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0521419646 - Liu Tsung-yuan and Intellectual Change in T'ang China, 773-819

Jo-Shui Chen

Excerpt

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Introduction

In China, the study of the Confucian classics and the discourse on Confucian doctrine have been an uninterrupted tradition; China thus produced no Confucian “renaissance” in the sense of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian humanist Renaissance. However, this does not mean that Confucianism has always maintained a high degree of intellectual vitality. In premodern China, at the intellectual level, the longest and most profound decline Confucianism suffered occurred during the period from approximately the third to the tenth century, that is, from the disintegration of the Han empire to the start of the Sung dynasty. This was an epoch in which Taoism and Buddhism successively predominated. However, the situation was reversed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with the emergence of a tradition commonly referred to as Neo-Confucianism. The Neo-Confucian movement of the Sung (960–1279) not only marked a potent Confucian revival, but also established Confucianism as the mainstream of thought in China until the May Fourth Movement of the early twentieth century. Neo-Confucianism, indeed, is one of the few key intellectual breakthroughs in China. This book concerns an intellectual development in the middle of the T'ang dynasty (618–907) that had important bearings upon the origins of this breakthrough.

Neo-Confucianism, however, is a vague and controversial term; some clarification about its usage in this book is thus required. Generally speaking, there are three views on this issue. The first equates Neo-Confucianism with the so-called Learning of the Way (*Tao-hsüeh*), that is, the Sung–Yüan–Ming currents of Confucian thought in the areas of metaphysics, theories of human nature, and instructions on moral cultivation.¹ A prevailing assumption behind this view is that *Tao-hsüeh*

¹ This is the earliest established and most widely used meaning of Neo-Confucianism. For a recent example of this usage, see Daniel K. Gardner, “Modes of Thinking and Modes of Discourse in the Sung: Some Thoughts on the *Yü-lu* (“Recorded

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was the most original and representative intellectual current in Sung-Ming China. The second is a broader view, according to which Neo-Confucianism includes all the Confucian intellectual trends in the Sung and late imperial times that are related to *Tao-hsüeh* in one way or another. Neo-Confucianism with this definition thus can be said to encompass the whole Confucian tradition from the Sung to the end of the Ch'ing.² The third view holds that Neo-Confucianism is so ambiguous a notion that it is virtually useless in historical description. It should be replaced with other terms, preferably those actually used historically.³

In this book, "Neo-Confucianism" will be used, and it will designate the Confucian tradition in general from the middle of the Northern Sung throughout late imperial China. In other words, this usage is close to the second view just introduced. The following three points explain my considerations in taking this stance. First, many criticisms of the term "Neo-Confucianism" expressed in recent challenges to its legitimacy are valid. However, despite all its difficulties, "Neo-Confucianism" as a descriptive concept is valuable in at least one way: It can be used to represent a distinctive phase in Chinese intellectual history, the late imperial era during which Confucianism was the mainstream philosophy, and to show that this current of thought was different in some profound ways from older Confucian traditions. One may argue that in this sense "Neo-Confucianism" is too diffuse a rubric, which seems to include

Conversations") Texts," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 50:3 (August 1991), pp. 574-603, particularly n. 1 on p. 574. In China, the *Tao-hsüeh* tradition is better known as "Learning of Principle" (*li-hsüeh*). But this term did not emerge until the mid-thirteenth century, long after the formation of *Tao-hsüeh*, and was closely associated with one specific philosophic school (the Ch'eng I-Chu Hsi school). See Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Introduction," in Wm. Theodore de Bary and JaHyun Kim Haboush, eds., *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea* (New York, 1985), pp. 14-15; Hoyt Tillman, "A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship: Approaches to Examining the Differences Between Neo-Confucianism and *Tao-hsüeh*?" *Philosophy East and West*, 42:4 (forthcoming, October 1992).

- 2 The most notable advocate of this view is Wm. Theodore de Bary. See his "A Reappraisal of Neo-Confucianism," in Arthur F. Wright, ed., *Studies in Chinese Thought* (Chicago, 1953), pp. 81-111; "Introduction," in Wm. Theodore de Bary and JaHyun Kim Haboush, eds., *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea*, pp. 4-17. For a view emphasizing the continuity between Ch'ing scholarship and intellectualism and Sung-Ming Confucian philosophy, see Ying-shih Yü, "Some Preliminary Observations on the Rise of Ch'ing Confucian Intellectualism," *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, N. S., 11:1 and 2 (December 1975), pp. 120-9.
- 3 Hoyt Tillman argues forcefully for this position in his "A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship." This article and Wm. Theodore de Bary's "Introduction" also contain general discussion about various usages of the term "Neo-Confucianism." For a view similar to that of Hoyt Tillman, see Peter Bol, "*This Culture of Ours*": *Intellectual Transitions in T'ang-Sung China* (Stanford, Calif., 1992), chap. 1, sec. 4.

