at this stage of his life, is closely related to the setbacks in his political career. Furthermore, this passage also points to the fact that he frequently associated himself with Buddhist monks.16 However, from the poems that Liu sent to some of these Buddhist monks, we can see the reason monks traveled to visit Liu was because they were interested in obtaining poems from Liu, who had achieved great fame as a poet.17 Thus, Liu's self-characterization as a devout Buddhist may have been merely a catalyst to stimulate more Buddhist clergymen to come knocking at his door.

While the above discussion clearly suggests that Liu's increased contact with Buddhism was very much a result of his political downfall after 805, we cannot maintain that Liu's affiliation with Buddhism was not genuine, particularly in terms of his appreciation of Buddhist tenets. As early as the Sung dynasty, the famed Neo-Confucian thinker Chu Hsi (1130-1200) was already aware that a

15LYHC, p. 392. Translation is taken from Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, p. 186, with minor changes. In his "Che chiu-nien fu" ("Rhapsody on being banished for nine years"), a work probably written in the same year, Liu Yü-hsi also depicted clearly his frustration after being banished in Lang-chou for nine years. For this rhapsody, see LYHC, p. 13.
16In his account of his contact with the monk Yüan-kao, Liu said that this monk, "upon hearing that [Liu] patronized Buddhism to the point of being sycophantic, [Yüan-kao] promptly came to follow [Liu]." See LYHC, p. 392. It is interesting to note in this passage that Liu used the rather negative adjective "sycophantic" ("ning") to describe his attitude toward Buddhism. This may further demonstrate Liu's overall acceptance of this religion.
17In fact, many of them were themselves poet-monks. We also see that some of the monks who visited Liu were praised by Liu as being skillful in the art of chess-playing. In other instances, Liu expressed his admiration of some of the wandering monks who could so freely travel in the world. See Hsiao Tuan-feng, "Lun Liu Yü-hsi shih-chung-ti fo-chiao lo-yin" (in Kuei-chou wen-shih ts'ung-kan, 1986, no. 3. pp. 125-130), p. 127.
whole chapter (chüan) in Liu's collected works is devoted to poems sent to Buddhist monks. This is a unique act of Liu if the present editions of Liu's collected works are faithful to the T'ang edition. In addition, a whole chapter in Liu's collected works is devoted to tomb inscriptions for Buddhist monks and records related to Buddhist matters. Furthermore, there are also poems and prose pieces throughout his oeuvre which reflect his Buddhist sentiments. These writings assist us in demonstrating the nature of Liu Yü-hsi's Buddhism.

Among Liu Yü-hsi's friends, Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü had diametrically opposed attitudes towards Buddhism. Han Yü is, of course, well known for his anti-Buddhist sentiments. Liu Tsung-yüan's affinity for Buddhism is also well known. However, Liu Tsung-yüan's attitude towards Buddhism was not completely uncritical. In particular, he held a very negative view of Ch'an Buddhist

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19As we have already discussed in chapter one, Liu wrote a preface to an edition of collected works of his known as Liu-shih chi-lüeh. See LYHC, pp. 250-251. In this preface we know that Liu personally selected from his writings, forty chapters in total, material to form the collection in ten chapters. This suggests that there was indeed a forty chapter version of Liu's collected works during Liu's time, and this collection was very likely compiled by Liu himself. Chapter twenty-nine of the Sung edition of Liu Pin-k'o wen-chi contains twenty-four poems that were sent to Buddhist monks. These poems constitute chapter seven of the Sung edition of Liu Meng-te wen-chi. Both of these two chapters are not in the supplement. It is possible, then, that this chapter of twenty-four poems was originally belonged to the forty chapter version, and, thus, was compiled by Liu Yü-hsi himself.

20See LYHC, pp. 51-62.

21For some discussions on the anti-Buddhist sentiments of Han Yü, see Ch'en Yin-k'o, "Lun Han Yü" in CYKWC 1, pp. 285-297; Sun Ch'ang-wu, Tang-tai wen-hsüeh yü fo-chiao, pp. 24-55; and Ch'en Teng-yüan, Kuo-shih chiu-wen (3 vols. Peking: San-lien shu-chü, 1958), vol. 2, pp. 209-214.
teachings. Interestingly, it seems that Ch'an philosophy had significant impact on Liu Yü-hsi's thought. Before we begin our discussion of this aspect of Liu's Buddhist sentiments, however, we should first examine how Liu viewed Buddhism as a whole.

In 818, when the vinaya master Chih-yen passed away, his disciples requested Liu to write a tomb inscription for him. The inscription begins in this way:

In China (chiu-chou), the dharma of the Buddha follows its location [in order to carry out its] transformation [of the people]. People of the central plains of China (chung-hsia) are confused by glory. There is nothing more suitable than mysterious enlightenment for overcoming [the sense] of prosperity. Hence, those who talk about the tranquility of dhyâna honour Mount Sung. People in the North are audacious and violent. There is nothing more suitable in the pacification of violence than the revelation [of the Bodhisattvas]. Hence those who talk about the supernormal honour the Mount Ch'ing-liang. People in the South are agile and emotional. To suppress emotions, there is nothing better than decorum. Hence those talk about the vinaya pitaka (lü-tsang) venerate the Mount Heng [in modern Hunan]...

In this passage, Liu Yü-hsi depicts some of the popular Buddhist sects demographically. His conception of the popularity of the these Buddhist sects is related to their ability to remedy the weaknesses of people's character. This seems very simplistic. Nonetheless, this passage helps us to probe the question of how Liu viewed some of the Buddhist tenets that prevailed in China at the time.

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22For a discussion of Liu Tsung-yüan's Buddhist sentiments, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, pp. 172-180.
23Mount Sung is in Honan province, near the eastern capital of Tang, Loyang. Here it is a reference to the dyâna of Bodhidharma, the first Patricarch in China of the Ch'an school, because he resided in this place.
24Mount Ch'ing-liang is Mount Wu-t'ai in Shan-hsi province. According to the Hua-yen sutra, this is the place where various bodhisattvas resided.
25LYHC, pp. 53-54.
Perhaps the answer is already provided by Liu himself, in the very first sentence of this inscription, "the dharma of the Buddha follows its location [in order to carry out its] transformation [of the people]." Thus, Liu's overall evaluation of Buddhism does not imply the superiority of a particular Buddhist sect over the others. He seems to suggest that each of these sects have their specific features so that they can fulfill the purpose of transforming the people more properly in some specific environments. It is the prevailing custom that determines which particular Buddhist teaching is more suitable in transforming the people. Thus the idea of "flexibility" seems to play an important role in Liu's conception of the teachings of various Buddhist sects, and Liu's acceptance of Buddhism as a whole is quite positive. Certainly when compared to the attitude of his close friend, Liu Tsung-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi's was much less critical.26

Liu Yü-hsi had once stated explicitly that a major feature of Buddhism is to "provide salvation for the various sufferings."27 Thus, in order to fulfill such a goal of universal salvation, Buddhist religion should also participate in the worldly affairs. Indeed, a basic feature of Mahayana Buddhism is its concern with worldly affairs. Unlike Hinayana Buddhism, which is concerned with the salvation of the individual self, Mahayana Buddhism, with its conception of the bodhisattva, emphasizes the idea of universal salvation.28

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26For a discussion of Liu Tsung-yüan's criticism of the Ch'an school, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, pp. 176-178. Sun Ch'ang-wu also notes Liu's criticism of the Ch'an school, but, based on the inscription written for Hui-neng, he seems to construe also that Liu appreciated the theory of "mind" and "nature" of the same school. See his Liu Tsung-yüan chuan-lun (Peking: Jen-min wen-hsūeh, 1982), pp. 298-300.

27LYHC, p. 57.

In an allegorical prose work, Liu illustrates clearly this feature of Mahayana Buddhism. Entitled "Chiu-chen chih" ("A record of the event of saving the drowning"), this work tells the story of how a Buddhist monk, in his attempt to save people and animals from drowning in a flooded region, became involved in a debate with his assistants whether or not they should save a tiger. Upon hearing the monk's instruction not to save the tiger from the water, his assistants protested. They put forward the idea that Buddhist teachings esteem highly the concept of emptiness, and from emptiness arises universality. From universality, in turn, arises great mercy. Hence, they argued, they should save all forms of life, and should not consider whether they were good or bad in nature. The monk refuted this interpretation of Buddhist teaching and its implication, and argued that Buddhist teachings do distinguish the good from the bad. He concluded that if they saved the tiger from the water, more people would be harmed as a consequence. Upon hearing the monk's argument, Liu agreed with the monk, and he commented:

I have heard that it is not a good omen when a good man is not saved from difficulty. And when a wicked one is in authority, it is [also] not a good omen if he is not removed. The words of the monk show great foresight, and hence I recorded this event.  

Clearly, this final statement by Liu shows rather explicitly the allegorical theme of the whole story. However, the whole story depicts a Buddhist monk who led others in an act to save people from a flooded region. This shows an example of the Buddhist concern of worldly affairs. While Liu's interpretation of the concept "universal salvation" seems to be confined within the realm of Man, he

29LYHC, pp. 256-257.
30For a brief discussion of the dating and the allegorical nature of this work, see Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 553.
probably did it in a way that was congruent with his own understanding of the religion.

With his general acceptance of Buddhism, and with his frequent contacts with anti-Buddhist figures like Han Yü, it is quite likely that Liu Yü-hsi would have been engaged in numerous debates to defend Buddhism. There is, however, no place in Liu's oeuvre where he explicitly debates against the anti-Buddhist polemics. The most famous anti-Buddhist figure in Liu's times was Han Yü, who displayed "typical" anti-Buddhist polemics in the essay "Yüan Tao" ("The Essentials of the Way") and the memorial "Lun fo-ku piao" ("A memorial on the Buddha's finger bone"). His attack on Buddhism is basically on the negative economic, social, and political impact that this religion had upon the state. In particular, he attacked Buddhist monks who, in taking the tonsure, obviously violated the basic ethical principle of Confucianism: filial piety. Perhaps, it was because Han did not criticize Liu Yü-hsi's affinity to Buddhism that Liu never actively attempted to refute Han's anti-Buddhist polemics.

However, there is evidence that Liu was aware of the attack upon the unfilial practices of Buddhist clergy expressed by Han Yü and others. In the preface to a poem with the purpose of sending off a monk called Yüan-kao to the South, Liu writes that Yüan-kao tells the reason why he left home life and became a Buddhist monk:

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31Han's criticism of Buddhism is said here to be "typical" because the critiques he uses are basically a repetition of some of the Confucian criticism of Buddhism made by earlier figures. See Stanley Weinstein, Buddhism under the T'ang, pp. 103-105.
32See HCLWC, pp. 7-11, 354-358.
33This conjecture is based on the fact that Liu Yü-shi's close friend, Liu Tsung-yüan, had taken great pains to rebut Han Yü's criticism of his affinity with Buddhism. For a discussion of this issue, see Chen Jo-shui, Liu Tsung-yüan, pp. 178-179.
34We are not sure which Buddhist school(s) this monk belonged to. However, according to the preface, he was said to be well-trained in both vinaya and dhyana.
When I was young I lost my parents. I put aside my childhood mind to seek for the superior vehicle (shang-sheng). [My search for the superior vehicle] has accumulated for more than forty years. [I am] approach an old-age and have not relaxed. I begin to grieve over [the fact that] the spring of Chün is cold. Now I am sad that the tomb in Fang has not been moved.

...Although myriad natures all belong to the Buddha, all [creatures] are seeds of Buddhahood, just like the rivers that flow into the ocean, no longer keep their names. However, for those who are equipped with Buddha wisdom, how could they abandon the hundred deeds [pai-hsing]?

Thus, the death of his parent when Yüan-kao was still in his childhood contributed to his leaving home life and becoming a Buddhist monk. In his answer he used a number of allusions that emphasize the virtue of filial piety. This clearly reflects the fact that Yüan-kao's melancholy as expressed in the passage is directly caused by his inability to fulfil his duty to be a filial son. Thus, after listening to Yüan-kao's speech, Liu was emotionally moved. It is obvious that the "hundred deeds" to which Yüan-kao refers must include filial piety, as there is a saying that "filial piety comes first in the list of the hundred deeds."

Later, we find that Yüan-kao traveled to Yung-chou and presented Liu Yü-hsi's poem, together with the preface, as a visiting gift to Liu Tsung-yüan. In

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35Shang-sheng refers to Mahayana Buddhism.
36The spring of Chün" is an allusion taken from the poem "Kai feng" in The Book of Poetry. It praises the seven filial sons who were capable of mitigating their mother's intention to remarry. For this poem see Mao-Shih cheng-i in Shih-san-ching chu-shu, pp. 301-302.
37This allusion is taken from the chapter "T'an-kung" in the Book of Rites. It tells the story that when Confucius' mother died, he buried her together with his father, who had passed away earlier and was buried in a place called Fang. Confucius built a burial-mound with a height of four ch’ih (a chinese foot). Because of heavy rain, however, the burial-mound was damaged. However, because of the rites of Chou, Confucius should not repair the damaged burial-mound. See Sun Hsi-tan, Li-chi chi-chieh (3 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1989), pp. 168-169.
38LYHC, p. 392.
39The idea that filial piety comes first in the list of the hundred deeds can be found in a number of places. For one example, see Pan Ku et al., Pai-fu-tung (Ts'ung-shu chi-cheng ch'u-pien edition. Taipei: Commercial Press, 1936), p. 159, line 4.
reading the preface, Liu must have been impressed by Yüan-kao's filial devotion, since he greatly praised this virtue of Yüan-kao in a preface to a poem he gave to this monk. In this preface, Liu not only praised Yüan-kao's filialness, but also upheld Liu Yü-hsi's trustworthiness in his remarks regarding Yüan-kao's virtue. Liu Tsung-yüan wrote the following words concerning Liu Yü-hsi's praise of Yüan-kao:

Among the writings of Buddhism there is the sutra of the Ta-pao-en in ten chapters (chüan). [Each chapter] expounds that it is through filial piety that one can reach the epitome of one's [Buddhist] practice. Those who are licentious and arrogant, although they practice the way [of Buddhism], like to go against its writings. [But as to] master Yüan-kao, I can see that he does not go against [its teachings]. In addition, he is in accord with Confucianism...[When] he came to visit me, I observed his personality. It reflects clearly Liu [Yü-hsi]'s wisdom and trustworthiness. Thus, repeatedly, [I] talk about this with him, and mention this matter.

In this passage, in praising Yüan-kao's filial virtue, Liu Tsung-yüan asserts that Buddhism and Confucianism are not in conflict, even in respect to ethical issues. Furthermore, Liu Tsung-yüan's repeated praise of Liu Yü-hsi's trustworthiness in this work suggests strongly the possibility that Liu Yü-hsi was also aware that the virtue of filial piety was used as a argument by some in an attempt to attack Buddhism. Hence, in responding to the attacks that Buddhist tradition violates the Confucian ethical principle of filial piety, some Buddhist figures and those, like Liu Tsung-yüan, who accepted certain Buddhist elements in their thought, attempted to argue that Buddhist and Confucianism (or even Taoism) were not in conflict.

