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POLITICS AND FACTIONALISM:
K'OU CHUN (962-1023) AND HIS T'UNG-NIEN

by
Koon-wan Ho

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
COMMITTEE ON ORIENTAL STUDIES
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1990
As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Koon-wan Ho entitled "Politics and Factionalism: K'ou Chun (962-1023) and His T'ing-nien" and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Jing-shen Tao	8-3-90
Charles Hedtke

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Jing-shen Tao	8-6-90
Dissertation Director
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SIGNED: [Signature]
The name of K'ou Chun (962-1023) attracted my attention early in my youth. In those days when I enjoyed listening to the stories of the warriors of the Yang Family of Northern Sung, which were broadcasted every night from the Radio of Hong Kong, the upright minister K'ou Chun who patronized the Yang heroes whole-heartedly won my admiration already. When I studied Sung history in high school and college, I was further stricken by K'ou Chun's bold deed in the 1004 crisis. But until I entered the Graduate College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, I knew very little about K'ou Chun except the well-known event of Shan-yuan.

When I studied the power struggle between Chao P'u (921-991) and Lu To-hsun (935-986) for my M. Phil. thesis, I read the first hand materials of the political figures of early Northern Sung including K'ou Chun. After finishing my M. Phil. thesis on Chao P'u, I strongly felt that K'ou Chun would be my next target of study. K'ou Chun has been widely studied for his role in the 1004 crisis, but his career and his participation in factional strife have not been explored by historians. The study of K'ou Chun would possibly bridge an important gap in early Sung history left by historians.

When I came to Tucson in 1983 to continue my study, my
idea was encouraged by my mentor, Prof. Jing-shen Tao. Under his supervision, my hope of studying K'ou Chun materialized. In a seminar course supervised by Prof. Tao, I read a great deal of documents concerning the Northern Sung civil service examination which most civilian officials participated. I have also been greatly benefited by working as the research assistant of Prof. Tao in his project on the intermarriages of the Sung officials. From the above studies I discovered that K'ou Chun was tied to many eminent political figures by either the t'ung-nien relationship or kinship relationship. Enlightened by this founding, I think that I could formulate the theme of my study of K'ou Chun in such perspective which had not been attempted by historians.

For personal reasons, I wasted two years in Hong Kong after passing my preliminary examination in the spring of 1987. Fortunately my laziness was pardoned by my mentor. I owe inestimable gratitude to Prof. Tao, my mentor. Without his inspiring and encouraging support in many ways, I could not complete my dissertation in a relatively short time. I owe much gratitude to Prof. William Schultz too. Though in his retirement, he granted me the honour for reading my manuscript and came back to Tucson in the hot summer for my oral examination. I would like to express my greatest gratitude to Prof. Charles Heitke for his kind advice in formulating the theme of my dissertation, and in particular,
nis valuable moral encourgement and substantial support in the hard times of my study at Tucson.

I own much gratitude also to my teachers, Prof. Chia-lin Pao and Prof. Chiu-ch'ing Lo, for their valuable moral support and comfort when I was troubled by my own predicament. Much thanks to Dr. Chi-chiang Huang who kindly read the first half of my manuscript and gave me valuable advice including the wording of the title of my dissertation. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Jennifer Jay who kindly polished the words of my dissertation. And finally I have to thank my parents, my old friends Dr. Hon-wai Ho, Dr. Wai-chor So, Mr. Shui-lung Tsang for their moral supports and other kinds of help during the entire period of my study abroad. All the errors in this study remain my own.
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ABSTRACT

This study is on K'ou Chun (962-1023), the early Northern Sung statesman who made his name in Chinese history by the conclusion of the Treaty of Shan-yüan in 1005 with the Northern Empire of the Liao, which brought about the peace between the two countries for more than a century. Apart from discussing K'ou Chun's role in the 1004 crisis, this study attempts to view Sung bureaucratic factionalism from a new perspective through examining the activities of K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien candidates who obtained their chin-shih degrees in the same year. It is found that the chin-shih of the 980 examination including K'ou Chun and Wang Tan (957-1017) gradually built up a powerful faction through their t'ung-nien relationship. This faction dominated the Sung court for more than thirty years since the middle of Emperor T'ai-tsung's reign (reigned 976-997). Their chief rival factions, interestingly, also came from two other t'ung-nien groups headed by Chang Ch'i-hsien (943-1014) and Wang Chin-jo (962-1025), respectively.

Historically, bureaucratic factionalism always intertwined with court politics. It was no exception for early Northern Sung. Since K'ou Chun and his faction were deeply involved in the succession questions of Emperor T'ai-tsung and Chen-tsung (reigned 997-1022), this study also
focuses on the power struggle that took place in the inner court.

K'ou Chun ultimately lost in the power struggle and died in banishment. However, his faction still managed to keep its influence during Empress Dowager Liu (reigned 1023-1033)'s regency when its junior members, headed by Wang Tseng (978-1038) and Lü I-chien (978-1043) gradually came to power.

K'ou and his faction were traditionally praised as "gentlemen", while most of their rivals were condemned as "petty men". Such a view will be examined through the study of their behaviors. And K'ou's historical image will be explored through different perspectives as well.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The founding of the Sung Dynasty in 960 by Emperor Sung T'ai-tsu (reigned 960-976) marked a basic change in traditional Chinese politics from the militocracy of the Five Dynasties era to bureaucratic absolutism dominated by civilian officials.¹ The revival and expansion of the civil service examination system during the reigns of T'ai-tsu and his successor T'ai-tsung (reigned 976-997), his younger brother, greatly helped in the growth of professional bureaucratic elites in the new empire.² This group of elites, who were chiefly civilian officials, became involved in bureaucratic factionalism, a prevailing phenomenon throughout the Sung. Robert M. Hartwell has recently suggested some new approaches to the investigation of the causes, processes, and effects of bureaucratic factionalism in Sung China.³ But he overlooked an important element giving rise to the emergence


²See Chapter II, Section II.

of bureaucratic factionalism among civilian officials, i.e. the special t'ung-nien (examination cohort) relationship established through the civil service examinations.  

My study will show that K'ou Chun (962-1023), who received his chin-shih degree in 980, the fifth year of T'ai-tsung's reign, built up a powerful faction steadily and gradually with his t'ung-nien. K'ou Chun made his name in Chinese history mainly by his accomplishment in the making of the Peace of Shan-yüan in 1005. It is notable that this crisis was virtually resolved by the collective effort of K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien and their friends. After the 1004 crisis, they continued to play a key role in the struggle against the "evil forces", especially in the Heavenly Texts Affairs Controversy. They were generally regarded as gentlemen, while their

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4 The successful candidates of any particular examination, whether it was prefectural, provincial, departmental or metropolitan, considered themselves as "t'ung-nien", meaning those individuals who had passed the examination in the same year. They were not classmates. They were merely the graduates of the same year in the open civil service examination. Such relationship will be discussed in detail in Chapter II, Section II & III. Since there is no precise parallel of the concept t'ung-nien in English, I continue to use the Romanized term t'ung-nien in the following chapters.

adversaries, the pro-Heavenly Texts clique, were labelled petty men. In the eyes of the Sung scholars, the continued factional strife after 1005 was fought between the "gentlemen" and the "petty men". The "gentlemen" were mostly K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien and their friends and followers.

In spite of K'ou Chun's fame and importance in Sung history, no serious and thorough study of his life and activities has been done by either Chinese or Western scholars. It is surprising that his biography is not even included in Herbert Franke's Sung Biographies. Similarly his eminent t'ung-nien, such as Wang Tan (957-1017), Chang

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Yung 觉 (946-1015), Li K'ang 李 (947-1004) and Hsiang Min-chung 徐敏中 (957-1017), have attracted relatively little attention among professional historians. The period in which they were active remains an unexplored field of early Northern Sung history. K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien were dominant in the Sung bureaucracy for almost thirty years beginning about the middle of T'ai-tsung's reign. Their influence was prolonged for another ten years when junior members of their faction, represented by Wang Tseng 王 (978-1038) and Lü Ichien 柳元方 (978-1043), inherited their positions and power. It is notable that the Ch'ing-li Reformers (革新改革家), represented by Fan Chung-yen 范忠信 (989-1052), were in power after 1041, and were admirers of K'ou Chun and the protégés

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of Wang Tseng, the successor of K'ou Chun and Wang Tan.\(^8\)

There was apparently a connection between K'ou Chun's group and the Ch'ing-li reformers who belonged to the fourth generation of the Northern Sung bureaucrats. K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien, who belonged to the second generation of the Sung empire, were linked to the founding ministers represented by Chao P'u 鄭公 (921-991). The study of K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien would give us a full picture of the activities of the early Northern Sung bureaucrats. It would help us understand the nature of factional strife in this period and avoid oversimplified explanations.

Fortunately, K'ou Chun's poetry and important memorials

\(^8\)Both Fan Chung-yen, Han Ch' i 孫（1008-1075), Fu Pi 費（1004-1083) and Ou-yang Hsiu 欧陽修 (1007-1072) were protégés and admirers of Wang Tseng. See Han Ch' i, Han Wei-kung chi 孫開國紀 (hereafter as HWKC, (The Collected Works of Han Ch' i), Kuo-hsueh chi-pen ts'ung-shu 孝書集編時書, hereafter as KHCPTS, (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), v. 10, pp. 161, 268, 276, 281. Fu Pi, "Wang Wen-cheng kung Tseng hsing-chuang" 孫文成公動族, in Tu Ta-kuei 庵奎 (after 1194) compiled, Ming-ch'en pei-chuan yün-yan chih chih 孫顔的備歴, hereafter as MCPCYCC, (The Collections of Jewel-like Biographies of Illustrious Sung Officials), Ssu-k'u ch'uan-shu chen-pen 蘇鶴撰筆, hereafter as SKCSCP, ser. 11, "chung" 郑, v. 44, pp. 1-10; T'ien K'uang 慈光 (1003-1061), Ju-lin kung-i 秋林客記, hereafter as JLKI, (Impartial Deliberations on the Scholar-officials), Ts'ung-shu chi-ch' eng ch' u-pien 昭書資政編, hereafter as TSCCCP, (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1935-37), "shang" 上, pp. 2, 6; Kung Ming-chih 龔時 (1091-1182), Chung-wu chi-wen 孫文編, hereafter as CWCW, (Records of hearsays on Su-chou), TSCCCP ed., v. 1, p. 1; Li Tao 雷 (1115-1184), Hsü Tzu-chih t'ung-chien ch'ang-pien 孫重著政篇, hereafter as HCP, (Collected Data for a Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government), (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chu punctuated ed., 1979-), v. 209, p. 5082.
presented to the throne during the Shan-yüan crisis are extant. His contemporaries wrote hundreds of accounts and anecdotes on his dramatic life. They are useful and helpful for a thorough study of K'ou Chun. The availability of the materials concerning K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, friends, followers and adversaries is also helpful in the study of K'ou Chun from other angles and perspectives. Rather than examining K'ou Chun in isolation, I attempt to study the entire Sung bureaucracy of the late tenth and early eleventh Centuries, focusing on the question of bureaucratic factionalism in where K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien played an important role.

My study is presented as a political biography of K'ou Chun in which the interactions with his t'ung-nien, friends,

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9 K'ou Chun's poetry collection was first entitled Pa-tung chi, but later Fan Yung (979-1046), his follower and admirer, compiled more than 200 poems written in different times and places in an edition entitled Chung-min kung shih-chi. It was published in the middle of the Eleventh Century and reprinted in the last years of the Northern Sung Dynasty, the early years of the Southern Sung, and again in the Ming Dynasty. K'ou Chun left no copy of his memorials. The only memorial to survive was kept by his grandson, K'ou Yen (?-after 1037), who later submitted it to the court as a valuable document. See K'ou Chun, K'ou Chung-min kung shih-chi, hereafter KCMKSC, (Collected Poems of K'ou Chun), Ssu-pu te'ung-k'an hsü-pien, (Compiled Poems of K'ou Chun), hereafter SPTKHP, (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1966, photo), pp. 1, 11, 14-18, 89-90; Ch'en Shih-tao, (1053-1101), Hou-shan t'an-ts'ung, (The Collected Hearsays of Ch'en Shih-tao), (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuated ed., 1989), v. 1, pp. 2-4; Wang Te-ch'en, Chu-shih hsien, (Records Written during Dusting), (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuated ed., "shang", pp. 2-3; HCP, v. 185, p. 4479.
followers and enemies are discussed in detail.

Factional politics always intertwines with court politics. In K'ou Chun's case, he was deeply involved in the succession dispute surrounding of T'ai-tsung and Chen-tsung (reigned 997-1022). His support to Prince Shou (later Chen-tsung) and Jen-tsung (reigned 1023-1063) caused the hostility of T'ai-tsung's empress, née Li, (960-1004) and Chen-tsung's empress, née Liu (reigned 1022-1033). These two palace women proved to be the greatest enemies of K'ou Chun. Interestingly, K'ou Chun's worst enemy in the battle field was again a female ruler, Empress Dowager Hsiao of Liao (953-1009). It seems that it was fatal for K'ou Chun to confront female rulers. Palace women and eunuchs, as the forces hidden behind the curtains, exerted tremendous influence in power struggles in the court and government. For this reason, the present study draws particular attention to the activities of the palace women and the eunuchs. The study of bureaucratic factionalism thus occasionally overlaps with an examination of inner court politics.

K'ou Chun's career can be divided into roughly five periods: (1) early life and early official career (962-987); (2) first peak of official career during the reign of T'ai-tsung (987-996); (3) second peak of official career marked by his accomplishment in the 1004 crisis (997-1005); (4) rise
and fall in the factional strife in the post-Shan-yüan era (1005-1015); (5) struggle for regency and his last years (1016-1023). These topics are covered in Chapters II, III, IV, V, VI, VII respectively. Because K'ou Chun's name has long been associated with the Peace of Shan-yüan, one whole chapter is allocated for the examination of K'ou Chun's role in the 1004 crisis. K'ou Chun is generally known as a loyal, upright minister and a tragic hero despite his shortcomings in his character. I discuss his image in Chinese history in Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER II
K'OU CHUN'S EARLY LIFE AND OFFICIAL CAREER, 962-987

I. HIS EARLY CAREER (962-980)

K'ou Chun, whose courtesy name was P'ing-chung 仲安, was born on August 16, 962 (the fourteenth day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar) in the Hsia-kua District 靈化縣 of Hua-chou Prefecture 陝州 (present-day Shensi province 縣), located eighty li 里 from the north bank of the Wei River 汾河, a tributary of the Yellow River 黃河. Since the K'ou clan was said to have originated from Shang-ku Prefecture 蘭州 (present-day Hopei province 河北), K'ou Chun was accordingly granted the title of Baron, and later Marquis of Shang-ku. This is also the reason why he was occasionally addressed as the Duke, or the Master of Shang-ku 上公, by his contemporaries.

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1Wei T'ai 萬(905-1110), Lin-han yin-chu shih-hua 林漢隱居詩話 hereafter as LHYCSH, (Critiques on Poetry by the recluse of Lin-han), TSCCCP ed., p. 10.

2Yüeh Shih 輝史 (930-1007), T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi 太平環域 (The Geographical Account of the T'ai-p'ing hsing-kuo period), (Taipei: Wen-hai ch'u-pan she, 1980), v. 29, p. 246.

3KCMKSC, p. 3. The biography of K'ou Chun here was written by Sun P'ien 孫(11th cent.), ten years after the death of K'ou Chun.

K'ou Chun's birth is clothed in legend. According to an anecdote written by the eminent Buddhist monk Wen Ying (d. c. 1086), K'ou Chun was born with ears like those characteristic of Buddhist statues. K'ou himself believed that he was reincarnated from a strange monk. It is notable that the date of his birth is exactly the date of the Yü-lan P'en Festival, commonly known as the Ghost Festival. This traditional Chinese festival is closely related to Buddhism. It was believed that a Buddhist monk Mu-lien (Sanskrit: Maudgalyayama) descended into the Underworld to rescue his mother on that day. He fed his starving mother with the Yü-lan P'en, i.e., pots of food. Thereafter, people followed his practice on that day by putting out food for "hungry ghosts". Wen Ying did not make the connection between K'ou Chun and the legendary Monk Mu-lien, but K'ou was widely believed to have possessed supernatural powers even after his death. Some people believed that he was King Yen-lo, the Judge of the Underworld.

5Wen Ying, Hsiang-shan yeh-lu, hereafter as HSYL, (The Private Records Gathered at Hsiang Mountain), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1984), "hsia", p. 44.


7See Chapter VIII, Section III.
Despite the legend of his extraordinary birth, K'ou Chun came from an ordinary family. His great-grandfather K'ou Pin (9th Cent.) and his grandfather K'ou Yen-liang (10th Cent.) did not hold any official post. His father K'ou Hsiang (10th Cent.), though a reputable scholar who received a chin-shih degree of the first rank in 944, only advanced as far as the post of Junior Secretary to Prince Wei (944-947), the eldest son of Emperor Kao-tsu of the Later Han (reigned 947-48). Prince Wei died in late 947, after which K'ou Hsiang probably returned to his hometown from Ta-ming Fu (in present-day Hopei province). K'ou Chun later expressed deep regret for his father's misfortune in his official career. If the crown prince had not died so early, K'ou Chun's father might have moved higher in his career in 944.

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8 The year 944 is the first year of K'ai-yün (reigned 943-946) of Emperor Ch'u-ti of the Later Chin (reigned 947-48). The Later Chin Dynasty was destroyed by the Khitan Liao in 946. And Liu Chih-yüan, later known as Kao-tsu of the Later Han, founded his short-lived dynasty in early 947 when the Khitans left K'ai-feng. Emperor Ch'u-ti only convened one civil service examination in 944 during his reign. Thus K'ou Hsiang's degree should have been conferred that year. See KCMKSC, p. 2; Hsüeh Chü-cheng (912-981), Chiu Wu-tai shih (Old History of the Five Dynasties), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1976), v. 83, p. 1098; HCC, v. 28, p. 384.

9 CWTS, v. 105, p. 1365; HCC, v. 28, p. 384. Prince Wei (Liu Cheng-hsun ) was appointed by his father as the Governor of the Northern Capital, i.e., Ta-ming Fu, in early 947 when the Later Han was founded. It is notable that K'ou Hsiang's master was the brother-in-law of Sung Yen-wo (926-989), later the father-in-law of K'ou Chun.
government. Apparently K'ou Chun's father sought compensation in his sons.

K'ou Chun was the eldest son. His intelligence was such as to cause high expectations with his parents. He was able to write poetry at the age of eight. He was highly praised by his teacher in the presence of his father. Judging from K'ou Chun's remarkable poems, his teacher predicted that K'ou would in the future become Grand Councillor.

Nevertheless, like other boys growing up in North China, K'ou Chun loved hunting and horse-racing more than studying. Lady Chao 趙氏 (?- 989), K'ou Chun's mother, naturally could not tolerate her son's laziness in his studies. She expressed disappointment with her son through punishment. It is recorded that Lady Chao once threw a farming tool at K'ou Chun in anger, injuring his leg. Impressed by his mother's high expectations, K'ou Chun abandoned his play and concentrated on his studies. It is told that whenever he touched the scar on his leg, he was reminded of his mother.

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12 Chu Hsi 楚際 (1130-1200), Wu-ch'ao ming-ch'en yen-hsing lu 胡朝名臣行錄, hereafter WCMYHL, (Words and Actions of Eminent Statesmen under the First Five Reigns of the Northern Sung), in Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an ch'u-pien 史部叢刊 (hereafter SPTKCP) (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1967,
K'ou Chun lived in poverty in childhood. His father died when he was still young, and he was unable to give his father a proper funeral. His mother did not possess a single item of silk clothing to wear in her entire life.

As indicated in one of his early poems, K'ou Chun studied hard because of parental pressure from his parents and his own sense of mission. It turned out that he did not disappoint his parents. Besides his recognized talent in composing poetry, he also distinguished himself in the studies of Classics. He was known as an expert on the so-called San-chuan, i.e., the Tso-chuan, the Kung-yang, and the Ku-liang, all three commentaries to the Ch'Un-ch'iü (The Spring and Autumn Annals). In his studies, K'ou did not follow traditional interpretations. His contemporaries were very much impressed by his critical and original notions on the Classics. It is believed that his interest in the San-chuan, especially the Tso-chuan, may have served to formulate his basic perceptions of state affairs. The statecraft of

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13 HCC, p. 264.


15 KCMKSC, pp. 2, 28.
the Ch'un-chiu statesmen probably enlightened his mind greatly. It is also worth noting that his tendency to question authority can be traced back to his early education.

K'ou Chun went to T'ai-ming Fu in 979 to take the qualifying examination. In this city where his father had once served in public office, he established enduring friendships with Chang Yung and Ma Kao (949-998), who also took the examinations at that time. Chang Yung, a native of P'u-chou (present-day Shantung province), was a man of action. He was an expert of sword fighting. Though he followed the path of a civilian official, he possessed the personality of a hsia (knight-errant). Though more of a military man than a Confucian scholar-official, he could write poetry and beautiful prose. K'ou Chun was greatly influenced by Chang Yung, whom he respected as an elder brother. Ma Kao was a native of Ta-ming Fu. Like Chang Yung and K'ou Chun, he came from a humble

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17 KYC, "appendix", pp. 8-9.

18 Chang Yung treated K'ou Chun as a younger brother. At Ta-ming Fu, Chang Yung wrote a poem encouraging K'ou Chun. KYC, v. 3, p. 3; HSTT, v.4, pp. 40-41.
background. The characters, as well as the early careers of all three men, were almost identical. But Ma Kao did not have a long career, as he died at a young age. 19

After the examinations, Chang Yung submitted a petition to the examiner recommending that Chang T'AN (10th Cent.) should rank first in the examination. K'ou Chun and Ma Kao also took part in the petition. They thus made a reputation for themselves by their gentlemanly action. Both subsequently passed the examination and were qualified to take the departmental examination the following year in K'ai-feng Fu (present-day Honan province). 20 According to a popular but unlikely anecdote, K'ou Chun even petitioned Emperor T'ai-tsung, who stopped by Ta-ming Fu during his northern campaign. It is said that the emperor was very much impressed by K'ou Chun's words. The emperor then ordered his attendants to take down K'ou's name for future reference. 21

Chang Yung and Ma Kao were K'ou Chun's oldest friends and subsequent political allies. If K'ou Chun had any patron at this time, Hsü Chung-hsüan (930-990), his father-in-law, was most likely that person. 22 The date of K'ou's marriage is

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19 LCC, v. 40, pp. 6-8.
20 KYC, "appendix", p. 4.
21 KKLIS, p. 1.
22 KCMKSC, p. 12.
unclear. But according to traditional Chinese custom, K'ou would have married relatively early, because being the eldest son, he was obliged to do so. Hsü Chung-hsüan was a capable administrator and an expert in financial affairs. He was recognized by both Emperors T'ai-tsu and T'ai-tsung for his excellent performance as the Army Provisioning Commissioner during several campaigns. K'ou Chun showed great respect and concern for his father-in-law in a poem, probably written in 980 or 981 when Hsü Chung-hsüan was serving as Army Provisioning Commissioner in the Southern Expeditionary Force to Chiao-chou (present-day Vietnam). Hsü Chung-hsüan, who began his official career at the early age of eighteen, very likely gave his young son-in-law, who was also eighteen when he passed the qualifying examination, moral as well as material support.

Accompanied by Chang Yung and Ma Kao, K'ou Chun went to the capital to participate in his first departmental examination in the early spring of 980.

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23 T'o-t'o (1313-1355) et al., Sung Shih, (Sung Dynastic History), (hereafter SS), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1977), v. 270. pp. 9268-69.

24 KCMKSC, p. 28.

II. THE "LIST OF DRAGONS AND TIGERS"

Emperor T'ai-tsong ascended the throne in November, 976. In the following year, he ordered convened the first civil service examination during his twenty years' reign. The examination that took place in 977 marked a major change in government recruitment patterns. Degrees were conferred in much greater numbers. As a matter of fact, 109 chin-shih, 207 chu-k'o (various degrees), and 184 facilitated degrees (conferred on those who had attempted the examinations many times without success) were granted in that year. Even without counting the facilitated degrees, the number was greater than the total number of degrees awarded during the entire sixteen years of Emperor T'ai-tsu's reign. T'ai-tsong's motive in changing government recruitment policy has been suggested by Ssu-ma Kuang as being "to promote civil culture and restrain military affairs." It thus provided a golden opportunity for those individuals who struggled for official preferment.

T'ai-tsong sought to continue his generous policy in the 978 examination, but because of the protests of Grand

26 HCP, v. 18, pp. 393-94.


28 Ibid., p. 50.
Councillor Hsüeh Chü-cheng, only seventy-four chin-shih and eighty-two chu-k'o degrees were conferred. K'ou Chun and his two friends were benefited by T'ai-tsung's new policy.

Ch'eng Yü (913-984), grandfather of the famous philosophers Ch'eng Hao (1033-1085) and Ch'eng I (1033-1107), was appointed chief examiner of the 980 examination. Hou She (?-983) and Sung Po (936-1012) were the assistant examiners. In this examination, 121 chin-shih and 534 chu-k'o degrees were granted. Su I-chien (958-996), a native of Tzu-chou (present-day Szechuan province), won first place, while Ch'en Jo-cho (955-1018), a native of Yü-chou (present-day Peking) and the grandson of a warlord, was second. The third place went to the southerner Chang Ping (961-1016). K'ou Chun, Chang Yung and Ma Kao were chin-shih degree holders of second rank. Being the youngest of the successful candidates, K'ou was fortunate to pass the palace examination, which was directed by T'ai-tsung personally. Ts'ui Chi (963-1022),

29 Ibid., pp. 49, 192.


31 SS, v. 261, pp. 9040-41; v. 266, pp. 9171-73; v. 301, pp. 9995-97; Lo Yuan (1136-1184), Hsin-an chi chi (Local History of Hsin-an District), SKCSCP ser. 6, (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1976), v. 6, p. 20.
a relative of Su I-chien, was less fortunate in being dropped from the final list by the emperor solely for his youth. K'ou Chun, only one year older than Ts'ui Chi, received his degree because the emperor remembered his name and thus kept him on the final list, according to one account. Like his father-in-law, K'ou Chun made a good start in his official career.

Besides Ts'ui Chi, Wang Yü-ch'eng, the great poet and later a good friend of K'ou Chun and Chang Yung, was among the list of unsuccessful candidates. However, he managed to receive his degree three years later. Ts'ui Chi, on the other hand, never succeeded in entering the thorny gate, although he later made several attempts to do so. Subsequently, he met K'ou Chun and other successful candidates of the 980 examinations on the road. Witnessing the success of his friends, Ts'ui Chi felt ashamed. He left the capital and returned to his home town immediately. Beaten by fate, he never took the examination again. He died in 1022, one year before the death of his seemingly more fortunate friend, K'ou Chun.

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32 Su Shun-ch' in (1008-1048), Su Shun-ch' in chi hereafter as SSCC, (The Collected Works of Su Shun-ch' in), (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuated ed., 1981), v. 14, pp. 182-83. Su Shun-ch' in was the grandson of Su I-chien. According to Su 's account, Ts'ui Chi had good ties with K'ou Chun.

33 KLKIS, p.1.

34 CTPN, pp. 24-25, 29-30.
Among the 121 winners of the chih-shih degree in 980, thirty-six of them can be identified from existing sources. Their ages varied from nineteen to fifty-one when they took the examination. The following is a chart of these men, whose names are arranged in alphabetical order.