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any and every one in late imperial China who considered himself a Confucian.⁴ In the study of intellectual history, however, it is sometimes unavoidable to use one single term to characterize a lengthy period, which is inevitably complex. “The Enlightenment” is an established designation, but it certainly does not imply that all intellectuals in eighteenth-century France were *philosophes*.

My second point is that “Neo-Confucianism” seems an acceptable label for the post-T'ang Confucian tradition. Although *Tao-hsüeh* was but one of many Confucian intellectual currents in the Sung, the impact of this new type of thought or thinking on other Confucian-oriented intellectual activities, education, and popular culture apparently grew with the passage of time. Moreover, it appears to me that Neo-Confucianism was new in a more fundamental sense: It was concerned with and tried to answer a set of questions that were previously ignored by the Confucians. *Tao-hsüeh* was only the most notable product of this larger trend. Third, I would like to emphasize that this book is concerned with the character of the T'ang–Sung intellectual transition and with the origins of the Neo-Confucian tradition; it does not directly deal with Chinese thought in the Sung or later. Therefore, these points are neither an attempt to settle the controversy about the term “Neo-Confucianism,” nor an expression of my definite views on this issue. I define Neo-Confucianism as the Confucian tradition in the Sung and late imperial times solely for the purpose of using it as a working concept in my treatise. In addition, in this study, *Tao-hsüeh* will sometimes be referred to as “Neo-Confucian philosophy” or “Neo-Confucian metaphysical and moral philosophy.”

Sung Neo-Confucianism was not a sudden revolution; it stemmed from a long and complicated intellectual transition. It is a consensus among scholars that the origins of the Neo-Confucian tradition can be traced back, at the earliest, to the mid-eighth century, right at the middle point of the T'ang dynasty, when an interest in searching for the original Confucian spirit and the guidance of Confucian principles began to appear in several areas of intellectual activity. The most critical period for the development of this newly revived Confucianism into a lasting and viable intellectual tradition, it is also generally agreed, came in the first quarter of the ninth century. At that time, almost an entire generation of leading literary men, with varying degrees of devotion and in various ways, endeavored to advance the Confucian cause; its best-known and most-vocal champion is none other than Han Yü (768–824).

4 For this point, see Hoyt Tillman, “A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship.”

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My book will deal with this critical phase in the T'ang–Sung intellectual transition; specifically, it is an exploration of the thought and sentiments of Liu Tsung-yüan (773–819) and their relationship to the mid-T'ang Confucian revival. Before explaining what this work attempts to achieve and the reasons for my choice of this theme, I would like to make a few comments on our present knowledge about the mid-T'ang Confucian revival.

Modern scholarship has extensively examined three main topics concerning the mid-T'ang Confucian revival. The first is the early *ku-wen* (ancient prose) reform, initiated by a group of prose writers in the middle of the eighth century. The second is an innovative, interpretative form of classical studies, which occurred simultaneously with the early *ku-wen* movement but was unrelated to it; it was proposed by two then-obscure classicists: Tan Chu (724–70) and Chao K'uang (fl. 770–80).⁵ The principal significance of these two movements in intellectual history lies in the fact that they were the very forces inaugurating the mid-T'ang Confucian renewal, and studies on them have given us a clear picture of the initial stage of the Confucian revival.

The other issue having received close scholarly attention is the thought of Han Yü and, to a lesser extent, that of Li Ao (774–836), a literary follower of Han and a like-minded thinker.⁶ This is definitely a subject of cardinal importance. As is well known, Han was the indisputable leader of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival at its apex. But more central to the development of T'ang–Sung Confucianism, he was also a visionary one. Han not only defended and promoted Confucian values vehemently, but also challenged Buddhist and Taoist world views to the core – this proved to be the key motivating factor for the Confucian effort to start forging a new philosophy that could contend with Buddhist and Taoist metaphysics and ideas of spirituality. Li Ao was the most creative and accomplished T'ang thinker in this regard.