41LTYC, pp. 678-679.
42Among the poems that Liu sent to Buddhist monks, we find one that was addressed to the famous Kuei-feng Tsung-mi (780-841), who was honored as the Fifth Patriarch in
Compared Liu Tsung-yüan's forceful assertion that Buddhist teachings, at their core, do not violate the ethical principles of Confucianism, Liu Yü-hsi had little to say. One possible reason, as we have already mentioned earlier, is that there was simply no one who brought up this issue and challenged Liu personally. Another possible reason, we may speculate here, is that the issue of ethical conflict between Confucianism and Buddhism simply does not pose a problem in Liu Yü-hsi's thought. To prove such a speculation, we are led to the following question: What particular elements of the Buddhist religion are found in Liu Yü-hsi's thought, and how are they displayed in his works?

Both the Hua-yen school and the Ho-tse line of the Southern Ch'an. Tsung-mi, who was trained originally in the Confucian tradition of scholarship, had on a number of occasions attempted to link Confucianism and Buddhism. With regard to the issue of filial piety, we find that Tsung-mi begins his commentary on the Yü-lan-p'en-ching in the following way: "That which began during the primordial chaos and now saturates heaven and earth, unites man and deity, connects the high and the low, and is revered alike by the Confucians and the Buddhists, is none other than filial piety," as translated in Kenneth Ch'en, Chinese transformation of Buddhism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 29. In his preface to the "Hua-yen yüan-jen-lun," Tsung-mi attempted to equate Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism in terms of their common goal of bringing well being to the world, although Tsung-mi does suggest that Buddhism is superior to the other two teachings. For this preface, see Chung-kuo fo-chiao ssu-hsiang tsu-liao hsüan-pien, vol. 2:2, pp. 386-387. Peking: Chung-hua Shu-chü, 1984. For a sound study of Tsung-mi's thought, see Peter N. Gregory, Tsung-mi and the sinification of Buddhism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991). Gregory asserts that it was through Po Chü-i that Liu Yü-hsi came to know Tsung-mi. He also dates Liu's poem to Tsung-mi as written in the early part of 833. See ibid., pp. 79-80. For this poem, see LYHC, p. 404. Jan Yün-hua dates this poem in 831. See his Tsung-mi (Taipei: Tung-ta tu-shu, 1988), p. 32. Because of a lack of information, we are not able to accurately pinpoint when Liu and Tsung-mi came to know each other. For more discussions of Buddhist attempts to adjust teachings to Chinese ethical practices and beliefs, see chapter two of Kenneth Ch'en's book. The full name of the Yü-lan-p'en-ching is Fo-shuo Yü-lan-p'en-ching. It can be found in T 16, no. 685.

We can recall from the previous chapter that Liu's concern with ethical issues was far from enthusiastic. While he acknowledged the importance of these norms and values, he simply took them for granted.
In answering the above question, we will first attempt to show that Liu's affinity with Ch'an Buddhism is unequivocal, and then to show that this affinity results in an obvious impact of Ch'an philosophy on Liu's world view and intellectual outlook. After this discussion, we will make use of an example to show the selective nature of Liu in his preference for certain Buddhist doctrines.

A year after Liu wrote the inscription for Chih-yen, the monk Tao-un traveled from Ts'ao-hsi (in modern Kuang-tung) to request Liu to write a second tomb inscription for the Sixth Patricarch of the Ch'an school, Hui-neng (638-713). It may not be safe for us to use this inscription alone as an indication of Liu's affinity towards Ch'an Buddhism. However, soon after he wrote this inscription, Liu wrote another stone inscription dwelling on the reason why the cassock of the first Patricarch of the Ch'an school, Bodhidharma, which had been passed down to each of the successive patriarchs, was no longer passed on after Hui-neng. In it, he wrote:

44See Ch'en Yü-chi, "Lun Liu Yü-hsi chi-ch'i wen-hsüeh cheng-chiu," p. 217. By Liu's time, Ch'an Buddhism, particularly the Southern Ch'an, had ascended a dominating position among other Buddhist schools. While it is quite obvious that there are Ch'an elements in Liu's thought, it is not safe to assume that he adhered necessarily to the Southern Ch'an only. For a study of Northern Ch'an Buddhism, see John R. McRae, The Northern school and the formation of early Ch'an Buddhism. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.

45The first tomb inscription was written by Liu's friend, Liu Tsung-yüan, in 816. See LTYC, pp. 149-151. Hui-neng was one of the most famous figures in the history of Chinese Buddhism. However, there are numerous controversial issues concerning his life and his supposed authorship of the Platform Sutra of the Six Patricarch. For the biography of Hui-neng in the sutra, see T 48, (no. 2007), pp. 337-338. For a translation, see Philip Yampolsky, The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patricarch (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 125-134.

46In the case of Liu Tsung-yüan, for example, the tomb inscription that he wrote for Hui-neng might mislead one to believe that his association with Ch'an was friendly in nature.
When Confucius was alive, he did not even own a [square] li of land. After he passed away, his shoes survived thousands of years.\textsuperscript{47} In the past, there was the Liang [dynasty]. [The time] was like that of a mad elephant. Bodhidharma [wanted] to save the world, and he came as the King of the physicians. Because words cannot cure [people's problems], it [must] rely on substance then the [problems] can be corrected...The common people do not understand Buddhism, [they consider the one who] possesses the cassock as honourable. The cassock that can deteriorate, is not where the Way is. People believe in the Way because of it (cassock), thus, it is considered valuable. When the Sixth Patricarch had not made himself known [to the world], he came from a humble origin. When he returned to the desolate land, [he tried to] enlighten the stupid people. Without a token of trust, how would the people come [to listen to him]? This is to open a door of convenience. It does not end with the passing on of the cassock...When its (cassock's) function has already been set forth, is it not the same as a straw dog? \textsuperscript{48}

Since this inscription was written of Liu Yü-hsi's own will, not at the request of any person, it may reflect Liu Yü-hsi's real opinion towards its subject matter. Here Liu's notion that Bodhidharma was a savior of the world shows clearly that Liu was an admirer of Ch'an Buddhism. In addition, Hui-neng's discontinuing of the tradition of passing on the cassock, as Liu suggests in the passage, is because the Way of Buddhism had already spread all over the world. Thus, the function of the cassock as a token of trust has diminished, and there is no need to pass it to the next patriarch. This, again, reflects Liu Yü-hsi's veneration of Hui-neng, and, probably, the Ch'an sect. We should now explore the nature of Liu's Ch'an sentiments, and how they are manifested in his intellectual outlook.

\textsuperscript{47}According to the "\textit{Wu-hsing chih}" in \textit{Chin shu}, on the fifth year of the Yüan-kang reign (291-299), Confucius' wooden shoes were destroyed because of fire. See Fang Hsüan-ling et al., \textit{Chin shu} (10 vols. Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1974) 27:805. Ch'ü T'ui-yüan quotes Tao Ku's \textit{Ch'ing-i lu} that during the reign of Hsüan-tsung (847-859), shoes, modeled on Confucius' wooden shoes, were sent to the court. Thus, the pattern of Confucius's shoes still exists at Liu's time. See Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, \textit{Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng}, p. 110.

\textsuperscript{48}LYHC, pp. 52-53.
By the time of the mid-eighth century, Ch'an, particularly the Southern Ch'an, had ascended to the dominant position in T'ang Buddhism. The ascendency of the Southern Ch'an was probably a by-product of the An Lu-shan rebellion. No only did it find an audience in the upper echelons of T'ang society, but it also found itself popular among commoners. By the early ninth century, after the works of monks Ma-tsu Tao-i (709-788) and his disciple Pai-chang Huai-hai (720-841) had been produced, the teachings of Southern Ch'an also emphasized personal, this-worldly endeavor. This feature would have been attractive to intellectuals like Liu Yü-hsi, who were immensely influenced by the this-worldly philosophy of Confucianism. Thus, Liu's acceptance of certain Ch'an teachings would pose no major conflict with his socio-political and spiritual concerns.

Hence we see, in the tomb inscription written for the Ch'an master Shen-kuang, a lucid characterization of Confucianism and Buddhism:

Heaven gives birth to humans but is unable to regulate their emotion and desires. The ruler governs his subjects but is unable to get rid of their power and authority with principle. So there is that which takes advantage of an opening of heavenly deeds to supplement its transformation, and to relieve the ruler's post in order to transform the people. The uncrowned

49Stanley Weinstein has pointed out that "the most significant feature of Buddhism of the post-An Lu-shan era was its 'popular' character." See his Buddhism under the T'ang, p. 62. This statement also refers to other Buddhist schools like the Vinaya, Fa-hsiang and the Hua-yen school's emphasis on scriptural study that reduced their 'popularity' among the commoners, who were mostly illiterate. Unlike these schools, Ch'an Buddhism stressed that in order to achieve enlightenment, there was no need to pay attention to scriptural study or strict observance of the vinaya. In particular, the Southern Ch'an school, since the time of Hui-neng, stressed that enlightenment could be achieved by sudden awareness, as opposed to the gradual approach of the Northern Ch'an school. This feature of the teachings of the Southern Ch'an proved to be attractive to the masses. For an insightful study of the history of Ch'an Buddhism, see In-shun, Chung-kuo Ch'an-tsun-shih (Shanghai: Shanghai shu-tien, 1992).

king (Confucius, su-wang) established the teaching of the middle way, to manifest the great centrality; and the Buddhist teaching emerges in the west, its practice to achieve the correct enlightenment. How true is this! When the Ch'ien and the Kun are properly established in their positions [of things], the Ways of the sages are carried out intermixedly in them. It is as in the different kinds of ch'i of water and fire; their forming tastes are with the same inner power. Wheels and shafts are of different shape, yet in reaching great distances, their functions are the same. Hence, Confucianism governs the living beings with the Middle Way, and rarely talks about nature and fate. Thus, when the world is on the decline, it gradually ceases flourishing. Buddhism, with great mercy, [attempts to] provide salvation for the [people's] suffering, and widely reveals [the doctrine of] casuality and karma. Thus, when the world is becoming evil, it is more venerated.

Overtly, Liu's conception of the importance of Buddhism is one that is characterized by the this-worldly nature of Buddhist teachings. He considers Buddhism and Confucianism to function in a complementary manner. The term "sage" that Liu uses in the above passage does not refer only to Confucian sages. It also refers those who belonged to the Buddhist tradition. However, Liu Yü-hsi also points out the basic difference between Buddhism and Confucianism. Simply put, the goal of Confucianism is to assist the ruler to govern the world properly with the Middle Way. Thus Confucians seldom talk about the concepts of nature and fate because they are more concerned with problems related to our individual existence rather than those concerning the well-being of the whole society. In this sense, Buddhism plays a complementary or supplementary role. It deals with the questions that concern one's individual existence. It helps to provide salvation to

52LYHC, pp. 56-57.
53 It seems to me that the term "nature" (hsing) should not be interpreted simply as human nature because Confucian thinkers do talk about human nature. This term, I think, should rather be understood in a Buddhist context. Thus, we may consider the term "hsing" as "tzu-hsing" (self-nature).
every individual from his or her sufferings with its doctrines such as causality and *karma*. Despite the difference in their approach, the final goals of this two ideologies, according to Liu, are the same: to bring well-being to the people. This is why Liu conceives of Buddhism as a supplement to Confucianism. Of course, it is quite obvious that the Confucian definition of the term "well-being" differs quite substantially from that of the Buddhists. Nonetheless, in Liu Yü-hsi's mind, Buddhism does carry a socio-political function, and this function is in tune with his Confucian concerns.

Buddhism, as a religion, stresses individual spiritual concerns. A major goal of Buddhism is individual salvation through enlightenment. Hence, it plays an important role in the guidance of one's inner life. However, different Buddhist sects emphasize different approaches to enlightenment. One aspect in which Ch'an Buddhism differs from other Buddhist schools is in its strong emphasis on the ability of the individual in his or her own salvation. Hence, Ch'an venerates the value of Man.54 This salient feature of Ch'an Buddhism is quite clearly displayed in the Platform Sutra:

...Therefore, although the Buddhas of the three worlds and all the twelve divisions of the canon are from the beginning within the nature of man, if he cannot gain awakening with his own nature, he must obtain a good teacher to show him how to see into his own self-nature. But if you awaken by yourself, do not rely on teachers outside. If you try to seek a teacher outside and hope to obtain deliverance, you will find it impossible. If you have recognized the good teacher within your own mind, you have already obtained deliverance.55

One is therefore innately equipped with all that one needs for salvation. Although Ch'an Buddhism does not totally reject the need to obtain a good teacher to provide guidance to enlightenment, it does consider such an approach suitable

for those who are of shallow spiritual capacity. Thus, it is not suprising to see in this sutra Hui-neng ridiculing the teachings of Pure Land Buddhism. When Wei Ch'ü, the prefect of Shao-chou (in Kuang-tung), inquires whether one can really be reborn in the Pure Land if one follows the teachings of this sect, that is, by invoking the name of the Buddha Amitabha, Hui-neng answers in the following manner:

...At Sravasti the World-honored One preached of the Western Land in order to convert people, and it is clearly stated in the sutra, '[The Western Land] is not far.' It was only for the sake of people of inferior capacity that the Buddha spoke of distance; to speak of nearness is only for those of superior attainments. Although in man there are naturally two types, in the Dharma there is no inequality...

Prefect, people of the East (China), just by making the mind pure are without crime; people of the West (The Pure Land of the West), if their minds are not pure, are guilty of a crime...

...Since Buddha is made by your own nature, do not look for him outside you body.

Here, Hui-neng acknowledges that there are two kinds of person in the world. One is superior to the other in terms of attainment. However, this does not necessarily imply that Ch'an is only for those who are of superior attainment. In fact, as we have seen in the previous passage quoted from the sutra, those who are of inferior capacity need the guidance of good teachers, and these good teachers are, in turn, people of superior capacity who can obtain their own enlightenment through the practice of Ch'an teachings. Thus, in this way, Ch'an Buddhism is still for all to follow.

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56Philip Yampolsky, The Platform sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, p. 156.
58Philip Yampolsky, The Platform sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, p. 158.
The central Ch'an teaching that everyone is capable of individual salvation without any assistance from others can be seen in Liu Yü-hsi's poem "Ou Tso" ("Poem written by chance"):

[As for] the ten thousand chüan of books that pile up on the bed,
[Only] the learned ones understand their real meaning.
[Along] the ten thousand li of water of the Yangtze river,
The warrior crosses at a strategic spot.
To nurture onself, one does not solely depend on medicine;
To apprehend Buddhism, one does not rely on others.
Why debate the value of the stone from the Munt Yen?
When the time is reached, then it will be [considered] precious.59

To understand the real meanings of books, and to be able to pinpoint strategic locations along the Yangtze river, both the scholar and the warrior rely on their own judgement. It is through learning that they can achieve the above mentioned abilities. However, finally, when the scholar is asked about the true meaning of books, or when the warrior has to look for a strategic spot on the Yangtze river, they cannot rely on others. No one can tell the scholar what the real meaning of the books that pile up on the bed are; he must seek it himself. Much the same can be said of the warrior. While Liu discusses worldly affairs at the beginning of the poem, these two first lines at the same time, as the later lines of the poem retrospectively suggest, convey a message that runs parallel to the Ch'an teaching that an individual is responsible for his or her own salvation.