**TABLE I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>From/born in</th>
<th>Highest Posts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chang Kao</td>
<td>Shang-ch'iu</td>
<td>Assistant Chief,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(?-?)</td>
<td>Dept. of Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chang Kuan</td>
<td>Ch'ang-chou</td>
<td>Supervisory official,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(?-?)</td>
<td>Finance Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chang Ping</td>
<td>She-chou</td>
<td>Aux. Academician,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(961-1016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(present-day Kiangsi)</td>
<td>Bureau of Mil. Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chang Shih</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Fiscal Commissioner,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(?-?)</td>
<td>Szechuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chang Yung</td>
<td>P'u-chou</td>
<td>Minister of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(946-1015)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(present-day Shantung)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch'ao Chiung</td>
<td>Shan-chou</td>
<td>Minister of Rites</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(951-1034)</td>
<td>&amp; Hanlin Academician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch'en Jo-cho</td>
<td>Yü-chou</td>
<td>Reviewing Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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35SSCC, pp. 182-83.
<p>| (955-1018)  | (present-day Peking) | Adviser |
| Hsia-hou Chia-chien(??-988) | Chiang-ling (present-day Hupei) | Right Policy Monitor |
| Hsiang Min-chung K'ai-feng (948-1019) | (present-day Honan) | Grand Councillor |
| Hsieh Mi She-chou (950-1012) | (present-day Kiangsi) | Right Policy Critic |
| K'ang Chien Korea (??) | (present-day Honan) | Adviser |
| K'ou Chun Hua-chou (962-1023) | (present-day Shensi) | Fiscal Commissioner, Kuang-nan East |
| Kuo unknown (947-1004) | (present-day Hopei) | Lesser lord of Imperial Sacrifices |
| Li Feng unknown (??) | (present-day Shensi) | Co-Administrator, Bureau of Mil. Affairs |
| Li Han-chang Hsüan-chou (942-999) | (present-day Anhui) | Fiscal Commissioner, Kuang-nan Circuit |
| Li K'ang Ming-chou (947-1004) | (present-day Hopei) | Co-Administrator, Bureau of Mil. Affairs |
| Li Chüeh Ch'ing-chou (942-999) | (present-day Shantung) | Director of Education |
| Liu Ch'ang-yen Ch'uan-chou (942-999) | (present-day Fukien) | Co-Administrator, Bureau of Mil. Affairs |
| Lu Chih-han Ch'i-chou (946-1002) | (present-day Hopei) | Fiscal Commissioner, Kuang-nan Circuit |
| Lü Feng-t'ien Min District (??) | (present-day Fukien) | unknown |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth - Death</th>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ma Kao</td>
<td>(949-998)</td>
<td>Ta-ming Fu</td>
<td>General Censor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma Liang</td>
<td>(959-1031)</td>
<td>Lu-chou</td>
<td>Lesser Protector of Heir Apparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pi</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pien Su</td>
<td>(fl.1012)</td>
<td>Shang-ch'iu</td>
<td>Aux. Academician of Military Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su I-chien</td>
<td>(958-996)</td>
<td>Tzu-chou</td>
<td>Vice Grand Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sung K'ang</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>Ch'ang-an</td>
<td>Assist. Commissioner of Fine Crafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sung Shih</td>
<td>(950-1000)</td>
<td>Ch'ang-an</td>
<td>Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai Yung</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tao Yueh</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>T'ien Wang-chih</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>Chengtu</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Huai</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>Ch'i-chou</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Tan</td>
<td>(957-1017)</td>
<td>Ta-ming Fu</td>
<td>Grand Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wei T'ing-shih</td>
<td>(951-999)</td>
<td>Ta-ming Fu</td>
<td>Right Policy Critic-Adviser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yen Ch'u</td>
<td>(?)</td>
<td>Tzu-chou</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the above-named thirty-six men, four became Grand Councillors. One became Vice Grand Councillor and two were promoted to Assistant Commissioners of Military Affairs. Five attained ministerial rank. Compared to other examination years, the year 980 was remarkable for producing the greatest number of Grand Councillors and board ministers. At the time, scholars accordingly praised the successful candidates of 980 as "the List of Dragons and Tigers" 36 Chang Yung was proud of himself for having passed the examination which had recruited the greatest number of talented men. He particularly praised Li K'ang, Wang Tan, K'ou Chun and himself as four different types of statesmen.37

The main thesis of the present study is that the chin-shih examination graduates of that year (980) eventually developed into a powerful faction, one which was dominated Northern Sung politics for nearly forty years. Their

36 Kung Ting-ch' en (1010-1086), Tung-yüan lu ed., pp. 16-17.

influence actually continued beyond their own life span when their associates, their offspring and their protégés inherited their power and positions. This special kind of relationship constituted the backbone of the factional political activities in which K'ou Chun was deeply involved.
III. K'OU CHUN AND HIS T'UNG-NIEN

As mentioned in the introduction, K'ou Chun was the core figure in the early Northern Sung factional politics. His faction mainly constituted people who received their chin-shih degrees in 980.

The successful candidates of any particular examination, whether it was prefectural, provincial, departmental or metropolitan, considered themselves as "t'ung-nien", meaning those individuals who had passed the examination in the same year. Actually, they did not study in the same class of any single academy or school. They were merely the graduates of the same year in the open civil service examinations. In most cases, they got to know each other only shortly before the examination took place. But such a relationship, as Kenneth E. Folsom has indicated, was the most important Chinese bond of friendship for members of the educated class.\(^\text{38}\)

Being a byproduct of the civil service examinations which flourished during the T'ang Dynasty (618-907),\(^\text{39}\) the t'ung-nien network regained its strength in the bureaucracy


when the founders of the Sung Empire revived the examination system. It is noteworthy that Emperor T'ai-tsu forbade the examiners and successful candidates from addressing each other as masters and disciples in 962,\textsuperscript{40} fearing such former practices would give rise to patron-client relationships within the bureaucracy. But he tolerated use of the term \textit{t'ung-nien} by those ministers who had passed the examinations in the same year.

Factions based upon the \textit{t'ung-nien} relationship did not exist during T'ai-tsu's reign. This is explainable because the numbers of successful candidates in this reign period was extremely low. Consequently, the number of people who could climb to senior positions was so limited that the establishment of any faction of political significance was very unlikely. It is evident that the twenty-six \textit{chin-shih} of 973, the second highest passing number during T'ai-tsu's reign, still could find no place in the higher ranks of the bureaucracy. Liu \textit{K'ai-s}, the eminent prose writer of early Northern Sung who received his \textit{chin-shih} degree in 973, expressed his frustration frankly in a letter to his \textit{t'ung-nien}, Li Ch'u-yüan (10th Cent.), for the misfortune they met in their official careers. According to Liu \textit{K'ai}'s, only two of their \textit{t'ung-nien} attained relatively

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{HCP}, v. 3, p. 71.
high rank. The others either died early or attained only unimportant posts. Interestingly enough, Liu K'ai straightforwardly urged Li Ch'u-yüan, the only surviving senior official among his t'ung-nien, to do something for his helpless fellow t'ung-nien. Liu K'ai went on to define the t'ung-nien relationship as being as close as to that of a brotherhood. He stated that one ought to treat t'ung-nien as well as one treated one's own relatives. And t'ung-niens should help each other in their careers, and share their fortune and misfortune. 41

K'ou Chun's group outnumbered Liu K'ai's t'ung-nien group. Moreover, in most cases, the chin-shih of 980 treated each other as members of a common brotherhood, helping each other in the bureaucracy. They were political allies as well as friends. More fortunate than Liu K'ai's group, they generated a few Grand Councillors who could well serve as leaders of their faction. For the most part, the chin-shih of other examination years adopted the norm suggested by Liu K'ai. For example, Tsang Ping (940-992), a chin-shih of 977, appealed to Emperor T'ai-tsung for reinvestigation of the death of his t'ung-nien Ma Ju-shih (10th Cent.). He also

41 Liu K'ai, Ho-tung hsien-sheng chi: 'q q~ hereafter as HTHSC (The Collected Writings of Liu K'ai), SPCKCF ed., v. 9, pp. 61-62.
took care of Ma Ju-shih's family afterwards. 42 Lü Meng-cheng (946-1011), who took first place honors in the 977 examination, also helped his t'ung-nien Wen Chung-shu (944-1010) in resuming his post. 43 K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien were not the only group to evolve into a powerful political faction. The chin-shih of 977 and 992, for instance, evidently constituted rival factions. They gradually rose to power in the middle of T'ai-tsung's reign, when the first generation statesmen who chiefly came from the mu-fu of T'ai-tsu and T'ai-tsung, left the political scene. 44

Compared with the chin-shih of other examination years during the reign of T'ai-tsung, K'ou Chun's group outnumbered the others both in the total number of Liang Fu (Secretariat and the Bureau of Military Affairs) councillors and high ranking ministers, 45 and in their entries in Sung Shih

42 HCP, v. 20, p. 452.
43 HCP, v. 32, p. 720.


45 The above table (pp. 37-40) shows that four of the 980 chin-shih attained the post of Grand Councillor. One became Vice Grand Councillor; and two occupied seats in the Bureau
(Sung Dynastic History). A total of twenty-five biographies of individuals belonging to K'ou Chun's group are to be found in the Sung Shih, in which the lives of only eminent people are included. It is no exaggeration to regard the year 980 as the "List of Dragons and Tigers" in terms of the recruitment of talents by that examination.

Among the thirty-six men listed in Table I, fourteen came from families of government officials. Except for Ch'en Jo-cho, Li K'ang and Wang Tan, whose family backgrounds were similar, their fathers or grandfathers were mostly unimportant local officials. Like K'ou Chun, many of their parents had high expectations for them. Hsiang Min-chung, Li K'ang, Su I-chien, Sung Shih and Wang Tan all had studied hard under the urging of their parents. Besides Chang Yung and Ma Kao, Hsiang Min-chung, Hsieh Mi, Lu Chih-han, Ma Liang and Wei T'ing-shih were reportedly similar to K'ou Chun both in personality and in their early official careers.

There were at least nine Southerners in the group, but regionalism was not an evident factor in their selection. K'ou Chun was not biased against his southern t'ung-nien,

of Military Affairs as Assistant Commissioners; and four attained the level of Ministers or equivalent.

though he was traditionally accused of being so.\textsuperscript{47} K'ou Chun shared a belief in Buddhism and general political disposition with most of his t'ung-nien, those from the north and the south.\textsuperscript{48}

In short, the socio-political tradition of the t'ung-nien relationship and the particular circumstances of the time enabled the chin-shih of 980 to forge a significant power group within the highly competitive bureaucracy. Similar family backgrounds, personalities, beliefs and political dispositions further cemented the ties between them. In addition, as previously suggested by Hu Yin, an early Southern Sung philosopher, the perfect number for a cohesive and successful t'ung-nien group should be around a hundred,\textsuperscript{49} which was approximately the size of K'ou Chun's group.

Nevertheless, like other kinds of social relationships, the t'ung-nien relationship was by no means solidly institutionalized. A member of a t'ung-nien group was only morally obligated to his fellow t'ung-nien. Differing

\textsuperscript{47}See Chapter VIII, Section II.

\textsuperscript{48}K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien included Chang Kao, Chang Ping, Chang Yung, Ch'ao Chiung, Hsieh Mi, Li K'ang, Sung Shih, Ma Liang and Wang Tan, who were all devoted Buddhists. See Chapter VIII, Section III. And most of K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien stood on his side in the 1004 crisis and the Heavenly Texts Controversy which will be discussed in Chapters V and VI.

\textsuperscript{49}\textit{FJC}, v. 19, p. 13.
political views and personal prejudices would weaken the t'ung-nien relationship from time to time. It is evident that K'ou Chun himself publicly criticized one of his own t'ung-nien, Wang Huai, and that he was later attacked by K'ang Chien, a Korean t'ung-nien. However, when compared with other t'ung-nien groups, the cohesiveness of K'ou Chun's group was remarkable.

As has been mentioned previously, K'ou Chun was the youngest in his group. At the court-sponsored banquet which was convened to honor the new chin-shih, K'ou Chun, on behalf of his fellow graduates, saluted Su I-chien who had been named number one on the list of successful candidates. In turn, Su I-chien congratulated the oldest graduate, Yen Ch'u, a fellow countryman and an old friend of his father. According to custom, they vowed to preserve their friendship forever. They pledged to respect their elder t'ung-nien and to disregard their individual positions in the examination. After the banquet, they left the capital to assume their first new official appointments. The subject of K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien will be taken up again in later chapters.

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V. THE EARLY OFFICIAL CAREER OF K’OU CHUN (980-987)

K‘ou Chun’s first appointment was that of magistrate of Pa-tung District (in present-day Hupei). The town of Pa-tung is located on the upper Yangtze River, very close to the Three Gorges area. K‘ou Chun, though young and inexperienced, proved to be a confident and efficient administrator, and was respected by both his subordinates and those above him. He trusted the Pa-tung people and did not use force to collect taxes. It is recorded that the people of Pa-tung cooperated with him and paid their taxes on time. He spent the first three years of his official career in this small town.

Numerous anecdotes about the young magistrate have been handed down. It was said that he ordered a shrine consecrating a strange spirit to be destroyed when he first assumed his post. It is also reported that he planted two cypresses in front of his office symbolizing his desire to become a good minister. It was also said that one of his

53 HCP, v. 30, p. 680; WCMCYHL, v. 4, p. 68.
54 KCMKSG, p. 2.
56 WCMCYHL, v. 4, p. 68.
superiors recognized his talent and treated him well. 57 Another account states that a fortune-teller predicted that his initial good fortune would ultimately lead to disaster. 58

K'ou Chun made a reputation as a poet as a youth. In the peace and quiet of the river community of Pa-tung, he composed hundreds of poems which were highly praised by his contemporaries. Some of these poems implicitly reflected his desire to become a great official. 59 Called K'ou Pa-tung by the circle of poets to which he belonged, he was compared to the great poets of previous dynasties. 60 His first collection of poetry was entitled Pa-tung chi. 61

Compared with his t'ung-nien, K'ou Chun's initial career was not extraordinary. Su I-chien, Ch'en Jo-cho, Chang Ping,

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57 Chang Shih-cheng (7-1073), Kua-i chih, hereafter as KIC, (Records of Strange Omens), FCHSTK, ser. 20, v. 8, pp. 1942-43.

58 Wang P'i-chih (chin-shih 1067-after 1096), Sheng-shui yen-t'an lu, hereafter SSYTL, (Compilation of Banquet Conversations on Sheng River Bank), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1984), v. 6, p. 53.

59 KCMKSC, pp. 16-17; HSYL, "shang", pp. 8-9; Ssu-ma Kuang, Ssu-ma Wen-kung shih-hua, hereafter SMWKSH, (Ssu-ma Kuang's Critiques on Poetry), TSCCPP ed., p. 3; Ko Li-fang (fl. 1164), Yun-yu yang-ch'iu, hereafter YYVC, (Critiques on Rhymed Verse), TSCCPP ed., v. 13, p. 145.

60 KCMKSC, pp. 16-17.

Li K'ang, Hsiang Min-chung and Sung Shih received better appointments and were more quickly promoted because of their higher rank on the examination list. Chang Ping, the most fortunate among his t'ung-nien, was favoured by the powerful Grand Councillor Chao P'u. In time, he became the son-in-law of Chao P'u's younger brother. K'ou Chun's own patron, his father-in-law, apparently could provide only moral support. His best friends, Chang Yung and Ma Kao, did not do better in their early careers. Chang Yung was appointed magistrate of Chung-yang District (present-day Wu-ch'ang, Hupei) which is on the lower Yangtze. Ma Kao served as the magistrate of Shao-yang District (Shao-chou (in present-day Honan).

It is notable that the examiners of the 980 examination did not establish patron-client relationships with the successful candidates as would be expected. On the contrary, Sung Po, the assistant examiner, later became the political rival of both K'ou Chun and Hsiang Min-chung. In the absence

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62 SS, v. 270, pp. 9268-69; v. 301, p. 9995; KCMKSC, pp. 45-46. Hsu Chung-hsuan was still serving in the south when K'ou Chun was at Pa-tung. In a poem written in 982 or 983 for Hsu Chung-hsuan, K'ou Chun indicated the hope that his father-in-law would return to the capital and be promoted to higher position.

63 KYC, "appendix", p. 4.

64 LCC, v. 40, p. 7.

of patronage from their examiners, some of K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien found patrons by marriage. Wang Tan, later the most important political ally of K'ou Chun, became the son-in-law of Chao Ch'ang-yen (945-1009). Chang Yung married General Wang Hsien (932-1007)'s daughter, and Hsiang Min-chung was admired by Chang Ch'ü-hua (938-1006) and became his son-in-law.66

While K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien served loyally in various districts outside the capital, the court was locked in a stormy and bitter power struggle. Chang Ping's patron, Chao P'u, was the central figure in this affair.

Chao P'u, the architect of the Northern Sung centralization policy, was defeated by Prince Chin- (later Emperor T'ai-tsung) in a factional dispute in the later years of Emperor T'ai-tsu's reign.67 Reportedly a witness of the alleged "Oath of the Golden Casket" which designated T'ai-tsung, T'ai-tsu's younger brother, as the successor of T'ai-tsu, Chao P'u turned against T'ai-tsung and urged T'ai-tsu to pass the throne to his own son. But T'ai-tsu did not change his mind. The loser in this power struggle, Chao P'u lost the post of Grand Councillor which he had held for ten


years. He returned to the capital only after T'ai-tsung ascended to the throne, but his career was blocked by Lu To-hsun (935-986), an old political rival and the new Grand Councillor. Chao P'u's relatives were also ill-treated by Lu To-hsun. However, T'ai-tsung's reconsideration of the succession question gave Chao P'u a golden opportunity to regain the imperial favour and take revenge on Lu To-hsun.

When T'ai-tsung ascended the throne in 975, his younger brother T'ing-mei (947-984), and T'ai-tsu's eldest son, Te-chao (951-979), were invested as the Prince of Ch'i and the Prince of Wu-kung, respectively. T'ing-mei was concurrently named Governor of K'ai-feng, which was customarily the post assigned the heir apparent since the Five Dynasties. It seemed that T'ai-tsung would pass the throne to his younger brother, who would hand it on to his nephew, as agreed in the "Oath of the Golden Casket." But the defeat of the Northern Sung army by the Khitans in the Battle of Kao-liang River in August, 979, caused T'ai-tsung to change his mind, perhaps because of the physical and

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69 Chiang Fu-ts'ung, loc. cit., pp. 256-57; HCP, v. 18, p. 401; v. 21, p. 476; v. 22, pp. 491, 500.

70 HCP, v. 17, p. 382.
psychological wounds he suffered in that disastrous defeat.\textsuperscript{71} Te-chao committed suicide in September, 979, once he learned that T'ai-tsung suspected him of harbouring plans to usurp the throne. It is recorded that a group of field commanders were considering placing Te-chao on the throne when T'ai-tsung escaped from the enemy. T'ai-tsung's suspicions were magnified when the immature young prince petitioned the emperor for mercy on behalf of the generals.\textsuperscript{72} Te-chao's younger brother Te-fang (958-981) died unexpectedly in April, 981.\textsuperscript{73} With the unnatural death of his two nephews, T'ing-mei was placed in an extremely sensitive and dangerous position. As rumours about T'ai-tsung's deteriorating health began to spread, the succession question surfaced and evolved into a serious political crisis.

Unlike his elder brother T'ai-tsu, T'ai-tsung was unwilling to pass the throne on to his younger brother or to a nephew. His real intention was perceived by Chao P'u. After an extraordinary imperial audience in October, 981, Chao P'u, the former rival of T'ai-tsung, was reinstated as Senior


\textsuperscript{72}HC\textsuperscript{P}, v. 20, p. 460.

\textsuperscript{73}HC\textsuperscript{P}, v. 22, p. 490.
Grand Councillor. Serving as the willing vehicle of the emperor, Chao P'u directed an unprecedented purge within the bureaucracy. Ssu-ma Kuang devotes special attention to this event in his chronicle of the early years of the Northern Sung. In May, 982, T'ing-mei was demoted and banished to Fang-chou (in present-day Hupei), while Lu To-hsün became the first Sung Grand Councillor to be banished to the extreme south. Their associates and friends all fell victims to this purge. The terror continued when General Ts'ao Pin (931-999), the Commissioner of Military Affairs, was caught up in the net. He was falsely charged by one of T'ai-tsong's henchmen and was removed from office in February, 983. The emperor now became more and more suspicious, nervous and sensitive to criticism. It is ironic that before the end of 983, Chao P'u, the planner and the executioner of the purge, was himself dismissed from office.

The rise and fall of Chao P'u and Lu To-hsün reflect the uncertainty and cruelty of politics at the time. Grand Councillors like Chao P'u and Lu To-hsün could lose everything...
overnight. K'ou Chun, who had just begun his own official career, probably did not foresee a similar ultimate fate for himself.\textsuperscript{78}

K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien were fortunate at that time in not being involved in the power struggle. Chang Ping, the son-in-law of Chao P'u's younger brother, was not affected by these events in any direct way, while Su I-chien, said to be the disciple of Lu To-hsun,\textsuperscript{79} was promoted to the important post of Drafter of the Secretariat in 983.\textsuperscript{80}

In the same year, K'ou Chun was given a promotion and transferred to Ch'eng-an District of Ta-ming Fu where his father had served thirty-six years ago.\textsuperscript{81} Ta-ming Fu was

\textsuperscript{78} An anecdote recorded that a fortune-teller had compared K'ou Chun's physical appearance with Lu To-hsun. The fortune-teller went on to predict that K'ou Chun's fate would ultimately be similar to that of Lu To-hsun. He advised K'ou Chun to retire as early as possible to escape from the disaster. The above account is questionable. The prophecy was supposed to be made in 980 when K'ou Chun received his chin-shih degree. In this year Lu To-hsun was still in power. How could the fortune-teller make such judgement when Lu To-hsun was still the powerful Grand Councillor? See: Chiang Shao-yu \textit{注編(1115-d. after 1145), Sung-ch'ao shih-shih lei-yüan} hereafter \textit{SSLY}, \textit{(A Collection of Famous Words and Deeds of the Northern Sung Dynasty)}, (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuated ed., 1981), v. 49, p. 644.

\textsuperscript{79} Wang Ming-ch'ing \textit{鈔$r^1$ (1127-after 1214), Yü-chao hsin-chih} hereafter \textit{YCHC}, \textit{(New Notes from the Residence with the Old Mirror)}, PCHSTK ser. 4, p. 1421.

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{SS}, v, 266, p. 9171.

\textsuperscript{81} KCMKSC, p. 2. Conflicting accounts by Tseng Kung \textit{邱} (1019-1083) and Wang Ch'eng \textit{邱} (?-ca. 1200) indicate that K'ou Chun remained in Pa-tung for five years. That implies that K'ou Chun could only have been transferred to Ch'eng-an
the most important northern cities of the empire. When K'ou Chun assumed his new duties, his relatives concluded the time was right to bury K'ou Chun's father with proper rites in that city. But K'ou Chun insisted that the funeral should not be held until he had attained a higher post which could result in an honorific title for his father who had been unsuccessful in his own official career. 82

His second term of office was as peaceful as the previous one. But unlike Pa-tung, Ch'eng-an was a place of strategic importance. He had to be alert at all times to the possibility of invasion by the Khitans. Apparently, he learned a great deal about national defence from that experience which was to prove helpful in his future career. At Ch'eng-an he continued to write poems, and he also made

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82 HCC, v. 19, p. 264.
friends with some Buddhist monks.83

During these years, the court was relatively peaceful. After the elimination of T'ing-mei, T'ai-tsung began to train his sons, especially his eldest son Yuan-tso (966-1027), for the succession. In December, 983, new state councillors were appointed to replace Chao P'u whom Yuan-tso hated. It is notable that the first group of chin-shih of T'ai-tsung, i.e., the chin-shih of 977, now rose to power. Lu Meng-cheng, optimus in the 977 examination, was appointed Vice Grand Councillor, while two t'ung-nien, Wang Mien (949-991) and Chang Ch'i-hsien (943-1014), were made Signatory Officials of the Bureau of Military Affairs.84 Later on, they all became political rivals of K'ou Chun's group.

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84HCP, v. 24, pp. 556-558; SS, v. 245, pp. 8693-94. Wang Mien's younger brother, Wang Huai, was K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien. It is interesting to note that in Yuan and Ming drama, K'ou Chun is described as the closest friend of Lu Meng-cheng. It was said that K'ou Chun studied with Lu at Po-ma Ssu at Loyang. K'ou helped Lu in various ways. When K'ou Chun became Grand Councillor, he promoted his old friend. But in the historical records, Lu was the rival of K'ou Chun. And he attained the post of Grand Councillor much earlier than K'ou Chun. See C. K. Wang, "Lu Meng-cheng in Yuan and Ming Drama", Monumenta Serica: Journal of Oriental Studies, v. 36 (1984-85), pp. 332-333; 338-341.
With the death of T'ing-mei in February, 984, the last barrier to T'ai-tsung's plans for the imperial succession was removed. But to his surprise, Yüan-tso was greatly disturbed by the death of his uncle, and he would not forgive his father's cruel treatment of his uncle. He refused to accept the throne from his father, and began to display certain abnormal traits, such as protesting against his father's evil deeds. On the twenty-fifth of September, 985 (the ninth day of the ninth month in the lunar calendar), he set fire to the palace after a banquet celebrating the Ch'ung-yang Festival, to which he had not been invited because of his mental illness. T'ai-tsung was overwhelmed by his son's strange behaviour. Although Yüan-tso was the son he loved most, he was compelled to degrade him to the status of commoner and replace him as successor to the throne.

Apart from family problems, T'ai-tsung was also confronted with troubles on the western border. Li Chi-ch'ien (963-1004), the Tangut chieftain, revolted in October, 984. Though he was defeated, his forces remained a serious

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85 HCP, v. 25, p. 572.
threat to the western defenses.\textsuperscript{88}

K'ou Chun was promoted by one rank in 985; it is unclear, however, whether he remained in Ch'eng-an or moved to the capital.\textsuperscript{89} He would have faced difficult times if he had remained in the north, since T'ai-tsung launched a second northern campaign earlier in that year. Unfortunately, the Sung troops were defeated in three battles in June and September, 985, and January, 986 respectively by the Khitans. T'ai-tsung's hopes for the recapture of the lost territories of Yen-yün \textsuperscript{90} thus vanished. Thereafter, he was forced to change his policy to a defensive one.

The defeat of the Sung army provided Chao P'u with still another opportunity to return to power. In June, 986, he memorialized the emperor, opposing the adoption of an offensive policy towards the Khitans. While his advocacy of an appeasement policy impressed the emperor only slightly, he did gain the patronage of Prince Ch'en \textsuperscript{91} (Yüan-hsi \textsuperscript{91}), the second son of T'ai-tsung and now the most likely candidate to become the heir apparent.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{88}\textit{HCP}, v. 25, pp. 585-86; \textit{SS}, v. 5, p. 75. Though Li Chi-ch'ien was defeated in 984, he struck back in March, 985, and killed the Sung field commander at Hsia-chou \textsuperscript{92} (in present-day Ning-hsia \textsuperscript{92}) in a surprise attack.

\textsuperscript{89}\textit{KCMKSC}, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{90}\textit{HCP}, v. 27, pp. 613-14, 619-622, 625-26.

\textsuperscript{91}\textit{HCP}, v. 27, pp. 614-17.
K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien attained remarkable advancement in their careers in this year. Su I-chien was elevated to the important post of Hanlin Academician, while Li K'ang and Sung Shih were named Drafters of the Secretariat.\textsuperscript{92} Under the early Sung sponsorship system, they were accorded the power of recommending officials for important assignments.\textsuperscript{93} With access to that kind of leverage, they helped their t'ung-nien advance up the political ladder.