5 Since these two movements will be dealt with in much detail later in this book, I shall only give basic bibliographical information here. For some sound discussions on the early *ku-wen* movement, see Peter Bol, “*This Culture of Ours*,” chap. 4; Ch'ien Chi-po, *Han Yü chih* (Shanghai, 1957), chap. 1; Hayashida Shinnosuke, “Tōdai kobun undō no keisei katei,” *Nippon Chūgokugakkai hō*, 29 (October 1977), pp. 106–23; David McMullen, “Historical and Literary Theory in the Mid-Eighth Century,” in Denis Twitchett and Arthur F. Wright, eds., *Perspectives on the T'ang* (New Haven, Conn., 1973), pp. 331–41. Most studies on the scholarship of Tan Chu and Chao K'uang are in Japanese and Chinese. For a basic idea of it, see David McMullen, *State and Scholars in T'ang China* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 101–3.

6 The most systematic and comprehensive treatment of Han as a man of letters and ideas is Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton, N. J., 1986). For a thorough examination of Li Ao's thought, see Timothy Hugh Barret, “Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in the Thought of Li Ao” (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1978).

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Despite the contribution of modern studies, however, systematic and reliable knowledge of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival still eludes us. From the point of view of intellectual history, the primary inadequacy in our present understanding of this subject is that it is unbalanced. We know a great deal about a few things and very little about many others, and the few things that we know are not enough to tell the basic story. For example, the insights that the studies on the incipient *ku-wen* movement and the scholarship of Tan Chu and Chao K'uang can provide on the origins of Neo-Confucianism are quite limited, since the mid-T'ang Confucian revival did not grow into a major and independent intellectual movement until the early ninth century. Moreover, despite their leading roles in the Confucian movement of the early ninth century, the thought of Han Yü and Li Ao, as this book will show, was not very representative of the contemporary Confucian mentality. In other words, although the ideas of Han and Li more than anything else foreshadowed the Sung Confucian philosophy, they alone are far from being able to reveal the characteristic features of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival.

This work represents an effort to explore the character of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival through a study of Liu Tsung-yüan, another seminal Confucian intellectual figure in the time of Han Yü and Li Ao. Liu and Han together are actually remembered in the East Asian world as the two T'ang *ku-wen* master stylists.⁷ I will scrutinize all aspects of Liu's life that are related to the intellectual changes of his time. They include the social and cultural backgrounds of his family, his life and career, particularly his involvement in an abortive political reform, his views on the Confucian doctrine, his relationship with the *ku-wen* movement and the new canonical scholarship, his social and political criticism, and his sentiments and reflections regarding the private realm of human life. This is not an intellectual biography in the strict sense. My foremost goal is to try to shed more, and hopefully new, light on the mid-T'ang Confucian revival through an appreciation of Liu's life and thought. All issues will be examined in view of their connections to or implications for the nature and evolution of this Confucian revival; matters without direct bearing on this subject, such as Liu's poetic and prose art, will appear only as background when and if they are mentioned.

7 There are numerous studies of Liu Tsung-yüan by literary scholars and, to a lesser extent, by religion and philosophy scholars. But few major studies have been conducted from the viewpoint of intellectual history or the origins of Neo-Confucianism. For a comprehensive bibliography of Liu Tsung-yüan, see William H. Nienhauser, "A Selected Bibliography of Liu Tsung-yüan," *Shu-mu chi-k'an*, 20:1 (June 1986), pp. 205-43.

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Three reasons explain my selection of Liu Tsung-yüan as the focus of this study. First, since our understanding of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival is unbalanced, an in-depth study of another prime leader of this movement at its apogee seems helpful for improving that understanding. Second, Liu's concerns and interests covered nearly all facets of the Confucian revival in question. He is thus an unusually good individual case through which one may gain insight into the wider phenomenon of which it is a part. If "to see a world in a grain of sand" is possible, Liu is a grain of sand worth exploring.