The message is then explicated in the next two lines,60 showing an apprehension of the way in which one can achieve salvation at an individual level. As we have noted, Liu had a life-long interest in medicine, and was constantly

59LYHC, p. 259. A similar statement is also found in the preface of a poem to monk Ch'üan-su. See ibid., p. 389.
60Tu Sung-po considers Liu's poem to be one that employs Ch'an sentiments. For his brief discussion of the poem, see Tu Sung-po, Ch'an-hsüeh yü T'ang-Sung shih-hsüeh (Taipei: Li-ming wen-hua shih-yeh, 1976), pp. 303-304.
aware of his weak constitution. Thus, in a number of places, when he writes about nuturing oneself, he also refers to the nourishment of the body. However, in this poem, he boldly pronounces that in order "to nuture oneself, one does not solely rely on medicine." With this pronouncement, the semantic content of the line shifts from physicality to the dimension of spirituality. And when Liu finally exclaims that in order to "apprehend Buddhism, one does not rely on others," he makes it clear that the kind of spiritual realm that he has in mind is none other than that of Buddhism. However, this appreciation of the realm of the spirit is soon replaced once again by concerns regarding worldly existence. In the last two lines of the poem, Liu makes a final statement regarding his philosophical/spiritual apprehension of life. This is expressed in terms of the importance of the concept of shih (opportunity/situation), a concept, as we have already seen in the previous chapter, provided Liu Yü-hsi with a sense of hope and confidence.

The stone of Mount Yen (Yen-shih) is an allusion taken from the biography of Yin Shao in the Hou Han Shu. In it, a stupid man from the state of Sung discovered a colored stone from Mount Yen. Believed that it was very precious, he bought it home and hid it. Later, a guest from the state of Chou heard of this and wanted to see the stone. The owner then made the fuss of performing all kinds of ceremonies before showing the stone to the guest. When the guest saw the stone, he covered his mouth with his hand and start laughing. He then told the owner that the stone was from Mount Yen, and yet was no different from tile or brick. The owner was very angry. However, he thought the guest was lying. Hence, he stubbornly persisted in his belief that this stone was really very valuable and kept it hidden ever more secretly.61 Thus, Liu Yü-hsi, like the man from Sung, might be

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looked down by others: In Liu's case, because of the political setback that he experienced. However, when the situation is proper, Liu firmly believed, he would once again be considered precious. Thus, in this sense, one's value is totally dependent upon the situation.

Judging by the order in which the two realms, this-worldly and other-worldly, are presented and re-presented within the poetic space, we may argue that Liu's ultimate concerns in life are related to this-worldly endeavor. Here, by employing the allusion of the colored stone from Mount Yen, Liu in a sense takes up the role of the 'stupid' man from the state of Sung. However, the question "Why debate the value of the stone from Mount Yen?" turns the negative image of the man from Sung into a positive one. Like the man from Sung, Liu might be looked down on by others because of the political setback that he experienced. However, when the time is right, Liu firmly believed, he would once again be considered precious. Thus, in this sense, one's value is totally dependent upon others.

We have provided one particular reading of this poem that it is by no means the only possible reading. Nonetheless, the Ch'an Buddhist sentiment in this particular reading of the poem is obvious, in spite of the fact that, according to our interpretation, it is subordinated to Liu Yü-hsi's this-worldly concerns.

There are a number of examples in Liu's writings, and his poetry in particular, which substantiate the supposition that he was a practicing Buddhist. For example, in a poem written to Po Chü-i and Yang Kuei-hou,62 probably in the spring of 825, Liu recalls his earlier practice of meditation in Buddhist tradition:

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62For the relationship between Liu Yü-hsi and Yang Kuei-hou, see Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, pp. 1686-1687.
Previously I learned the method of practising meditation in Buddhism.
Now, because of myriad affairs,
I [am like the fisherman who has] forgotten the bamboo fish-trap.63

This poem was probably written in 825.64 It is difficult to tell when Liu Yü-hsi began practicing meditation. However, it seems that his interest in meditation continued till the end of his life. For, from the title of another poem, we can see, at least, Liu's association with Buddhist meditators at a later stage of his life. The title of this poem is: "Ping-chung san-Ch'an-k'o hien-wen yin-i hsieh-chih" ("When I was sick, three guests who are practitioners of meditation visited me; hence, I write this poem to thank them").65

63LYHC, p. 418. For another example that may suggest Liu's participation in meditation, see LYHC, p. 615.
65LYHC, pp. 286-287. Pien Hsiao-hsüan thinks that this poem was written near the end of Liu's life, around 436 to 442. See his Nien-p'u, pp. 231-232. Ch'ü T'ui-yüan also takes a similar view, although his reason differs from that of Pien. See Ch'ü T'ui-yüan, Liu Yü-hsi chi chien-cheng, p. 637. If this poem was indeed written near the end of Liu's life, then it is quite possible that his practice of meditation continued for the rest of his life. In a poem to a wandering monk (dhuta), Liu writes:

The unorthodox ways and evil mountains are tens of thousand in number;
[But] once the Buddha's words (chen-yen) are manifested, the peaks [of these evil mountains] are all crushed.
Sometimes, in a moonlight night, and in a place where human traces are none,
I, alone, approach towards Lake Chao, to subdue the wicked dragon.

The term chen-yen has various interpretation. For a discussion, see Ting Fu-pao, Fo-hsitheh ta-tzu-tien (2 vols. Taipei: Fo-chiao tsu-chi wen-hua fu-wu chung-hsin, 1988), pp. 1751b-1752b. However, because it is not easy to pinpoint the precise connotation of this term in this poem, hence we render it as "Buddha's words." Lake Chao is located in Hunan Province. According to the Li Tao-yüan, Shui-ching chu (Shanghai: Shih-chieh shu-chü, 1936), p. 475, it is so deep that its depth cannot be measured. In addition, this lake is located near the Hsiang river. Hence, this poem was likely written between 805 and early 815 when Liu was in Lang-chou. For this poem, see LYHC, p. 393. Where this poem, particularly the last line, depicts clearly the experience one encounters during meditation, it is not easy to tell if this describes that of Liu's or the wandering monk. Even if it describes that of the wandering monk, we can still use it as another example of his association with people who practice meditation.
The Bamboo fish-trap is used here as a synonym for written words or language. While this usage alludes to *Chuang-tzu*, a Taoist text, Liu's usage of the allusion seems to point to a unique tenet of Ch'an:

...in the original nature itself the wisdom of *prajña* exists, and by using this wisdom yourself and illuminating with it, there is no need to depend on written words. Again, the idea that there is no need for written words in the process of spiritual cultivation is based on the idea that one's own-nature is equipped with the wisdom of *prajña*.

However, apart from a few occasions, Liu does not dwell extensively on this aspect of his Buddhist sentiments. He remarks on his Buddhist conceptions throughout his oeuvre, but mostly in a fragmentary manner. There are ample examples of references to Buddhism in Liu's poetry; however, most of these are, for example, poems written to Po Chü-i relating Liu's Buddhist activities. Thus they are not of great use in our understanding of Liu's personal involvement in the Buddhist religion beyond the scope of our discussion above.

However, more can be said about the impact of Buddhism on Liu's intellectual outlook. In particular, there is again noticeable Ch'an influence on Liu Yü-hsi's conception of the writing of poetry, a major and esteemed intellectual activity among the members of the T'ang's high culture. In one instance, in the

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66 The bamboo fish-trap is an allusion from *Chuang-tzu*: "The purpose of a bamboo fish-trap is to catch fish; when fish is caught, one can forget the purpose of a bamboo fish-trap. The purpose of hare trap is to catch the hare; when the hare is caught, one can forget about the hare trap. The purpose of words is to convey meaning, when meaning is conveyed, one can forget the words." See Wang Hsien-chien, *Chuang-tzu chi-chieh* (Ssu-ch't'uan: Cheng-tu ch'u-pan-she, 1988), p. 66.

67 Philip Yampolsky, *The Platform sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, p. 149.

68 For some examples of these kind of poems, see *LYHC*, pp. 483–4, 492, and 508.
preface to a poem sent to the *vinaya* master Hung-chü, Liu expressed how he perceived the process of writing poetry:

The Sanskrit word *sa-men* (*srmana*) is similar to the Chinese term "getting rid of desire" ("chu-yü"). If one is able to depart from desire, then one's mind can be empty. When [the mind is] empty, then myriad scenes can enter [into the mind]. When they enter, then some things must leak out. Hence, [what leaks out] will manifest itself as words. When the words are mysterious and deep in meaning, they must obey the rules of tones and rhymes. Hence, from recent history onwards, Buddhist monks known for their poetry in the world emerged one after another. If in accord with the state of complete cessation of thought, one can apprehend the state of affairs. Hence, silently one [arrives at the state of] purification. From wisdom, one can manipulate words. Thus, purely, [these words are] beautiful. This is really the calyx of the flower in the Ch'an monasteries...69

Certainly, as we can see in this passage, Liu Yü-hsi's conception of how good poetry is created is very much indebted to Ch'an Buddhism. The focus of Liu's ideas is the role of one's mind in relation to good poetry. That one's mind ultimately determines the nature of a poetic work is an age-old concept in Chinese literary history,70 but Liu, in this case, adds Ch'an Buddhist elements to the arts of writing good poetry.71 Emptying one's mind, Liu contended, is fundamental in the process of creative writing. Without such a state of mind, one is unable to apprehend the totality of myriad phenomena and scenes. As a consequence, the final product, when manifested into written words will not be aesthetically sound.

70For one example, Lu Chi (261-303) in his "Wen fu" ("A rhapsody on literature") depicts in a rather detailed fashion the process of creative writing. His emphasis is on the ability to observe the ever-changing environment; in this process of observation, it is the 'heart' (mind) that manipulates all the incoming information and produces the final product of this process. For this rhapsody, see Kuo Shao-yü ed., *Chung-kuo li-tai wen-lun hsüan* (4 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai ku-chi, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 170-175.
71See Tu Sung-po, *Ch'an-hsüeh yü T'ang-Sung shih-hsüeh*, p. 371. Tu has made use of this passage of Liu's to support the idea that Ch'an sentiments not only do not conflict with the composing of poetry, but are, in fact, helpful to such an act.
In another instance, Liu gives a general view of his standards of good poetry, providing a statement that hints at the possibility of Ch'an influence:

In a few words, a hundred ideas can be illuminated; and to sit still while the mind is roaming far afield, one can order a myriad scenes.72

It is not safe for us to claim that this conceptualization of the creative process of poetry writing is necessarily influenced by Ch'an, but the idea that one's mind possesses the ability to manipulate myriad scenes in the above poem does indicates a possible parallel with Buddhist elements in Liu's poetic theory.

The term "sitting still while the mind is roaming far afield" ("tso-ch'ih") is taken from Chuang-tzu.73 Meditation, in Buddhist tradition, aims to cultivate oneself spiritually in order to discover one's own-nature. In the Platform sutra, we find a passage expounding the idea of "sitting in meditation." It reads as follow:

Now that we know that this is so, what is it in this teaching that we call 'sitting in meditation' ("tso-ch'an")? In this teaching 'sitting' means without any obstruction anywhere, outwardly and under all circumstances, not to activate thoughts. 'Meditation' is internally to see the original nature and not become confused."74

While Liu Yü-hsi's characterization of the process of writing poetry may not have much in common with the process of spiritual cultivation, it is still possible for us to argue that his general characterization is blended with both Taoist and Buddhist elements. From the two passages that we have quoted above that are concerned with Liu's theory of poetry composition, there is no doubt that the first one, the preface to the poem sent to the vinaya master Hung-chü, reflects clear Buddhist influences. In the second, as we have noted, the key term, tso-ch'ih, signifies a Taoist sentiment. However, if we look at the particular context in which this term appears in Chuang-tzu, we can find an alleged conversation between

72LYHC, p. 237.
73See Wang Hsien-chien, Chung-tzu chi-chieh, p. 23.
74See Philip Yampolsky, Platform sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, p. 140.
Confucius and his disciple, Yen Hui. In this conversation, Confucius is said to explain the concept of "fasting of the mind" (hsin-chai) to Yen. The definition of "hsin-chai" is precisely the emptying of one's mind, while the term "tso-ch'ih" is mentioned to signify the opposite.75

This seems to pose a problem in our understanding of Liu's theory of poetry composition, for the concept "tso-ch'ih" describes a diametrically opposite state of mind to the Buddhist practice of meditation. However, if we look at the preface to the poem sent to Hung-chü, we can see a parallel between Buddhist meditation and the concept of "hsin-chai": "If one is able to depart from desire, then one's mind can be empty." It is interesting to note, however, that Liu's theorization of poetry composition shares certain similar features with that of the concept of "tso-ch'ih," because the emptying of the mind, as Liu contends, should anticipate the influx of "myriad scenes" into the mind. Furthermore, the passage suggests that when one's mind reacts with these "myriad scenes," one will naturally express one's inner feelings, as a result of such a reaction, in the form of words. This further suggests that poetry composition is a dynamic process, rather than a static one. One's mind is in constant contact with its surroundings. Thus, this seems to imply a parallel between Liu's general theory of poetry composition and theory that was influenced by Buddhist elements.

Finally, we shall discuss Liu Yü-hsi's understanding of Buddhist doctrine. In such a discussion, we will attempt to show how Buddhist thought is coherently synthesized by Liu so that it can operate within his "Confucian universe."

Quantitatively, Liu wrote many poems and inscriptions for Buddhist monks, but he wrote very little that reflects clearly his understanding of the doctrinal aspects of Buddhist religion.

To Liu, Buddhism, as a religion, was mystical in nature. Thus, the ultimate truth of Buddhist teachings is indescribable, and transcends all linguistic expression. Indeed, Liu on a number of occasions expressed the indescribability of Buddhist philosophy. Nonetheless, we do find a short passage in Liu's writings that provides a means to analyze the nature of Liu's understanding of Buddhist doctrine. While this passage alone does not allow us to make any strong statement, it does, nevertheless, shed light on our understanding of Liu's thought as a whole, especially Liu's affinity to Buddhism and its conformity to his ultimate concern for the well-being of the people.

In the third month of 829, the pagoda built specifically for Fa-jung, the legendary first patriarch of the Ox-head (Niu-tou) school, was completed. Upon request of Li Te-yü (787-849), then Surveillance Commissioner of the Che-hsi circuit, Liu composed an essay to commemorate this event. This essay begins

76See LYHC, pp. 51-52 and 54.
77Legend has it that this school originated as a branch of the Ch'an school because the fourth patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism, Tao-hsin is said to have transmitted the dharma to Fa-jung. Liu's essay contributes to the formation of such a legend. The Ox-head school was later absorbed by the Southern Ch'an tradition. For a discussion of the history and doctrinal features of this school, see In-shun, Chung-kuo Ch'an-tsung shih, pp. 85-128. Also see John McRae, "The Ox-Head school of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism, from early Ch'an to the golden age" in Robert M. Gimello & Peter N. Gregory ed. Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen, pp. 169-252. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983.
78Li Te-yü played an important role in the suppression of Buddhism during the reign of Wu-tsung (840-846). Liu indicates in this essay Li's prohibition of monks from misleading the people. But at the same time, the essay also indicates that Li also appreciated those Buddhist clergymen who he believed had really attained enlightenment. See Fu Hsüan-tsung, Li Te-yü nien-p'u (Chi-nan: Ch'i-lu shu-she, 1984), pp. 203-204. For a discussion of the suppression of Buddhism by Wu-tsung, see Stanley Weinstein, Buddhism under the T'ang, pp. 114-136.
with a genealogy sketching the Ch'an tradition from the time of Mo-k'o Chia-yeh (Mahakasyapa), the first patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism in India, and then gives an account of Fa-jung's life. At the end of the essay, Liu makes the following statements:

The superior one unites [the concept of] emptiness and departs from appearances. The mediocre one holds on [to the idea of] emptiness and hates [the concept of] being. If it is not because of appearances, how can enlightenment be demonstrated? If it is not from being, how can one apprehend non-being? Those who have arrived at the real truth and achieved the Middle Way (chung-tao), realize, of course, that acting is not the same as clinging to being. [This realization] is superior [to the idea that] to not cultivate [oneself] is equivalent to non-action.79

In the above passage, the occurrence of the term 'Middle Path' should attract our attention immediately. In our discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's Confucian sentiments in the preceding chapter, we have already concluded that Liu's political ideology can particularly be characterized by this idea of the 'Middle Way.' However, in this particular context, Liu's usage of this term carries with it a specific Buddhist connotation. Indeed, this term points to the teaching of Madhyamika Buddhism, or Buddhism of the Middle Way.