K'ou Chun was assigned to the task of transporting army provisions to the western front in late 987, probably recommended for that post by his t'ung-nien.\textsuperscript{94} By the end of 987, when K'ou Chun was serving at the western front, Chao P'u returned to the capital and was well received by T'ai-tsung.\textsuperscript{95} Strongly recommended by Prince Ch'en, now the Governor of K'ai-feng and the de facto heir apparent, Chao P'u was again named Senior Grand Councillor one month later.\textsuperscript{96}

\textsuperscript{92}\textit{HCP}, v. 27, pp. 623-24.

\textsuperscript{93}\textit{E. A. Kracke, Jr., Civil Service in Early Sung China, 960-1067,} (Cambridge, Mass:1953), chap. IX, p. 140.

\textsuperscript{94}\textit{KCMKSC}, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{95}\textit{HCP}, v. 24, p. 558; v. 28, p. 641. When Chao P'u was ousted from the capital in 983, it is recorded that Chao P'u realized T'ai-tsung was unwilling to see him again. It is evident that T'ai-tsung had changed his mind and approved Chao P'u's return to the capital. It is very possible that Prince Ch'en had influenced his father's view on Chao P'u.

\textsuperscript{96}\textit{HCP}, v. 28, pp. 641-42; v. 29, p. 647.
Chao P'u's return to power in February, 988, was evidently favorable to the advancement of K'ou Chun's group. It is notable that Chao P'u was both directly and indirectly related to K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien. His closest tie needless to say, was Chang Ping. Liu Ch'ang-yen was Chao P'u's most trusted and loyal subordinate. Wang Tan was the son of Chao P'u's good friend. 97 Wang Yü-ch'eng, the best friend of K'ou Chun and Chang Yung, was thought to be highly regarded by Chao P'u. 98 We will see later that the policies and perceptions of K'ou Chun's group on state affairs followed those of Chao P'u, since there was an apparent linkage between them and the senior statesman.

As Chao P'u exerted his last influence on early Northern Sung politics in 988, K'ou Chun emerged as a new political star in the middle of the year, which marked a key turning


98 HCP, v. 30, p. 675; CTTPN, pp. 135-136, 195. Wang Yü-ch'eng's eldest son Chia-yü (?-after 1004) was married to Chang Yung's daughter. Many memorials of Chao P'u were drafted by Wang Yü-ch'eng. When Chao P'u died in 992, Wang Yü-ch'eng wrote many poems lamenting his patron.
point in his career.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{99}Scholars in the Southern Sung and Yuan Dynasties compared Ch'ao P'u with K'ou Chun. Both Chao and K'ou were praised as great statesmen despite their shortcomings. See: Fang Ta-chung \textit{ch'ao chung} (13th Cent.), \textit{T'ieh-an chin-shu} hereafter \textit{TAC}, (The Collected Writings of Fang Ta-chung), SKCSCHP ser. 2, v. 25, pp. 2-3; Lu Wen-kuei \textit{liang lei-kao} (14th Cent.), Ch'iang-tung \textit{lei-kao} hereafter \textit{CTLK}, (The Classified Drafts of Essays of the Eastern Wall), SKCSCHP ser. 2, pp. 14, 17-18.
K'ou Chun returned from the western front in early 988. He then received a new assignment as the Controller-general of Yun-chou (in present-day Shantung). Before assuming his new duties, he had been granted an imperial audience. He greatly impressed T'ai-tsung with his rich knowledge and remarkable perception of barbarians affairs. A special written examination was offered to K'ou Chun at the palace immediately after the audience. K'ou Chun produced an impressive essay entitled "Discourse on Defence Against the Barbarians", and T'ai-tsung was pleased with his performance.

In June, 988, K'ou Chun was promoted to the post of Right Exhorter , which ranked among the attendants of the emperor. He was given the concurrent title of Auxiliary Official of the Institute of History. In the central government, his ability was further tested and he was then

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assigned to the position of Administrator of the Finance Commission, a very demanding and important post.²

Some of K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien also shared his good fortune. Hsieh Mi was promoted to be the Left Policy Monitor and Auxiliary Official of the Institute of History,³ while K'ou Chun's best friend, Ma Kao, was promoted to be Palace Censor and was much appreciated by T'ai-tsung.⁴ Following the path of Li K'ang and Sung Shih, Hsiang Min-chung had already been elevated to the rank of Drafter of the Secretariat.⁵ Chang Ping was also promoted after his patron Chao P'u returned to power earlier in the year.

Chao P'u was appointed for a third time as the Senior Grand Councillor. He was assisted by Lü Meng-cheng, the Junior Grand Councillor. Lü Meng-cheng was the first man among the chin-shih during T'ai-tsung's reign to attain such a high post.⁶ Wang Mien and Chang Hung (939-1001), Lü

²KCMKSC, pp. 2-3; HCC, v. 19, p. 264. Throughout the Sung Dynasty, the Finance Commission was the most important administrative organ in the central government besides the Secretariat and the Bureau of Military Affairs. Being responsible for the making of fiscal policy and administering the state treasury, the work loads of the Finance Commission officials were generally heavier than those serving in other ministries. But their prospects were also better.


⁴LCC, v. 40, pp. 6-7.

⁵SS, v. 282, p. 9553.

⁶HCP. v. 29, p. 647.
Meng-cheng's t'ung-nien, were promoted to Vice Grand Councillor and Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs, respectively, at the same time. The power of the 977 chin-shih was expanding.\(^7\)

While the 977 chin-shih steadily expanded their influence, another group of chin-shih also became active in factional politics. They were the chin-shih of 978. Compared with Lü Meng-cheng and K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, this group of chin-shih was inferior both in quality and quantity. But they were the first group of chin-shih who acted openly as a faction during the early Northern Sung Dynasty.\(^8\)

Chao Ch'ang-yen, the Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs, was the leader of the 978 faction. He was the father-in-law of Wang Tan. But unlike Wang Tan, he was a man of action, and sometimes perceived as a trouble-maker. He was outspoken and aggressive, being the representative of hawks advocating a hard line policy towards the Khitans.\(^9\)

\(^7\) HCP, v. 29, p. 648.

\(^8\) In 978, only seventy-four men received the chin-shih degree. Although Feng Cheng (958-1023) became Grand Councillor in the later years of Chên-tsung, he was incompatible with the other Grand Councillors in his time. Two more Vice Grand Councillors came from this graduate list, i.e. Chao Ch'ang-yen and Li Ch'ang-ling (937-1008), who not ranked among great statesmen. Another prominent figure from this year was T'ien Hsi (940-1003). See John W. Chaffee, op. cit., p. 192; SS, v. 267, pp. 9194-98; v. 285, pp. 9608-9611; v. 287, pp. 9652-55; v. 293, pp. 9787-92.

\(^9\) SS, v. 267, pp. 9194-98.
faction included Hu Tan who placed first in the 978 examination and was now the Drafter of the Secretariat. Hu was a great scholar of Han history, but his excessive self-confidence made him unpopular in the bureaucracy. Lü Meng-cheng, Li K'ang and K'ou Chun all disliked him.10 Hu Tan had openly criticized Chao P'u in 983 in his memorial to T'ai-tsung. His hostile attitude towards Chao P'u was shared by his t'ung-nien Ch'en Hsiang-yü and Tung Yen, Administrators in the Finance Commission.11 Liang Hao, the optimus of the 985 examination, also joined this faction. Liang Hao had been the subordinate of Chao Ch'ang-yen and now promoted to Right Exhorter.12 It is recorded that the five men gathered at Chao Ch'ang-yen's residence day and night, discussing state affairs and criticizing those they disliked. They made use of a commoner to petition the emperor, charging Li Fang, the Grand Councillor and the best friend of Chao P'u, with irresponsibility. The petition was so effective that Li Fang was dismissed.13

11HCP, v. 29, p. 651.
12Ibid.
13HCP, v. 29, pp. 650-51.
It is not surprising that Chao P'u would not tolerate the existence of such a rival group when he returned to power. Co-operating with Prince Hsü (the former Prince Ch'en), Chao P'u started another purge in the bureaucracy. Chao Ch'ang-yen and his faction fell victim to this purge, some narrowly escaping from capital punishment. All the hawks in the court were eliminated, including the emperor's favorite Hou-mo-ch'en Li-yung.

It is evident that Chao P'u tried his best to realize his appeasement policy towards the Khitans. He strongly opposed the adventurous policy advocated by the hawks. Perceiving T'ai-tsung's inconsistency in the making of foreign policy, Chao P'u minimized the influence of the hawks by eliminating their representatives on the one hand, and promoting the people who shared his views on the other.

K'ou Chun and his friends Wang Yü-ch'eng and Wen Chung-shu met the needs of the emperor and Chao P'u. Their knowledge of foreign affairs became assets for their own success. Grasping the golden chance, K'ou Chun managed to make a great leap forward in his career.

In February, 989 T'ai-tsung invited his ministers to submit memorials discussing the best ways to defend the

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14 Ibid.
15 HCP, v. 27, p. 602; v. 29, pp. 651-52.
borders. Wen Chung-shu was praised for his impressive memorial, which reached the emperor's desk first.¹⁶ Wen Chung-shu was the t'ung-nien of Lü Meng-cheng, the Junior Grand Councillor. They were countrymates and friends as well. Lü Meng-cheng had enthusiastically helped Wen regained his post. But Wen Chung-shu in return attacked Lü Meng-cheng, which led to Lü's removal from office in 991.¹⁷ Wen Chung-shu had been K'ou Chun's close friend and colleague since 988 when they were both appointed as Right Exhorters. They were commonly addressed as "Wen-K'ou". But Wen Chung-shu's betrayal of his t'ung-nien made him unpopular in the bureaucracy. K'ou Chun's close association with Wen Chung-shu, who was generally regarded as a petty man, was harmful in his dealings with other bureaucrats. Yang Hui-chih, widely regarded as a virtuous scholar-official, labelled K'ou Chun and Wen Chung-shu as the kind of petty men who gained advancement at the expense of others.¹⁸

¹⁶HCP, v. 30, p. 666.

¹⁷HCP, v. 30, p. 720; SS, v. 266, pp. 9182-83; LPC, v. 6, p. 1; Wu Ch'u-hou 胡傳(Chin-shih 1245), Ch'ing-hsiang ts'ai-chi 淸代資治, hereafter CHTC, (Miscellaneous Notes written at Ch'ing-hsiang), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1985), v. 1, p. 2.

¹⁸LPC, v. 6, p. 1; Hsieh Ts'ai-po 謝之 Aç (Chin-shih 1202), Mi-chai pi-chi 密齋筆記, hereafter MCPC, (Notes written at the Mi Studio), TSCCCP ed., v. 4, p. 38; SS, v. 296, p. 9869.
Chang Chi (933-996) was next in submitting a memorial on foreign policy to the throne. Chang Chi was originally a Han-lin Academician of the Southern T'ang Kingdom. He was a reputable scholar but regarded as an opportunist. His betrayal of his friends was no secret. But his knowledge and literary talent impressed the emperor as well as K'ou Chun, a situation that later proved to be disastrous to K'ou's career. 19

Two other memorialists on this occasion were Wang Yü-ch'eng, K'ou Chun's good friend, and T'ien Hsi, a t'ung-nien of Chao Ch'ang-yen. While Wen Chung-shu and Chang Chi were generally regarded as being petty men, Wang Yü-ch'eng and T'ien Hsi were highly respected by their contemporaries as men of great virtue. 20 Their ideas were much appreciated by both the emperor and Chao P'u. 21

K'ou Chun's own memorial greatly impressed the emperor. Unfortunately this memorial is no longer extant, so we are unable to determine his notions on foreign policy. After consulting with the Grand Councillor, 22 the emperor promoted

20 SS, v. 293, pp. 9787-9800.
21 HCP, v. 30, pp. 671-78.
22 The Grand Councillor who was reluctant to promote K'ou Chun is believed to have been Lü Meng-cheng, since Chao P'u was on sick leave when K'ou Chun memorialized the throne in August, 989. See HCP, v. 30, pp. 680-81.
K'ou Chun to the position of Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs in August, 989.\textsuperscript{23} That was a great turning point in K'ou's career.

At the time K'ou Chun was being elevated, Chao P'u was very sick and about to leave the political scene. Before his retirement, he strongly recommended Chang Ch'i-hsien to the emperor. The emperor accepted his suggestion and reinstated Chang as Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs. At the same time, another 977 chin-shih, Wang Hua-chi 王化基 (943-1009), was promoted to Acting Executive Censor 檢察史中丞, an important functional post in the bureaucracy. \textsuperscript{24} The 977 chin-shih group thus became the dominant faction at court.

Among the new political stars, Pi Shih-an 彭士安 (938-1005) was most helpful to K'ou Chun's career. A native of Shan-chou (in present-day Hopei province), he received his chin-shih degree early in 966 when Wang Tan's father was the chief examiner. He was the patron as well as good friend of Wang Yü-ch'eng. He later became the political ally of K'ou Chun. When K'ou Chun was elevated to high position, Pi Shih-an also attained the post of Drafter of the Secretariat after a lengthy period of provincial service.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{24}HCP, v. 30, p. 687.

\textsuperscript{25}SS, v. 281, pp. 9517-23; Liu Chih 劉祁 (1030-1097), Chung-su chi 律書集 hereafter as CSC, (The Collected Works of Liu Chih), TS/CCCP ed., v. 11, pp. 145-49, "Pi Wen-chien shen-
Unlike his services at Pa-tung and Ch'eng-an, K'ou Chun now had to learn how to advance in the capital. Patrons and friends were necessary for one's protection and survival in the bureaucracy. T'ai-tsung's appreciation of his talent was to be his greatest advantage, but it was also a cause of jealousy among rival officials. In principle, it was advisable to make as many friends as possible and not to confront anyone in the bureaucracy. K'ou Chun did make many friends, including those regarded as either gentlemen or petty men in this period. But in practice, he could not avoid making enemies. Once he was considered as belonging to a certain group or faction, he could not act differently from the people in that group or faction. Thus, he soon found that he could not please everyone in the bureaucracy. As a matter of fact, he did not attempt to please everyone at the expense of his principles. When he was close to the center of power, he could not escape becoming involved in the power struggle. Factional strife erupted between the 977 and 980 chin-shih after 990, and K'ou Chun played an important role in that factional strife.

*tao-pei* 塔之為神道路 (The Spirit-path Tombstone Inscription of Pi Shih-an); *HCP*, v. 30, p. 681.
II. THE PROMISING ACADEMICIAN (989–991)

The Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs 槍家及學士 was a post newly created in the Five Dynasties when the Bureau of Military Affairs was formally established. The importance and status of this senior assignment (chih 釋) was comparable to that of Hanlin Academician in early Northern Sung; talented men of literary skill were assigned as Hanlin Academicians in the Secretariat, while civilian officials who possessed a good knowledge of military affairs were placed in the Bureau of Military Affairs. Officials of these two types became the most likely candidates for the positions of Vice Grand Councillor and Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs, respectively. They both enjoyed privileges granted to senior officials of Vice-Minister level. These positions were therefore

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perceived as shortcuts to advancement. It is evident that most Liang Fu councillors were promoted from either the ranks of Hanlin Academicians or Auxiliary Academicians of the Bureau of Military Affairs. Eminent political figures in early Northern Sung, such as Chao P'u, Hsüeh Chü-cheng, Chang Chi-hsien, Tou Ch'eng (925-982), Shih Hsi-tsai (928-984), Wang Mien, Wen Chung-shu, and Pi Shih-an all had served as Auxiliary Academicians of the Bureau of Military Affairs. Besides K'ou Chun himself, his t'ung-nien including Hsiang Min-chung, Chang Ping, Chang Yung, Pien Su and Liu Ch'ang-yen all attained these important posts. Later, Fan Chung-yen, Han Ch'i and Fu Pi also shared the same career experience.

Unlike those of the Hanlin Academician, the daily duties of the Auxiliary Academician were not clearly defined. K'ou Chun was not the subordinate of the Commissioner of Military Affairs, though his work was closely related to his Bureau. He was instead regarded as the military adviser to the emperor. Besides exerting his influence in the making of military policies, K'ou Chun extended his influence throughout the government when he was concurrently appointed Supervisor of the Ministry of Personnel, giving him executive as well as

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advisory powers.

K'ou Chun established his own style in playing the political game. His frank remonstrances caught the attention of his master and colleagues. His words were sharp, critical and straightforward. Though he was much favoured by T'ai-tsung and was granted rapid promotions, he was ready to challenge the emperor's authority and insist on his own principles. It is recorded that T'ai-tsung was impressed by his insistence on principle and compared him with the T'ang statesman Wei Cheng (579-642).\textsuperscript{28} It is said that whenever the young Auxiliary Academician showed up at court, his colleagues became nervous; his reputation for straightforwardness was clear.\textsuperscript{29}

The responses to his personal style by his colleagues varied greatly. His best friend Chang Yung approved and praised it. Some admired his courage. But others perceived K'ou Chun's actions to be in violation of the rules of the political game. How could a minister always argue with his master and continuously confront his colleagues?

K'ou Chun's recruitment policy was another matter of controversy. For the recruitment and promotion of officials, there were objective criteria such as seniority. But as the

\textsuperscript{28}SSCW, v. 2, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{29}KLKIS, p. 1.
Supervisor of the Ministry of Personnel, he did not follow the rules, procedures and precedents precisely. He promoted those people whom he perceived to be talented even when they did not have the required formal qualifications. Naturally his t'ung-nien and friends were the beneficiaries of this practice. K'ou Chun was praised for arranging the promotion of Ch'ien Jo-shui and his best friend Chang Yung, who were generally held to be men of talent. But his subjective assessment of skill could be easily perceived as playing favorites.

K'ou Chun's first setback in his career took place in late 989, when his mother died. According to custom, he had to observe a lengthy mourning period. With approval from the emperor, he left the capital and buried his parents in Lo-yang, the Western Capital (in present-day Honan province). After long postponement, K'ou Chun now could bury his father with the proper rites. K'ou Chun had also lost his wife before he was promoted to Auxiliary Academician. In early 990, his respected patron and father-in-law Hsü Chung-hsüan also passed away.

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30 KYC, "Appendix", pp. 5-6; Yang I (974-1020), Wu-i hsin-chi (Collected Works of Yang I), SKSCP ser. 8, v. 9, "Ch'ien-kung mu-chih-ming" (Tomb Record and Inscription of Ch'ien Jo-shui), pp. 8-9.

31 KCMKSC, pp. 3, 10; HCC, pp. 264-65.

32 KCMKSC, p. 12.

33 SS, v. 270, p. 9269.
During the period when K'ou Chun was absent from the capital, Chao P'u finally retired due to sickness in early 990. Among Chao's followers, Liu Ch'ang-yen, K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, served the old man with great loyalty. It is unclear whether K'ou Chun ever paid a visit to his t'ung-nien and Chao P'u, who were at Lo-yang. K'ou Chun's good friend, Wang Yü-ch'eng, who had written many farewell poems to Chao P'u in early 990 when Chao retired, also wrote a farewell essay to K'ou Chun before K'ou left for Lo-yang. It is possible that K'ou visited Chao P'u on behalf of Wang Yü-ch'eng. K'ou Chun, who later evidently adopted Chao P'u's foreign policy, very likely would have sought valuable advice from Chao P'u if he did paid him a visit.

K'ou Chun's mourning period was terminated by the emperor in late 990. When he returned to K'ai-feng, he discovered that the most powerful individual at court was Vice Grand Councillor Wang Mien, the elder brother of his t'ung-nien Wang Huai. Wang Mien, a 977 chin-shih, represented a shift of factional influence as Chao P'u retired; the 977 chin-shih had become dominant at court. But Wang Mien antagonized his own

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34 HCP, v. 31, p. 697.
35 SS, v. 267, pp. 9206-07.
36 CTPN, pp. 68, 73.
37 HCP, v. 31, pp. 700-701.
t'ung-nien by his autocratic behavior. Harmony within the bureaucracy was further disrupted by the involvement of K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien in power politics in early 991.

Before K'ou Chun launched his attack on Wang Mien, two of his t'ung-nien, Hsieh Mi and Chang Kuan, had already impressed the emperor by their frank remonstrances critical of Wang Mien.38 In April, 991, when T'ai-tsung inquired as to the causes of the current natural disasters, including a plague of locusts and a drought, K'ou Chun replied that it was probably caused by injustices in punishment. He then brought up the case of the Vice Grand Councillor's younger brother, Wang Huai, his t'ung-nien, who had committed the crime of bribery, but was only demoted while his collaborator was sentenced to death. T'ai-tsung was very much annoyed by Wang Mien's involvement in this criminal case. Wang Mien was seriously criticized by the emperor, while K'ou Chun was highly praised for his courage in disclosing the facts.39

K'ou Chun's action in this instance was the cause of controversy among his colleagues and contemporaries. On the one hand, he was praised for challenging authority. But on the other, he was criticized for violating the rules of the bureaucratic game. How could K'ou Chun attack his t'ung-nien

Wang Huai in this way? It was thought that K'ou Chun should have protected his t'ung-nien's interest instead. To many individuals, K'ou Chun's open criticism of his colleagues, especially in the presence of the emperor, was hardly acceptable. That is the reason why Yang Hui-chih criticized K'ou Chun as an opportunist who placed his own advancement above his colleagues' interests.

In May, 991, K'ou Chun was promoted to Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs, which placed him among the rank of councillors (chih-cheng). His elevation was generally perceived as the result of his successful attack on Wang Mien. However, he had to pay a high price for his success. Many of his colleagues, especially those who maintained good ties with the Wang brothers, were unhappy about Wang Mien's downfall and were angry with K'ou Chun. It is notable that Sung Po, the assistant examiner for the 980 examination, sided with Wang Mien. K'ou Chun had thus made enemies who desired revenge. In climbing up the bureaucratic


41 HCP, v. 32, p. 714.
ladder, he found it to be more and more shaky.
III. FROM ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER TO VICE GRAND COUNCILLOR (991-994)

K'ou Chun was only thirty-one years of age when he was promoted to the position of Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs. He was the youngest man ever to attain that post during the whole of the Sung Dynasty. Among his t'ung-nien, he was the first one to become a councillor in the Liang Fu. His education, his experience in Ch'eng-an, his mission to the western borders, and his two years of service as an Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs helped him in becoming a successful Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs in spite of his relative youth. He may have already been an expert in his office. But it is evident that he was a beginner in the matter of political power struggles. As a result, he soon found that he had become the target of factional strife.

The power struggle between Wang Mien and K'ou Chun continued after K'ou's promotion. This time Wang Mien's own 977 t'ung-nien were involved. Chang Ch'i-hsien and Ch'en Shu (946-1004) were promoted to Vice Grand Councillors. Wen Chung-shu, another chin-shih of 977, shared K'ou Chun's

fortune at the same time. But Wang Mien's friend and t'ung-nien, Chang Hung, was dismissed. In May, 991, five chin-shih of the 977 class were in the Liang Fu 43, but they were divided into two political camps. Lü Meng-cheng and Wang Mien belonged to one group, while Ch'en Shu, Chang Ch'i-hsien and Wen Chung-shu were on the other side. K'ou Chun had good ties with Ch'en Shu and Wen Chung-shu, and was therefore the enemy of Lü Meng-cheng and Wang Mien.44 Chang Hsun 5 (940-995), the sole Assistant Commissioner who did not possess the chin-shih degree, apparently stood opposite K'ou Chun. General Wang Hsien, the father-in-law of Chang Yung and the Commissioner of Military Affairs, remained neutral in the power struggle between these civil officials.45

Fighting a war on two-fronts, Wang Mien sought to take defensive measures. It is notable that K'ou Chun's friend Wang Yü-ch'eng, now a Drafter of the Secretariat, was utilized by Wang Mien. In order to reduce the work load of the councillors, Wang Yü-ch'eng memorialized the throne requesting

43They were Lü Meng-cheng, Chang Ch'i-hsien, Ch'en Shu, Wang Mien, and Wen Chung-shu. See HCP, v. 32, p. 714.

44Chang Ch'i-hsien and Wen Chung-shu were both countrymates, t'ung-nien and very close friends. But Chang Ch'i-hsien later became the enemy of K'ou Chun. See WCMCYHL, v. 3, p. 55; MCPCYYCC, "hsia", v. 2, p. 12.

45SS, v. 268, pp. 9223, 9230. Wang Hsien was dismissed in September 991. Although it is recorded that K'ou Chun occasionally argued with Wang Hsien, the Commissioner of Military Affairs did not side with Chang Hsun.
that the Grand Councillor and the Commissioner of Military Affairs should only see their subordinates in the Grand Office together after the imperial audience. Wang Mien immediately felt that Wang Yü-ch'eng's suggestion could help his own cause. Under the new practice, his rival t'ung-nien and K'ou Chun could not easily detect his actions by examining the reports of other officials. Hence, Wang Mien strongly supported Wang Yü-ch'eng's proposal. T'ai-tsung approved it without realizing Wang Mien's real intentions. K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien Hsieh Mi voiced his opposition, pointing out the defects in Wang Yü-ch'eng's proposal and severely criticizing Wang Yü-ch'eng. T'ai-tsung was convinced and reversed his decision. 46

Thus Wang Mien was once again defeated by his rivals. He gradually lost the trust and favor of the emperor. In October, 991, he was removed from office. At the same time, his rival Ch'en Shu also lost his post. 47 The greatest losses in this power struggle were sustained by Lü Meng-cheng, the Grand Councillor and the patron of Wang Mien. He was dismissed from office for associating with Sung K'ang, his brother-in-law, who had submitted an improper petition. According to another source, Lü Meng-cheng was charged with

46 HCP, v. 32, pp. 715-16.
47 HCP, v. 32, p. 719.
the unfair punishment of Chang Hsin (10th Cent.), then a poor scholar in Lo-yang, who had refused to lend him money. The man who launched the attack on Lû Meng-cheng was Wen Chung-shu, Lû's former friend and t'ung-nien. It is believed that this was the real reason for Lû Meng-cheng's dismissal.⁴⁸

Li Fang was then reinstated as Senior Grand Councillor, while Chang Ch'i-hsien was elevated to Junior Grand Councillor. The fall of Lû Meng-cheng, Wang Mien and Ch'en Shu provided a golden opportunity for the advancement of K'ou Chun's group. Li K'ang, an older t'ung-nien of K'ou Chun, was promoted to Vice Grand Councillor from Hanlin Academician, and Wang Tan was named a Drafter in the Secretariat.⁴⁹

K'ou Chun was undoubtedly the winner of this round in the power struggle. He and Wen Chung-shu were reappointed as co-administrators of the Bureau of Military Affairs when the bureau was restructured. The old general Wang Hsien was removed from office. Chang Hsûn was promoted to Administrator of the Bureau.⁵⁰ But in the absence of Wang Hsien, who had played the role of mediator, the quarrel between K'ou Chun and Chang Hsûn soon evolved into another round of factional strife.

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⁴⁸HCP, v. 32, p. 720; v. 34, p. 755.
Many cases of factional strife in early Northern Sung times were closely intertwined with the question of succession. The rise and fall of Chao P'u and Lu To-hsün illustrate this point very well. K'ou Chun was fortunate in not broaching the sensitive and dangerous issue of succession when his t'ung-nien Sung K'ang petitioned the emperor to invest Prince Hsü as the crown prince. The motive of Sung K'ang's pro-Prince Hsü clique was apparent. Sung and his clique planned to gain political advantage by pleasing the emperor and the heir apparent. They failed, however, because they misunderstood T'ai-tsung. Though the emperor favored Prince Hsü and already regarded him as his successor, he would not allow his ministers to influence his decision.