Third, Liu's efforts as a Confucian thinker focused primarily on revitalizing Confucianism as a political philosophy, and this was a vision considerably different from that of Han Yü and Li Ao. More important, this book intends to demonstrate that Liu's Confucian ideal was far more representative than that of Han and Li in their own time. That is to say at least in the mid-T'ang, the yearning to rekindle and realize Confucian political ideals was more important as a source for the Confucian movement than was the endeavor to construct a Confucian moral and metaphysical philosophy to rival Buddhist and Taoist teachings. Liu's frame of mind was a traditional one according to which Confucianism governed only the social, behavioral aspects of human existence, whereas the inner, spiritual life was the domain of Buddhism or Taoism. This suggests that in essence the mid-T'ang Confucian revival was not a movement of new Confucianism; rather, it was chiefly a revival of old-fashioned Confucianism, yet in it a new type of Confucianism burgeoned. I believe that this treatise on Liu Tsung-yüan can well illustrate this basic feature of the mid-T'ang Confucian revival and hence add to our understanding of the origins of Neo-Confucianism.

Finally, I would like to note that I do not wish to reduce Liu Tsung-yüan to merely a constituent of an intellectual movement. Whenever possible, I shall seek to show that Liu was not just living for an intellectual cause; in fact, quite often, his responses to concrete social and personal situations gave life to a resurgent intellectual tradition.

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1

Literati and thought in the early and middle T'ang

Liu Tsung-yüan was born in the eighth year of the Ta-li era of Emperor Tai-tsung of the T'ang dynasty, most of which fell within the year A.D. 773. The year itself was not one of major historical significance, but the period around Liu's birth saw the most drastic changes and the most serious turmoil T'ang China had ever experienced. The catalyst of these changes was the An Lu-shan rebellion, which broke out in 755 and ended in 763. After this rebellion China became a politically divided land. The military and political forces supporting An Lu-shan and his followers continued to rule the northeastern provinces, where the rebellion had originated.¹ Many regional military commanders in the rest of China who had gained power during the court's effort to put down the rebellion, on the other hand, started asserting semi-independent status. These two combined factors greatly weakened the central government and resulted in almost incessant military revolts or threats of revolt.² On the social level, the rebellion dealt a grave blow to the prestigious Shan-tung aristocracy, whose principal base, the Lo-yang area, was destroyed,³ accelerating the overall decline of the aristocratic

1 The northeast (known as Ho-pei in the T'ang) was also culturally alienated from the mainstream of Chinese society. See Ch'en Yin-k'ò, *T'ang-tai cheng-chih shih shu-lun kao, Ch'en Yin-k'ò wen-chi* (Shanghai, 1980-2; hereafter abbreviated as *CYKWC*) 5, pp. 25-8; Edwin G. Pulleyblank, *The Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan* (London, 1955), pp. 75-81.

2 For a survey of T'ang military regionalism after the An Lu-shan rebellion, see C. A. Peterson, "Court and Province in Mid- and Late T'ang," in Denis Twitchett, ed., *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 3, part 1, *Sui and T'ang China, 589-906* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 464-560; Edwin G. Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion and the Origins of Chronic Militarism in Late T'ang China," in John Curtis Perry and Bardwell C. Smith, eds., *Essays on T'ang Society* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 49-59. The separatist challenges to the T'ang also contributed to the eunuchs' ascendancy at court, because emperors grew distrustful of the regular military and bureaucratic apparatus.

3 The famous mid-T'ang financial minister Liu Yen (715-80) gave a vivid report about the ravaging of this area in a letter to Yüan Tsai (d. 777), then the most powerful prime

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class, a process that changed the fabric of Chinese society forever. In addition, the devastation of the north by continuous fighting complemented the rise of the southeast as the national economic center, and this marked a fundamental shift in China's economic and social geography.

As one of the foremost writers and thinkers of his time, Liu Tsung-yuan participated in another vital change: the far-reaching Confucian revival movement, which first sprang up in the 740s and 750s and eventually led to the emergence of Neo-Confucianism in the Northern Sung. As a young intellectual and official in the metropolitan area in the late eighth century, Liu came under the influence of this movement in its initial stage, and later played a leading role at its apogee in the early ninth century. In order to appreciate fully the implications of Liu's state of mind and intellectual endeavors and those of his comrades, as this book sets out to do, it is necessary to describe first the main features of literati culture and intellectual trends in the early and middle T'ang.