This Buddhist school was formed by Nagarjuna, the great synthesizer of Mahayana Buddhism.80 In China, the school was best represented by the Three Treatise School (San-lun tsung), the three treatises referred to being The Middle Treatise (Chung-lun), The Twelve Topics Treatise (Shih-erh-men lun), and the

79LYHC, p. 56.
Hundred Treatise (*Pai-lun*). All of them are said to be written by Nagarjuna himself.

In the most famous and important verse in the Middle Treatise, we find a statement which emphatically asserts the idea that emptiness is simply a "conventional designation" ("chia-ming"):

All things which arise through conditioned co-arising.
I explain as emptiness.
Again, it is a conventional designation.
Again, it is the meaning of the Middle Way.

This verse implies the idea of not falling to either side of two extremes. To accept the view that the phenomenal world is non-empty is wrong. But, similarly, to acknowledge it as empty is also wrong. Emptiness is by itself a 'conventional designation' used solely for the purpose of helping one understand the true meaning of Buddhist dharma. Hence Nagarjuna expresses in this verse that this fact is precisely the 'meaning' of the Middle Way.

Apart from the fact that the term 'Middle Way' is found in Liu's passage, we can also provide here other concrete evidence which can further support our idea

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81 These three treatises are collected in T 30, no. 1564, 1568, and 1569 respectively.
82 Richard A. Gard has expressed doubts regarding the authenticity of these three treatises. However, until modern times, probably no one had questioned the authenticity of these treatises. For Gard's opinions on this issue, see Richard A. Gard, "On the authenticity of the Pai-lun and Shih-erh-meng-lun," in *Indogaku Bukkyogaku kenkyu* (Journal of Indian and Buddhist studies), vol. II, no. 2 (March 1954), pp. 751-742; Richard A. Gard, "On the authenticity of the Chung-lun," in *Indogaku Bukkyogaku kenkyu*, vol. III, no. 1 (September 1954), pp. 376-370.
83 T 30, p. 33b. This verse has been translated by a number of scholars. The translation given here follows that of Paul Swanson, *Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy: the flowering of the Truth Theory in Chinese Buddhism* (Berkeley, California: Asian Humanities Press, 1989), p. 4. In page 3, Swanson provides a list of some of the English translations of this verse.
that Liu's passage is directly related to Madhyamika philosophy. From Liu's account in the essay, one of Fa-jung's masters was known as monk Chiung, and, from Fa-jung's biography in *Hsü kao-sheng chüan*, we know this monk to be a master of the Three Treatises. Thus, logically, Madhyamika philosophy may have exerted a considerable degree of influence on Fa-jung's thought. In fact, the most important text of the Oxhead School, *Chüeh-kuan lun*, which is attributed to Fa-jung, contains certain elements of Madhyamika philosophy.

With the above discussion of Madhyamika Buddhism and its connection with the Ox-head School, and with the Ch'an School in general, we can now proceed to analyse Liu's passage in order to understand how he interpreted the concept of the Middle Way. The first two lines echo the idea of clinging neither to emptiness or non-emptiness, but, at the same time, distinguish the differences in capacity among the people. Hence it is only superior people, Liu contends, who are capable of

84We have not been able to identify positively the full name of this monk, and thus we are unable to find out if a biographical account exists.
85See *Hsü Kao-seng chüan*, in T 50, p. 604b, line 3.
86A Tun-huang version of the *Chüeh-kuan lun* is collected in Hisamatsu Shin'ichi et al. ed. *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1968), vol. 2, pp. 188-198. In particular, under the entry number 13, we find that the idea of Middle Way is employed in the discussion of whether there is any difference between a commoner and a saint. For a discussion of this aspect of the Ox-head School, see John McRae, "The Ox-head School of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism: from early Ch'an to the golden age," pp. 221-235. For a discussion of Madhyamika affiliations of Ch'an Buddhism, see Cheng Hsüeh-li, "Zen and San-lun Madhyamika thought: exploring the theoretical foundation of Zen teachings and practices." On page 357 of this article, the author also indicates that Fa-jung employed the Madhyamika concept of the Middle Way to preach a "wholesale negation of all views."
87Here we can make use of a passage from "The chief ideas of the Mahayana" ("Ta-ch'eng-ta-i-chang"). This text is found in T 45, pp. 122b-143b. It is also known as "Chiu-mo lo-shih fa-shih ta-i" in three chiüan. It contains Chiu-mo lo-shih's (Kumarajiva) answers to questions raised by his disciple Hui-yüan on issues regarding the meanings of Mahayana's sutras. This passage further supports the idea that Liu's first two statements in the passage agree with Madhyamika philosophy: "The Buddhas, accomodating to what living beings understand, explain three classes of doctrine within the one meaning [ekartha]. For beings with dull faculties they declare emptiness, suffering, and
getting rid of preoccupations with the idea of emptiness, and, simultaneously, capable of departing from appearances, thus arriving at the 'middle' of the two extremes.

Most interesting in the whole passage are the third and fourth lines. "If it is not because of appearances, how can enlightenment be demonstrated? If it is not from being, how can one apprehend non-being?" The point of interest here is the emphasis on the importance of 'appearances' and 'being' in the process of spiritual cultivation. This idea accords with another salient feature of Madhyamika philosophy, for we can find in the Middle Treatise the following verse:

All Buddhas depend on two truths
In order to preach the Dharma to sentient beings.
The first is the worldly mundane truth.
The second is the truth of supreme meaning.88

The above-mentioned verse concerns the issue that while one is taught in Buddhist teachings that the phenomenal world, including oneself, is non-substantial, it is through such a non-substantial world of existence that enlightenment is achieved. Hence, the Buddhas all talk about two kinds of truth, impermanence. These beings, having heard that all dharmas are impermanent and suffering, become profoundly detached, succeed in cutting off craving, and attain liberation. For beings with medium faculties, they declare that everything is without self, secure, quiescent, and in nirvana. When these beings hear that all dharmas are without self and consist of only nirvana, security, and quiescence, they cut off craving, and gain liberation. For those with keen faculties, they declare that all dharmas from the very beginning are unarising, unceasing, utterly empty, and like nirvana. Therefore, within the one meaning, according to the fetters and mental faults of beings, there are differences of profundity." See T 45, p. 137a. Translation is taken from Richard Robinson, Early Madhyamika in India and China, p. 189. Clearly, except for the fact that Liu only dwells on those who belong to the categories of superior and mediocre capacity, his depiction of these two groups is very much in conformity with that in the above passage. 88T 30, p.32c, as translated by Paul Swanson, T'ien-Tai philosophy, p. 1.
and not reject the 'worldly mundane truth,' since an acceptance of this level of truth will assist one to comprehend the 'truth of supreme meaning.'

It is also interesting to note that in the Chʻeh-kuan lun, we find the following statement:

Yüan-men asked: "According to the principle that all things are after all empty, then from where shall I seek for enlightenment?...
Ju-li answered: "You should seek it from within all existence..."

Hence, the message is clear. Liu's expression of this feature of Madhymika philosophy may enhance our understanding of what attracted his attention the most in this Buddhist school, the thesis that in order to attain enlightenment, one should not blindly reject one's mundane existence. Perceived in this way, Liu Yü-hsi's statements fit well in their particular context. Liu's use of the two rhetorical questions here not only signifies that he agreed with this teaching of Madhymika Buddhism, but it also displays his emphasis on the importance of the worldly truth. That is why he goes on to characterize those who indeed understand the concept of "Middle Way" as those who have arrived at the "real truth" ("chen-ti") The term "real truth" is used in opposition to the idea of "mundane truth" ("su-ti"). While the two truths are diametrically opposed to each other, they are not separable.

In our discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's Buddhist thought, we have identified a number of prominent features. Since he was young man growing up on the southeastern seaboard of China during the last two decades of the eighth century, Liu established close ties with Buddhism at an early age. It is very likely that Liu

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89 For a discussion of this verse, see In-shun, Chung-kuan lun-sung chiang-chi (Taipei: Fu-yen chin-she, 1973), pp. 53-461. For a discussion of the "Two Truths" see Paul Swanson, T'ien-t'ai philosophy, pp. 18-37.
received a fair amount of his education in a Buddhist setting, and there is no doubt that some of the most talented literary figures he admired were either devout Buddhists or Buddhist clergymen. After the downfall of his political career at 805, Liu's contact with Buddhist figures increased, accompanied by an increase in his interest in Buddhist philosophy. Among the various Buddhist teachings, it seems that Ch'an Buddhism attracted Liu the most. Not only did this Buddhist school exert great influence on his spiritual life, it also influenced his intellectual life. As a testimony to this, one can find traces of Ch'an elements in Liu's poetry and his poetic theory.

While Buddhism was, for centuries, in contention with strong-minded scholar-officials who were patrons of such indigenous schools of philosophy and religion as Confucianism and Taoism, Liu Yü-hsi seems to have bothered little about anti-Buddhist polemics. However, his genuine Buddhist beliefs did not pose a conflict with his strongly Confucian concerns. This was due to the kind of Buddhist doctrine he found himself most comfortable with.

While there is no doubt that Liu had a generally positive view of various Buddhist schools of thought, our discussion on his inscription to Fa-jung suggest that he selected certain elements from various schools that best fitted his concerns for worldly affairs. In the case of Madhyamika Buddhism, Liu selected those elements that provided a way for him to incorporate Buddhism into his strong Confucian ideology without causing conflict. Hence, Buddhism and Confucianism co-existed harmoniously in Liu's thought.
Chapter 4: Heaven & Humanity

As a thinker, Liu Yü-hsi is perhaps best known for his three-part essay "T'ien lun" ("On Heaven"). Through a discussion of Heaven, he expresses his ideas concerning human beings and how they should and must control their own destiny. We can find a number of interesting features in the essay. For example, Liu attempts to posit a theory that explains away all the mysteries and contingencies that one may encounter in life, and directly refutes the concept of "k'ung" (sunyata?) in his argument. This refutation of "k'ung" has been used by many who have written about the essay as a clear sign of anti-Buddhist sentiment in Liu's thought.¹ If this is indeed the case, then it may point to a possible inconsistency with the explanation of Liu's Buddhist sentiments developed in the previous chapter.

We have already, in the preceding two chapters, explored the Confucian and Buddhist dimensions of Liu's thought, and we have, to a certain extent, indicated the dominant nature of these two elements across the whole spectrum of his philosophy. Now, through a discussion of the specific issue of Heaven and Humanity, we would like to further explore the position of these two elements in Liu's system of thought. The focus of our present discussion is on the essay "T'ien Lun." However, some of the ideas and concepts that Liu expresses in this essay can also be found in his other works.² Most often, they are expressed in a

²It is true that "T'ien Lun" is the only work of Liu Yü-hsi that deals with the concept of Heaven in an extensive way. However, I do not agree with Lamont's statement that "there is little in Liu Yü-hsi's writings to give us any direct background to his attitude towards
consistent fashion, although there are some cases at which these ideas and concepts show clear signs of contradiction. Thus, it is necessary for us to take into account all the occurrences of these usages because they definitely enhance our understanding of Liu's thought. We will begin our discussion with an examination of some peripheral issues, and then proceed to a close reading of the essay.

It is impossible to date Liu's essay. A difference of opinion exists among contemporary scholars as to the dating of this essay, and since there is no clear textual evidence pointing to any definite date, we will follow a generally accepted view that it was written some time after Liu's banishment in 805. There is no doubt that this essay could not have been written after the year 819, the year Liu Tsung-yüan died, since he wrote a letter discussing the essay "T'ien Lun." Hence, we can tentatively date the essay between the years 805-819. Unfortunately, the letter from Liu Tsung-yüan is not dated, and it contains no useful information that

Heaven per se." See his article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, p. 45. There is no doubt that, except for the essay "T'ien Lun," Liu's idea of Heaven is not expressed in any systematic way. However it does not mean that he writes nothing about this subject. In fact, he does refer to Heaven in his other writings. While such references may not appear to represent his reflective thinking on Heaven, and are scattered throughout his oeuvre, they do provide us with additional information as to how Liu thought of Heaven at various stages of his life.

3Hou Wai-lu in his Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih, vol. 4, part 1, argues that this essay was written after Liu's banishment in 805. He bases his argument on a certain passage in the essay. Pien Hsiao-hsüan agrees with Hou's argument. See his Nien-p'u, pp. 69-70. E.G. Pulleyblank, while agreeing that "T'ien Lun" was written some time after 805, suggest the idea that "the essay purports to be a record of a conversation between himself (Liu Tsung-yüan) and Han Yü." If this is the case, then the essay could either have been written before 794, or after 801. For Pulleyblank's idea, see his article, "Neo-Confucianism and neo-Legalism in T'ang intellectual life, 755-805," pp. 110-111. H.G. Lamont rejects Pulleyblank's thesis and agrees with that of Hou. See his article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, p. 39. As Lamont has pointed out in this article, the key item of evidence that supports the dating of the essay as written after 805 is an expression used in the essay.
can assist us in narrowing down the date of "T'ien Lun" further. Nevertheless, the approximate dating of the essay allows us to explore issues such as the connection between Liu's state of mind during this period and the messages that are conveyed in the essay, and the relevance of his intellectual endeavors during his years of banishment to some of the concepts that he developed in the essay.