Furthermore, there were other matters to consider. First, Empress Li was in favour of Yüan-tso, his eldest son, whom he actually liked most. Second, the formal investiture of any of his sons as the crown prince would have aroused the resentment of Empress Sung, the wife of T'ai-tsu, who thought that T'ai-tsu's grandson should inherit the throne. Last

51 Sung K'ang's pro-Prince Hsü clique was not tied to K'ou Chun's faction, though Sung K'ang and his brother Sung Shih were both the t'ung-nien of K'ou Chun. Sung K'ang's clique included Feng Cheng, a rival of K'ou Chun, and three other men.

52 Empress Li's disposition was clearly reflected in 997 when she insisted that Yüan-tso, the eldest son of T'ai-tsung, should succeed the throne. Chiang Fu-ts'ung has suggested that T'ai-tsung might have compromised with Empress Sung when he ascended the throne in 976. He has suggested further that
but not least, T'ai-tsung was sensitive to the repercussions that were sure to follow if crown prince was formally invested. T'ai-tsung was unwilling to see his ministers shifting their loyalty to their future master while he was still on the throne. 53

As a matter of fact, K'ou Chun was in a difficult position regarding the succession issue. He had married the younger sister of Empress Sung after the prescribed mourning period for his mother had passed. This was his second wife, who came from a prominent family in Kuang-p'ing (in present-day Honan province). K'ou Chun's new father-in-law, General Sung Yen-wo, was the brother-in-law of Prince Wei, whom K'ou Chun's father had served. 54 General Sung died in June, 989, before the wedding of K'ou Chun and his daughter. 55

T'ai-tsung had been restrained by an agreement that he would postpone the investiture of Chen-tsung as crown prince after the death of Empress Sung. HCP, v. 41, p. 862; Chiang Fu-ts'ung, op. cit., pp. 271-297, "Sung T'ai-tsu Hsiao-chang Sung huang-hou peng-pu ch'eng-sang k'ao" (On the Improper Funeral Arrangement of Empress Sung of T'ai-tsu)

HCP, v. 38, p. 816. T'ai-tsung's worry was explicitly reflected in September, 995, when Chen-tsung was formally invested as the crown prince.

General Sung Yen-wo was the maternal grandson of Chuang-tsung of the Later T'ang, (reigned 923-925). He became the son-in-law of Emperor Kao-tsu of Later Han. See HCC, v. 28, pp. 383-85, "Sung-kung shen-tao-pei" (The Spirit-path Tombstone Inscription of Sung Yen-wo)

Sung Yen-wo had fifteen daughters. Empress Sung was the eldest. K'ou Chun's name did not appear on the list of his sons-in-law when the tombstone inscription of Sung Yen-wo was
Empress Sung, as the eldest daughter of the Sung Clan, presided over the wedding ceremony. Wang Yü-ch'eng, who wrote the spirit-path tombstone inscription for General Sung, was very likely the matchmaker of this marriage. This marriage tie soon placed K'ou Chun in a dangerous and difficult position when the relationship between T'ai-tsung and Empress Sung began to deteriorate. But in the long run, he was greatly benefited from this marriage which widened the scope of his social relations, especially his relations with the circle of military men. Several prominent military officers were sons-in-law of General Sung, and it is notable that K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, Hsiang Min-chung, was also a son-in-law of General Sung's younger brother.


56 HCC, v. 28, pp. 383-90; HCP, v. 37, p. 813. Wang Yü-ch'eng was demoted in June, 995 for criticizing T'ai-tsung's improper arrangements for Empress Sung's funeral. Apparently he had close ties with the Sung Clan.

57 Besides Emperor T'ai-tsu and K'ou Chun, seven sons-in-law of Sung Yen-wo came from eminent military families, including Han Ch'ung-hsün (954-1009) and Wang Te-yung (987-1065), who later became Assistant Commissioner and Commissioner of Military Affairs respectively. Hsiang Min-chung's second wife was the daughter of Sung Yen-wo's younger brother. See HCC, v. 28, pp. 388-89; SS, v. 250, pp. 8824-25; v. 278, pp. 9466-69; Wang An-shih (1021-1086), Lin-ch'uan Chi (hereafter WLCC), (Collected Works of Wang An-shih), Ssu-pu pei-yao ed., Lung-hsueh (hereafter SPPY), (Taipei: Chung-hua, 1965-66 photocopy of the 1936 ed.), v. 90, p. 10; "Wang-kung hsing-chuang" (Record of Conduct of Wang Te-yung); Tsu Wu-tse (1006-1085), Lung-hsüeh
The year 992 was another examination year. On April, 992, 353 men received their chin-shih degrees.\(^5^8\) Ting Wei (966-1037) and Wang Ch'in-jo (962-1025) were among the successful candidates. They ranked fourth and eleventh in the examinations respectively, and were to be the first two southerners to become Grand Councillors in early Northern Sung times.\(^5^9\) Ting Wei, a native of Su-chou (in present-day Kiangsu province), was the son-in-law of T'ou Ch'eng.\(^6^0\) By marriage Ting Wei was tied to Wang Mien, the rival of K'ou Chun. But he was much praised by K'ou Chun for his outstanding talent in poetry and prose. He was also highly praised by Wang Yü-ch'eng and Liu K'ai, leaders of a leading wen-chi (hereafter LHWC), (Collected Works of Tsu Wu-tse), SKCSCP ser. 5, v. 15, p. 12, "Hsiang Wen-chien kung hsing-chuang" (Record of Conduct of Hsiang Min-chung)\(^5^8\) John W. Chaffee, op. cit., p. 192; HCP, v. 33, p. 734.

CTPN, pp. 89-90; HCP, v. 90, p. 2075; v. 96, p. 2207. Wang Ch'in-jo was the first southerner to attain the post of Grand Councillor (September 1017). Ting Wei was elevated to this post in August 1018.

T'ou Ch'eng came from the eminent T'ou family of Hopei. He attained the post of Vice Grand Councillor in 980 but died in the same year. He was a good friend of Ting Wei's father. Appreciating Ting's talent, T'ou Ch'eng married his daughter to Ting Wei. See SS, v. 263, pp. 9092-98; v. 283, p. 9566; P'an Ju-shih 諸木石 (d. after 1033), Ting Chin-kung t'ian-lu (hereafter TCKTL), (Records of Ting Wei's Talks), FCHSTK ser. 8, pp. 461-63. P'an Ju-shih was the son-in-law of Ting Wei.
literary circle.\textsuperscript{61} Like K'ou Chun, Ting Wei's parents and father-in-law had high expectations for his future. Apparently, he was not discriminated against by K'ou Chun or other northerners for his southern background.

Wang Ch'in-jo was a native of Lin-chiang-chün (\textit{in present-day Kiangsi province}). Like Ting Wei, he came from an ordinary family. He had shown much cleverness in youth, and accordingly his grandfather had high expectations for his future. But he was physically unattractive and he did not possess the literary talent of Ting Wei. He attracted little attention from K'ou Chun's group, but he was recognized by Prince Shou (later Chen-tsung) on one occasion.\textsuperscript{62}

Other eminent figures from the chin-shih of this year were Wang Shu (963-1034) and Chang Shih-hsun (964-1049). Wang Shu later became K'ou Chun's son-in-law and chief deputy. Chang Shih-hsun was the third man among his t'ung-nien of 992 to become Grand Councillor eventually. He maintained good ties with K'ou Chun and his group.\textsuperscript{63}


\textsuperscript{62} \textit{SS}, v. 283, pp. 9559, 9564; Hu Tzu \textit{Hsi-yin} (1082-1143), \textit{YOUTHCC} (Literary Notes Written at T'iao Stream, Part I), (Hong Kong: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1976), v. 25, pp. 171-72.

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{SS}, v. 286, pp. 9632-33; v. 311, pp. 10216-18; P'eng Pai-ch'uan \textit{Chih-chih} (fl. early 13th Cent.), \textit{TPCCTL}, (A Record of Various Items Pertaining to Politics in the T'ai-p'ing
The chief examiner in 992 was Su I-chien, and the assistant examiners included Wang Tan, Pi Shih-an and Ch'ien Jo-shui, who were either K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien or his friends. Sun Ho 余何 (961-1004) ranked first in this examination. Yüeh Huang-mu 楊徽 (967-1021), son of Yüeh Shih, a t'ung-nien of Su I-chien, also passed at this time. It is notable that Yang I also received a special chin-shih degree in this year. Except for Wang Ch'in-jo, the above-named chin-shih of 992 later became the most important and closest political associates of K'ou Chun.

While Ting Wei and his t'ung-nien enjoyed their successes in the examinations, the old emperor was saddened by the deaths of Chao P'u and Prince Hsü in the middle of the year. Chao P'u passed away in August, 992, after a lengthy illness. It was rumoured at the time that his death was caused by the ghost of T'ing-mei, the younger brother of T'ai-tsung. Since T'ai-tsung credited such beliefs, and since he was also

Period), reprint of Shih-yuan ts'ung-shu ed., 臺灣大學 (Taipei: 1966), v. 28, p. 1887; KCMKSC, p. 38; Fan Chen 宋綺 (1008-1089), Tung-chai chi-shih 東齋紀事 (Records of East Studio), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1980), v. 3, p. 28. A poem written for Chang Shih-hsun is found in K'ou Chun's extant poetry. An anecdote records that Chang Shih-hsun visited the Hsiang-kuo Temple 轉國寺 with K'ou Chun just after he received his chin-shih degree. A fortune-teller there predicted that K'ou Chun and Chang Shih-hsun would become Grand Councillors in the future.

64CTPN, pp. 89-90.

responsible for his brother's unnatural death, the death of Chao P'u must have caused him some psychological distress. He did display great sadness at Chao P'u's death, and he may have wondered if he would soon share the same fate. It may also have been the wound he received in combat in 979 that continued to affect his health years later.66

Four months after Chao P'u's death, Prince Hsü also passed away, poisoned by his favorite consort, it was said. Upon the death of his beloved son, T'ai-tsung almost collapsed. He wept the night through and did not eat. He composed poems to lament his son's death, and granted him posthumously the title of crown prince. But soon it was found that Prince Hsü had deceived his father in many ways. It was alleged that the illnesses of the emperor and Yüan-tso had been caused by the "black magic" practised by Prince Hsü. T'ai-tsung was greatly angered. After an investigation directed by Wang Chi-en (949-999), the powerful eunuch whom T'ai-tsung and Empress Li trusted, was completed, the consort who poisoned Prince Hsü and was said to have participated in the practice of "black magic" in the palace, was ordered hanged and her relatives banished. The honorific titles granted to Prince Hsü were all withdrawn, and his attendants, including Lü Tuan (935-1000), were all demoted and severely

punished.  

Empress Li was the most likely person to have disclosed Prince Hsü's "crime" of practising "black magic", considering her potential motives and her closeness to T'ai-tsung. She disliked Prince Hsü but supported Yüan-tso, the elder brother of Prince Hsü, as the successor of T'ai-tsung. Yüan-tso lost the favor of T'ai-tsung in 985 after setting a fire in the palace. It is said that Yüan-tso set the fire following Prince Hsü's visit after a banquet he did not attain.  

We are not clear what Prince Hsü told his elder brother. Apparently Empress Li believed that Yüan-tso had been framed by his younger brother. When the "crime" of Prince Hsü was ultimately disclosed in 992, she made use of this opportunity to defend Yüan-tso by putting all the responsibility for the 985 fire on Prince Hsü, who was alleged to have previously practised "black magic" on his elder brother. She went on to beg the emperor to pardon Yüan-tso and restore his status. But T'ai-tsung delayed making a decision. Prince Hsiang...
(later Chen-tsung), the third son of T'ai-tsung, now became the leading candidate as heir apparent.

Wang Mien died in the same month. Though he was unable to gain his revenge on K'ou Chun, his friend Chang Hsün was ready to do so. In July, 993, Chang Hsün encountered an opportunity: when K'ou Chun and Wen Chung-shu one day left the palace for home, they encountered a mad man who addressed K'ou Chun as emperor. Having witnessed the accident, Wang Pin (923-995), head of the Police and a close friend of Chang Hsün's, deliberately reported to T'ai-tsung that K'ou Chun had been addressed as emperor. Facing this serious charge, K'ou Chun could hardly defend himself. Fortunately, Wen Chung-shu was willing to bear witness. Criticizing each other in front of T'ai-tsung, Chang Hsün and K'ou Chun both annoyed the emperor. As a result, Chang Hsün was demoted while K'ou Chun was removed from the Bureau of Military Affairs.

This was the second setback in K'ou Chun's career. It was common in factional strife for a minor offense or a mere accident to be utilized by one's opponents in gaining political advantage. K'ou Chun was to suffer similar experiences in the future.

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70 HCP, v. 33, p. 741.
71 HCP, v. 34, p. 750.
For the chin-shih of 980, the fall of K'ou Chun, though a great setback, was compensated by the elevation of Liu Ch'ang-yen, Hsiang Min-chung and Chang Yung. Liu was promoted to Co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs, while Hsiang Min-chung and Chang Yung were appointed Auxiliary Academicians of the Bureau of Military Affairs. Hsiang Min-chung and Chang Yung were concurrently appointed Directors of the Memorial-forwarding Office. Lü Tuan, a friend of K'ou Chun, was promoted to Vice Grand Councillor. At the same time, Wang Yü-ch'eng was pardoned and returned to the capital.

Since August, 993, the capital and adjacent prefectures were seriously troubled by flooding and bandit activities. The emperor was extremely displeased with his councillors' performance. Li Fang, Chang Ch'i-hsien, Li K'ang, Wen Chung-shu, and Chia Huang-chung (945-996) were all dismissed in November, 993, for their share in these matters. Su I-chien and Hsiang Min-chung were elevated at that time to fill the vacancies occasioned by the departures of Li K'ang and K'ou Chun.

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72 HCP, v. 34, pp. 750-52.
73 CTPN, p. 106. HCP, v. 34, p. 750; TCKTL, p. 465. Lü Tuan had been strongly recommended by K'ou Chun to T'ai-tsung.
74 HCP, v. 34, pp. 753-755; SS, v. 265, p. 9154; MCPCYCC, "hsia", v. 2, "Chang Wen-ting kung Ch'i-hsien chuan" (The Biography of Chang Ch'i-hsien), pp. 7-8. Chang Ch'i-hsien was dismissed in July 993. According to his
K'ou Chun was glad to see the promotions of his t'ung-nien, but the return of Lü Meng-cheng was certainly bad news for him. Realizing Lü Meng-cheng was innocent in the Chang Hsin's case, T'ai-tsung reappointed Lü Meng-cheng Grand Councillor. Shortly after Lü's return to power, K'ou was banished from the capital. He was appointed Prefect of Ch'ing-chou. When he was about to leave the capital, Wang Yü-ch'eng wrote a poem to encourage him. Despite the removal of K'ou from his post in the central government, T'ai-tsung still appreciated his talent.

Fearing that the emperor would summon K'ou Chun back to court, his enemies frequently sought to slander him in front of the emperor. However, K'ou Chun did not entirely lose favor with the emperor. Moreover, he was protected and aided by his t'ung-nien, who could counteract the influence of the rival faction.

Strongly recommended by Su I-chien and Ch'ien Jo-shui, Wang Tan began to gain favor with T'ai-tsung. He showed his political wisdom, for instance, by requesting the application of the law of avoidance when his father-in-law, Chao Ch'ang-yen, the leader of the 978 chin-shih, was promoted to Vice

biographies in SS and MCPPYCC, his dismissal was indirectly caused by Li K'ang's fault.

75HCP, v. 34, pp. 755-56; HCC, v. 10, p. 141.
While K'ou Chun rose and fell dramatically with the changing winds at court, Wang Tan enjoyed a career marked by steady advancement.

K'ou Chun spent a year at Ch'ing-chou, a prosperous seaport on the Shantung peninsula, where he made a name as a generous and fair-minded administrator. Among his deputies, he was particularly supportive of Chu T'ai-fu (959-1000). At Ch'ing-chou, he enjoyed a time free from factional struggles. It is reported that he liked to drink day and night with his guests and subordinates, and he continued to write poetry.

While K'ou Chun enjoyed the more leisurely pace of life in the provinces, rebellions broke out in the west in early 994. Led by Li Shun (?-1017) and Wang Hsiao-po (?-994), a large-scale peasant revolt erupted in Szechuan. Cheng-tu, the capital of the province, was captured by the rebels. At the same time, the Tangut chieftain, Li Chi-

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76 According to the law of avoidance practised in the Sung dynasty, ministers who served as Drafters, Hanlin Academicians or Executive Censor were transferred to other posts when their relatives were appointed councillors in the Liang Fu. But this law was loosely observed in early Northern Sung times. See HCP, v. 34, pp. 756-57.

77 SS, v. 306, p. 10103; v. 307, p. 10131. It is recorded that Chu T'ai-fu could not advance further because he was disliked by a certain councillor, who was mostly likely Chang Ch'i-hsien, K'ou Chun's rival.

78 HCP, v. 34, p. 756; KCMKSC, p. 62.
ch'ien, also took up arms against the Sung court. Wang Chi-
en, the powerful eunuch, was sent to suppress the Szechuan rebellion, while General Li Chi-lung (950-1005), the elder brother of Empress Li, was sent to deal with the Tangut problem. By mid-year, the Szechuan rebellion was temporarily suppressed and Li Chi-ch'ien had fled in defeat. But the problems arising from the rebellions were unresolved. Szechuan had been devastated by both the rebels and Wang Chi-en's army. Chang Yung, highly recommended by his t'ung-nien Su I-chien, was named Prefect of Cheng-tu and instructed to restore order in Szechuan. He performed with distinction in that task, and the province recovered quickly under his administration.

However, the old emperor failed to recover from his old war wound. His health further deteriorated in the fall of 994. This time he had no choice but to consider the question of succession. K'ou Chun, whom T'ai-tsung regarded as a candidate for Grand Councillor, was called back from Ch'ing-chou in October, 994. He was promoted to Vice Grand Councillor

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80 HCP, v. 35, p. 767.
81 HCP, v. 35, pp. 775-78, 780; v. 36, pp. 784-789, 793, 795.
83 HCP, v. 38, p. 818.
after a private talk with the emperor concerning the imperial succession question. Becoming the de facto Grand Councillor, K'ou Chun now had to fight a war on two fronts. He had to confront the forces of the empress and those of his old enemies.

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84 HCP, v. 36, p. 797; v. 38, p. 818.
IV. THE DE FACTO GRAND COUNCILLOR 994-996

It is recorded that in October, 994, when K'ou Chun was called back to the capital from Ch'ing-chou and consulted about the succession question, T'ai-tsung showed him the wound on his thigh, saying that he had arrived just in time. T'ai-tsung then asked him whether his third son Yüan-han (later Chen-tsung) was a suitable candidate to succeed to the throne. K'ou replied moderately that the emperor should not consult the palace women, his attendants or the eunuchs on this matter, but that he should make the decision by himself. He went on to say that a father knows his sons best. If T'ai-tsung had concluded that Yüan-han was well suited to the task, then the choice was clear. With this advice, T'ai-tsung chose Yüan-han as his successor. Yüan-han was enfeoffed as the Prince of Shou and concurrently named Governor of K'ai-feng in the same month that K'ou Chun was promoted to Vice Grand Councillor. 85

K'ou Chun's support of Yüan-han's candidacy undoubtedly created key political assets for his future career. He also made a reputation by his statements concerning the principles involved in the imperial succession. These statements were

85 HCP, v. 36, p. 797; v. 38. p. 818.
mentioned and quoted frequently by his contemporaries. But in this matter, he also offended Empress Li and her associates, who supported Yüan-tso.

Lü Meng-cheng was still Grand Councillor. When K'ou Chun was appointed Vice Grand Councillor, T'ai-tsung reminded Lü Meng-cheng that the two men should co-operate and not fight each other as before. T'ai-tsung's trust in K'ou Chun was well-known. Openly praised by the emperor and compared to the famous Wei Cheng from the times of T'ang T'ai-tsung, K'ou was regarded as the de facto Grand Councillor. Lü Tuan, a close associate, clearly pointed out this fact.

Lü Tuan was the younger brother of Lü Yu-ch'ing (927-976), who had served T'ai-tsu as Vice Grand Councillor. Chao P'u, an old friend and ally of Lü Yu-ch'ing, had strongly recommended Lü Tuan to the throne when he returned to power for the third time. Lü Tuan had experienced many difficulties in the bureaucracy, and suffered several setbacks in his

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86 See CS, p. 16; CYTC, Part 2, v. 2, pp. 362-63. Here Yü Yün-wen (1110-1174) quoted K'ou's statements in his remonstrance to Emperor Hsiao-tsung (reigned 1163-1189) concerning the investiture of Kuang-tsung (reigned 1189-1194) as the crown prince. Lo Ts'ung-yen (1072-1135) also cited K'ou's famous statements in his Tsün Yao-lü (Records Following the Rules of Emperor Yao). See Lo Ts'ung-yen, Lo Yü-chang hsien-sheng wen-chi (Collected Works of Lo Ts'ung-yen), hereafter LYCHSWC, TSCCCP ed., v. 5, p. 56.

career. He had served both T'ing-mei and Prince Hsü. He was promoted to the post of Vice Grand Councillor in July, 993, when K'ou Chun was dismissed. He was reported to be careless in the handling of minor affairs but wise, cautious and firm on great issues. Well aware of his own and K'ou Chun's respective positions, he let K'ou Chun make all of the decisions except those which he perceived to be crucial, in which cases he was certain to make his views known.\(^8\)

Friends and t'ung-nien of K'ou Chun benefited from his promotion. Wang Yü-ch'eng and Sung Shih were named Hanlin Academicians in early 995. Ch'ien Jo-shui was elevated to Co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs, and Chang Yung was highly praised by T'ai-tsung for his merit in Szechuan.\(^9\)

In May, 995, Lü Meng-cheng was dismissed, and Lü Tuan was promoted to Grand Councillor. Based upon matters of precedence, Lü Tuan then requested that the Vice Grand Councillor share power and responsibility with the Grand Councillor. Apparently Lü Tuan wanted to return the favor to

\(^8\)Chang Chi-fan, "Lü Tuan yü Sung-ch'ü te Huang Lao ssu-hsiang" (Lü Tuan and Huang-Lao Thought in Early Sung Times), in Teng Kuang-ming and Li Chia-ch'ü (ed.), Sung-shih yen-chiu lun-wen chi (Symposium Articles on Sung History), (Cheng-chou: Honan Jen-min ch'u-pan she, 1982), pp. 385-392.

K'ou Chun who had recommended him to be Grand Councillor. Furthermore, as the de facto Grand Councillor whom the emperor trusted most, it would be appropriate for K'ou Chun formally to share political power. Naturally, T'ai-tsung accepted Lü Tuan's suggestion.90

Chang Chi was also promoted to Vice Grand Councillor at the same time. He had won K'ou Chun's respect and friendship for his wide knowledge when he worked under K'ou at the Ministry of Personnel from 989-991. He was also recommended by K'ou Chun for promotion. But unlike Lü Tuan, Chang Chi was a typical opportunist. Later, in 996, when he found K'ou Chun had lost favor with the emperor, he turned against him.91

Nevertheless, in 995, K'ou Chun failed to protect his t'ung-nien Su I-chien. Su was dismissed partly because of Chang Chi's slander.92 To some of his t'ung-nien who were close to Su I-chien, K'ou Chun's silence probably was problematic. K'ou Chun also failed to protect his friend Wang Yü-ch'eng, who was demoted in June, 995, for criticizing T'ai-tsung's improper handling of the funeral arrangements for Empress Sung.93 But being the brother-in-law of Empress Sung,

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90 HCP, v. 37, pp. 810-12.
91 HCP, v. 36, p. 801; v. 37, pp. 811-12.
93 HCP, v. 37, p. 813; CTPN, pp. 119-120.
K'ou Chun was in a sensitive and precarious position, and had to keep silent. He only privately complained to Chang Chi, an expert in the rites.

The death of Empress Sung terminated the opposition from the imperial family for making T'ai-tsung's son his successor. T'ai-tsung now felt free to invest Prince Shou as the crown prince. In July, 995, Prince Shou was formally invested, the first time during the Sung Dynasty that a crown prince was formally designated. Li K'ang, an elder t'ung-nien of K'ou Chun, was appointed chief deputy to the crown prince. The new crown prince was greatly cheered by the residents of the capital. Emperor Li was very much displeased at this outcome. She slandered him to T'ai-tsung, causing the emperor to suddenly feel apprehensive and insecure. The overly sensitive emperor immediately summoned K'ou Chun to the palace. He questioned him with evident suspicion and anxiety whether the crown prince had gained the loyalty of the people, and where the emperor should go under the circumstances. The emperor explicitly regretted making the prince his successor. At this critical moment, K'ou Chun managed to convince the nervous emperor that the people's favorable response to the selection of the crown prince was encouraging, and that it contributed to the stability of the state. K'ou Chun was

invited to have a drink in the palace. His advice to the emperor was made known to Empress Li and other consorts by the emperor personally, and both the emperor and the crown prince were relieved at the turn of events. But Empress Li and her associates were upset over their failure to eliminate the crown prince.\textsuperscript{95}

Empress Li was influential in and out of the imperial court. Her faction included the powerful eunuch Wang Chi-en, the Vice Grand Councillor Li Ch'ang-ling and the Drafter of the Secretariat Hu Tan. Li Ch'ang-ling and Hu Tan were chin-shih of 978, and the latter had returned to power after Chao P'u's death. Chao Ch'ang-yen, leader of this group of chin-shih, was appointed Prefect of Feng-hsiang Fu (in present-day Shensi province) in October, 994, and did not become involved in Hu Tan's plan of making Yuan-tso, the crown prince's elder brother, the successor of T'ai-tsong.\textsuperscript{96} Their faction also included the man P'an Liang (?-1009), a native of Hang-chou (in present-day Chechiang province), who made his reputation as a poet.\textsuperscript{97} He had been recommended

\textsuperscript{95}HCP, v. 38, pp. 818-19; LYCHSWC, v. 5, p. 56; KLKIS, pp. 2-3; Ho Koon-wan, loc. cit., p. 51, note 91.

\textsuperscript{96}HCP, v. 36, pp. 792-93, 796-97.

\textsuperscript{97}Ho Koon-wan, loc. cit., pp. 44-45. It is notable that P'an Liang had exchanged poems with K'ou Chun and Wang Yü-ch'eng. However, both K'ou and Wang were not political allies of P'an.
by Wang Chi-en to treat the wound T'ai-tsung had previously incurred in battle, and it is recorded that he urged Wang Chi-en to influence T'ai-tsung on the matter of the imperial succession.

Wang Chi-en's clique frequently assembled at a certain Buddhist temple in K'ai-feng. The empress was apparently behind them. Wang Chi-en could also count on General Li Chi-lung, the empress's elder brother, who was the most senior and experienced field commander of the day and trusted by T'ai-tsung. If there had been a coup, it would have been strengthened by General Li Chi-lung's military power. What K'ou Chun encountered now was a rival faction headed by the powerful eunuch Wang Chi-en, whom the empress strongly supported. When K'ou Chun advised the emperor not to consult the palace women and eunuchs about the succession matter, he was specifically referring to Empress Li and Wang Chi-en. Being the most trusted minister and the de facto Grand Councillor, K'ou Chun thus became the target of Empress Li's faction. In order to remove the crown prince, they concluded

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it would be necessary to eliminate K'ou first.\(^99\)

K'ou Chun was vulnerable to attack because of his outspoken, careless and self-confident manner. Being trusted by the emperor, he often acted without considering the feelings of either his colleagues or his imperial master. He made decisions on the basis of subjective perceptions of the problems at hand, without restraint of rule or precedent. Going to the extreme, he sometimes even challenged the authority of the emperor. Apparently, in this way he seriously violated the rules of the bureaucratic game, and thus he provided an opportunity for his rivals to force him from the inner halls of power. It is ironic and instructive that one of his own t'ung-nien initiated the attack, thus indicating that the t'ung-nien relationship was subject to certain definite limitations.