Intellectual classes

The characteristic social structure of the Era of Disunion and of the Sui period, in which the aristocracy dominated the top levels of the political system and, more important, enjoyed deep-rooted social esteem, survived to the early and middle T'ang. In modern historiography, "Chinese medieval aristocracy" refers to the social group composed of the families and clans that for generations had occupied prominent social and political positions, in most cases from the early fourth century on. These families and clans were known during the T'ang as "old clans" (*chiu-tsu*), "noble clans" (*kuei-tsu*), "scholar clans" (*shih-tsu*), or "illustrious clans" (*ming-tsu*).⁴ In the early and middle T'ang, it is probable that the majority of notable intellectuals came from this aristocratic class, which generally valued education and culture.⁵

minister. See Liu Hsü et al., *Chiu T'ang shu* (Peking, Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 1975; hereafter abbreviated as *CTS*), 123:3512-13.

- 4 For those terms, see Utsunomiya Seikichi, "Tōdai kijin ni tsuite no ichi kōsatsu," in his *Chūgoku kodai chūseiishi kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1977), pp. 632-6; Ch'en Yin-k'o, *T'ang-tai cheng-chih*, p. 78; Imabori Seiji, "Tōdai shizoku no seikaku sobyō," *Rekishigaku kenkyū*, 9:11 (December 1939), p. 67. For a perceptive description of the main features of medieval aristocracy, see Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Aristocratic Families of Early Imperial China* (Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 2-33.
- 5 According to the estimate of Mao Han-kuang, 71% of the total *chin-shih* degree holders during this era were from aristocratic families. We should also bear in mind that the *chin-shih* examination was a major channel through which the literati of lower origins acquired high social and political status. Thus, even allowing for a certain degree of error in Mao's estimate, it is still safe to make the statement footnoted here. For Mao's

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Yet the T'ang aristocracy was far from a homogeneous entity. According to the theory of Liu Fang (fl. ca. 740–65), a mid-T'ang historian and genealogist, there were four regionally based aristocratic groups, each with its separate historical roots in the pre-Sui period of political division between north and south.⁶ The most powerful and prestigious of the four was the Shan-tung (East of the Mountains) aristocracy. This group comprised a number of great clans that had originated in the North China Plain, particularly in modern Hopei and Honan,⁷ and had stayed in the north during the pre-Sui period of non-Chinese rule to lead the native Chinese effort in coping with the alien regimes. During the Era of Disunion, generally speaking, these clans did not have connections with the military and political bloc that founded the Sui and T'ang dynasties, the “Kuan–Lung group,” whose power base was in the Wei River area (in modern Shensi).⁸ Consequently, in the early T'ang, not only did the Shan-tung aristocracy hold little share of political power, but its undisputed social prestige incurred the hostility and repression of the imperial house. In 659, for example, intending to curb this group's pretensions and influence, Emperor Kao-tsung prohibited intermarriage among members of ten, mostly Shan-tung, aristocratic lineages, though this only added to their self-conceit

estimate, see his “T'ang-tai t'ung-chih chieh-ts'eng she-hui pien-tung” (Ph.D. dissertation, National Cheng-chih University, 1968), pp. 259–60.

- 6 See Denis Twitchett, “The Composition of the T'ang Ruling Class: New Evidence from Tunhuang,” in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the T'ang*, pp. 50–1. Liu's original essay on this theory appeared in Ou-yang Hsiu et al., *Hsin T'ang shu* (Peking, Chung-hua shu-chü edition, 1975; hereafter abbreviated as *HTS*), 199:5676–80. See also *Ch'üan T'ang wen* (rpt. Taipei, 1965; hereafter abbreviated as *CTW*), 372:7a–11b. This is a thesis widely cited by scholars with approval.
- 7 In his “The Composition of the T'ang Ruling Class,” p. 50, Denis Twitchett identifies Shan-tung as modern Hopei. It is true that, in T'ang texts, as a geographical concept Shan-tung often means “East of Mt. T'ai-hang” and thus corresponds roughly to present-day Hopei. However, in connection with social grouping, Shan-tung actually stood for a much larger area. For example, both the T'ai-yüan Wang clan and the Ying-yang Cheng clan appeared in Liu Fang's list of the Shan-tung aristocracy (*HTS*, 199:5677). Yet T'ai-yüan is in modern central Shansi and Ying-yang in modern Honan. The reason for this discrepancy is that the designation of Shan-tung as the entire North China Plain plus most of modern Shansi Province was an old notion arising in the Warring States era (403–221 B.C.) and prevalent in the Han, and the T'ang people continued to use it when referring to Shan-tung aristocrats. For detailed discussions of this problem, see Chang Jung-fang, “Shih-lun T'ang-tai te Shan-tung yü Kuan-tung,” *Shih-huo yüeh-k'an*, 13:1–2 (May 1983), pp. 45–57; Hsing I-t'ien, “Shih-shih Han-tai te Kuan-tung Kuan-hsi yü Shan-tung Shan-hsi,” in his *Ch'in-Han-shih lun-kao* (Taipei, 1987), pp. 85–120. For a generally accurate explanation of “Shan-tung” as it is used in the term “Shan-tung aristocracy,” see also Howard J. Wechsler, “Factionalism in Early T'ang Government,” in Arthur Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the T'ang*, p. 89.
- 8 For the definition of “Kuan-Lung group,” see Ch'en Yin-k'o, *T'ang-tai ch'eng-chih*, pp. 12–19. For details, see also chap. 2, sec. 1.