Liu's motives for writing the essay are clear, since he clearly indicates in the first part of the essay his reasons for writing the "T'ien Lun." It is simply a response to the 'debate' between Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü on the relationship between Heaven and Man. Liu Yü-hsi tells us of his motive in the following way:

My friend Liu Tzu-hou (Tzu-hou is the style name of Liu Tsung-yüan) from the Hsieh district of Ho-tung (in modern Shan-hsi) composed the

\[\text{4In an eulogy for Yang Kuei-hou, Liu recalls that "In the past when I was acquainted with you, both of us were in the prime of life (chuan). We were angry with people talking about fate, and laughed at those who talked about Heaven." See LYHC, p. 611. Usually, chuan refers to an age between thirty and late forty. It should therefore correspond to the years of 802 to 822. Since we are sure that the essay must have been written before 819, this phrase reduces the range of possible composition dates to 802 to 819, which is a little bit wider than the range 805-819. Such information further strengthens the probability that the range of dates is a valid one.}

\[\text{5It is questionable whether or not these intellectual exchanges between Liu Tsung-yüan and Liu Yü-hsi and Han Yü(?)}\text{ can be characterized as a debate. As Lin Shu has already indicated, "following Liu [Tsung-yüan]'s disgrace, he [Han Yü] composed these words of resentment and grief to comfort Liu..." See Lin Shu, Han-Liu-wen yen-chiu-fa. (Taipei: Kuang-wen shu-chü, 1964), p. 91. Translation is taken from H.G. Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, p. 38. The fact that we cannot find anything in Han Yü's collected works that responds to Liu Tsung-yüan's essay "T'ien Shou" does not necessarily mean that Han never wrote a reply. There is always the possibility that some of Han's writings have been lost. However, when Liu Tsung-yüan responded to Liu Yü-hsi's essay "T'ien Lun," we also cannot find any attempt on Liu Yü-hsi's part to prolong the discussion. Thus, it seems that while the two Lius were very serious about the opinion expressed in their writing, their correspondence never developed fully into a debate.}

\[\text{6For the exchange of ideas on Heaven between Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü, see Liu's essay "T'ien Shuo," in LTYC, pp. 441-443. This essay has been translated by H.G. Lamont, with annotations. See his article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, pp. 66-69.}\]
essay "T'ien Shou" to argue with Han T'ui-chih's (T'ui-chih is the style name of Han Yü) words. His essay is really elegant. But, because it was written with a burst of emotion, it cannot exhaustively explain the relationship between Heaven and Human. This is why I have composed the essay "T'ien Lun" in order to develop completely his argument.7

Apart from telling us that the essay "T'ien Lun" was a direct response by Liu Yü-hsi to Liu Tsung-yüan's rebuttal of Han Yü's conception of the relationship between Heaven and Humanity,8 this passage also indicates that Liu Yü-hsi did agree with some of Liu Tsung-yüan's ideas. If the two Lius shared the same conception of Heaven and Humanity, then there would be no need for Liu Yü-hsi to make further efforts to discuss the same issue. Hence, we might surmise that Liu Yü-hsi's idea of Heaven is not quite in tune with that of Liu Tsung-yüan. Indeed, this is why Liu Yü-hsi felt that the essay "T'ien Shuo" had not completely made clear various issues about Heaven and Human, and why he wanted to write more material on this subject to further develop Liu Tsung-yüan's argument. We can also see a strong sense of confidence when Liu Yü-hsi said that his discussion on this subject could actually "develop completely his (Liu Tsung-yüan) argument" ("chi ch'i pien"). But when Liu Tsung-yüan responded critically to "T'ien Lun," it seems that Liu Yü-hsi did not write a further reply.

To start our discussion of Liu Yü-hsi's idea of Heaven, particularly in his essay "T'ien Lun," we should logically begin with the word "T'ien" ("Heaven").

7LYHC, p. 67.
8If what Han Yü had said in "T'ien Shuo" is really to give comfort to Liu Tsung-yüan, as Lin Shu asserts, then Han's idea of Heaven and Human as represented in "T'ien Shuo" should not be taken at surface value. Fang Chieh is aware of this, and he shows quite convincingly that the passage in Liu's essay is in general agreement with Han's conception of the relation of Heaven and Human. For Fang's discussion, see his article, "Liu Tsung-yüan ti t'ien-jen ssu-hsiang," (in pp. 87-109, Kuo-li pien-i-kuang kuang-kan, vol. 12, no. 1, 1983), pp. 96-103.
The concept of T'ien emerged as early as the Shang dynasty, and occupied a central place in the history of Chinese thought. However, our understanding of the term T'ien is not without problems. Indeed, various theories have been put forward by scholars to explain the origin of this term. Nevertheless, by the time of the early Chou, T'ien had emerged as something like an omnipotent deity governing both the realm of human and that of natural affairs. By the time of the Spring and Autumn Period (770 - 477 B.C.), there is no doubt that the relationship between Heaven and Humanity was moralistic in nature, and that natural phenomena were considered to be the reflection of Heaven's will.

With the development of an "anthropomorphic" Heaven, the concept was used with the implication that it might present a force to help maintain order in the human world. Furthermore, it might also be used by some to present a strong argument to legitimize the existing political order. However, other creative thinkers disagreed with such a concept of Heaven. Taoist thinkers, in particular,

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10This description of the term "T'ien" during the Chou period (11th century-771 B.C.) is, of course, very simplistic. The concept of T'ien went through various stages of development from the time of early Chou down to the time of Liu Yü-hsi. A well known example is the emergence of a correlative cosomology, which presented a systematic theory to explain the correlation between human and Nature. Behind this correlation between the human world and the phenomenal world we find the conscious T'ien. For a discussion of this aspect of Chinese thought, see chapter nine of Benjamin Schwartz's The world of thought in ancient China. However, since there are numerous differing ideas on the development of the connotations of T'ien, and many of them are not conclusive enough to allow us to use them, for the purpose of this chapter we will discuss only a general outline of the the development of the concept of T'ien.

11The term "anthropomorphism" is borrowed from Benjamin Schwartz. For his definition of this term see Benjamin Schwartz, The world of thought in ancient China, p. 33.

identified Heaven (T'ien) with Nature (tzu-jan). In addition, in the later part of the Warring States Period (476-222 B.C.), the highly original thinker, Hsün Tzu (fl. 298-238 B.C.) emerged, expounding that Heaven is neither conscious nor moral. There is no direct connection, Hsün Tzu argues, between the realm of human affairs and the realm of natural phenomena. He begins his essay "T'ien Lun" as follows:

Heaven's ways are constant. It does not prevail because of a sage like Yao; it does not cease to prevail because of a tyrant like Chieh. Respond to it with good government, and good fortune will result; respond to it with disorder, and misfortune will result. If you encourage agriculture and are frugal in expenditures, then Heaven cannot make you poor. If you provide the people with the goods they need and demand their labor only at the proper time, then Heaven cannot afflict you with illness...

This naturalistic view, we will see later, exerted a considerable influence on Liu Yü-hsi's conception of Heaven. It is interesting to note that both Hsün Tzu and Liu Yü-hsi most clearly express their conceptions of Heaven in the essays bearing exactly the same title: "T'ien Lun." Liu Yü-hsi himself never indicates clearly whether or not his conception of Heaven is inspired by Hsün Tzu. The only time Liu mentions Hsün Tzu's name is in his preface to Lü Wen's collected works. Liu associated Lü with Hsün Tzu in terms of their ability to understand the kingly Way. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Liu Yü-hsi was familiar with Hsün Tzu's works. That Liu intentionally chose to give his essay an identical title, "T'ien Lun," must hint at the possibility of a certain level of influence from Hsün Tzu. Indeed, when we proceed to discuss the main ideas of Liu's essay later, we will

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15Se LYHC, p. 235.
find that there is common ground between the two thinkers on the issue of Heaven and Humanity.\textsuperscript{16}

In "T'ien Lun," Liu Yü-hsi begins his essay with a characterization of two prevailing and opposing theories of the relationship between Heaven and Humanity:

In the world there are two doctrines concerning Heaven. Those who adhere to (chü) the obvious will say: "Heaven and Human are really like shadow and echo: calamity will certainly be sent down because of crimes; good fortune will certainly be sent down because of goodness [in one's deeds]. When one cries out in great distress one will certainly be heard. When one prays in hidden pain, one will certainly be answered." It is as if there is really someone who is in control. So the theory of secret determination (yin-chih) prevails. For those who are bigoted (ni) in obscure matters, they will say: "Heaven and Humanity are very different. When thunder shakes the domestic animals and plants, this is not necessarily the result of crimes. When spring nourishes the clay and rushes, it is not necessarily because [Heaven] has selected the good. In the case of Chih and Ch'iao,\textsuperscript{17} they succeeded. In the case of K'ung and Yen,\textsuperscript{18} they had difficulty. These [matters] are so confused that there are no one in control." So the theory of naturalness (tzu-jan) prevails.\textsuperscript{19}

In this passage, it is clear that Liu Yü-hsi considers both the two theories -- secret determination and naturalness -- inadequate in their characterization of the relationship between Heaven and Humanity. When referring to those who followed the theory of secret determination, Liu speaks of them as people who

\textsuperscript{16}That Liu Yü-hsi's conception of Heaven and Humanity is reminiscent of Hsün Tzu's idea is generally acknowledged by most scholars. For an example, see H.G. Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, pp. 62-63.

\textsuperscript{17}Chih refers to Tao Chih from the state of Ch'in, and Ch'iao refers to Chuang Ch'iao from the state of Ch'u. Both of these men were said to have been leaders of bandits during the Warring States period.

\textsuperscript{18}Kung refers to Confucius. Yen refers to Confucius' disciple Yen Hui, who suffered from poverty and died at an early age.

\textsuperscript{19}LYHC, p. 67.
"adhere to the obvious." Because the occurrence of events match people's expectations, therefore people firmly believe that a conscious, supernormal power, Heaven, exists and control human affairs. In the case of the naturalists, he characterizes them as those who are "bigoted in obscure matters." Because things occur in ways that go against people's expectations, hence it is not clear to them the reason why things happen in such a way. Both of these characterizations carry a clearly negative tone.

It is true that, as H.G. Lamont has indicated, "Heaven, in general, was for Liu Yü-hsi a term for nature; his separation of Heaven and Humanity was conceived of in terms of morality and purposeful action." But the focal point of the essay "T'ien Lun" is the relationship between Heaven and Humanity, and hence the essay concentrates upon the relationship between the realms of nature and human affairs, not merely on Heaven alone. In this respect, I cannot agree with those who contend that Liu Yü-hsi simply sides with the naturalists. What Liu tries to show in this passage is the two extremes of how people preconceive the relationship between Heaven and Humanity, in order to pave the way for Liu to state the "Middle Path" approach in his conception of Heaven and Humanity.

The fact that Liu Yü-hsi's idea of Heaven and Humanity differs from these two theories is further shown by the structure of the essay. Immediately after outlining the two different theories of Heaven and Humanity, Liu proceeds to state that his motive in writing the "T'ien Lun" was inspired by the background of the exchanges between Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yüan. From Liu Tsung-yüan's

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21For an example of this view, see Fu Yün-lung, "Liu Yü-hsi che-hsüeh ssu-hsiang yen-chiu," p. 376.
22There is no direct textual evidence in the whole of the essay to support this statement, yet Liu's theory of Heaven and Humanity, as we will soon see, attempts a compromise between the two theories by acknowledging a linkage between the two realms in a specific way.
"T'ien Shuo" it is quite obvious that the so-called theory of secret determination refers to that of Han Yü, while the theory of naturalness refers to that of Liu Tsung-yüan. We have already indicated earlier that Liu Yü-hsi did not totally agree with Liu Tsung-yüan's ideas regarding the essay "T'ien Shuo." Clearly, then, it is quite conclusive that the passage expresses a different theory, one unique to Liu Yü-hsi.23

Showing great coherence in the development of his ideas, Liu Yü-hsi does indeed announce his own theory of Heaven and Humanity immediately after outlining the theories above:

In general, things that belong to the realm of shape all have things that they are capable and incapable of. Heaven is the greatest [among those] with form, and human beings are the greatest among all living creatures. What Heaven is capable of, humans, of course, are incapable of. [Among those things] humans are capable of, there are some that Heaven is likewise incapable of. So, I say: "Heaven and Humanity are superior (sheng) to each other." This theory says that: "The way of Heaven is to give birth to and nourish things. Its function is manifested in strength and weakness. The way of humanity is in laws and regulations. Its function is manifested in right and wrong.24

Here Liu delimits the realms of Heaven and Humanity by drawing up certain boundaries. Both Heaven and Humanity, according to Liu, belong to the realm of form and shape. Thus, this classification scheme allows Liu to confine the subjects under discussion to a narrowly-defined space. Specifically, it reduces Heaven to an entity with physical form, hence removing any possibility of a metaphysical

23 Certain elements of Liu's theory, as we will see later, already existed. Liu's theory may nonetheless be unique in the way in which he incorporated various existing elements into a relatively coherent theory to explain of various questions concerning Heaven and Humanity. For a general discussion of the development of the concept of Heaven prior to Liu's times, see H.G. Lamont, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part I. 
24LYHC, pp. 67-68.
interpretation of Heaven. With such a characterization of Heaven and Humanity, Liu then further denies the possibility of an omnipotent Heaven, thus allowing the possibility that human beings might surpass Heaven.

As to the basic relationship between Heaven and human beings, Liu makes it quite clear that physically humans originate from Heaven, since the "way of Heaven is to give birth to and nourish things." In addition Liu Yü-hsi employs the idea that Humanity is created from ch'i (material force). Liu elaborates his idea of ch'i as follow:

With yang, there is abundant growth; with yin, there is withering and death. Water and fire are harmful to things. Wood is hard and metal is sharp. When young, one is strong and healthy. When old, one is weak and dim-sighted. Those whose ch'i is strong, contend to rule. those whose strength is great, contend to dominate [the others]. These are the functions of Heaven.

Here Liu makes use of the yin-yang and five elements to describe the basic mechanism of the phenomenal world. He uses the concept of ch'i to explain the nature of the world. In particular, he stresses that, in the natural world, living creatures dominate one another through their physical fitness. It is those who are physically strong and powerful that take charge of things. Of course, when he talks about humans, Liu asserts that human society differs greatly from that of other

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25In a number of places of his works, Liu again indicates quite clearly that it is from ch'i that Humanity is produced. Also, the character of a man is directly related to the kind of ch'i with which he is endowed. However, Liu never discuss what determines the endowment process. For some of the places at which he indicates this connection between Heaven and human beings, see LYHC, pp. 14, 29, 128-130, 224, 234, 608, 610-611. The concept of ch'i is important in both the history of Chinese thought, and in Chinese literature. For some discussions of this concept, see Ch'ien Chung-lien, "Shih 'ch'i,'" in Ku-tai wen-hsíeh li-lun, vol. 5 (August 1981), pp. 129-150; David Pollard, "Ch'i in Chinese literary theory," in Adele Austin Rickett ed. Chinese approaches to literature from Confucius to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, pp. 43-66. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978.  
26LHYC, p. 68.
creatures in terms of the ability to set laws and regulations. Specifically, the laws and regulations that Liu is referring to are based upon moral norms such as rites (li) and righteousness (i).27

However, we can already see some shortcomings in Liu Yü-hsi's theory, caused unnecessarily by the use of certain incorrect terms. In particular, it is rather puzzling for Liu to say that "What Heaven is capable of, Humanity, of course, is incapable of." After this statement, it is quite illogical to expect human to be able to surpass Heaven, since nothing that Heaven is capable of can be better performed by humans. Furthermore, Liu continues to say that "[Among those things that] humans are capable of, there are some that Heaven is likewise incapable of." This seems to suggest some human functions can also be carried out by Heaven.

If this statement is changed into something like "what humans are capable of, Heaven is incapable of," it may solve the logical discrepancy between the two statements, even though the latter one is a redundant statement, for the first statement already implies a total separation between Heaven's realm of action and that of Humanity. However, Liu did not envision Heaven and Humanity as realms that are mutually exclusive of each other. For sure, there is an "animal" nature in humans, which explains why law and regulations are needed for humans to maintain order.28 In addition, the usage of the word sheng (to surpass) implies the involvement of a conscious mind. This will, as Liu continues to develop his

27This idea shows great similarity to that of Hsün Tzu. In his essay "T'ien Lun," we can see Hsün Tzu's idea of the importance of rites and righteousness in the maintenance of social order: "...among men nothing is brighter than ritual principles [li-i]...He who does away with rites blinds the world; and when the world is blinded, great disorder results." See Hsün-tzu chin-chu chin-i. (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1975), pp. 336-337. Translation taken from Burton Watson, Hsün Tzu, pp. 86-87.

28This can be seen clearly from the examples of travellers given in the second part of the essay.
concept of the naturalistic nature of Heaven, create some problems in his argument.