K'ou Chun's honeymoon with the emperor ended in July, 996, when he was charged by his old rival Feng Cheng and his Korean t'ung-nien K'ang Chien with abuse of power.\(^100\) Another chin-shih of 978, Feng Cheng was the t'ung-nien of Hu Tan and Li Ch'ang-ling. The son of a servant, his talent was early

\(^99\)Chen-tsung admitted that he had been slandered by his enemy even after his investiture as crown prince, and that his position as the heir apparent was thereby threatened. Chen-tsung did not mention the name of his enemy, Empress Li was very likely the person. See HCP, v. 39, pp. 832--33; v. 42, pp. 888-89; Ho Koon-wan, loc. cit., p. 51, note 91.

\(^100\)HCP, v. 40, pp. 846-47; TCKTL, pp. 459-60.
recognized by Chao P'u.\textsuperscript{101} Like K'ou Chun, he was the youngest among his t'ung-nien,\textsuperscript{102} and they had known each other for a long time. It is recorded that they frequently visited Ting Tu's father's private library in K'ai-feng.\textsuperscript{103} But their relationship was never close. While Feng Cheng supported Prince Hsü, K'ou Chun sided with Prince Shou. Feng Cheng was demoted and sent to the south for his participation in the 991 petition.\textsuperscript{104} In 996, Feng Cheng served as Controller-General of Kwang-chou (present-day Canton). In the annual review of personnel, he was criticized by K'ou Chun and did not receive the promotion which he was due according to the rules of seniority. For this, K'ou Chun was criticized for practicing favoritism, it being said that he promoted those he favored and discriminated against those he disliked or did not know. When Feng Cheng appealed his case to the throne, he was warned and criticized by an administrative order issued from the Secretariat. Feng Cheng concluded that the order had not been issued by the

\textsuperscript{101} VYTHHC, v. 19, p. 1; SSCW, v. 6, p. 104.

\textsuperscript{102} Feng Cheng received his chin-shih degree at the age of twenty-one. He was awarded a poem written by T'ai-tsung after the conferment of his degree. VYTHHC, v. 19, p. 132; Wang Ying-lin (1223-1296) Yu-hai (Sea of Jade), hereafter YH, (Shanghai: Kiangsu Ku-chi ch'u-pan she, 1987, photo), v. 30, p. 572.

\textsuperscript{103} MCP, v. 32, p. 723; SSCW, v. 6, p. 104.

\textsuperscript{104} MCP, v. 32, p. 723; SSCW, v. 6, p. 104.
emperor, who was so busy and ill that he could not take care of minor affairs, and that his being passed over for promotion was the action of K'ou Chun. Feng Cheng then memorialized the throne, charging K'ou Chun with abuse of power and cited the sealed administrative order as evidence. K'ang Chien, then Fiscal Commissioner of the Kwangnan East Circuit (present-day Kwangtung province), also charged that K'ou Chun had committed a crime of which the emperor was unaware. In this instance, K'ang Chien, a t'ung-nien of Su I-chien who had recommended him, seemed to be taking revenge for Su I-chien, whose dismissal K'ou Chun was said to have engineered. K'ang Chien charged that since Lü Tuan, Chang Chi and Li Ch'ang-ling had all been recommended by K'ou Chun, they remained silent and did not oppose his actions.\footnote{HCP, v. 40, pp. 846-48; SS, v. 285, p. 9608.}

T'ai-tsung was very much annoyed. He could not tolerate this usurpation of power. In his view, all edicts, orders and commands should be issued only by the emperor. His ministers could offer suggestions and proposals, but they could not assume the authority of the emperor. This time K'ou Chun was not as fortunate as before. He was unavailable when T'ai-tsung summoned his councillors of the Secretariat to the palace to inquire into the case; he was performing a sacrificial ceremony for the sick emperor at the Imperial
Shrine and could not leave until the ceremony was over the next day. Rightly or wrongly, Lù Tuan and the other councillors placed the responsibility for the incident on K'ou Chun. The angry emperor did not accept Chang Chi's explanation that administrative orders were issued only for minor matters. Strictly prohibiting their use in the future, the emperor went on to state that henceforth all types of edicts, ordinances and decrees could only be issued by the throne. He recalled the fact that Chao F'u had once issued a Secretariat Memorial during T'ai-tsu's reign, but that practice was soon prohibited.¹⁰⁶

Lù Tuan admitted his fault in overlooking K'ou Chun's abuse of power, for he realized that further explanation would only annoy his master, who believed that his ministers were infringing upon his authority. But K'ou Chun did not possess the political wisdom of Lù Tuan. He held to principle, insisting that the Grand Councillors should have some autonomy in the exercise of power. When he was summoned to the palace after the ceremonial had been performed, knowing that he had been betrayed by his colleagues, he nonetheless defended his position, arguing that even if he was wrong in the Feng Cheng case, his colleagues should share in the responsibility. At this time, Chang Chi suddenly turned against K'ou Chun,

¹⁰⁶HCP, v. 40. p. 847.
disclosing the fact that K'ou Chun had spoken critically of the emperor. Though antagonized by Chang's betrayal, K'ou Chun was unable to defend himself against a surprise attack from a man he had recommended for office. He thus found himself in an untenable position, and no longer in the emperor's favour.

K'ou Chun was not, after all, another Wei Cheng. At court, he was also attacked by the empress. Unfortunately his friends and t'ung-nien in the Bureau of Military Affairs, such as Hsiang Min-chung and Ch'ien Jo-shui, were not consulted on the matter. Although there was no one to speak for him, he still attempted to strike back. The next day he brought all the records relating to the case to court. But this act only further annoyed the emperor. K'ou was then dismissed and banished to Teng-chou (present-day Hupei). The downfall of K'ou Chun was the result of prolonged factional strife in which he had been involved since his

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107 TTHTSL, v. 80, p. 119.

108 Empress Ch'ang-sun of T'ang T'ai-tsung 尚德皇后 (601-636) praised the loyalty of Wei Cheng who had annoyed the emperor for his frank remonstrance. T'ai-tsung's temper was thus eased. However, as the enemy of K'ou Chun, Empress Li was very unlikely to speak for him. Concerning Empress Ch'ang-sun's remonstrance, see Wang Tang 五唐 (11th Cent.), T'ang yü-lin chiao-cheng 唐詣林校攤 (Collected Conversations of T'ang Eminent Figures with Notes), hereafter TYLCC, (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1987), v. 4, p. 414.

109 HCP, v. 40, p. 847.
promotion to Auxiliary Academician. He had earlier succeeded in ousting Wang Mien, a chin-shih of 977, at the expense of his t'ung-nien Wang Huai, but this time he stood accused by one of his own t'ung-nien and a political rival. It is unclear whether Feng Cheng received any support from his t'ung-nien Hu Tan and Li Ch'ang-ling when he launched an attack on K'ou Chun. But undoubtedly Empress Li and her associates were very much pleased to witness his fall because he had supported the crown prince. In all fairness, K'ou Chun was responsible for his own situation. Excessive self-confidence made him blind and egocentric. Moreover, he miscalculated the reaction of the emperor. Though he had been highly praised by T'ai-tsung for his straightforward manner, frank words did not always please the emperor. Furthermore, K'ou Chun's well-known ability in reasoning and his excellent skill in debate were not always appreciated by the emperor. It was also unwise to insist on the right of senior officials to act on their own responsibility. And finally, he had to taste the fruit of bitterness for his incorrect assessment of the behaviour of opportunists such as Chang Chi.

Apart from K'ou Chun's fall, the class of 980 suffered another great loss. Su I-chien, optimus at that examination, passed away at the early age of thirty-nine. While alive, he

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110 SSILY, v. 9, p. 104. K'ou Chun's abilities in such respects were highly praised by his friend Chang Yung.
enthusiastically recommended his classmates to important posts. Chang Yung, Wang Tan, K'ang Chien and Ma Liang were all the beneficiaries of his patronage.\textsuperscript{111}

Lu Chih-han, another member of the 980 class, narrowly escaped capital punishment when he was charged by General Li Chi-lung with failing to transport provisions to the western front in due time. He was, however, rescued from his predicament by Ch'ien Jo-shui.\textsuperscript{112}

When the class of 980 fell from favor, the rival faction, the chin-shih of 977, returned to power. Wen Chung-shu and Wang Hua-chi were appointed Vice Grand Councillors in February, 997.\textsuperscript{113} Nevertheless, Chang Chi was soon removed from office when his opportunistic behavior once again exposed in the Ling-chou (in present-day Ninghsia) issue.\textsuperscript{114}

With T'ai-tsung's health deteriorating day by day, the power struggle between the empress and the crown prince became more acute. In defense, the prince assumed a low profile. His advisers included Pi Shih-an and Li K'ang, either K'ou

\textsuperscript{111}HCP, v. 40, pp. 853. 855; WCWKIS, p. 881. Su I-chien died in December, 996.

\textsuperscript{112}Yüan Chiung (fl. 1248), Fench-ch'uang hsiao-tu (Notes Written by the Maple Window) hereafter FCHT, FCHSTK ser. 3, p. 1694.

\textsuperscript{113}HCP, v. 41, p. 860.

\textsuperscript{114}TTHTSL, v. 78, p. 106. v. 80, p. 119.
Chun's friends or t'ung-nien. Lü Tuan also stood at the crown prince's side. Among the prince's attendants, Wang Ch'in-jo was recognized for his courageous resistance to a possible plot against the crown prince. They were the core figures of the prince's faction.

Emperor T'ai-tsung passed away in March, 997. Even then, Empress Li and Wang Chi-en planned to place Yuan-tso on the throne; however, Lü Tuan skillfully resolved the crisis. Wang Chi-en was arrested, Empress Li was held in check, and General Li Chi-lung was expelled from the capital, while Hu Tan and Li Ch'ang-ling were demoted and also banished. It is notable that Wang Chi-en was brought to trial by Wei T'ing-shih, a t'ung-nien of K'ou Chun.

K'ou Chun, who had supported the new emperor at a critical moment—in his career, was ready to return to office. But the de facto Grand Councillor in the last years

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117 According to a well-known anecdote, in May 996, Chang Chi and Li Ch'ang-ling fell from horseback when they rode by the palace gate. K'ou Chun's horse was also frightened and shied away. K'ou Chun tamed his horse in the last minute and thus escaped from falling on the ground. In July 996, Chang Chi once again fell off his horse into the mud. The author of this anecdote believed that the dismissal of all three Vice Grand Councillors was prophesied by this event. K'ou Chun did not lose his fortune totally and thus he could return to power. Chang Chi fell to the ground twice and died shortly after the accident. Although Li Ch'ang-ling survived after the fall of Wang Chi-en, he never returned to power. See SSLY,
of T'ai-tsung had to wait for several years before he could become Grand Councillor in fact.
V. SOME REMARKS

K'ou Chun was fortunate in his early career. His expertise in foreign policy met the needs of T'ai-tsong, while his association with the talented men of the 980 examination provided the necessary assistance for survival in the stormy bureaucracy. He was fortunate in not having become involved in the power struggle which arose out of the question of imperial succession. His ultimate removal from office in 996 could also be perceived as fortunate, for it is doubtful he could have resolved the crisis as Lù Tuan had done.

His sudden rise and fall in office was quite dramatic. He was the youngest councillor during the history of the Sung Dynasty. He was also the first chin-shih of 980 to become a councillor. But he was unable to retain his post in the Liang Fu for more than two years, mainly because of his uncompromising personality which the emperor could not tolerate on a regular basis. He was a statesman who upheld principle, and unlike most of his t'ung-nien and colleagues, he was ready to challenge the authority of his master. He was a true successor of Chao P'u in the sense that he continued Chao's struggle in seeking the autonomy of the Grand Councillor in the administration of state affairs. He also valued the friendship of his colleagues; however, he did not hesitate to break with them in order to uphold principle. It
is evident that he violated the rules of the bureaucratic game from time to time.

His major contribution during T'ai-tsung's reign, as perceived by his contemporaries, was his support of Chen-tsung at a critical moment which proved to be significant to the stability of the state. But his active participation in factional politics can not be viewed as either positive or constructive.

K'ou Chun failed to contribute anything significant to the solution of interstate relations with the Khitans and the Tanguts. Apparently in this area he followed the lines set up by Chao P'u.

Compared with Chao P'u, K'ou Chun was equally responsible, courageous and far-sighted. But he did not possess the consumate skill and natural caution required to play the game of factional politics. He was easily trapped and slandered by his enemies, and it is unlikely that he learned much from his setbacks. He remained egocentric, overly self-confident, and careless throughout his career.
CHAPTER IV
NEW ERA, NEW GOVERNMENT AND OLD PROBLEMS (997-1003)

I. THE NEW EMPEROR

Chen-tsung ascended the throne in March, 997, at the age of thirty. With the support of Lü Tuan, the young emperor consolidated his power quickly. Empress Li, the wife of T'ai-tsung, his stepmother, was honored as the Empress Dowager Wan-an, but her influence was severely limited. General Li Chi-lung, the elder brother of the empress dowager, lost his post in the Imperial Army and was expelled from the capital. As has been previously indicated, Wang Chi-en and his faction were degraded and banished. On the other hand, previous victims of the struggle for imperial succession, including the emperor's uncle, elder brothers, and cousins, were all rehabilitated. His elder brother Yuan-tso was restored to the position of the Prince of Ch'ü. It is said that Chen-tsung once planned to visit his elder brother,

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1Chen-tsung and Yuan-tso were sons of Consort Li, who died early in 977. Empress Li had no son. She was the stepmother of Chen-tsung and Yuan-tso. Consort Li was honored as Empress Dowager Yuan-te when Chen-tsung ascended the throne. SS, v. 242, pp. 8610-11.

2HCP, v. 41, pp. 862-63, 865-66; WCMCYHL, v. 2, p. 27; SSCW, v. 6, p. 121. Li Chi-lung managed to regain power and influence until 1004, when the Empress Dowager Li died.
although the imperial visit was ultimately cancelled. These measures undoubtedly won the respect and support of members of the imperial family and restored some stability to the country, which had been embroiled in the succession question since the last years of T'ai-tsung.

However, as has been pointed out by Liu Ching-chen, Chen-tsung gained the throne more by accident than design. He was not considered the best choice by his father. A kind, humble and considerate man, he did not possess the leadership qualities which an autocratic monarch ideally should possess. He lacked self-confidence, was bookish, indecisive, and was easily swayed by argument. Unlike his predecessors, he did not have any battlefield experience. And it is doubtful that he could ride and shoot like his elder brother, Yüan-tso.

As perceived by his ministers and people in general, he was a weak emperor compared with his father and uncle, the

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3 HCP, v. 41, p. 867. SS, v. 245, pp. 8693-94. Yüan-tso lived in reclusion after his younger brother ascended the throne. He was highly respected and granted many privileges by Chen-tsung. He was still alive when Chen-tsung passed away in 1022.


5 SS, v. 245, pp. 8693-94. Yüan-tso had accompanied T'ai-tsung on the Northern Campaign in 979. He was reputed to be a good archer.
founders of the empire.

Fortunately, he was morally and physically supported by his wife, the Consort Liu (969-1033) (later Empress Liu). An ambitious palace woman, she gradually emerged as a significant figure in court politics. She was to become the second female rival K'ou Chun encountered in his career.

Perhaps encouraged by his wife, Chen-tsung attempted to build up his authority and confidence. Shortly after he ascended the throne, he insisted that Kuo Chih (935-1010), his former attendant and an ex-Vice Grand Councillor, assume a new assignment at Ta-ming Fu. He stated that if this order was not implemented immediately, then his authority as emperor would be severely diminished. Nevertheless, in most cases, his personal wishes were set aside, for he had to rely on his ministers in the handling of state affairs, and he had to make concessions to them from time to time. Lack of experience and weakness of character made it unlikely that he would rule in the way his father had done. From the very beginning, his councillors were given considerable autonomy in their administration. If it is said that T'ai-tsu and T'ai-tsung had expanded the authority of the emperor to the peak, then this tendency was evidently reversed in Chen-tsung's time.

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Chen-tsung ruled eleven months under his father's last reign-title, chih-tao 道道 (Ultimate Way). In February 998, he adopted his own reign-title, hsien-p'ing 成平 (Total Tranquility). During the first two years of his rule, the government gradually underwent a series of changes which resulted in the formation of a new style of government and a new era.

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7SS, v. 6, p. 106. Chen-tsung took one of the words "p'ing" (Tranquillity) from his father's first reign-title T'ai-p'ing hsing-kuo 太平興國 (Ascendent Nation in Grand Tranquillity) for his own reign-title. For English translations of the Sung reign-titles, see James M. Hargett, "A Chronology of the Reigns and Reign-periods of the Song Dynasty (960-1279)," in Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies, 19(1987), 26-34.
II. THE NEW GOVERNMENT (997-998)

A. Personnel

Chen-tsung's new government was virtually constituted by members of the old guard and talented ministers. Many former Liang Fu councillors were reinstated. Li Chih (947-1001) and Li K'ang, the two chief deputies of the former crown prince, were reappointed as Vice Grand Councillors immediately after Chen-tsung ascended the throne. General Ts'ao Pin was reinstated as the Commissioner of Military Affairs four months later. Chang Ch'i-hsien managed to return to power in November, 998, and was reinstated as Senior Grand Councillor when Lü Tuan retired.

Lü Tuan headed the government until November, 998. Wang Hua-chi, Hsiang Min-chung and Wen Chung-shu continued to work under him. But Chao Jung (944-998), Li Wei-ch'ing...

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8Li Chih was a t'ung-nien of Lü Meng-cheng. He was appointed Vice Grand Councillor early in 983. Li K'ang attained this post in 991. HCP, v. 24, p. 558; v. 32, p. 720; v. 41, p. 863.

9HCP, v. 41, p. 876.

10Chen-tsung had highly praised Chang Ch'i-hsien shortly after he ascended the throne. It is therefore not surprising that he would select him to be the successor of Lü Tuan. See HCP, v. 41, p. 875; v. 43, p. 917.

11Wang Hua-chi continued to serve as the Vice Grand Councillor until April, 1001. When Lü Tuan retired, Wen Chung-shu was also dismissed, while Hsiang Min-chung was promoted to Vice Grand Councillor to replace Li K'ang who succeeded to Lü Tuan's post. HCP, v. 43, p. 917; v. 48, p. 1054.
(943-998), Li Ch'ang-ling and Ch'ien Jo-shui all lost their posts in the Secretariat and the Bureau of Military Affairs for different reasons.\(^\text{12}\)

Newcomers to the Bureau of Military Affairs were all former attendants in the service of Chen-tsung. They were Sung Shih, K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, Yang Li (931-999), and Hsia-hou Chiao (933-1004).\(^\text{13}\)

Other important functional posts in the government were also occupied by either members of the old guard or new men, especially the former attendants of Chen-tsung. Ch'en Shu, the indispensable expert in finance, retained his post as the Finance Commissioner, while Chang Yung was called back from

\(^{12}\)Ch'ien Jo-shui resigned in July, 997 for personal reasons. Li Wei-ch'ing was demoted to Executive Censor in September, 997. Chao Jung was also removed from the Bureau at the same time. They both passed away within a year after their dismissal. HCP, v. 41, pp. 868-69; SS, v. 6, p. 105.

\(^{13}\)SS, v. 6, pp. 105-107; HCP, v. 41, p. 876; v. 43, pp. 907, 917. Hsia-hou Chiao only served up to November, 998. He resigned because of illness.
Szechuan to assume a new position as Executive Censor.\textsuperscript{14} Wang Yü-ch'eng was reappointed as a Drafter of the Secretariat when the emperor was greatly impressed by one of his memorials.\textsuperscript{15} Wang Tan, also favored by Chen-tsung, was promoted to Hanlin Academician.\textsuperscript{16} T'ien Hsi, an official well known for his frank remonstrances, was also brought back to the capital, where he served as Director of the Memorial-forwarding Office and Co-administrator of the Bureau of Personnel Evaluation.\textsuperscript{17}

Among the new faces, Pi Shih-an was the oldest in terms of age. After numerous setbacks in his career, he finally

\textsuperscript{14}Ch'en Shu had served as the Finance Commissioner since the last years of T'ai-tsung. He held this post for almost ten years. He left the Finance Commission on his own request in 1003 and recommended K'ou Chun to be his successor. Ch'en Shu was praised as the model Finance Commissioner of the Northern Sung. He was much respected by K'ou Chun. His son Ch'en Chih-Chung (?-after 1055) was a junior member of K'ou Chun's faction and became Grand Councillor in Jen-tsung's reign. See HCP, v. 40, pp. 849-50; v. 55, p. 1205; SS, v. 267, pp. 9198-9203; v.285, pp. 9601-05. Chang Yung returned from Szechuan in the middle of 997. He first served as Commissioner of Revenue, then was appointed Executive Censor, head of the Censorate. See KYC, "appendix", p. 6.

\textsuperscript{15}Wang Yü-ch'eng was reappointed as a Drafter of the Secretariat in January, 998. HCP, v. 42, pp. 896-901.

\textsuperscript{16}Wang Tan was strongly recommended by Ch'ien Jo-shui in May, 997, when Ch'ien was about to leave the Bureau. Wang Tan received many important assignments when he was serving as Hanlin Academician. Chen-tsung told his ministers that he would promote Wang Tan to a more important post in the near future. SS, v. 282, pp. 9543-44; HCP, v. 41, pp. 868-69.

\textsuperscript{17}T'ien Hsi memorialized the throne in August, 997, and this memorial impressed Chen-tsung greatly. HCP, v. 41, pp. 869-875, 889-892.
attained the important post of Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs and Acting Governor of K'ai-feng when his master ascended the throne. The much younger Wang Ch'in-jo and Yang I were more fortunate. They were rapidly promoted to important posts for their previous service to the emperor. They later became the most important and closest political counterparts of K'ou Chun.

Many important military posts were occupied by bodyguards of the former crown prince. They included Chang Ch'i-jen (?-1048), Wang Chi-ying (946-1006) and Wang Chi-chung (935-1023). However, Kao Ch'iung (935-1006), Fu Chien (?-1017) and Wang Ch'ao (fl. 960-1004), the old bodyguards of T'ai-tsung, continued as senior commanders in the Imperial Army.

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18 HCP, v. 41, pp. 897-98; v. 43, p. 918. Pi Shih-an was transferred to the post of Hanlin Academician in November, 998.

19 HCP, v. 41, pp. 863-64; v. 42, pp. 887-89. Yang I was promoted to Left Exhorter. Wang Ch'in-jo was elevated to the director of a department in the Finance Commission.

20 SS, v. 268, pp. 9228-29; v. 279, pp. 9471-72; v. 290, pp. 9709-9711. At the end of Wang Chi-chung's biography in SS, there is a list of military officials who were former bodyguards of Chen-tsung. Chang Ch'i enjoyed a very close relationship with Chen-tsung and Empress Liu, and he was much trusted by both. He was promoted to Commissioner of Military Affairs and then Commissioner-Councillor.

21 Fu Chien was the most senior commander in the Imperial Army. Wang Ch'ao and Kao Ch'iung ranked second and third respectively. Other senior military officials included Pan T'ing-chao (927-1001), Ko Pa (933-1007), Wang Hanchung (?-1002). SS, v. 279, pp. 9476-78; v. 289.
It is surprising that when K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien and friends held influential positions in the new government, K'ou Chun himself, a former de facto Grand Councillor, was unable to obtain a post. His good friend Ma Kao also shared the same fate.\(^2\) It is very likely that he was blocked in this respect, first by Lü Tuan and then Chang Ch'i-hsien.

When K'ou Chun was charged with malfeasance by Feng Cheng in 996, Lü Tuan's stance was obscure. Though Lü Tuan had not turned against K'ou Chun in the open way Chang Chi did, he apparently "watched the fire from the other side of the river," as it were. After the fall of K'ou Chun, Lü Tuan regained all the power which had been withdrawn by the Vice Grand Councillors. Thus, he was a clear beneficiary of K'ou Chun's fall.\(^2\) Under the circumstances, it would have been embarrassing if K'ou Chun had returned to the capital to work with him again. It is thus conceivable that Chen-tsung preferred to wait to recall K'ou. He dared not see the two men who had been most helpful in his accession to the throne.

9691-9703.

\(^2\)^LCC, v. 40, p. 8. It is recorded in Ma Kao's biography that Ma had offended the councillors when he memorialized the throne. The Grand Councillor deliberately assigned him to remote Kwangsi 圍. He died at Kuei-chou 𥧹 (in present-day Kwangsi province). The name of that Grand Councillor has not been identified. Chang Ch'i-hsien, the rival of K'ou Chun, was most likely the man who blocked the advancement of K'ou's good friend.

\(^2\)^HCP, v. 40, pp. 848-49.
clash again at court, though the relationship existing between Lü Tuan and K'ou Chun may not have been as bad as normally assumed.26

The case for Chang Ch'i-hsien is different. He was an openly avowed enemy of K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien, including Li K'ang and Chang Yung. It is conceivable that he tried his best to keep K'ou Chun out of the capital. The power struggle between Chang Ch'i-hsien and members of the class of 980 will be further explored in the next section.

Though K'ou Chun was unable to exert his own influence at that time, many men of his group who had not received important assignments in T'ai-tsung's time did manage to attract the attention of Chen-tsung. They included Ma Liang, K'ang Chien, Ch'en Jo-cho, Pien Su and Ch'ao Chiung.25 Ma Liang, Pien Su and Ch'ao Chiung were ranked among the eminent ministers of Chen-tsung's reign.

26 TCKTL, p. 465; SHYCK, "hsüan-chu" 52: 12, p. 4734. When Lü Tuan was about to retire in November, 998, he strongly recommended Li K'ang to be his successor. It is possible that he may also have recommended K'ou Chun to the emperor so as to return the favor to K'ou. It is notable that in September, 1015, K'ou Chun, then the Governor of the Western Capital, was commissioned to take care of Lü Tuan's sons who were living in poverty. Inferring from this fact, the relationship existing between K'ou Chun and Lü Tuan must have been cordial, at least.

K'ou Chun's old foe Feng Cheng also returned to the capital and served as the Judge of the Censorate. He had gotten into trouble for slandering the emperor, and had been imprisoned for a while. 26

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B. Political Philosophies

While K'ou Chun enjoyed a lavish life style at Teng-chou, the aged Grand Councillor Lú Tuan labored diligently in the new government which he led. After numerous setbacks in his long career, Lú Tuan could finally implement his conservative policies with the approval of the young emperor and the support of his colleagues. In this respect, he followed the line of Chao P'u, the good friend of his elder brother and his patron. He advocated a non-aggressive foreign policy, and sought to make peace with both the Khitans and the Tanguts. He acceded to reforms in domestic affairs which Wang Yü-ch'eng and T'ien Hsi proposed. But he was cautious of the possible consequences of a large scale reform program which might have unexpected side-effects for the country. He was inclined towards Taoism in political philosophy. He believed it necessary to make careful calculations of the cost and benefit of any proposed reform. And generally, as a cautious and conservative statesman, Lú Tuan was not an enthusiastic reformer. His disposition was evidently inherited by many individuals belonging to the class of 980,

\[27\] KCIS, v. 20, p. 309. It is said that K'ou Chun was fond of banquets which lasted overnight. He wasted many candles by lighting them in the toilets and bedrooms when a banquet was in process. For this, he was strongly criticized.
including Li K'ang and Wang Tan. K'ou Chun did not disagree with him in this respect.