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and to their adoration by society.⁹ Nevertheless, over time, especially after the reign of Empress Wu (684–704), they also became an important part of the ruling circle.¹⁰ Prior to the An Lu-shan rebellion, members of the most distinguished Shan-tung families, such as the Po-ling Ts'uis and the Chao-chün Lis, were already concentrated in the national political and cultural centers, that is, the areas of Lo-yang and, to a far lesser extent, Ch'ang-an.¹¹

The second aristocratic group, which shared many common traits with the Shan-tung aristocracy, was the Kuan-chung group. It included illustrious clans that had originated in the Ho-tung (modern southern Shansi) and the Kuan-chung (modern Shensi, particularly the Wei River valley) regions, and they, like the Shan-tung aristocrats, stayed in the north during the era of north–south division. Though powerful locally and highly cultured, these clans had never acquired nationwide prominence. Yet their political fortune changed when the Northern Wei (ruled by the Hsien-pi people) split into two kingdoms in 534 and a group of its military and political leaders established the

- 9 However, it should also be pointed out that the pressure from the central government did have some effect on the behavior of these families. At least for a short time after the court's ban on their intermarriage, they continued the practice but in a secret manner. See Liu Su, *Sui-T'ang chia-hua* (Shanghai, 1957), p. 19. For a concise description of the political and social status of the Shan-tung aristocracy in the T'ang, see Ho Ch'i-min, "T'ang-ch'ao Shan-tung shih-tsu te she-hui ti-wei chih k'ao-ch'a," in his *Chung-ku men-ti lun-chi* (Taipei, 1978), pp. 287–311.
- 10 According to Mao Han-kuang's statistics regarding the social background of T'ang officials, the Shan-tung aristocrats had already entered the government in large numbers at the beginning of the T'ang. (See his "T'ang-tai t'ung-chih chieh-ts'eng," pp. 147–51.) But this conflicts with descriptive information in historical texts. See Ch'en Yin-k'o, *T'ang-tai cheng-chih*, 77–8; idem, "Chi T'ang-tai chih Li-Wu-Wei-Yang hun-yin chi-t'uan," *CYKWC* 2, pp. 234–40; even Mao's own "Chung-ku Shan-tung ta-tsu chu-fang chih yen-chiu: T'ang-tai chin-hun-chia yü hsing-tsu-p'u," *Chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu-so chi-k'an* (hereafter abbreviated as *CYLY*), 54:3 (1983), pp. 22–39. The central problem with Mao's statistics, and the statistical approach in the study of ancient history in general, is that he did not, and due to the lack of materials was probably unable to, examine the individual cases of supposed Shan-tung aristocrats serving the early T'ang regime. Like other major illustrious medieval clans, the Shan-tung aristocratic clans were all huge ones; wide disparities existed in social status between various branches and families within a clan. Many Shan-tungese working for the early T'ang government were perhaps only nominal members of the Shan-tung aristocracy. This was certainly the case with the ancestors of a brother-in-law of Liu Tsung-yüan. See Jo-shui Chen, "The Ho-tung Liu Clan and the Family of Liu Tsung-yüan: Some Facts and Interpretations" (unpublished manuscript). For a more convincing discussion of this topic, see Patricia Ebrey, *Aristocratic Families*, p. 112.
- 11 This trend started perhaps in the late fifth and early sixth centuries, but accelerated during the T'ang. See Patricia Ebrey, *Aristocratic Families*, pp. 28, 91–3; Mao Han-kuang, "Ts'ung shih-tsu chi-kuan ch'ien-i k'an T'ang-tai shih-tsu chih chung-yang-hua," *CYLY*, 52:3 (1981), pp. 499–504.