Nevertheless, the central idea that an overlapping of the realms of Heaven and Humanity exists is clear. Thus Liu goes on to specify what the realm of human affairs is like:

With yang, he plants. With yin, he collects. He prevents calamity [caused by water] and uses water to irrigate. He prevents fire hazards and uses fire for lighting. He cuts down woods and hollows (k'uan) them out to make them strong. He saps and mines; he sharpens [his tools] with the whetstone. With righteousness, he controls the powerful and the wicked. With rites, he differentiates the elder and the young. He elevates the worthy and upholds the meritorious. He establishes regulations and prevents evils. This is what a human beings is capable of.

Here, we can see two different levels of human affairs, one amoral, and the other moral in nature. One concerns human beings' relationship with the natural world, the other the internal stability of human world. In an earlier passage, Liu has already stated that water and fire are harmful to things. Here this idea is further elaborated. While humans need to prevent destructive fires, they can, at the same time, make use of fire for lighting. Similarly, while we guard against calamities caused by water, we can also make use of water in the irrigation of fields. These examples show how humans can make use of their environment for their own benefit. At this level of human affairs there are no moral issues.

But when he talks about the relationships between humans themselves, Liu Yü-hsi presents a more moralistic outlook. Righteousness and rites maintain a

\[29\] The translation of this line may cause some ambiguity. Yang, in this context, probably refers to the warm season of the year. Likewise, yin should refer to the cold season of the year.

\[30\] Literally the word hai means only some kind of harm. Due to the parallel structure with the next line, it makes more sense to interpret this term as calamity caused by water.

\[31\] Literally, the word "k'uan" means "to hollow." This line seems to refer to the making of tools by wood.

\[32\] LYHC, p. 68.
proper social order. Liu has already stated that the human way is in laws and regulations, and it is clear that these are established on a Confucian moral foundation. To Liu, a system of laws and regulations based on Confucian moral values plays a central role in maintaining the stability of the human world. In addition, the system also determines whether or not people can understand the way of humans. By presenting three different scenarios of how well laws and regulations are followed by the people in the human world, Liu attempts to show how one might or might not be confused about the relationship between Heaven and Humanity.

The first of these three scenarios demonstrates how one would not attribute one's life experience to Heaven were the law to be strictly enforced in the human world:

Humanity can surpass Heaven in the [area] of law. When the law is strictly enforced, then right is the commonly accepted right, and wrong is the commonly accepted wrong. People under Heaven, who follow the way will certainly be rewarded. If they go against [the way] they will certainly be punished. In the case of those who ought to be rewarded, even if they are honored as one of the Three Senior Statesmen, and are given ten thousand chung in salary, these actions are all said to be proper. Why? It is because they have done good deeds. In the case of those who ought to be punished, even if their clans and those to whom they are related are exterminated, or they submit to the cruelty of swords and saws, all these actions are said to be proper. Why? It is because they have done evil deeds...Prosperity can be obtained by goodness, and calamities can be encouraged by evil acts. How can [these] things be interfered with by Heaven?

Clearly, it is because of law, Liu contends, that human beings are capable of surpassing nature. The law should be set up in accord with the Way of human beings, and the function of the this Way is manifested as right and wrong, but it is

33Chung is an ancient measurement equal to four pecks (tou).
34LYHC, p. 68.
based on the standard of right and wrong that humans can establish laws. Thus when one follows the law, one is also following the Way of Humanity. Hence, the law, as a code of behaviour, is situated immediately between human beings and the Way of Humanity, and without such a code human beings will probably lose their Way. But what kind of standard is this law? As we have already indicated, righteousness and rites form the basis of such a standard, and are tied to good and evil deeds.

Of course, when Liu propounds that "in the case of those who ought to be punished, even if their clans and those to whom they are related are exterminated...all these action are said to be proper," placing strong emphasis on laws and regulations, one tends to see in him a strong legalist tendency. It is true that there are legalist elements in Liu's thought, but I do not think that these elements play a dominant role. This is because Liu had always emphasized the idea that law (fa) must be closely associated with moral values.35

When he talks about a worst case when the law is greatly relaxed, Liu writes:

...right and wrong change places. Reward is always given to the deceitful, and punishment is always given to the honest. When righteousness is unable to restrain the powerful, and punishment is insufficient to humble

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35For a discussion of the political ideas of Shang Yang and Han Fei, two Legalist thinkers, see Hsiao Kung-chuan, A history of Chinese political thought. (Translated by F.W. Mote. vol. 1: from the beginnings to the sixth century A.D. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 368-424. For example, Hsiao has indicated that "...Han Fei Tzu not only placed ethics beyond the scope of politics, but he also regarded personal ethics and political needs as mutually incompatible, and attacked the former." See ibid., p. 386. Hsiao Kung-chuan has also provided this statement on the basic difference between the political thought of Confucianism and Legalism: "Theoretically, there was a basic difference between Confucian and Legalist political thought. The Confucians set up the welfare of the people as the goal of government, whereas the Legalists regarded the interest of the ruler as paramount..." See his "Legalism and autocracy in traditional China," (in Tsing-hua Journal of Chinese studies, new series IV, no. 2, 1964, pp. 108-121), p. 114.
the criminals, then the tools on which humanity relies to surpass Heaven are completely lost.36

Law provides one with a sense of right and wrong. It is closer to a moral code than to a penal code. Hence, when people are confused, not only is righteousness unable to restrain the powerful from acting improperly, but also even with strong punishment, criminals will not be afraid. A natural consequence of this is that when right and wrong are confused, the Way of Humanity is also confused, and at this time an individual tends to attribute his success and failure in life to Heaven's will.

Liu Yü-hsi opens the second part of his essay with an example to show his ideas regarding the relative superiority of Heaven and Humanity:

Now the travellers, in a group, arrive in the wilderness, and they seek a resting place in the green forest, and they drink from rivers and springs. It is certain that the strong and the powerful will take precedence there. Even the sagacious cannot compete with them. Is this not a case where Heaven is superior? When the group arrives at a city, they seek shelter under the decorated rafter (house), and feast themselves upon sacrificial feasts. It is certain that the sagacious will take precedence there. The strong and the powerful cannot compete with them. Is this not a case where Humanity is superior?...So I said: "When [a sense of] right and wrong exists, even when one is in the wilderness, Humanity's principle is superior. When [the sense of] right and wrong is lost, even if one is in a [civilized] state, the principle of Heaven is superior. In this way, Heaven does not intend to be superior to Humanity. Why? When Humanity does not govern [properly] then things will be attributed to Heaven...37

This example further clarifies Liu's ideas concerning Heaven and Humanity. In the first part of the example, Liu presents a scenario of how people compete with each other in a totally uncivilized environment. In the wilderness, when the

36LYHC, p. 68.
37LYHC, pp. 69-70.
norms of human society no longer prevail, people compete with each other under the laws of nature. Moral values then play no role in the behavior of people. This idea may echo Hsün Tzu's concept of human nature. Thus, when Liu asks rhetorically "Is this not a case where Heaven is superior?" we are quite sure that Heaven, to Liu, refers simply to the state of nature, in which the essential qualities of human beings, the sense of right and wrong, are lost. Of course, if this sense of right and wrong cannot be maintained, particularly by laws and regulations, as Liu Yü-hsi might contend, then human society is no different from the uncivilized environment that Liu had depicted in the passage above.

When the situation is reversed so that the travellers arrive in a civilized state, moral values serve as the standard that determines relationships between people, and these values help to maintain a proper social order. In this case, humans are superior. This superiority results from human beings' ability to follow their own Way, and not that of Heaven's. In other word, humans can only surpass Heaven (Nature) when they can control their "animal" quality. Whether or not humans are superior, depends on humans themselves. Heaven never "attempts" to subdue Humanity, or "tries" to be superior. That is why "Heaven does not intend to be superior to Humanity." This phrase seems to imply that Heaven is unconscious, and this fact balances the problem of using the word sheng, which, as we have indicated earlier, connotes a sense of consciousness. Also, from this example, Liu makes it quite clear that Humanity's relationship with Heaven depends on Man's actions alone. When people govern themselves properly, they are superior to

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38Hsün Tzu's idea that human nature is "evil" is a well-known issue in the history of Chinese thought. Often, Hsün Tzu's and Mencius' conceptions of the nature of human have been viewed as the diametrical opposite of those of pre-Ch'in Confucanism. For a discussion of Hsün Tzu's idea, see Benjamin Schwartz, The world of thought in ancient China, pp. 291-302. Chang Heng has provided an interesting argument that these two thinkers' ideas of man's nature are not, in fact, in conflict. See his "Hsün Tzu tui-jen ti jen-chih chi-ch'i wen-t'i," in Wen-shih-che hsieh-pao, vol. 20 (June 1971), pp. 175-217.
Heaven. When they do not, then Heaven is superior, or, more correctly, Humanity is submerged in the current of natural phenomena.

The next task that Liu takes up is to explain why, since the time of antiquity, people have attributed their success or failure in life to Heaven. Liu's answer to this question is very simple. He believes that this is solely caused by people's ignorance. In explicating this he again makes use of the example of travelling. Instead of travelling on land, however, this time the people in Liu's example are travelling on water:

When a boat is travelling on the Wei river, Tzu river, I river, and Lo river, its swiftness and slowness depend on human beings. Its arrival and departure depend on human beings. The angry roar of the wind cannot incite great waves. The upstream flow of current cannot rise so high that it can overwhelm one. If it happens that there is a swift and safe voyage, it is due to human beings. If it happens that the boat overturns and runs aground, it is likewise due to human beings. People inside the boat never once speak of Heaven. Why? Because the reason (li) [why things happen in such a way] is clear. For the boat that travels on the Yangtze, Yellow river, Hui river, and the oceans, its swiftness and slowness cannot be predicted in advance. Its arrival and departure cannot be ascertained. A wind that makes the branches whistle can create a maelstrom, and [large] clouds with the shape of a carriage's canopy can make manifest strange phenomena. If it cross quietly, this is due to Heaven. If it sadly sinks, this is likewise due to Heaven. Those who are in the boat, never for once say [that this is due to] human beings. Why? Because the principle (li) [why things happen in such a way] is obscure.

Here we see a picture of human beings confronting the world of nature. When travelling on small rivers, where the waters are calm, human beings have the power to bring themselves safely across the water. Because it is within the ability

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39 The Wei and Tzu river are in modern Shangtung, and the I and Lo are in modern Honan. These four rivers, compared with the Yangtze and Yellow rivers, are much smaller in size.
40 LYHC, p. 70.
of travellers to control their destiny in these navigable conditions, they never attribute their successful crossing to Heaven. However, when travelling in the rough sea and big rivers, travellers are overwhelmed by the power of nature. People are confused and scared; they do not know why things happen in such a way. The outcome of travelling, crossing successfully or sinking, is therefore attributed to Heaven.

In the previous example, when Liu talks about people travelling in different environments -- civilized and uncivilized -- he stresses the importance of moral values. In the present example, the travellers are in a state of motion. It is important for us to point out the dynamic nature of Liu's second example, because it enhances our understanding of an important concept that Liu employs later to characterize the structure of the phenomenal world -- shih (conditions).

After his second example Liu makes a more important point, attempting to establish a general theory that explains why things happen in a certain way. He chooses to use two highly abstract and ambiguous concepts -- shu (numerical dimensions) and shih41 -- to formulate a general model that explains the basic mechanism behind all events in the phenomenal world. However, while Liu's envisioning of the laws of nature can be described with such a general model, Liu has yet to take accounts of the elements of contingency. Therefore, it is important

41Liu Yü-hsi never provides a clear definition to this two terms. Hence it is difficult to provide a precise translation of them. H.G. Lamont translates "shu" as "numerical dimensions." See his article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, pp. 76-77. Chen Yu-shih renders it as "numerical determinism." See her Images and ideas in Chinese classical prose. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 191, n. 14. The literary meaning of shu is "number," and, as we shall see later, Liu's usage of the term shu does carry a certain conotation similar to that of the word "number." Hence, for the convenience of our discussion, we will translate it as "numerical dimension." As to the term "shih," Lamont translates it as "actual condition." See p. 77 of part II of his article. We will translate this term simply as "condition."
for us to make clear the way in which Liu attempts to explain why, under identical conditions, outcomes may nonetheless be different.

Using a dialogue format, Liu begins with the question as to why events under similar situations do not necessarily result in similar outcomes:

The questioner said: "I saw boats crossing [the water] together. The wind and water [conditions] were the same, [and there were no other factors involved]. However, some sank and some did not. If it is not because of Heaven, then what is responsible for these [discrepencies]?" It is answered that: "Water and boats are two things. When things are joined together, it is certain that shu (numerical dimensions) exists between them. When shu exists, then shih (condition) is formed between them. If one boat sinks and one boat crosses safely, it happens because they match their shu, and they seize on (ch'eng) their shih, and that is all. This shih is created when shu is attached to things; it is like shadow and echo. That which originates from slowness, has slow shih. Hence human beings are capable of understanding it. That which originates from quickness, has swift shih. So it is difficult to understand..."42

Shu and shih constitute a pair of concepts, Liu contends, that can explain all the events in the world.43 A basic presupposition of this model that Liu posited in this passage is that shu must exist between two or more objects because "when

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42LYHC, pp. 70-71.
43In an essay titled "Kuan po" ("Observing gambling") Liu presents a rather different view of the relationship between shu and shih. Commenting on an event in which Liu's friend lost both a dice game and a chess game, Liu writes: "...As to these two (dice and chess game), how could any shu exist among them (winning and losing)? It is only because the shih that they differ..." See LYHC, p. 246. It is difficult to account for this difference in Liu's view of the pair of concepts (shu, shih). However, as Lamont as pointed out, in a preface of a poem to a monk called Wei-liang, Liu Yü-hsi expounds the "same theory about the nature of Heaven as he did in the Tien Lun." In this preface, Liu wrote: Those who observe Heaven by its outward appearance say, "It is like Ch'ien and strong; it is vast and high." Those who look up to Heaven in accordance with its numerical value (shu) say, "Those used are forty-nine." Heaven, in fact, because it has form (hsing) cannot escape from its numerical value... See LYHC, p. 403. Translation is taken from Lamont's article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," part II, p. 51.
things are joined together, there is certainly the *shu* between them." This *shu* hence provides a way to describe the interrelationship between various entities in the phenomenal world. As we have indicated in chapter two, Liu shows a profound interest in the *Book of Changes*, particularly in the years after 805. One specific characteristic of this classic is its emphasis on numbers.44

H.G. Lamont's interpretation of the term *shu* as "in some sense like the neo-Confucian concept of "principle" (*li")"45 seems quite reasonable too. Of course, the usage of the term *li* in Liu's times was quite different from its usage during the Sung. Liu does use the term *li* in his essay, but it refers to the basic reason behind things.46 However, in the first part of the essay, Liu uses the term *shu* to mean something similar to "principle" (*li*).47 This shows again the difficulty in the study of this essay because of imprecision in Liu's use of language.

Let us return now to our discussion of the passage. On the surface, *shu* and *shih* seem to determine totally the outcome of all events. But since Liu is trying to answer the question of why under similar conditions some boats cross successfully and some sink, the way in which Liu characterizes the pair (*shu, shih*) still appears to be unable to answer the question posed at the very outset. Liu only discusses the

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44 For a discussion of a possible connection between the concept *shu* and the *Book of Changes*, see Lamont's article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven," pp. 50-54. In particular, on p. 54, Lamont points out that the idea that *shu* must exist between things may be inspired by a phrase in the chapter "The Way of Heaven" in *Chuang Tzu*. See *Chuang Tzu chin-chu chin-i*, p. 394. This phrase is in a story about a wheelwright explaining the subtlety of his skill. There, the term *shu* refers to something like "method" or "technique," which is, of course, quite different from Liu's usage. However, Lamont contends that "it is possible that when Liu uses *shu* as 'number' with this same phrase lifted from *Chuang-tzu*, he is trying to express a similar idea about the subtle numerical relationship between things."