In sum, Chen-tsung's government was new in the sense that he reigned in a way greatly different from his predecessors. His councillors enjoyed much freedom and autonomy. Besides, many new men were absorbed into the central government and other old dignitaries were reappointed. But new faces and returnees did not necessarily possess new minds. It is evident that the new government headed by Lü Tuan and dominated by the chin-shih of 980 was conservative because of the political dispositions of these key figures. Their prime concern was to solve the problems left unresolved by the former emperor. Whereas it might appear that old wine was now contained in new bottles, in actuality the wine was new, but the bottles were old.

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29 It is recorded that Ch'en Shü, the Finance Commissioner, deliberately kept the emperor unaware of the current fiscal condition of the state treasury. He argued that if the young emperor knew that there was a surplus in the state revenue, he would be tempted to waste it. HCP, v. 43, p. 921.
III. Factional Strife in the Hsien-P'ing Period (998-1003)

Chen-tsung was pleased that Lù Tuan worked amicably with his colleagues. Lù Tuan, being the sole Grand Councillor, consulted with his colleagues on state affairs and made important decisions in consort with them. He was thus trusted by his master and respected by his colleagues. But his successor, Chang Ch'i-hsien, did not continue his style of administration.

Chang Ch'i-hsien, a very assertive man, received his chin-shih in 977. He had proved to be an able administrator in both civilian and military fields. Like his predecessor, he was a protégé of Chao P'u. As a follower of Chao P'u, Chang Ch'i-hsien followed both his master's policies and administrative style. He tended to act on his own recognizance, believing in the correctness of his decisions.

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30 It is recorded that when Chang Ch'i-hsien met T'ai-tsu at Lo-yang in 976, he insisted that his proposals were all practical. He served in various posts, where he compiled an excellent record. He once defeated a Liao army at Tai-chou (in present-day Shansi province) in January, 987, with a relatively small force. See HCP, v. 18, p. 394; v. 27, pp. 626-27.
and judgments. He chose not to consult his colleagues on every matter. It is interesting to note that although they disliked each other, Chang Ch'i-hsien and K'ou Chun were much alike in terms of personality. Both men were achievement-oriented.

Chang Ch'i-hsien, a fat man of strong character, was reinstated as the Senior Grand Councillor in November, 998, when Lü Tuan retired from office. At the same time, Li K'ang was promoted to the post of Junior Grand Councillor. Li K'ang was the first person among K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien to attain such a high position. While Li K'ang's two t'ung-nien, Hsiang Min-chung and Sung Shih, were elevated to Vice Grand Councillor and Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs respectively, Chang Ch'i-hsien's t'ung-nien Li Chih and Wen Chung-shu left the Secretariat. The new Senior Grand Councillor found that he was surrounded by men belonging to

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31When Chao P'u was about to retire in 989, he strongly recommended Chang Ch'i-hsien to T'ai-tsung. Like his patron, Chang felt that it was his sole responsibility to make the emperor the sage king and the state strong and wealthy. He believed that he could accomplish these objectives single-handedly. HCP, v. 30, pp. 681-82; v. 47, p. 1033; SS, v. 256, p. 8940; v. 265, pp. 9150-55, 9158.

32HCP, v. 43, p. 917; SS, y. 265, p. 9158; Ou-yang Hsiu, Ou-yang Wen-chung ch'uan-chi (The Complete Works of Ou-yang Hsiu), hereafter OYWCCC, SPPY ed., v. 126, p. 6. According to Ou-yang Hsiu's account, Chang Ch'i-hsien was a gourmand who was especially fond of pork.

33HCP, v. 43, p. 917. Hsia-hou Chao also left the Bureau of Military Affairs at the same time.
the class of 980 and their associates. Though his t'ung-nien Wang Hua-chi and Ch'en Shu remained as the Vice Grand Councillor and Finance Commissioner respectively, their support was not to be counted on if a conflict developed between the two Grand Councillors.

Chen-tsung was well aware of the potential for renewed factional strife among his ministers. He was in a dilemma. If he appointed just one Grand Councillor, this would be dangerous, for nobody could check the power of that individual. But if more than one Grand Councillor were appointed, disagreement and confrontation among them was very likely to erupt and factional strife would be the unavoidable consequence. Hoping that his ministers would follow Lü Tuan's model, Chen-tsung summoned Chang Ch'i-hsien and Li K'ang to the palace immediately after they assumed their new duties. The emperor instructed them to work together and put aside any prejudice or personal animosity that might exist.34

However, Chen-tsung was to be disappointed. Harmony and co-operation did not exist between his Grand Councillors, and another round of factional strife set in shortly thereafter. This was an old problem for which the young emperor had no solution.

34HCP, v. 47, p. 1033.
Chang Ch'i-hsien was the chief actor in this round of factional strife, and the men of 980 headed by Li K'ang were his primary rivals. The first victim was Wang Yü-ch'eng. He was demoted for the third time in January, 999. His close relationship with Li K'ang and Chang Yung made him a prime target for Chang Ch'i-hsien. According to contemporary accounts, Chang Ch'i-hsien charged that Chang Yung's memorials had been written by Wang Yü-ch'eng. Apart from denying the Grand Councillor's charge, Chang Yung successfully impeached Chang Ch'i-hsien for misbehaving during an imperial audience due to drunkenness. But Chang Yung was posted to Hang-chou in the spring of 999, probably at the instigation of Chang Ch'i-hsien. Needless to say, K'ou Chun was kept out of the


36Li Hsin-chuan, Chiu-wen cheng-wu (Correction of Mistakes in Old Accounts), hereafter LCWCW, (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1983), v. 1, p. 15; KYC, "appendix", p. 14; HCP, v. 44, pp. 940-41; WCMCHHL, v. 3, p. 55. According to Chu Hsi's account, Chang Ch'i-hsien was impeached by Chang Yung during the Imperial Sacrifice Ceremony in which Chang Ch'i-hsien addressed Wen Chung-shu in harsh language.

37Chang Yung was commissioned to Hang-chou in May, 999. Three months later, his father-in-law Wang Hsien was reinstated as Commissioner of Military Affairs. Chang Yung's removal from the post of Executive Censor was not caused by the law of avoidance. According to Weng Ying's account, Chang Yung was sent to Hang-chou to suppress a revolt there. This
capital as long as possible. It is evident that in June, 1000, when K'ou Chun set out for the capital from T'ung-chou (in present-day Shensi province), intending to pay his respects to the emperor, he was suddenly impeached while on the way to court by his deputy, who was believed to be a henchman of Chang Ch'i-hsien. K'ou Chun was consequently transferred to Feng-hsiang Fu, and thus failed to see the emperor. 38 Ma Kao was another victim. He was commissioned to a port in the south and died there. Chu Tai-fu, K'ou Chun's former deputy, was likely another one. 39

Chang Ch'i-hsien's autocratic manner made him very unpopular within the bureaucracy. The junior censor Wang Ch'i (952-1010), who was later praised by K'ou Chun, bravely impeached the Senior Grand Councillor and challenged him in front of the emperor. 40 Li K'ang assumed a low profile in this struggle with Chang Ch'i-hsien. Apparently, he wished to imitate Lù Tuan in Lù's dealings with K'ou Chun: he preferred

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assignment was very likely arranged by Chang Ch'i-hsien. HCP, v. 45, p. 956; HSYL, "shang", p. 4.

38 HCP, v. 47, pp. 1013, 1016; SS, v. 281, p. 9529

39 LCC, v. 40, pp. 8, 20. After the death of Ma Kao, K'ou Chun assumed care of his friend's sons. One of Ma Kao's sons received his chin-shih degree in 1005 when K'ou Chun was Grand Councillor. Chu Tai-fu was blocked by Chang Ch'i-hsien in his advancement, partly due to his opposition to Chang Ch'i-hsien's foreign policy. See Chapter III, note 74.

40 HCP, v. 43, pp. 918-19; v. 46, p. 997. OYWCCC, v. 130, p. 6; SS, v. 304, pp. 10065-68.
to wait rather than openly confront Chang Ch’i-hsien.

In December, 1000, Chang Ch’i-hsien suddenly fell from power. His downfall was caused by a minor fault which his rivals seiged upon to impeach him.\(^{41}\) Chang Ch’i-hsien's antipathy towards the men of 980 continued after his removal from the Secretariat. In November, 1002, he urged Lady Ch’ai (?) (after 1002), the widow of Hsüeh Wei-chi (955-996)\(^{42}\), to charge Hsiang Min-chung, then the Junior Grand Councillor, with deceit in a marital matter. Frontally attacked by Chang Ch’i-hsien and undermined by Wang Ssu-tsung (942-1019), Hsiang Min-chung was dismissed. But Chang Ch’i-hsien himself was also demoted for instigating Lady Ch’ai to make these charges.\(^{43}\) It is notable that K’ou Chun had already been reassigned as the Acting Governor of K’ai-feng when his friend Hsiang Min-chung was charged. It is very likely that K’ou Chun had played a key role in putting Chang in the net.

Chang Ch’i-hsien never returned to the Secretariat, although he was later restored to rank. His struggle with the men of 980 was no longer significant, and he assumed a

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\(^{41}\) HCP, v. 47, p. 1033.

\(^{42}\) Hsüeh Wei-chi was the adopted son of Hsüeh Chü-cheng. SS, v. 264, pp. 9111-12.

defensive position during his remaining years of service.\textsuperscript{44}

The surviving men of 977 who were still in power during the Hsien-p'ing period were Lü Meng-cheng, Wang Hua-chi and Ch'en Shu. Lü Meng-cheng was reinstated for the third time as Senior Grand Councillor in April, 1001. (Wang Hua-chi was dismissed at the same time).\textsuperscript{45} But unlike Chang Ch'i-hsien, Lü Meng-cheng was not interested in power, which his t'ung-nien pursued at the expense of harmony in the bureaucracy. While Ch'en Shu had good ties with K'ou Chun and his group, the enduring factional strife between the chin-shih classes of 977 and 980 since T'ai-tsung's reign was virtually over by the end of the Hsien-p'ing period. It is interesting to note that Chang Ch'i-hsien's grandson later became the son-in-law of K'ou Chun, while Lü I-chien, nephew of Lü Meng-cheng, became the son-in-law of Ma Liang.\textsuperscript{46} These two groups of chin-

\textsuperscript{44}SS, v. 7, p. 123; Hung Mai 洪迈 (1123-1202), Jung-chai sui-pi 涓才隨筆, hereafter JCP, (Random Notes of Jung Studio), (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuated ed., 1978), v. 5, pp. 70-71. Chang Ch'i-hsien was restored to the position of the Minister of War in March, 1004. Several years later, when Chen-tsung inquired whether he was willing to take a commission in T'ai-yüan 塔院 (in present-day Shansi province), he declined, explaining that he was worried about the slander he would have to endure in that commission. Apparently, he was alert to the real motive of such an assignment and took a defensive stance.

\textsuperscript{45}HCP, v. 48, pp. 1044, 1053-54. Lü Meng-cheng's other t'ung-nien, Li Chih and Chang Hung, passed away in February and April of 1001, respectively.

\textsuperscript{46}SS, v. 298, p. 9917; Yin Chu 隱朱 允 (1001-1046), Ho-nan hsien-sheng wen-chi 福南光宅文集 (Collected Works of Yin Chu), hereafter HNHSWC, SPCKP ed., v. 17, pp. 90-91, "Chang Kung mu-chih-ming" 楚雄墓誌 (The Tomb Record and
shih eventually abandoned their prejudice and merged into one group through intermarriage in the second generations.

As the men of 977 gradually left the political scene, K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien moved up and became the dominant faction at court. Wang Tan was first promoted to Co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs in March, 1000, and then elevated to Vice Grand Councillor in April, 1001. After the dismissal of Chang Ch'i-hsien, K'ou Chun managed to return to the capital. He first replaced his friend Wen Chung-shu as the Acting Governor of K'ai-feng in June, 1002, then served as the Finance Commissioner beginning in July 1003. He was considered as the next Grand Councillor by both the emperor and his colleagues. Nevertheless, K'ou Chun suffered the loss of many of friends and t'ung-nien during this period. Wang Yü-ch'eng, Ma Kao, Liu Ch'ang-yen, Wei T'ing-shih, Sung Shih and Lu Chih-han all passed away, one after the other.

General Ts'ao Pin died in March, 999. General Wang

Inscription of Chang Tzu-kao

47 *HCP*, v. 46, p. 993; v. 48, p. 1054.

48 *HCP*, v. 52, p. 1133; v. 55, pp. 1205, 1217; v. 56, p. 1244.

Hsien, the father-in-law of Chang Yung, and the former colleague of K'ou Chun, succeeded to the new post of Commissioner of Military Affairs. He was then replaced by new men, including Wang Chi-ying, Chou Ying \( \text{H}^* \text{L}^* \) (951-1016) and Ch'en Yao-sou \( \text{I}^* \text{K}^* \text{Z}^* \) (961-1017). Feng Cheng, the old rival of K'ou Chun, finally attained a post in the Liang Fu after consecutive setbacks in his career. He was appointed Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs, and then Co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs in April, 1001.\(^{50}\) Feng and his associates did not confront the 980 class, and Feng expressed deep regret for having filed charges against K'ou Chun in 986.\(^{51}\) The new enemies of K'ou Chun's group were evidently Wang Ssu-tsung, an old bureaucrat who began his career in T'ai-tsung's reign, and Wang Ch'in-jo, a new star who emerged after Chen-tsung ascended the throne.

Wang Ssu-tsung received his chin-shih degree early in 974. He was an ambitious and arrogant man. Though he placed first in that year's examination, he reportedly behaved more like a military man than a scholar. He was said to be cunning and calculating in dealing with the emperor and his colleagues. He preferred to act independently, and he was very unpopular among the bureaucracy. He was a fierce enemy

\(^{50}\)SS, v. 6, pp. 109, 111-112, 114-115.

\(^{51}\)TCKTL, pp. 459-460.
of K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien. In November, 1002, he criticized Hsiang Min-chung in front of Chen-tsung and caused the dismissal of the Grand Councillor.\textsuperscript{52} He continued to challenge the chin-shih of 980 after the Hsien-p'ing period.

Wang Ch'in-jo's case was different. He assumed a low profile during this period and only sought to exert himself offensive after 1005. A favorite of Chen-tsung, his proposal on tax exemption impressed the emperor greatly. This generous measure was expected to strengthen the benevolent image of the emperor among the people.\textsuperscript{53} Wang was thus rapidly promoted to Hanlin Academician and then Vice Grand Councillor in April, 1001. But his opportunistic behavior incurred the disapproval of the men of 980. In April, 1002, Wang Ch'in-jo was charged with having accepted a bribe two years earlier when he served as a co-examiner in a department level examination. Chao Ch'ang-yen, then the Executive Censor, insisted that the case involving the new Vice Grand Councillor be investigated. But Chen-tsung decided to protect Wang Ch'in-jo. Hsing Ping (932-1010) and three other officials including Pien Su, K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, were named to reinvestigate the case. The result was naturally

\textsuperscript{52}SS, v. 287, pp. 9647-9651; HCP, v. 16, p. 336; v. 22, p. 504; v. 52, p. 1152; v. 53, p. 1157; v. 95, pp. 2192-93; SSCW, v. 3, pp. 47-48.

\textsuperscript{53}HCP, v. 42, pp. 888-89; v. 43, p. 912.
favorable to Wang Ch'in-jo. He was proved innocent, while his colleague Hung Chan (963-1003) was made the scapegoat in the case. Hung Chan was banished and Chao Ch'ang-yen was demoted for having falsely accused Wang Ch'in-jo.\textsuperscript{54}

Actually, Wang Ch'in-jo had accepted a bribe and Hung Chan was innocent. Hsing Ping and Pien Su, who had acted in support of the emperor's favorite, were criticized by K'ou Chun's group.\textsuperscript{55} But in Wang Ch'in-jo's eyes, the 980 group was jealous of his good fortune. Chao Ch'ang-yen's attack on him was regarded as a plot by the 980 men. Chao's son-in-law, Wang Tan, had worked with Wang Ch'in-jo in the disputed examination. But Wang Tan was transferred to another post before the bribery took place. According to Wang Ch'in-jo, Chao Ch'ang-yen felt free to launch the attack because he believed that his son-in-law would not be involved.\textsuperscript{56} It is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{54} HCP, v. 47, pp. 1018, 1030; v. 48, p. 1057; v. 51, pp. 1119-20; SSCW, v. 7, p. 137. Wang Ch'in-jo attacked Wang Ch'i on one occasion in order to please Chang Ch'i-hsien, whom Wang Ch'i had once impeached. This opportunistic act undoubtedly annoyed the men of 980. According to Ssu-ma Kuang's account, Chen-tsung later realized that Wang Ch'in-jo had indeed accepted the bribe.
\item \textsuperscript{55} Hsing Ping was despised by these men for his opportunism. And Pien Su apparently was not excused by his t'ung-nien, Wang Tan. HCP, v. 73, p. 1675; v. 90, p. 2070.
\item \textsuperscript{56} Hung Chan died in July, 1003, in his place of banishment in the extreme south. Wang Ch'in-jo much regretted Hung Chan's death because he had accepted a bribe. Yuan Ch'ung's account clearly states that it was Wang Ch'in-jo who had made Hung Chan the scapegoat. Yuan's account goes on to say that Wang Ch'in-jo was later plagued by the ghost of Hung Chan. There is evidence that Wang Ch'in-jo was not an honest
\end{itemize}
believed that mutual antipathy between Wang Tan and Wang Ch'in-jo started at this time, and Wang Tan would not forgive his t'ung-nien Pien Su's opportunistic behaviour in this case.\(^{57}\)

Unlike Wang Ssu-tsung, Wang Ch'in-jo realized that if he desired to survive in the bureaucracy now dominated by the 980 men, he had to form his own faction so that he would no longer be isolated in a future power struggle. People like Hsing Ping, whom the 980 gentlemen looked down upon, were Wang Ch'in-jo's natural allies.\(^{58}\) A group of southerners who were criticized for their opportunism gradually coalesced into a significant faction headed by Wang Ch'in-jo and his t'ung-nien, Ting Wei. Though it could not immediately challenge the position of the men of 980, it showed its strength in the next round of factional strife.

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\(^{57}\) Wang Tan later refused to restore Pien Su's post, even when requested to do so by Hsiang Min-chung. Wang Tan insisted that because Pien Su had ranked among the emperor's attendants, he should not be pardoned for accepting a bribe. It is very likely that Wang Tan had not forgotten Pien Su's actions in the Hung Chan case. \(\text{HCP}, \text{v. 90, p. 2070}\)

\(^{58}\) \(\text{HCP}, \text{v. 73, p. 1675; SS, v. 431, pp. 12799-12801. Hsing Ping was thanked by Wang Ch'in-jo, since he had protected Wang in the bribery case. Wang later promoted Hsing's son as an expression of his gratitude, but both Hsing and his son were despised by their colleagues.}\)
IV. THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Besides the problem of factional struggles among his ministers, Chen-tsung was heavily occupied by the problem of national security which had been left unsolved by his father. Apart from the Khitan menace, the Tangut people also constituted a serious threat on the western border. And at the same time, Szechuan, the most troubled province, once again experienced serious unrest in the early Hsien-p'ing period.

After a grave defeat by the Khitans in 986, Emperor T'ai-tsung virtually gave up any hope of recapturing the lost territories of Yen-yün. When Chao P'u and his peace advocates returned to power, the idea of peaceful coexistence with Liao prevailed in the Sung court. But T'ai-tsung was unwilling to take the initial step in making peace with the Liao state. Because a number of Khitan raids on its borders had been checked by the Sung army, T'ai-tsung put the problem aside, where it remained at his death.


60 The Sung army, led by Li Chi-lung and Yüan Chi-chung (938-992), defeated the Liao army at Ts'ao River (in present-day Hopei province) in December, 988. Six months later, Li Chi-lung again defeated Yeh-lü Hsiu-ko (d. 998) near the T'ang River and Hsü River (in present-
T'ai-tsung left his son a group of capable field commanders, men who were mostly members of the second generation of the dynasty-founding generals. They included Yang Yen-chao (958-1014), Yang Ssu (934-1014), Li Yün-cheng (960-1010), Li Yün-tse (953-1028), Ho Ch'eng-ch'u (946-1006), Ma Chih-chieh (955-1019), Li Chi-ho (962-1008), Li Chi-hsüan (950-1013), Ching Ssu (?-1014), Ts'ao Ts'an (948-1019), Ts'ao Wei (973-1030), Li Yen-wo (971-917), Kao Chi-hsüan (959-1036) and Sun Ch'uan-chao (952-1011). But the two most senior commanders, Fu Chien and Wang Ch'ao, were widely regarded as being incapable and were infamous for their cowardice.

The Liao army was defeated again at Fu-chou (in present-day Shansi province) in February, 995, by Che Yü-ch'ing (957-995). HCP, v. 29, pp. 657-58; v. 30, pp. 682-83; v. 37, pp. 807-08.

Yang Yen-chao was the son of the great Sung general Yang Yeh (?-986). Yang Ssu was the son of Yang Hsin (914-975). The Li brothers were the sons of Li Ch'ien-p'o (914-975). Ho Ch'eng-ch'u's grandfather was Ho Fu-ch'in (10th Cent.), a famous general of the Five Dynasties period. His father was Ho Chi-yün (927-971), one of the founding generals of the Sung Empire. Ma Chih-chieh was the son of Ma Ch'uan-i (923-960) who died on the battlefield. Li Chi-ho was the younger brother of Li Chi-lung and was an expert in Tibetan Affairs. Li Chi-hsüan attained his success by his own efforts. He had fought many battles since T'ai-tsung's time. Ching-ssu was the grandson of Ching Han-ju (d. 960). The Ts'ao brothers were sons of Ts'ao Pin. Kao Chi-hsün was the son of Kao Chüan. His granddaughter later became the Empress Kao of Ying-tsung (reigned 1063-1067). Sun Ch'uan-chao came from a military family based at Wolf Mountain (in present-day Hopei). Li Yen-wo was the son of Li Chin-ch'ing (915-973). See SS, v. 253, p. 8873; v.
The Sung generals might have gained some confidence since the Liao lost its two greatest generals, Yeh-lú Hsiu-ko and Yeh-lú Hsieh-chen (d. 999), within the space of two years in the early Hsien-p'ing period. But Fu Chien and Wang Ch'ao were still no match for the new Liao chief commander, Hsiao Ta-lin (d. 1004), the cousin of Empress Dowager Hsiao of Liao. Facing serious external threats to its security, Chen-tsung, who doubtlessly remembered the unsuccessful coup engineered by Empress Dowager Li in 997, was unwilling to recall General Li Chi-lung, her elder brother and probably supporter, even though the court lacked experienced field commanders.

With little knowledge or experience in military affairs, Chen-tsung relied solely on his councillors and military advisors in dealing with the problems left by his father. Chang Ch'i-hsien and Hsiang Min-chung were acknowledged experts in military affairs. Though they were commonly rivals at court, there is no evidence to indicate that they were at odds in matters of foreign policy. Lû Tuan, Lû Meng-cheng,


62 Yeh-lú Hsiu-ko died in 998, while Yeh-lú Hsieh-chen passed away the next year during a southern campaign. T'ot'ô et al., Liao Shih (History of the Liao), (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1974), v. 14, p. 154.
Li K'ang and his t'ung-nien associates basically followed Chang Ch'i-hsien and Hsiang Min-chung in these matters. They favored peaceful co-existence with the Liao. Following the policy of Chao P'u, they strongly opposed any military venture designed to recover the lost territories. 

Chen-tsung was convinced by their arguments and adopted an appeasement policy. When he visited the ill Commissioner of Military Affairs, Ts'ao Pin, he agreed with him that it would be good policy if Sung made peace with Liao. But the emperor wondered how this could be implemented in a face-saving way. Chu Tai-fu's proposal of sending a special envoy to negotiate with Liao was rejected by both the emperor and his councillors. This was an old problem that T'ai-tsung had also confronted: how to achieve peace with Liao without taking the initiative? And how to transmit an overture to Liao in the absence of formal diplomatic channels?

Chang Ch'i-hsien encountered an opportunity to act when the Khitans launched an attack of medium scale in December, 999. Urged on by Wang Chi-ying and strongly supported by

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63 Wang Yü-ch'eng, Chu Tai-fu and Hsieh Mi were advocators of such a policy. Hsieh Mi explicitly recalled Chao P'u's policy in his memorial. HCP, v. 42, p. 896; v. 44, pp. 931-33, 935-38, 942-43.

64 HCP, v. 44, pp. 945-56.

65 HCP, v. 44, pp. 931-33. Chu Tai-fu was willing to go to Liao as a negotiator.
Chang Ch'ı-hsien, the emperor was induced personally to lead an expeditionary force against the enemy. Chang Ch'ı-hsien calculated that a northern campaign would not be risky since the Khitan force was evidently small. With the presence of the emperor at Ta-ming Fu, it would be convenient, it was argued, to direct peace talks with the Khitans. If the Sung army was powerful enough, the Liao probably would be forced to make peace. Furthermore, the emperor could be made to resemble his uncle and father as a great military leader. It is evident that Chen-tsung was encouraged by this plan. He enthusiastically set about inspecting the troops and making war plans.  

In January, 1000, Chen-tsung arrived at Ta-ming Fu. But the emperor and the Senior Grand Councillor's presence did not lead to a great victory for the Sung army. Instead, the Liao army withdrew after a successful raid on border areas. Empress Dowager Hsiao chose not to wage a decisive war with Chen-tsung. After a month at Ta-ming Fu, Chen-tsung achieved nothing: the Khitans would not negotiate with the Sung. Greatly disappointed at this outcome, a scapegoat was needed. Angry civilian officials requested that Fu Chien, the cowardly and irresponsible chief field commander, be beheaded for his poor performance in the field which led to the failure of the

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Sung army. Instead, Fu Chien was banished and degraded. 67

Before Chen-tsung returned to K'ai-feng, Fan T'ing-chao brought the emperor and his councillors some comfort with a minor military success. But Sung lost a brave general, K'ang Pao-sui (?-1000), at the same time. 68

The Sung and Liao remained locked in a stalemate. The Sung army was victorious in November, 1001, at Wei-lu-chûn (in present-day Hopei province), 69 but was defeated at Wan-tu (in present-day Hopei) in May, 1003. Commander Wang Chi-chung, a close friend of Chen-tsung, was captured in the latter battle. 70 The old problem remained unsolved throughout the whole of the Hsien-p'ing period. A breakthrough took place in 1005 when the Treaty of Shan-yûan was concluded.

When Chen-tsung was on his way back to the capital, unrest in Szechuan reoccurred. A mutiny of the Ch' eng-tu Garrison led by a junior military officer, Wang Chûn (d. 1000), broke out; it was the result of mismanagement and

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67 HCP, v. 45, pp. 971-80; v. 46, p. 986.
68 HCP, v. 46, pp. 985-89.
69 HCP, v. 50, pp. 1082-84.
70 HCP, v. 54, p. 1190; Chiang Fu-ts'ung, op. cit., pp. 104-106. Chiang Fu-ts'ung suspects that Wang Chi-chung was allowed to be captured by Liao in order to transmit Chen-tsung's overtures for peace talks.
corruption in the Szechuan government. Niu Mien (945-1008) and Fu Chao-shou (?-1000), the successors of Chang Yung, were judged to be incompetent and held responsible for the outbreak of the mutiny. The geography of Szechuan was favorable to the rebellion. As a matter of fact, the mutiny of Wang Chun was the third large scale rebellion to occur in the area since the founding of the dynasty. Fu Chao-shou was killed by the rebel army while Niu Mien and Chang Shih, the Fiscal Commissioner of Szechuan and a t'ung-nien of Chang Yung, fled to Han-chou (in present-day Szechuan). Lei Yü-chung (947-1005) was immediately sent to Szechuan to suppress the rebellion. After nine months of province-wide fighting, the rebellion was crushed. But the prosperous basin was once again devastated.