45 See his article, "An early ninth century debate on Heaven." part II, p. 47.

46 Liu uses this term *li* in the example of people travelling by water.

47 *LYHC*, p. 68.
mechanism behind the phenomenal world, but he does not explain why, under the same wind and water conditions, some boats, assuming these boats are of similar make, cross safely and some sink.

According to Liu, when two or more things are brought together, shu automatically arises between them. In our example, it arises between the boat and water. This concept of shu represents the rule behind the dynamic of "movement" between the elements within the group. However, it does not constitute the actual force which determines the "movement" of the elements. Thus Liu employs the concept shih. It gives rise to such "movement." This concept resembles that of the concept of "field of potential" in physical science. When the boat is travelling on the Yangtze river, say, the shih is fast, hence the boat will travel at a high speed because the speed of water is swift. When the shih is slow, the boat will travel at a low speed. The inability of humans to comprehend the principle behind these events, for Liu, explains why people believe that it is Heaven that controls their fate.

But, at a deeper level in the human world, we have to take into account the human factor. Shu and shih do not necessarily dictate the occurrence of all events in the world. When considering human being's relationship to their environment, it is the triplet -- shu, shih, humanity -- that constitutes all the determinating factors. That is perhaps why Liu says, "If one boat sinks and one boat crosses safely, [it is because they] match their shu, and seize on (ch'eng) their shih. The term "to seize on the shih" (ch'eng-shih) carries with it a clear sense of consciousness. Since shu and shih exist objectively, it must be human beings who "seizes on the shih." The implication of this is that humanity does play a role in its own destiny. With such an understanding, one can answer the question of why, under a similar conditions, some boats can cross safely, while some cannot. Those who understand the
principles that are behind the operation of natural phenomena can act in accordance with shih, so that calamity can be avoided.

In this way, shu and shih help to explain human affairs. Liu then further extends his theory to the realm of Heaven. He reduces Heaven to an entity that is also under the governance of this basic principle of objective existence:

The questioner said: "You say that shu exists and then shih will be created, and this is not because of Heaven. Is it really true that Heaven is controlled by shih?" It is answered that: "The shape of Heaven is constantly round and its color is constantly blue. Its revolution can be measured. Dawn and dusk can be measured by [a sun-dial]. Is this not because of the existence of shu? Heaven is always lofty and never low; it is always in motion and never comes to a halt. Is this not in accord with shih? Now Heaven, having received its form as lofty and great, cannot return to something small and low. Once it rides on the ch'i in motion, it cannot rest for even a short moment. Hence, how can it escape from shu and transcend shih? So I said with certainty: "The reason why the myriad things are inexhaustible is [because] they are superior to each other and, also, each makes use of the other and that is all. Heaven and Humanity are the greatest among the myriad things."48

Obviously, Heaven, under this consideration, is no longer an omnipotent entity. It is restricted, like Humanity, by shu and shih. Its shape and color are fixed, as is its path of motion. It follows the same set trajectory every day. Moreover, it is within the power of Humanity to measure the dimensions of Heaven and its period of revolution.49 It is not up to the Heaven to determine its own form, and therefore there is nothing mysterious about Heaven.

48LYHC, p. 71.
49This idea of the measurability seems to suggest that Liu Yü-hsi did envisioned a "numerical" dimension in his coining of the concept shu. If this is the case, then we can see some parallels between this concept of shu with Plato's useage of numbers to describe the cosmic order. For a discussion of this aspect of Plato's thought, see Donald J. Munro, The concept of Man in early China. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 52-58.
In Liu's characterization of Heaven, the term shu seems to refer to some kind of numerical dimensions. It is the measurability of Heaven -- its circumference and its period of revolution -- that Liu is talking about. Even its shape - round - and its color - blue - are perceived as constant and unchanging.

We can also see in this passage the possible influence of the Han philosopher Wang Ch'ung (27-100?), when Liu says that Heaven, "having received its form as lofty and great, cannot return to something small and low." In the chapter "Wu-hsing" (Formless), Wang Ch'ung writes: "Human beings, upon receiving the primordial ch'i from Heaven, each receive the fate of long or short life....When the capacity and shape [of a person] is formed, he cannot return to something smaller or greater."50 In this chapter, Wang Ch'ung repeatedly expounds the idea that humans should not pursue immortal life, basing his argument on the above idea that our capacity and shape are totally predetermined and it is impossible to change them. Although Wang does not use this idea to discuss anything other than humans, it seems quite possible that Wang's idea did exert a certain impact on Liu.

Compared to those of Liu Tsung-yüan and Han Yü, Liu Yü-hsi's arguments in his essay are the most sophisticated. At the beginning of the essay, we have already noted, Liu confines Heaven and Humanity within the realm of form and shape. Such a confinement of Heaven within the same realm as Humanity paves the way, at the least, for Liu's thesis statement that "Humanity and Heaven are mutually superior to each other." But this leaves the realm of formlessness unexplored. Hence, Liu proceeds to deal with this aspect:

The questioner said: "If Heaven is really unable to escape from shu because it has form, in the case of those that are without form, how are you going to account for their shu?" It is answered that: "What you have called 'formless,' is it not the same as emptiness? Emptiness is the subtlest and smallest of forms. [In its substance], it is not [a solid thing which

provides] an obstacle to things, and in its function, it constantly relies on the existence of things. It must rely on things before it manifests [itself in form]. [If one] constructs a house, the height and width are embedded in its interior. In making of utensils, the forms of compasses and squares emerge from within. When sounds are produced, they are large and small, but echoes cannot exceed them. When sundials are set up, some may be bent, and some straight. But their shadows cannot surpass them [in length]. Is this not the shu of emptiness? When the eyes see [things], it is not because they [emit] light. They rely on the sun, moon, and fire for light to exist. Those things which are called dark and gloomy, are unable to be detected by the eyes. The eyes of the fox, weasel, dog, and mouse, can they be said to be dark and gloomy? So I said that "seeing with the eyes, one can obtain rough image of forms. Seeing with one's intellect, one can comprehend the subtlely of forms. How is it possible that within Heaven and Earth there is anything that has no form? The 'formlessness' that was spoken of by the ancients refers to things that have no regular form, and that is all. They must rely on other things, before they can be seen. How, then, is it possible that they can escape from shu?"\[51]n

In the above passage, Liu Yû-hsi does not actually deny the concept of emptiness (k'ung). What he does is first equate formlessness with emptiness. Then, he asserts that emptiness is not actually the same as absence, but it is the subtlest of all forms. For some, Liu's passage shows a clear anti-Buddhist sentiment.\[52] It appears to me more of a structural tool for the completion of his arguments than an anti-Buddhist polemic. Without his assertions concerning formlessness, the whole of Liu's argument simply cannot stand up to serious challenge. Liu claims that the complement of our physical universe is a complete void, and that Heaven and Earth thus constitute the whole of our universe; nothing existing beyond them. With this argument, Liu covers the whole range of cosmological phenomena, including those that are not comprehended or detected simply by one's sensory powers.

\[52]For an example, see Hou Wai-lu, Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih, vol. 4, part I, pp. 373-374.
The idea of k'ung (sunyata) in Buddhist philosophy is very different from the kind of emptiness that Liu is talking about in this passage. The central doctrine of Buddhist philosophy, k'ung, rejects the ontological existence of being. Hence, the whole of the phenomenal world, arising as a result of causality, is illusory in nature. But Liu's argument is aimed at a rather different direction. He only focuses his argument on things that are with or without physical forms. His arguments contain no ontological speculation at all. Thus, it is not plausible to make a conclusive statement as to whether or not there is any anti-Buddhist message conveyed in this passage.

Other critics remark that the idea that "formlessness" ("wu-hsing") or "emptiness" ("k'ung") is that which has no regular form is adopted from Taoist philosophy. This seems a bit far-fetched, since the term "wu-chang-hsing" ("without regular form") is not a specialized term whose origin can be firmly located in specific texts.

In the last part of the "T'ien Lun," Liu Yü-hsi begins with the assertion that the phenomenal world can be understood by the same principle. Therefore, the world must be completely intelligible:

Someone said: "Among those who talked about astronomical phenomena in the ancient times, there were the theories of hsüan-yeh, hun-t'ien, and the book of Chou-pei." There was [also] Master Tsou (Tsou Yen), who

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54According to an annotation in the biography of Chang Heng in HS 59:1898, these were the major schools of thought on astronomy in ancient times. The hsüan-yeh theory contended that the various stars and planets floating randomly in infinite space. However, the writings of this school are no longer extant. The school of Hun-t'ien believed that Heaven and Earth were like an egg. Enclosing the Earth, Heaven was like an eggshell. Half of Heaven was above Earth, while half was below. The Earth was just like the egg yolk. The north and south poles were fixed to the two opposite ends of Heaven, and the planets and stars revolved around the axis joining these two poles. Chou-pei refers to the Chou-pi suan-ching, in Chi'en Pao-chung ed. Suan-ching shih-shu. 2 vols. Peking:
taught that Heaven is lofty and distant, and it is outstanding and extraordinary. Now, for what you have said [about Heaven], is there any theory that you use for a basis?” It is answered that: “I am not the disciple of these people. In general, for those things that belong to the realm of shu, one can extrapolate from small things to the large, and they must be in accordance. Human affairs must also be in accordance with those of Heaven. Examining things based on [such] a principle, [we see that] the myriad things can be understood by the same principle.55

In this passage, Liu dissociates his conception of Heaven from that given in the ancient theories. They cannot provide a clear explanation of the various events in the phenomenal world with any degree of regularity. The occurrence of events may appear to be random, and even chaotic. However, because of his a belief in a basic principle (shu) underlying everything in the world, Liu posits that all phenomena can be understood by a process of extrapolation. Through such a process, the regularity of the theory can be guaranteed. This is perhaps the major thrust of Liu Yü-hsi’s conception of the world. Everything is embedded in a matrix of correlations. In a sense, all things exist in a closed temporal-spatial continuum.

Liu’s emphasis on regularity is further made clear in the next passage by some examples:

Humans have [skin] complexion, eyes, ears, nose, teeth, hair, chin, and the pureness and fineness of hundreds of parts of the body; however, they originate from the kidneys, intestines, heart, and the stomach. The Three Illuminations (sun, moon, and stars) of the Heaven, hanging up high in

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Chung-hua shu-chü, 1963. This text is still extant. It is full of numerical measurements of the phenomenal world. Of course, it also provides a theory of what Heaven and Earth are like. For example, it theorizes that Heaven is like a canopy and Earth is like a chess board. Interestingly, this book emphasizes the importance of numbers (shu), and the measurability of the phenomenal world. It says nothing about whether or not Heaven is omnipotent. Hence, it is difficult to tell why Liu rejects the merits of this text. A more detailed discussion of some of these theories can be found in Joseph Needham, et al. Science and civilisation in China. (5 vols. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1962), vol. 3, pp. 210-224.

55LYHC, p. 72.
space, are the divine brilliances of myriad phenomena. However, their origins are in the mountains, rivers, and in the five phases. Turbidity is the mother of clearness; heaviness is the origin of lightness. When the two positions (yin and yang) are set, they make use of one another. Their breathing out turns into rain and dew; their belching turns into thunder and wind. By riding on the ch'i, [things] are created, and the various characteristics are put in proper order. The category of planted things is called 'planted life' (sheng), and the category of moving things is called 'animal life' (ch'ung). The greatest among the forms of naked animal life is the wisest one. He can uphold the principle of Humanity, and is able to mutually surpass Heaven. He can make use of the advantages of Heaven to establish human order. If the order [of Humanity] declines, then [he] will return to his origin.56

The external physical composition of the human body is linked directly to its internal organs. Similarly, the Heavenly objects -- sun, moon, and stars -- are directly linked to the mountains and rivers on earth. It is interesting to note also that Heaven, in this characterization, originates from Earth, and, furthermore, it is governed by the operations of the five phases. In this interrelationship between various objects, the only connection between Heaven and Humanity is ch'i.

Humans are created from ch'i, just like other living things. But human beings differ from others because their intellect surpasses that of other living things. Thus they can make use of their environment to create benefical living conditions for themselves. In this context, the "human order" that Liu talks about does not exclude realms of existence other than that of human beings. On the contrary, it is within the totality of existence which all kinds of creatures inhabit that human beings must establish their own order. This is because humans are not disconnected from other form of life.

In closing his argument, Liu raises a few examples concerning the ancients:

56LYHC, pp. 72-73.
57Here Heaven seems to be equivalent to sky, instead of a synonym for nature.
The documents of Yao and Shun begin by stating "On investigating ancient times," but not by stating "on investigating Heaven." The poems about Yu and Li start by referring to the Lord-on-High (Shang-ti), but do not speak of human affairs. In the court of Shun, the worthy and virtuous (yilan-k'ai) were employed. It was said that they were employed by Shun, but not by Heaven. Under Kao-tsung of Yin, the world was resurrected from disorder. He realized the worthiness of [Fu] Yüeh, but he claimed that [his position] was bestowed by the Lord. It was once difficult to deceive the people of Yao by spirits. When the mores of the Shang were corrupted, Heaven was used [by the rulers] to control the people. From this, I can ask: "Does Heaven really interfere in human [affairs]?"

Liu presents in this passage two very different sets of ancient rulers. Yao and Shun were two ancient sage-kings, whereas Yu and Li were two tyrants. With the supports of Confucian classics like The Book of Documents and The Book of Poetry, Liu reasserts the idea that when the human world is properly governed, as in the times of Yao and Shun, people will not attribute their well-being to Heaven. On the contrary, when the world is in chaos, as in the times of Yu and Li, people are confused, and thus they believe that it is Heaven that causes all their sufferings. In addition, Liu's quoting the Confucian classics not only helps to prove his case,

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58This refers to the beginning lines of the chapters "Yao-tien" and "Shun-tien" in the Book of Documents. See Shih-san-ching chu-shu, vol. 1, p. 118c and 125c. It seems that Liu lifts these line without being aware of the fact that they do not reject the existence of an omnipotent deity controlling human affairs. In fact, in the "Shun-tien" we can find a clear reference to the Lord-on-High. See ibid., p. 126b.
59Yu and Li are two famous tyrants in Chinese history. The two poems about them are "Wan Liu" in Shih-san-ching chu-shu, vol. 1, p. 92a, and "Pan" in ibid., pp. 548c-550b.
60Yüan-k'ai refers to the sixteen clans that were employed by Shun. For this allusion, see SC 1:35. In this passage, it refers generally to people of virtue and ability.
61There seems to be a corruption of the text. Chung-tsung should be Kao-tsung. This is alluded to the chapter "Yüeh Ming" ("The charge of Yüeh") in the Book of Documents. This chapter begins with a story that Kao-tsung saw a virtuous man call Fu Yüeh in his dream. Hence he dispatched people to search for him. Finally, he found Yüeh in the place called Fu-ya. Kao-tsung therefore made Yüeh his minister. See Shang-shu cheng-i, in Shih-san-ching chu-shu, vol. 1, p. 62b.
62LYHC, p. 73.
but it is also a conscious attempt to establish his theory of the relationship between Heaven and Humanity within the Confucian tradition.