71 HCP, v. 46, pp. 983-84.

72 The first large scale rebellion to erupt in Szechuan in Sung times was led by Ch'uan Shih-hsiung (?-966). The second was led by Li Shun and Wang Hsiao-po in 994. Niu Mien received his chin-shih degree in 978. He was said to be a kind man but not a good administrator. When he was appointed the Prefect of Ch'eng-tu, Chang Yung already predicted that he would have trouble. Fu Chao-shou was the son of Fu Yen-ch'ing (897-974), a great general. But Fu Chao-shou did not inherit his father's talent in military affairs. Lei Yü-chung was the son of Lei Te-hsiang (918-992), the former rival of Chao P'u. Lei Yü-chung was also an expert in military affairs. He belonged to the type of civil official resembling Chang Ch'i-hsien, Chang Yung, Ch'ien Jo-shui, Hsiang Min-chung and K'ou Chun. See HCP, v. 6, pp. 150-52, 159-163; v. 7, pp. 166-67, 172, 176-78, 183; v. 46, pp. 988-994, 998; v. 47, pp. 1014, 1021, 1024-30. SS, v. 251, pp. 8837-8842; v. 277, pp. 9439-40; v. 278, pp. 9453-63.
Fearing that another revolt would take place, Chen-tsung imposed a set of new measures, including martial law on the Szechuan basin. According to imperial information, Li Shun, the leader of the peasant rebellion in 994, was still alive and might re-emerge. Having learned from previous mistakes, Chen-tsung selected the administrators of Szechuan with much caution. Finally, Ma Chih-chieh was chosen. Ma was a capable commander, but he lacked the skill needed in handling civilian affairs. When order was restored, Chen-tsung and Li K'ang again thought of Chang Yung, the model administrator. Chang Yung was the only individual respected by the Szechuan people. To assure permanent stability in the basin, Chang Yung was once again appointed Prefect of Ch'eng-tu in May, 1003, upon

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73 Lei Yü-chung and Ma Liang had served temporarily as Prefect of I-chou (present-day Ch'eng-tu) and Fiscal Commissioner of Szechuan after suppressing the rebellion. Sung T'ai-ch'u (946-1007) succeeded to their posts in May, 1001. But he proved to be uncooperative and he was soon replaced by Ma Chih-chieh. Martial law was imposed, but the morale of local officials was very low. They deliberately quarrelled with their colleagues, hoping for a transfer. The threat of another rebellion also existed, since Li Shun was still alive. See HCP, v. 48, p. 1058; v. 49, p. 1075; v. 50, p. 1089; v. 52, p. 1152; Wu T'ien-ch'i (Two Topical Studies of the Rebellion of Wang Hsiao-po and Li Shun), in Teng Kuang-ming and Hsu Kuei (ed.), Sung-shih yen-chiu lun-wen chi (Collected Articles on Sung Studies), (Hangchou: Chekiang jen-min ch'u-pan she, 1987), pp. 231-247.
the recommendation of his t'ung-nien, Li K'ang.74

Compared with the Khitan threat to national security, Tangut raids on the western border were relatively minor. But the fate of Ling-chou had been unsettled since the last years of T'ai-tsung and Chen-tsung could not make up his mind on this issue. His ministers also failed to reach a consensus. Lü Tuan, Li K'ang, Li Chih, T'ien Hsi and Yang I favored the abandonment of the city. They argued that the cost of holding the city was too high, and that limited state resources should be used in the defence of Shensi and Hopei.75 But Chang Ch'i-hsien and his associates, such as Tseng Chih-yao (947-1012), Liu Chung (955-1015), Li Chi-wo, Ho Liang (947-?), Cheng Wen-pao (953-1013), Wu Shu (947-1002) and Yang Yun-kung (944-999) held a different view. They argued that if Ling-chou was lost to Li Chi-ch'ien, the Tangut chieftain, his forces would be greatly strengthened. Though the cost of keeping Ling-chou was high, its strategic importance should not be ignored, and the defense of Ling-chou, especially the problem of transporting provisions, could be worked out. Chang Ch'i-hsien and his associates went on

74Chang Yung was warmly received by the Szechuan people when he arrived at Ch'eng-tu. HCP, v. 54, pp. 1188-90; SS, v. 293, p. 9802.

75HCP, v. 41, pp. 860-62, 869-875; v. 42, pp. 886, 891, 893-97, 901; v. 43, p. 910; v. 50, pp. 1094-99; v. 51, pp. 1109-1110.
to suggest that the western tribes, especially the Tibetans, could be used to balance the forces of Li Chi-ch'ien. Chang Ch'i-hsien strongly advocated adopting the ancient idea of "using the barbarians to attack the barbarians" as Chao P'u had done. He recommended P'an Lo-chih (？-1004), the chieftain of the Liu-ku Tribe, to the emperor as one source of potential aid in this respect.  

The controversy over Ling-chou ended when the city finally fell in April, 1002.  As a result, the threat from the Tangu intensified. Thus the emperor was forced to act; he had several choices. He could adopt an appeasement policy and make further concessions. He could "punish" the barbarians as his father had done. Or he could adopt Chang Ch'i-hsien's

76 *HCP*, v. 42, p. 997; v. 44, pp. 947-951; v. 49, pp. 1075-79; v. 50, pp. 1087-94, 1099-1100; v. 51, pp. 1107-09; v. 56, p. 1243, v. 150, pp. 3638, 3640-41. It is notable that Sung K'ang, the younger brother of Sung Shih and also a chin-shih of 980, supported Chang Ch'i-hsien's policy. He was appointed the special envoy to the Tibetan tribes. Tseng Chih-yao, the father of Tseng Kung, was the protégé of Chang Ch'i-hsien. He openly criticized Hsiang Min-chung for the sake of his patron. His hostile attitude towards Hsiang Min-chung could reflect the tension between Chang Ch'i-hsien and the 980 men. Equally, Li K'ang disliked Tseng and disapproved his promotion. Concerning the question of Ling-chou, Chang Ch'i-hsien's judgement proved farsighted. Forty years later, Sung was greatly troubled by Hsi Hsia, the Tangut kingdom, which had been much strengthened by the annexation of Ling-chou and near-by regions. Fu Pi deeply regretted the loss of that strategic city in a memorial to the throne.

77 *HCP*, v. 51, p. 1118.
The emperor and his ministers encountered severe difficulties during the Hsien-p'ing period. External invasions and internal rebellions threatened the very survival of the empire. Wang Tan wondered when peace would return. It is said that senior ministers were so busy that they were unable to take their meals on time.\(^7\)

\(^{78}\)HCP, v. 51, pp. 1121-22. After the fall of Ling-chou, Chang Ch'i-hsien further advocated his policy of "using the barbarians to attack the barbarians." Li K'ang and his faction did not oppose this traditional policy and P'an Lo-chih was generally accepted as being the best individual to put it into operation.

\(^{79}\)HCP, v. 56, p. 1243.
K'ou Chun did not occupy an important post in the central government until the last two years of the Hsien-p'ing period. It is believed that he was blocked from doing so by Lü Tuan and Chang Ch'i-hsien. In June, 998, he was transferred to He-yang (in present-day Honan province) from Teng-chou, where he was known for his luxurious banquets. In the summer of 999, he was transferred to T'ung-chou. In June, 1000, he travelled to the capital to pay his respects to the emperor, whom he had not seen for five years. But on the way to the capital, K'ou was impeached by his own deputy and ordered to remain at Feng-hsiang Fu. He was then appointed the Prefect of that city.

He spent two years in this western city. He continued his writing of poetry and enjoyment of banquets with guests and deputies. Among his deputies, Yen Su (?-after 1033), the great scientist, attracted his greatest attention. At Feng-hsiang Fu, he met his old friend Chang Yung, who was on his way to Szechuan. Chang Yung suggested that K'ou Chun

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80 See Section II & III of this chapter.
81 KCMKSC, p. 3. Also see note 26 of this chapter.
83 SS, v. 298, pp. 9909-9910.
should take a look at the biography of Huo Kuang (138–68 B.C.) in the Han Shu (The Han History). Implicitly, Chang Yung was comparing his old friend with General Huo Kuang, who was well-known for his illiteracy and lack of diplomatic behavior. K'ou Chun shared Chang Yung's humor and took the advice. He was thus prepared to share the responsibility for state affairs with his t'ung-nien Li K'ang, Hsiang Min-chung, Wang Tan and Sung Shih if called back to the capital. 84

K'ou Chun had not been forgotten by Chen-tsung. In June, 1002, he was summoned to the capital. Meanwhile, his old rival Chang Ch'i-hsien had gone to the western front after the fall of Ling-chou. Thus, these two strong personalities did not meet in the capital. 85 When K'ou Chun arrived, he was appointed Acting Governor of K'ai-feng to replace his old friend Wen Chung-shu, who was transferred to the position of

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85 Chang Ch'i-hsien was appointed General Commissioner of Nine Prefectures on the western front in February 1002. HCP, v. 51, pp. 1107–08.
Executive Censor.\textsuperscript{86}

K'ou Chun impressed his master and his colleagues with his brilliant administrative abilities in his new assignment. He solved the problem of flooding in the capital,\textsuperscript{87} and carefully selected new personnel to take charge of public security there.\textsuperscript{88} His performance was highly praised, and he was regarded as the best candidate for the next assignment as Grand Councillor. But K'ou himself was not so inclined. Wang Chia-yü, the eldest son of Wang Yü-ch'eng and the son-in-law of Chang Yung, apparently advised K'ou Chun not to accept the post of Grand Councillor as soon as it was offered. Instead, the young man suggested that the best time for him to accept the post would be when he would be considered indispensable and irreplaceable. K'ou Chun accepted the young man's advice.\textsuperscript{89}

K'ou Chun's new job lasted only one year. He was then appointed Finance Commissioner to replace his friend Ch'en Shu. He had served as Administrator of the Finance Commission early in his career. That experience and his recognized ability led to the new appointment to this important position.

\textsuperscript{86}HCP, v. 52, p. 1133.

\textsuperscript{87}HCP, v. 52, p. 1143; SHYCK, "fang-yü" (Geographical Accounts), 16:22, p. 7572.

\textsuperscript{88}HCP, v. 54, p. 1187.

\textsuperscript{89}HCP, v. 55, p. 1217; SSCW, v. 2, pp. 33-34.
It is said that he at once went to see Ch'en Shu, sincerely seeking the advice of this finance expert who had strongly recommended him for the post. On his part, Ch'en Shu briefed him on the details of the situation. It is recorded that K'ou Chun later edited and ordered reprinted all the rules and guidelines of the Commission which had been formulated by Ch'en Shu.

In his new job, he was assisted by three Deputy Commissioners, Cha Tao 鄭道 (955-1018), Pien Hsüeh 任煕 (960-1004) and Lin T'e 林頙 (?-after 1023). Cha Tao was a native of She-chou. He was a devout Buddhist and a virtuous man. K'ou Chun had recommended him for office in T'ai-ntsung's time, but he was not an expert in finance. Lin T'e was also a southerner. His ability in finance was shown when he served as the Commissioner of Army Provisions on the western campaign in 996. He later became a core member of Wang Ch'in-jo's clique. Pien Hsüeh was also an expert in finance, but his harshness with his subordinates was often criticized.¹⁰

¹⁰HCP, v. 52, p. 1135; v. 55, p. 1205; SS, v. 277, pp. 9434-35; v. 283, pp. 9564-65; v. 296, pp. 9877-9880; SSCW, v. 2, pp. 23-24. It is notable that K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, Ch'en Jo-cho, had competed for the post of Finance Commissioner. When he found that he had failed to get the job, he appealed to the emperor, but this annoyed the emperor and led to his demotion. According to another account, K'ou Chun was recommended by Chang Mi 柴米 (fl. 1003). See Lü Hsi-che 魯希哲 (1039-1116), Lü-shih tsa-chi 魯氏時史 (The Miscellaneous Notes of Mr. Lü), hereafter LSTC, PCHSTK ser. 18, "hsia", p. 215.
K'ou Chun was enthusiastic in recommending talented officials to the emperor and his t'ung-nien, the Grand Councillor Li K'ang. He had strongly recommended Ting Wei, who made a reputation for himself by his excellent service at Kwei-chou (in present-day Hupei, near the Three Gorges). The relationship between K'ou Chun and Ting Wei was a friendly one. Ting Wei, a reputable poet who shared literary interests with K'ou Chun, was regarded by him as a valuable friend, regardless of Ting's kinship ties to Wang Mien and his southern origins. K'ou had once questioned Li K'ang rather bluntly as to why Ting Wei had not been promoted to a high post. In reply, Li K'ang mentioned Ting Wei's opportunistic behavior, a judgment K'ou Chun did not accept.

Li K'ang's excellent judgment of people was also apparent in his selection of Wang Tseng as a son-in-law. Wang Tseng, a native of Ch'ing-chou, was named optimus in the 1002 chin-shih examinations. (The chief examiner was Ch'en Shu). Wang

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91 HCP, v. 51, p. 1108; v. 52, p. 1142; v. 54, p. 1187; v. 56, p. 1231; Ch'en Ch'un (1174-1244), Chiu-ch'ao pien-nien pei-yao hereafter CCPNPY, (Essential Outline, Year by Year, of the Events of the Northern Sung), SKCSCP ser. 7, v.6, pp. 28-29.

92 See Chapter III, note 60. K'ou Chun did not discriminate against southerners. Friends like Ch'en Shu and Yang I and subordinates like Cha Tao were all southerners.

Tseng was similarly favored by Lü Meng-cheng, but in the end, he chose to marry Li K'ang's daughter. Cultivated by Li K'ang and his t'ung-nien, including K'ou Chun and Wang Tan, Wang Tseng soon emerged as a new star on the political horizon. The humble young man, whom K'ou Chun had met in his t'ung-nien's house the year he returned to the capital, soon became one of K'ou's most important deputies, and eventually his successor.

Besides Ting Wei and Wang Tseng, another important person close to K'ou Chun in this period was Wang Shu, the t'ung-nien of Ting Wei. Wang Shu was recommended by Chao Ch'ang-yen, father-in-law of Wang Tan. After his service at Ming-chou (present-day Ningpo), he was named Administrator of the Commission of Herds almost at the same time as K'ou Chun was appointed Finance Commissioner. Wang Shu would later prove to be a loyal follower and a skillful deputy in K'ou Chun's later career.

Other close friends of K'ou at this time were Pi Shih-an and Yang I. They were among his most important political allies. Besides civilian officials, K'ou had many friends in

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the military. Apparently his marriage ties, his former service in the Bureau of Military Affairs, and most importantly, his stern character and interests made him popular among the military men. For example, Kao Chiung, the Commander-in-chief of the Palace Command and the trusted guard of the emperor, was on good terms with K'ou Chun.96

By the end of 1003, the political environment had become favorable for K'ou Chun. His old foes had either died or left the political scene. While his t'ung-nien and other friends were occupying most of the important posts inside and outside the court, he soon found himself in a position where he had to come up with a solution to the old problem of the Khitan threat, which reemerged in the later years of the Hsien-p'ing period.

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CHAPTER V
K'OU CHUN AND THE 1004 CRISIS

I. THE WARTIME GRAND COUNCILLOR

In the first lunar month of 1004, Chen-tsung changed his reign-title from Hsien-p'ing to Ching-te (Spectacular Virtue). In doing so, he was probably thinking of his uncle T'ai-tsu's second reign-title Ch'ien-te (Supernal Virtue). His desire for peace was apparent, and it was reflected in the new reign-title. In March, 1004, good news came from the western border that Li Chi-ch'ien, the Tangut chieftain, had been killed by P'an Lo-chih in a battle at Hsi-liang Fu (in present-day Ch'inghai province). But the greater threat from the Khitan showed no sign of abating. The Khitan army increased its pressure on the northern borders of the Sung under the leadership of Hsiao Ta-lin, the leader of the hawks at the Liao court.

Chen-tsung lost his chief military adviser, Ch'ien Jo-shui, two months before adopting a new reign-title. This was

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1HCP, v. 56, p. 1224; James M. Hargett, loc. cit., pp. 30-32. The word "ching" could mean "admire" or "adore". It was common in Sung times for words from previous reign-titles to be adopted in later reign-titles in memory of deceased rulers.

2HCP, v. 56, pp. 1228-29.
great blow to him. Two other experts on military affairs, Chang Ch'i-hsien and Hsiang Min-chung, had not yet regained the emperor's trust.\(^3\) Therefore, the only person he could rely on at such a critical juncture was K'ou Chun.

K'ou Chun witnessed the death of many important figures in the palace and the court before he returned to power. The emperor lost his only son, Prince Chou (995-1003), in May, 1003, and then his beloved sister, Princess Cheng (?-1004), in May, 1004. His feelings upon the death of Empress Dowager Li in April, 1004, must have been mixed at best, but he was surely pleased to be able to elevate Lady Liu to the rank of Consort of Mei-jen.\(^4\) In the court, T'ien Hsi passed away one month after the death of Ch'ien Jo-shui.\(^5\) And then Hsia-hou Chao, Ch'en Su and finally Li K'ang all died in the summer of 1004.\(^6\) Lü Meng-cheng died shortly after his

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\(^3\)HCP, v. 55, p. 1215. Chang Ch'i-hsien and Hsiang Min-chung had been demoted and dismissed in November 1002 because of a partisan dispute. See Chapter IV, Section III.

\(^4\)HCP, v. 54, p. 1190; v. 56, pp. 1225-26; 1232-33. Emperor Chen-tsung publicly displayed much sorrow upon the death of Empress Dowager Li, but it is doubtful that he really regretted the passing of this woman who had long been a thorn in his side. However, he did permit General Li Chi-lung to return to the capital to see his young sister on her death bed.

\(^5\)HCP, v. 55, p. 1220.

\(^6\)HCP, v. 56, pp. 1236-37; 1244-45.
retirement in October, 1003.\(^7\)

K'ou Chun was undoubtedly happy to see Ting Wei on his return from Kuei-chou, while the promotion of Pien Su was also good news for him.\(^8\) In September, 1004, K'ou Chun at last attained the post which he had desired for years; namely, that of Junior Grand Councillor. Pi Shih-an, the aged statesman and a relative of K'ou Chun by marriage, was appointed Senior Grand Councillor at the same time. Several days later, Wang Chi-ying, Ch'en Yao-shou and Feng Cheng were promoted to the posts of Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of Military Affairs respectively. Wang Tan and Wang Ch'in-jo kept their posts as Vice Grand Councillors.\(^9\)

Though K'ou Chun was generally recognized as being the best choice in a time of war for the post of Junior Grand Councillor, Chen-tsung was still hesitant to place full authority and responsibility in his hands. The appointment of Pi Shih-an was probably designed to impose a restraining hand on his exercise of power, considering his record of uncompromising, arrogant behavior. Fortunately, the experienced Pi Shih-an functioned well as a mediator between

\(^7\)HCP, v. 55, p. 1213.

\(^8\)HCP, v. 56, pp. 1231, 1238-39, 1248. Pien Su ranked first among the twenty men personally promoted by Chen-tsung. He was named Prefect of Hsing-chou (in present-day Hopei), a strategic city on the northern border.

\(^9\)HCP, v. 57, pp. 1251-52.
the strong-minded Junior Grand Councillor and the emperor. When Chen-tsung asked Pi Shih-an who would be the best choice for the post, Pi replied with no hesitation that K'ou Chun was the man. Pi went on to praise K'ou Chun for his loyalty and virtue. He further stated that K'ou had the wisdom to make decisions on important issues that he himself did not possess. When Chen-tsung hesitated because of K'ou's reputation for stubborn inflexibility, Pi convinced the emperor that his virtues outweighed his vices and that his good working relationship with the bureaucracy was a positive factor. Pi Shih-an also pointed out that K'ou Chun was willing to work for the best interests of the state, even at the expense of his own personal needs. He also argued that in defending the causes of righteousness, K'ou Chun would make no concessions to petty men. Pi Shih-an thus concluded that K'ou Chun was the kind of virtuous individual the common people and petty men disliked. But he was the minister the emperor and the state needed most, especially in a period of crisis.10

Pi Shih-an's arguments were effective. Chen-tsung's last doubt was removed, and he wisely chose Pi Shih-an to monitor K'ou Chun's behavior in office. Pi was the leader of Chen-tsung's former attendants, and he was respected by K'ou Chun and Wang Tan for his personal virtue and his seniority. He

10HCP, v. 56, pp. 1244-45.
was the indispensable bridge linking the two powerful groups together. Nevertheless, the placement of K'ou Chun's old rival, Feng Cheng, and men like Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en Yao-sou, who apparently held viewpoints quite different from K'ou Chun, in the Liang Fu might be perceived as a mistake which eventually resulted in disunity among the senior councillors.\(^{11}\)

As a wartime Grand Councillor, K'ou Chun was given more authority than his predecessors. Unlike his father, Chen-tsung believed that the Grand Councillors should share responsibilities with the Commissioners of Military Affairs in the making of military policy. After assuming their duties, K'ou Chun and Pi Shih-an were formally invested with the task of overseeing the Bureau of Military Affairs. They were authorized to make military policy in consultation with the Commissioners in that bureau.\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\)Tseng Kung-liang 陈孔亮 (998-1078) cited Chen-tsung's words during an imperial audience with Emperor Shen-tsung 沈宗 (reigned 1068-1085), and recalled the fact that Chen-tsung had deliberately put K'ou Chun and his rivals in the Liang Fu at the same time, desiring to balance the power among his ministers. Wang An-shih argued that the lack of unity of opinions among Chen-tsung's ministers was the cause for the defeat of the Sung army. See HCP, v. 248, p. 6046; TPCCTL, v. 13, p. 1072.

\(^{12}\)HCP, v. 46, p. 984; v. 57, p. 1257. When Li K'ang was Grand Councillor, he was allowed to present his opinions concerning military affairs privately. Hsiang Min-chung had also been appointed concurrently the Co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs when he was serving as Vice Grand Councillor. Chen-tsung's Grand Councillors were no longer kept out of military affairs as their predecessors had been in T'ai-tsung's time.
Modern scholars have compared K'ou Chun to Yü Ch'ien (~1398-1457), the senior Ming official in the 1449 military crisis. He might also be compared to Winston Churchill. What a wartime leader needs is a sophisticated plan of action, an unshaking determination to carry on, and the courage of a great soldier. These traits K'ou Chun undoubtedly possessed.

II. FROM WAR TO PEACE

In September, 1004, shortly after K'ou Chun assumed his new post as Grand Councillor, Sung intelligence learned of Liao preparations for a large scale invasion.\textsuperscript{14} When Chen-tsung claimed that he would go to the front as he had done in 999, K'ou Chun immediately supported the idea, suggesting that the emperor should go to Shan-chou as soon as possible, since the main Sung forces were deployed there.\textsuperscript{15} K'ou Chun believed that with the emperor at the front, the command structure would be unified. It was customary since the Five Dynasties for the emperor to take personal command of the army on the battlefield. T'ai-tsu and T'ai-tsung had done so, and Chen-tsung had already gone to the front on one occasion. The presence of the emperor at the front, it was believed, greatly enhanced the morale of the soldiers. And the best means to achieve the peace desired by the emperor was a show of force, which would compel the enemy to submit. In addition, in case there were peace negotiations, the presence of the emperor at the front would add to the efficient conduct of discussions.

However, K'ou Chun overestimated his master's self-confidence and courage. Unlike his predecessors, Chen-tsung

\textsuperscript{14}HCP, v. 57, pp. 1253, 1256.
\textsuperscript{15}HCP, v. 57, pp. 1256-57.
was a literary man rather than a warrior. Though he liked to
discuss strategy and tactics with his ministers, and to design
war plans and charts from time to time, he lacked significant
battlefield experience and the necessary fortitude. His
discussions of military plans probably served mainly to
disguise a personal timidity and a lack of confidence. Pi
Shih-an and Wang Chi-ying, his old attendants, perceived his
unwillingness to take personal risks. But if he refused to
go, his image would undoubtedly be marred. Perceiving the
dilemma of the emperor, the experienced Pi Shih-an wisely
proposed that the emperor should not go to Shan-chou until the
coming of winter when the necessary preparations had been
made. Naturally, Chen-tsung accepted this face-saving
proposal.16 Hopefully the Khitan army would withdraw soon and
he would not have to go to the front at all.

Unfortunately, the worst possible development transpired,
disappointing and frightening Chen-tsung. In October, 1004,
Empress Dowager Hsiao of the Liao launched a surprise attack.17
Apart from a general sense of optimism, an element of

16 HCP, v. 57, p. 1257; CSC, v. 11, p. 147; Chou Pao-jui
"Ch'ien-lun Shan-yuan chih-meng ti chueh-ts'e jen-wu
chih-i Pi Shih-an" (A Preliminary Study of Pi Shih-an, the Primary Sung Decision-

17 HCP, v. 57, pp. 1265-66; CSC, p. 147.
opportunism might have been another cause for this action. The death of Li Chi-ch'ien earlier in the year had relieved the Sung army from fighting a two-front war. And the construction of dikes, waterfields and ponds along the eastern border in the Kuan-nan region (present-day Hopei, south of Peking) had effectively limited the opportunities for maneuver by the Khitan cavalry. Therefore, the Empress Dowager decided to lay siege to the city before the Sung could settle its problems on the western border and complete its defensive system in the north.

The surprise attack was successful. The deployment of the Sung armies had been based on the assumption that the Liao army would not advance toward Ting-chou and Ta-ming Fu, and that Shan-chou and other cities along the banks of the Yellow

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18 The defence system designed by Ho Ch'eng-ch'U was very effective. The Khitan cavalry was unable to break through the Kuan-nan region. They could only move southward through Ting-chou (present-day Hopei), where the major Sung force was garrisoned. It is notable that Ho Ch'eng-ch'u's defence system at Kuan-nan was still effective in the thirteenth century in minimizing the effectiveness of the Mongol cavalry advancing southward from the Great Wall. See Lü Chung (?-1247), Sung-shih ch'uan-wen (The Full Text of Sung History), SKCSCE, ser. 11, v. 30, p. 48; SS, v. 273, pp. 9329-32; HCE, v. 56, pp. 1228, 1234-35, 1241-42; v. 150, pp. 3648-49; Yen Ch'in-heng, "Pei-Sung tui-Liao t'ang-ti she-she chih yen-chiu" (A Study of the Construction of Dikes and Ponds as a Defence Measure along the Sung-Liao Border during the Northern Sung Dynasty), Cheng-chih ta-hsüeh hsüeh-pao, 8(1963): 247-257.
River would be safe. 19 But contrary to expectations, the Liao army marched southward, bypassing Ting-chou. Wang Ch'ao was so intimidated by the strong Khitan force that he held back his 80,000 troops at Ting-chou and did not loose a single arrow. 20 With the Khitan army advancing easily to the north bank of the Yellow River, the Sung court fell into a panic. When the bad news reached the emperor, he immediately summoned K'ou Chun to the palace. K'ou Chun delayed going to the palace until the next morning when he submitted for consideration a subtle plan of action. 21 K'ou Chun proposed that the eastern defensive line be strengthened, and that the strategic city of Ta-ming Fu be held at all cost. In view of the weakness of the Sung army, he pointed out that it should adopt a strategy of defending against the Liao cavalry in walled cities and avoiding the enemy in the open fields. In this plan, several scenarios were proposed to meet changing needs. Last but not the least, he urged the emperor to go to

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19 Even in October, 1004, the experienced general Wang Hsien still argued that the Liao army would not pass beyond Ting-chou. See HCP, v. 57, p. 1259.