The essay "T'ien Lun" is a highly structured philosophical discourse, despite a few defects in Liu Yü-hsi's use of language. Strangely, it seems to have exerted little impact upon later thought. Of course, Liu Tsung-yüan responded soon after reading this essay with some negative comments. The major reason why Liu Tsung-yüan had problems in agreeing with some of Liu Yü-hsi's arguments seems to relate to certain ambiguities in "T'ien Lun." Perhaps, it is also because the concerns of the two Lius were not identical. At any rate, the study of this work does enhance our understanding of Liu Yü-hsi's world view and the focus of his intellectual concerns.

There is no doubt that Liu opposes the idea that human affairs are determined by Heaven. Heaven is simply a synonym of Nature. This idea is echoed in a number of places in Liu's works. For example in a poem titled "A song of the otter" we read:

Upon catching fine fish, the otter believes that this is all because of Heaven's mercy.  
First offers it in sacrifice, not daring to eat.  
Holding the fish, it looks up to the mysterious blue.  
Standing up on the chilly beach like a man does,  
Its mind is one, its neck is straight.  
The fisherman thinks that it is a demon,  
and he throws stones at its throat.  
He calls his children to thread together the fishes and bring them back home

---

63Basically, Liu Tsung-yüan feels that most of the ideas in "T'ien Lun" can only serve as commentary on his essay "T'ien Shuo." There are some of Liu Yü-hsi's ideas with which he cannot agree. In particular, the idea of the mutual superiority of Heaven and Humanity is rejected by Liu Tsung-yüan.

In this satirical piece, Liu makes use of an allusion to the otter from the chapter "Monthly Ordinances" ("Yüeh-ling") in the Book of Rites. In contrast to the order of the natural world in which living things compete with each other for survival, Liu shows that the otter is killed because of its ignorance. The otter thinks that Heaven is moral and merciful. But in the end, because of such a belief, the otter becomes the food of the fisherman and his family. Near the end of the poem, Liu expounds clearly his thesis that Heaven is not responsible for the occurrence of the world's events, and it is pointless for us to expect any return from Heaven.

This poem was probably written when Liu was banished to Lang-chou during the years 805 and 814, which is also roughly the same period during which he wrote the "T'ien Lun." Clearly, it conveys a message that is consistent with that of the "T'ien Lun." We can also find other works which echo a similar message. Some of Liu's writings do reflect an opposite view, but these are quite obviously tinted with a strong sense of frustration as a result of his political downfall. Liu's
decline in political fortunes may have resulted in a sense of doubt about his political future, and even about his view of things. Nonetheless, the essay "T'ien Lun" still represents Liu Yü-hsi's most conscious and serious effort to outline his own world view, and, therefore, can serve as a pointer towards his major concerns in life.

We can detect two major themes in Liu's essay. The first concerns Liu's basic view of the phenomenal world. He presents a world of nature that is dynamic and well-regulated. The relationships between things in the universe are governed by a law that is founded upon the pair of concepts shu and shih. The behaviour of material things embedded in this highly complex matrix of interrelationship, is dictated, to a certain degree, by the "force field" that is created by the matrix. The term shih carries with it a definite dynamic aspect. Thus, while things are "trapped" within this rigid space, they are not at all static. They must "move."

The second theme, and the more important, stresses the idea that humans "can" control their own destiny. Shu and shih determine the basic operations of something, but they do not necessarily dictate the path of human action. Human beings can transcend this basic structure of existence, but, at the same time, exist inside it. Confined within a closed and well-regulated universe, humans are superior to all living things because of their intellect, and their ability to set up laws to regulate their own behaviour. These laws, based on Confucian moral values, enable human beings to understand their own world and, therefore, enable

you know that, beyond our capacity of hearing and seeing, there are mysteries that cannot be explained?....Our knowledge of things is small, [but] the world is vast; how can one comprehend the truth of things?" This clearly presents a rather different view of things. At any rate, it shows that one cannot expect complete consistency in Liu's writings.

70In the preface of "A rhapsody in questioning the Great Potter," we can find a clear sign of Liu's doubts about human situations. As a result, he attempts to question the "Great Potter", that is, the "Creator."
them to improve his own conditions of existence. With an understanding of the mechanism of how things operate, human beings can then seize upon situations in order to transform their world. In this way, Liu's overall conception of the universe is an "open" one. It is up to humans themselves to determine their own destiny.
Conclusion

Liu Yü-hsi died in 842, the second year of the Hui-ch'ang reign period (841-846). His life spanned seven decades, and he served a total of seven emperors in his lifetime. Liu had a highly successful career in the early part of his life. He passed both the chin-shih and the Po-hsüeh hung-tz'u examinations before the age of twenty-five, and gained fame as poet and essayist. He had also established ties with famous statesmen like Tu Yu and Ch'üan Te-yü. All these facts seemed to predict an exalted rank in his future political career. However, with the collapse of the 805 reform, Liu's career took a sudden turn for the worse. For the rest of his life, for nearly four decades, Liu was either banished far away from the court or barred from participating in any significant role in the central government. During this period of political idleness Liu continued to think and communicate with others, particularly those who suffered from similar political setbacks, concerning the state's affairs and philosophical issues.

In this study I have tried to make clear the main thrust of Liu Yü-hsi's thought. Through a study of his Confucian and Buddhist sentiments it is clear that Liu Yü-hsi always tried to exert himself in the world. The goal of such an exertion was to bring well-being to the people (chi-wu). This clearly stemmed from his strong affinity with Confucianism. His approach to achieve such a goal, as is outlined in his writings, can be summarized by the notion of Middle Way (chung-tao) or the Way of Great Centrality (ta-chung chih-tao). More specifically, the Middle Way implies a flexible approach to deal with worldly affairs. However, this advocacy of flexibility does not imply a trade-off of moral principles. To Liu, moral principles are the guiding principles of human behavior. Thus, while he stressed the importance of law in the running of state affairs, this law must be
based on Confucian values, and is created only for the purpose of bringing well-being to the people.

Spiritually, Buddhism played an important role in Liu's inner life. His association with Buddhist clerics can be traced back to his childhood years, but these kinds of activities increased after his banishment in 805. His attitude towards various Buddhist schools was positive in general. However, his affinity with Buddhism did not merely provide Liu consolation when he was in despair. Our discussion reveals that Liu also viewed Buddhism as a teaching to bring well-being to the people. It seems that Liu selected elements from various Buddhist schools that best fitted this major concern in his life. In this sense, Buddhism and Confucianism exist in a complementary fashion in Liu's thought.

Hence, while "Buddhism within and Confucianism without" does provide a basic characterization of Liu's intellectual outlook, we can further refine this basic model. Buddhism and Confucianism are not disconnected elements so that each takes charge of a separate dimension of Liu's system of thought. They are actually connected together and, according to Liu, should serve the same purpose of bringing well-being to the people.

This major concern of Liu can also be demonstrated by his famous philosophical dissertation, "T'ien Lun." In this essay, Liu presents a naturalistic view of Heaven. Liu basically perceives Heaven as Nature. He makes use of the two concepts, shu and shih, to explain the occurrence of various events in the phenomenal world. In this way, the world is in principle intelligible in all its parts. While the world is a naturalistic one, human beings are capable of "transcending" the force of nature, Liu contends, with the help of laws, to control their own destiny. This does not necessarily mean that Liu perceives a separation between Humanity and Heaven. Human beings are still part of nature. However, because humans are the "greatest among all living creatures," they are capable of
understanding the nature of things through their intellect. With such a capability, humans can then control their destiny.

With the concepts of shu (numerical dimensions) and shih (conditions), Liu Yü-hsi presents a well-structured and well-regulated universe. Humans, being part of this well-regulated universe, follow the force of nature. However, because humans are capable of understanding the basic principles behind the mechanism of the world, they can devise their own methods so that they can choose their own way while being embedded within this well-structured world. This method is a set of laws based on Confucian moral values. Hence, this implies that if human beings are ever able to "transcend" the force of nature and to create a proper social order, they must also create a well-structured and well-regulated society.

The central thesis of Liu's essay "T'ien Lun" actually focuses on the human realm. The goal of achieving a well-regulated society is, again, for the purpose of bringing well-being to the people. Therefore, the final message of this essay is consistently coherent with the major concern of Liu's Confucian and Buddhist sentiments.

Finally, a few words should be added concerning prospects for future research in light of this presentation of Liu Yü-hsi's thought. As I have already indicated in the introduction, a basic understanding of Liu's thought should provide us more materials to construct a larger and clearer picture of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement. As to the impact of Liu's thought, it seems that there is little evidence of its direct influence on others. However, as Lamont has suggested, Liu's concept of shu "may have been of some importance as a link between an earlier divination tradition and the numerology of the Neo-Confucians
Shao Yung (1011-1077) and Ts'ai Ch'en (1167-1230)..."1 Hence, this would be a possible direction in which to turn, for such research may shed light on our understanding of the connections between the mid-T'ang Confucian revival movement and Sung Neo-Confucianism.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Chinese Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTW</td>
<td>Ch'üan T'ang Wen</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTS</td>
<td>Chiu T'ang Shu</td>
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<tr>
<td>CYKWC</td>
<td>Ch'ên Yin-k'o Wen-chi</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCLWC</td>
<td>Han Chang-li Wen-chi Chiao-chu</td>
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<td>HS</td>
<td>Han Shu</td>
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<td>HHS</td>
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<td>Hsin T'ang Shu</td>
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<td>LTYC</td>
<td>Liu Tsung-yüan Chi</td>
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<td>LYHC</td>
<td>Liu Yü-hsi Chi</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Shih Chi</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Taisho shinshu daizokyo</td>
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<td>TCTC</td>
<td>Tzu-chih T'ung-chien</td>
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<td>TFKY</td>
<td>T'se-fu Yüan-kuei</td>
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<td>TT</td>
<td>T'ung Tien</td>
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<td>YTSC</td>
<td>Yüan Tz'u-shan Chi</td>
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Glossary

An-hui 安徽
An Lu-shan 安禄山
Ch'an 禪
chang 常
Chang-an 長安
Chang Chiu-ling 張九齡
Chang Heng 張衡
Chang Hung-chi 張弘靖
Chao 晒
Chao-Ch'ü ting 招屈亭
Chao Lin 趙濤
Chao K'uang 趙匡
Chao Kuang-han 趙光漢
Che-chiang 浙江
"Chiu chiu-nien fu" 讀九年賦
Che-hsi 浙西
Che-yu 浙右
chen 蕭
chen-ming 正名
chen-ti 真谛
chen-yen 真言
Ch'en Tzu-ang 陳子昂
Cheng (surname) 鄭
ch'eng (sincerity) 真
ch'eng (to seize upon) 乘
Chüeh-kuan lun
Ch'ün-su
chung (centrality) 中
chung 鍾
ch'ung 鍾
chung-ho 中
Chung-hsia 中夏
Chung Hung 中弘
Chung lun 中論
Chung-ni 中
Chung Shan 中山
Chung Shuo 中說
chung-tao 中道 中庸
Chung Yung 中庸
fa 法
Fa-hai 法海
Fa-hsiang 法相
Fa-jung 法融
Fang-yang 范陽
feng 風
fu 賦
fu-ku 復古
Fu-ya 傳涯
Fu Yueh 傳說
Fung Sui 預隨
hai 善
Han 漢
hsing (form)
Hsiung-nu
Hsü Ching-tsung
Hsü Kao-seng chüan
Hsüan
Hsüan-tsung
Hsüan-yeh
Hsüeh Ching-hui
Hsün Tzu
Hu-chou
Hua-yen
"Hua-yen yüan-jen-lun"
Huai
huang-chi
Hui-neng
Hui-yüan
Hun-tien
Hunan
I
I (river)
I-ching
Jao-chou
jen
Jen T'ang
Ju-chou
Ju-li
Kai-feng
Liu Tzu-hou
Liu Tzu-liang
Liu Yen
Liu Yü-hsi
Lu
Loyang
Lu
Lu Chi
Lu Chih
Lu Ch'un
Lu Hsiang
Lu Po
Lu Shan
lù-tsang
Lü Wen
"Lun fo-ku piao"
Ma-tsu Tao-i
Mao (surname)
mao
meng
meng-hsia
Meng-te
ming
Mo-k'o Chia-yeh
ni
ning
Niu Seng-ju
Niu-tou 牛頭
o-lung 愚龍
pa-ts'ui 拔萃
Pai-chang Huai-hai 百丈懷海
pai-hsing 百行
Pai-lun 百論
"Pan" 板
P'ang Ts'an 廣參
Pei-mang Shang 北芒山
Pei Shan 北山
Pei Shih 北史
Pei Tu 裴度
Peng cheng 彭城
Peng-yang ch'ang-ho chi 彭陽倡和集
p'i 正
pi 比
"Pien-I Chiu-liu lun" 辯易九六論
"P'ing ch'üan-heng fu" 評權衡賦
"Ping chung san-Ch'än-k'ö chien-wen yin-i hsieh-chih" 彭中三載宗見問因以薦之
Po-chou (in Kuei-chou) 播州
Po-chou (in Shangtung) 播州
Po Chü-i 白居易
po-hsüeh hung-tz'u 博學宏詞
sa-men 沙門
San-lun tsung 三論宗
Shan-hsi 山西
Shan-tung 山東
Shang  商
shang-sheng  上乘
Shang Shu  尚書
Shang-shu sheng  尚書省
shang-ti  上帝
Shang Yang  商鞅
Shao-chou  蘇州
Shao Yung  蘇頌
sheng  生
sheng  胜
shih (condition)  勢
shih-chung  時中
Shih Ching  詩經
Shih-erh-meng lun  十二門論
Shih P'in  詩品
Shih Shih  詩式
Shih Shih-kai  施士母
shih-tien  釋奠
shu (numerical dimensions)  數
Shun  順
"Shun-tien"  順典
Shun-tsung  順宗
Shun-tsung shih-lu  順宗實錄
Ssu  四
Ssu-ch'uan  四川
ssu-ma  司馬
Su-chou  蘇州
Wang Shu-wen
Wang T'ung
Wei (a state)
Wei (surname)
Wei (river)
Wei Chih-i
Wei Ch'ü
Wei Ch'un
Wei Hsüan
Wei Liang
Wei-shih
Wen
"Wen Fu"
Wen-hsin tiao-lung
"wen-i ming-tao"
"Wen Ta-chün fu"
wu
wu-chang-hsing
Wu-hsing (five elements)
"Wu-hsing" ("Without form")
Wu-hsing (place name)
"Wu-hsing chih"
Wu-t'ai
Wu-tsung
Wu Yuan-heng
ya
yang (to nuture)
Yang
Yang-chou
Yang Kuei-hou
Yangtze
Yao
"Yao-tien"
Yen (name of a mountain)
Yen (a surname)
Yen Hui
Yen-shih
yen-tieh-shih
Yi
Yin
yin-chih
Yin Shao
Yu
Yü
Yü-hsi
Yü-lan-pen ching
Yüan
Yüan Chen
Yüan Chieh
Yüan-ho
Yüan Hung
Yüan K'ai
Yüan Kao
Yüan-men
"Yüan Tao"
Yüan Yü
"Yüeh Chi"
yüeh-fu
"Yüeh-ling"
"Yüeh-ming"
Yung-chiao
Yung-chou
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