20 HCP, v. 57, p. 1256.

21 Sun Sheng (1038-1099), Sun-kung t' an-p' u (The Collected Conversations of Sung Sheng), hereafter SKTP, PCHSTK ser. 8, "hsia", p. 593. According to Sun Sheng's account, K'ou Chun was on sick leave that very day. But the nervous emperor ordered that his Grand Councillor come to the palace at once. If he could not walk, he should be carried to the palace in a sedan-chair.
Shan-chou at once to assume personal command of the army.\(^{22}\)

When the emperor hesitated in accepting this advice, a feeling of defeatism spread among K'ou Chun's colleagues. Wang Ch'in-jo suggested that Chen-tsung should flee to South China, while Ch'en Yao-sou favored Szechuan as a refuge. K'ou Chun was very much annoyed by these suggestions. If the emperor fled at this critical moment, K'ou argued, the dynasty would collapse, and he contended that anyone who made such a proposal should be beheaded.\(^{23}\) K'ou Chun's vigorous rejection of a defeatist attitude saved the emperor from making a grave mistake. Serving as a preventive measure, K'ou Chun sent Wang Ch'in-jo, the representative of the defeatists at court, out of the capital. Wang Ch'in-jo was appointed Prefect of Ta-ming Fu, the strategic city then under attack by the Khitans.\(^{24}\)

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\(^{22}\) In Chinese terms, this strategy is known as chien-pi ch'ing-yeh (戦平業), which is similar to the Fabian Strategy. Concerning the Fabian Strategy, see B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), pp. 31, 33-34, 46-47, 49-59, 79. K'ou Chun's war plans were presented in the form of a memorial, the only one of his memorials to survive. The full text of this memorial can be found in: *HSTT*, v. 1, pp. 2-4; *SMCTI*, v. 130, pp. 30-32. It was submitted in the ninth lunar month of 1004.

\(^{23}\) *HCP*, v. 57, pp. 1267-68; *SKTP*, p. 1443.

\(^{24}\) *HCP*, v. 57, pp. 1267-68; v. 58, p. 1284; *SSLY*, v. 11, p. 125. When Wang Ch'in-jo arrived at Ta-ming Fu, the Liao army launched a large scale assault. Fortunately, the city was under the command of the capable general Sun Ch'uan-chao. Wang Ch'in-jo had a hard time at Ta-ming Fu. Nominally, he was the highest commander of the Sung garrison at Ta-ming. But in actuality, he could not command Sun Ch'uan-chao's army. One occasion, Sun implicitly stated that what Wang should do was just to stay in his office and let his military
Putting Wang in a dangerous place like Ta-ming where he could exercise no influence on the emperor, K'ou Chun successfully blocked the activities of the defeatists at court. Witnessing the fate of Wang Ch'in-jo, Ch'en Yao-sou and others of a defeatist mentality kept silent.

K'ou Chun was confident about the outcome of the war. He knew his military colleagues well; they were capable and reliable. At court, he was supported by Pi Shih-an and Wang Chi-ying, while his t'ung-nien and other personal friends offered him valuable assistance at this critical period. The presence of Chang Yung and Hsiang Min-chung in Szechuan and Shensi respectively was the best guarantee of the security of those two regions which concerned Chen-tsung the most.25 Ma Liang at Chin-ling 多按 (present-day Nanking, ), Pien Su at deputies shoulder the responsibilities of defending the city. But Wang would shoulder all responsibilities and punishments if Ta-ming fell.

25 It is recorded that Hsiang Min-chung did not show any anxiety when he received news of these events from the northern front. He conducted the local government as normal. The western front was peaceful during the crisis. For his excellent performance in the 1004 crisis, he regained Chen-tsung's favour. Chang Yung maintained order in Szechuan by imposing martial law and he was successful in achieving the desired goal. Chen-tsung lauded his excellent service. The emperor openly stated that with the presence of Chang Yung in Szechuan, he need not worry about the security of the western border. See HCP, v. 56, p. 1236; v. 58, pp. 1276-77; v. 61, p. 1357; CS, "chung", p. 28; Sung Ch'i 998-1061), Ching-wen chi, (Collected Works of Sung Ch'i), hereafter CWC, TSCCCP ed., v. 62, "Chang Shang-shu hsing-chuang", (The Record of Conduct of Minister Chang Yung), pp. 831-34; YHCH, v. 6, pp. 57-58.
Hsing-chou, and Chang Ping at Shan-chou, all did their best to maintain law and order. Wang Tan enjoyed the trust and confidence of his master and t'ung-nien, and he was named Mayor of the capital as Chen-tsung and K'ou Chun set out for Shan-chou. It is reported that he did an excellent job with the help of Li Han-chang, his close friend and t'ung-nien.

Ting Wei, then a good friend of K'ou Chun, was offered the important task of guarding Yang-liu Pass, near Yün-chou. His remarkable performance did not disappoint K'ou Chun. Lei Yü-chung and Cheng Wen-pao were asked to lead

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26 HCP, v. 58, p. 1274; v. 59, p. 1330; Chang Hsüan (13th Cent.), Chih-ta Chin-ling hsin-chih (The Local History of Chin-ling of the Chih-ta period), hereafter CTCLHC, SKCSCP ser. 7, v. 3b, p. 16. Pien Su was promoted to Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs for his excellent performance in defending Hsing-chou. During the 1004 crisis, Hsing-chou became a center for refugees. Like Chang Yung, Ma Liang maintained law and order in Chin-ling by the imposition of harsh legal methods.

27 HCP, v. 58, pp. 1288, 1295. Li Han-chang served as Inspector of Provision, transporting supplies from K'ai-feng to Shan-chou. Wang Tan was appointed Acting Mayor of the capital when the Governor, Prince Yung (Yün-fen 969-1005), the younger brother of the emperor, could not assume his duties because of illness. Li Han-chang was a good friend of Wang Tan. He addressed some poems to Wang Tan when Wang was serving as Hanlin Academician. See Wang Tse-min (14th Cent.) & Chang Shih-yü (14th Cent.) ed., Yüan-ling ch'un-ying chi (Collected Works of the Eminent Figures of Yüan-ling), hereafter VLCYC, SKCSCP ser. 2, v. 5, p. 1; v. 7, p. 2.

28 HCP, v. 58, pp. 1276, 1289. Stratagems were employed by Ting Wei in maintaining law and order at this strategic pass. The Khitan army was driven away by the deployment of his forces along the river bank.
relief forces from Shansi, and their missions were also successful.29

At this critical time, K'ou Chun abandoned any bias against his old rivals. Chang Ch'i-hsien was appointed the Overall Commander of Shantung.30 While Li Chi-lung was made Principal Field Commander of the Shan-chou Garrison, Wang Ssu-tsung was given the responsibility of holding the strategic city of T'ai-yüan.31

Good news reached the Sung court before the emperor departed for Shan-chou: Kao Chi-hsun, the son of Kao Chiung, had defeated a Liao army on the border of Shansi and Hopei.32 Prior to this defeat, the Liao army had also suffered heavy casualties in the siege of Ying-chou (in present-day Hopei), the prime objective of the campaign. Li Yen-wo, the

29 HCP, v. 56, p. 1225; v. 58, pp. 1294-95, 1301. Cheng Wen-pao had been strongly recommended by K'ou Chun in February, 1004. He and Lei Yu-chung were cited for merit by Chen-tsung for their performance during the crisis. Lei Yu-chung's relief army successfully supported many cities attacked by the Liao army.

30 HCP, v. 58, p. 1276.

31 Li Chi-lung memorialized Chen-tsung in December, 1003, urging him not to go to the front. When Chen-tsung arrived at South Shan-chou, Li Chi-lung suggested that he not cross the river and face the enemy directly. Apparently, he opposed K'ou Chun in this matter. Being the most experienced and capable Sung field commander, he was still appointed Principal Field Commander of the Shan-chou Garrison. Li Chi-lung's and Wang Ssu-tsung's appointments were approved by K'ou Chun. HCP, v. 55, p. 1219; v. 58, pp. 1282, 1287; v. 59, p. 1315.

32 HCP, v. 57, p. 1270.
hero of this battle, was quickly promoted and awarded. The victory at Ying-chou undoubtedly did much to stimulate the morale of the Sung army.\(^{33}\)

Empress Dowager Hsiao had underestimated the resistance of the Sung army at Ying-chou, but she did not abandon her goal. The Liao army bypassed Ta-ming Fu and marched on Shan-chou directly.\(^{34}\) Facing a strong assault by the Liao army (approximately 200,000 men in total), K'ou Chun issued strict orders forbidding the troops to join the enemy in combat outside the walls. All commanders and prefects were ordered to adopt a defensive posture. During wartime, local treasuries could be utilized to recruit and reward soldiers, and all commanders and prefects had to bear in mind that if they failed to defend their cities, they were subject to beheading.\(^{35}\)

While both sides prepared for mortal combat at Shan-chou, negotiations for peace proceeded simultaneously. The

\(^{33}\)HCP, v. 58, pp. 1278-80; v. 59, p. 1310.

\(^{34}\)HCP, v. 58, pp. 1280-81, 1284-86.

\(^{35}\)HSTT, v. 1, p. 1; HCP, v. 58, p. 1284, 1290; v. 59, p. 1311. It is evident that during the war only Te-ch'ing-ch'un 德清郡 (in present-day Hopei) was captured by the Liao. The Sung troops fought bravely at Te-ch'ing-ch'un, and the prefect and commanders of this small city all fought to the death. Wang Ku 亢 (11th Cent.), the Prefect of T'ung-li ch'un 通利軍 (in present-day Hopei), was the only local official to abandon his city. He was arrested by Chao Ch'ang-yen and sentenced to death, but subsequently pardoned.
intermediary was Wang Chi-chung, formerly a close friend of Chen-tsung who had been captured by the Liao at the battle of Wan-tu in 1002. He was also trusted by Empress Dowager Hsiao. When he sent a letter to Chen-tsung transmitting her desire for peace, Chen-tsung responded immediately by sending Ts'ao Li-yung (975-1029) to initiate discussions. K'ou Chun apparently did not oppose the peace talks, but he did realize that peace could only be attained by a show of strength. For this reason, he urged the emperor to hold firm at this critical moment.

K'ou Chun first encountered difficulty at Wei-ch'eng (in present-day Hopei), south of Shan-chou. Knowing that the Sung army had been defeated at Ta-ming Fu and that Wang

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Ch'ao's forces had not arrived in time, Chen-tsung suddenly lost confidence and decided to return to K'ai-feng. Very likely he was influenced to do so by his wife, the Empress Liu. Fortunately, K'ou Chun gained the help of Kao Chiung, Chief-Commander of the Palace Command, and Wang Ying-ch'ang, Head of the Imperial Bodyguard, at this critical moment. Finally, the emperor was convinced to continue his journey to Shan-chou.\(^{37}\)

The Sung army performed very ably at Shan-chou. Detecting the route of Hsiao Ta-lin, General Chou Wen-chih and his troops successfully ambushed the senior Liao commander and killed him with crossbow fire before Chen-tsung and Empress Dowager Hsiao reached Shan-chou.\(^{38}\) However, the death of Hsiao Ta-lin did not lead to the collapse of the Liao army. Empress Dowager Hsiao and her Grand Councillor, Han Te-jang, were still effectively in control of their forces.

On the Sung side, Chen-tsung again revealed his weakness. He was so alarmed by the fighting that he refused to go to North Shan-chou, which was still under attack. Perhaps the fighting reminded him of the severe wound his father suffered in combat and the death of Hsiao Ta-lin. This was the second

\(^{37}\)HCP, v. 56, pp. 1284-85.

\(^{38}\)HCP, v. 58, pp. 1286-87, 1290; v. 59, pp. 1313-14. Chou Wen-chih was an eunuch.
difficulty K'ou Chun encountered during this crisis. With the support of Kao Chiung, K'ou Chun was at last able to induce Chen-tsung to appear at a tower on the walls of North Shan-chou, though he did so with great reluctance.\(^{39}\) The emperor was cheered by his soldiers, his courage was restored, and he was proclaimed for his heroic action. He seemed almost to forget the dangers, and he inspected his army and gave instructions to Li Chi-lung and other generals.\(^{40}\) The emperor's nightmare was soon over, however, for negotiations proceeded smoothly and the Treaty of Shan-yüan was concluded in the spring of 1005.\(^{41}\)

K'ou Chun finally achieved his desired goal of attaining peace. During the negotiations, he made only the most minimal concessions. It is recorded that when Ts'ao Li-yung was about to enter into the final discussions, K'ou Chun warned him that if he agreed to an annual indemnity payment of more than

\(^{39}\)\textit{HCP}, v. 58, p. 1287; \textit{JLKL}, p. 6. According to T'ien K'uang's account, Chen-tsung was so terrified that he refused to cross the river to North Shan-chou. When he was brought to the tower almost by force, his anxiety was not relieved upon seeing thousands of Khitan cavalry massed below. In contrast to the emperor, K'ou Chun remained calm. Comforted and encouraged by K'ou Chun, Chen-tsung regained his courage.

\(^{40}\)\textit{HCP}, v. 58, pp. 1287, 1289-90.

300,000 units of silver and silk, he would be beheaded. The emperor, on the other hand, was willing to give a million. Knowing the powerful Grand Councillor was a man of his word, Ts'ao Li-yung held his ground until Empress Dowager Hsiao accepted the terms.\(^42\)

Everyone was pleased with the resolution of the 1004 crisis, and K'ou Chun had reached the highest point in his career. He was admired and praised by his contemporaries, and people of later times would applaud his success in attaining a peaceful solution to this crisis. But the way he handled the crisis was to remain a highly controversial matter.

\[^{42}\text{HCP, v. 58, pp. 1292-93, 1298-1300.}\]
III. K'OU CHUN VERSUS EMPRESS DOWAGER HSIAO: A GAME OF DICE OR CHESS?

Geoffrey Blainey has drawn an interesting parallel between warfare and the games people play in his *The Causes of War*. He has suggested that warfare is either a game of dice or a game of chess. While the former relies greatly upon good fortune, the latter requires subtle calculation. Which game did K'ou Chun and Empress Dowager Hsiao of the Liao play in the winter of 1004? Apparently, they both thought of themselves as playing a game of chess.

In her early fifties, Empress Dowager Hsiao had ruled the Khitan empire for more than twenty-five years. Over that length of time, she accumulated much experience and a sound knowledge of the battlefield. She was cautious, calculating and capable of decisive action. Her two chief ministers, Han Te-jang and Hsiao Ta-lin, were highly skilled as a statesman

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"Empress Dowager Hsiao was fifty-one in 1004. She had ruled the Khitan empire since the last years of Ching-tsung (reigned 969-982). See HCP, v. 55, p. 1207; LS, v. 71, pp. 1201-02; Liu Lap-yin "Liao Cheng-t'ien t'ai-hou she-cheng chi-chien te wai-chiao" (Liao’s Diplomacy During the Regency of Empress Dowager Cheng-t'ien), *Journal of the History Society of Chung-chi College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong*, v. 5, 1981, pp. 17-30.

45LS, v. 71, p. 1202
and a military commander, respectively. The Liao leaders were not the kind of adventurers to risk all on a single throw of the dice. Instead, they carefully calculated the situation before marching into battle. They might be criticized for excessive optimism at times, but that optimism was not entirely groundless. As a matter of fact, their estimation of Chen-tsung, Wang Ch'ao and most Sung civil officials was correct. It was evident that the weak Sung emperor was willing to make great concessions under pressure. In the Sung court, a spirit of defeatism was widespread. And at the front, Wang Ch'ao, the principal commander of the Sung forces, refused to commit his forces to battle. The only mistake which the Khitan leaders made was their underestimation of K'ou Chun's vigorous leadership and force of will.

K'ou Chun was well-known for his love of dicing. Although many people, including friends and admirers, spoke of the manner in which he handled the 1004 crisis while engaged in his favorite game, he had in fact made detailed

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46 LS, v. 82, pp. 1289-90; v. 85, pp. 1313-14.

47 SS, v. 281, pp. 9531-33; HSTT, v. 1, p. 2. According to the biography of K'ou Chun, he played dice with Yang I at Shan-chou in 1004. He did not give up that hobby even during his banishment to Lei-chou (in present-day Kwangsi) in his last years.

48 According to Fu Pi, Chang Yung, K'ou Chun's best friend, once said that he was no match for his friend who had had the courage to risk all on a single throw of the dice at Shan-chou. See SS CW, v. 5, p. 103. K'ou Chun's admirers who shared Chang Yung's view included Wang Pai (1197-1274)
preparations for war before marching to Shan-chou. During that crisis, the most controversial issue he had to deal with was the question of Chen-tsung going to the front to take personal command of the army. Consequently, he was accused by his rival, Wang Ch'in-jo, of putting the emperor in a dangerous position in a grand gamble. Taking a superficial view of this matter, it does appear that K'ou Chun was indeed playing a dangerous game, while giving little thought to the safety of the emperor, as suggested by Wang Ch'in-jo. But if we examine the 1004 crisis in depth, there is reason to conclude that K'ou Chun made the best decision.

In contrast to the perception of most people, probably K'ou believed it was more dangerous for Chen-tsung not to go to the front under the peculiar circumstances existing in 1004. While most people probably had forgotten the lesson of K'ai-yün, K'ou Chun remembered the nightmare which his father had witnessed sixty years earlier. Emperor Ch'u-ti of the Later Chin, who had failed to go to Shan-chou to take personal command of his army when Emperor T'ai-tsung of Liao (reigned 927-947) launched an attack in 946, was later compelled to hand his lands and subjects over to the Liao


ruler when his commander-in-chief, Tu Ch'ung-wei (7-948) surrendered at Shan-chou. K'ou Chun concluded that that situation should not be repeated. In his mind, the presence of the emperor at the front would serve to minimize the danger of mutiny or betrayal by his armed forces. Chang Ch'i-hsien and Ch'ien Jo-shui evidently shared the same belief. Unfortunately, the former had left the capital, while the latter had died. K'ou Chun had to convince the emperor and his colleagues unaided.

K'ou Chun was as optimistic in outlook as his opponent, Empress Dowager Hsiao. According to one popular account, he claimed that if the emperor went to the front, the crisis

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50 CWTS, v. 109, pp. 1433-37.

51 Chen-tsung's northern campaign in 999 was initiated by Chang Ch'i-hsien, who undoubtedly shared this belief. Ch'ien Jo-shui clearly reflected such thinking in a memorial submitted to Chen-tsung in April, 1000, three months after the emperor returned from the front. Ch'ien Jo-shui pointed out the fact that since the Five Dynasties, northern campaigns commanded by military men were invariably unsuccessful. And in many cases, the commanders of these northern campaigns turned against the court. Though he did not recall the history of the 960 coup, the emperor and his ministers could not forget how Emperor T'ai-tsu had founded the dynasty. Apparently Ch'ien Jo-shui perceived the danger which K'ou Chun sensed in 1004. Among K'ou Chun's followers, Lü I-chien also perceived the danger. It is said that Lü I-chien always reminded his followers of this fact. See HCP, v. 46, p. 1001; Ch'ao I-tao (1059-1129), Ch'ao-shih k'o-yü (Quoted Remarks of Ch'ao's Seniors and Contemporaries), hereafter CSKY, TSCCCP ed., v.3, p. 18. Ch'ao I-tao was a descendent of Ch'ao Chiung, a t'ung-nien of K'ou Chun.
would be resolved in five days. But he did not foresee the cowardice of the emperor or of many of his civilian colleagues at the critical moment in Shan-chou. Nor did he anticipate Wang Ch'iao's disastrous delay in advancing his army, which was critical to the situation at Shan-chou.

Both K'ou Chun and Empress Dowager Hsiao managed to retain their reputations at Shan-chou. They found that the road to victory could be thorny and dangerous. If the game they played in the beginning was chess, it was dice at the end when everything hung in the balance. Empress Dowager Hsiao encountered her most formidable enemy in 1004. And so did K'ou Chun.

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52 HSTT, v. 1, p. 6.
53 HCP, v. 58, p. 1284; v. 59, p. 1312.
IV. SUCCESS OR FAILURE? --- K'OOU CHUN'S ROLE IN THE 1004 CRISIS

The Treaty of Shan-yüan was concluded in early 1005. Although the Sung had to pay an annual tribute of 300,000 units of silver and silk to Liao in exchange for peace and amicable relations, the Sung had to pay an annual tribute of 300,000 units of silver and silk to Liao in exchange for peace and amicable relations,\textsuperscript{54} Chen-tsung and his ministers regarded themselves as the victors in the war. At an imperial banquet celebrating the victory, Li Chi-lung extolled the emperor for leading his armies to victory, and exchanged equally flattering comments with his colleagues.\textsuperscript{55} The killing of Hsiao Ta-lin was cited as evidence of their success.\textsuperscript{56}

K'ou Chun shared the view of his master and colleagues. He was manifestly proud of his accomplishments.\textsuperscript{57} He had won a place in history by his role in resolving the 1004 crisis, and he was later highly praised by Fan Chung-yen as a man of Great Loyalty (\textit{ta-chung} \textsuperscript{58}) who had saved the dynasty at a critical juncture. And he has been admired by generations

\textsuperscript{54}For the contents and an analysis of the treaty, see Jing-shen Tao, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 15-18.
\textsuperscript{55}HCP, v. 58, pp. 1293-94.
\textsuperscript{56}HCP, v. 102, p. 2365.
\textsuperscript{57}HCP, v. 62, p. 1389.
\textsuperscript{58}Fan Chung-yen, \textit{Fan Wen-cheng-kung chi} \textsuperscript{58} (Collected Works of Fan Chung-yen), hereafter FWCK, SPCK ed., v. 6, p. 49.
of people ever since.59 A few people, apart from rivals like Wang Ch'in-jo, however, questioned his success at Shan-chou. They have criticized his tactics.60 And his insistence on the emperor's presence at the front has been perceived as risky and opportunistic.61

There have been two conflicting views on the Treaty of Shan-yüan and K'ou Chun's role in that entire affair. On one side, K'ou Chun is regarded as having been realistic and pragmatic in his handling of the crisis and his insistence on a treaty advantageous to the Sung.62 On the other, K'ou Chun is regarded as having been dangerously reckless and also guilty of accepting terms that were humiliating and costly. These conflicting opinions tend to be subjective in nature.


60Fu Pi criticized K'ou Chun's tactics in a memorial to Emperor Jen-tsung in 1044, exactly forty years after the 1004 crisis. HCP, v. 150, p. 3642; v. 153, p. 3729.


62Fu Pi's view represents those who view the Treaty of Shan-yüan as advantageous to the Sung. HCP, v. 150, pp. 3639-40.
I would like to review this question from a different angle. First, as a wartime leader, K'ou Chun achieved a high measure of success. Although his initial plan was later criticized by Yeh Shih as lacking in subtlety, the plan was based on his accurate assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Sung armies. Furthermore, the plan was implemented and carried out by the men whom K'ou Chun had carefully selected. The field commanders were given a high degree of autonomy, and the general plan was subjected to adjustment from time to time. Acting under the name of the emperor, K'ou Chun virtually assumed the role of grand marshal. He did not direct the armies on the battlefield, but he united them under a single command and regulated the different forces efficiently. In the face of the emperor's hesitation and the opposition of the defeatists, he was firm and decisive. He refused to compromise at a critical moment. He convinced his master by strong and frank words to act and warned the defeatists not to with vigorous measures. He was

63 HHCYHM, v. 48, p. 715.

64 SKTP, p. 1443; HHCYHM, p. 716; HCP, v. 58, p. 1298. According to Sun Sheng, K'ou Chun submitted a list of several hundred field commanders to the throne with his war plans. He chose the commanders himself. Ho Ch'eng-ch'ou was transferred to Shan-chou from Hsiung-chou (in present-day Hopei, the border city of Sung), while Ching Ssu was appointed Prefect of Po-chou, another strategic city adjacent to Shan-chou. These proved to be good choices. In asserting that K'ou Chun did not have any skill in recruiting talent, Yeh Shih betrays his subjective approach to the question.
ready to challenge the emperor's authority and to offend his colleagues in order to resolve the crisis. He admitted that in many instances he had issued orders without receiving the approval of the emperor, but he argued that these actions were necessary under wartime conditions. 65

Second, as a civilian official, K'ou Chun was one of the most successful men of his times to realize the ideal of the Confucian-General (ju-chiang urch). Chang Ch'i-hsien, Hsiang Min-chung, Ch'ien Jo-shui, Chang Yung, Lei Yu-chung, and even Wang Ssu-tsung, were regarded as Confucian-Generals. But in terms of scale of action and the importance of their individual military service, they were inferior to the hero of Shan-yüan. 66 It is evident that K'ou Chun was highly respected by the military men of his day, men who publicly humiliated some of their civilian colleagues for their

65HCP, v. 58, p. 1298.

66James T. C. Liu has listed four different types of Confucian-Generals in a recent article. K'ou Chun could be categorized as a "typical type". Professor Liu, however, does not include men who were active in the first three reigns of Northern Sung, including K'ou Chun and Chang Ch'i-hsien who would seem to meet his criteria. See James T. C. Liu, "Ts'ung ju-chiang ti kai-nien shuo-tao li-shih shang-tui Nan-Sung Chang Chun ti p'ing-lun" (From Concepts of Confucian-Generals to Comments on Chang Chun of the Southern Sung in Chinese History), in Jing-shen Tao (ed.), Kuo-shih shih-lun: T'ao Hsi-sheng hsien-sheng chiu chih jung-ch'ing chu-shou lun-wen chi (Collection of Essays on Chinese History: Anniversary Volume Dedicated to Prof. T'ao Hsi-sheng on his Ninetieth Birthday), (Taipei: Shih-huo ch'u-pan she, 1987-88), pp. 481-85.
cowardice during times of crisis. His calmness, courage, strict manner and rich knowledge of military matters won the respect and confidence of military men who had customarily looked down upon civilians since the period of the Five Dynasties. Compared with his civilian colleagues, K'ou Chun owned other advantages in dealing with military men. His marriage ties put him on very good terms with many military officials. His hobbies, such as horse racing, drinking and gambling, and his powerful voice, his tall and strong stature, all contributed to an impressive image. Civilian control of the military was one of the prime objectives of the Sung founding fathers. During the 1004 crisis, K'ou Chun accomplished this goal perfectly. And at the same time, he

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67 K'ou Chun was supported by Kao Chiung and Wang Ying-ch'ang at a critical time. On the other hand, Kao Chiung had openly humiliated Feng Cheng in front of the emperor. Ho Ch'eng-ch'u and Sun Ch'uan-chao explicitly despised Ch'en Yu-shou and Wang Ch'in-jo for their cowardice. **HCP**, v. 58, pp. 1284-85, 1287; **HSTT**, v. 1, p. 1; v. 4, p. 42.


realized the ideal of the Confucian-General by successfully commanding the Sung army in a conflict with their northern neighbor.

Third, K'ou Chun was a successful practitioner of Confucian learning. As Grand Councillor, he did not abandon his responsibilities in time of crisis, at a time when many of his colleagues desired to flee. He went to the front and commanded the army himself. His rival charged him with endangering the emperor's safety, but he regarded the survival of the state as the highest priority. For the safety of the state, he did not hesitate to act against his master's will. Nor did he seek harmony among his colleagues at the expense of his principles. He might have been hated, but he detested the thought of becoming a popular "honest villager" (hsiang-yüan) whom Mencius had condemned centuries ago.

K'ou Chun's success was favored by circumstances. Empress Dowager Hsiao was willing to make peace with Sung, especially after the death of Hsiao Ta-lin, the leader of the Liao hawkish faction. The combat capabilities of the Sung army were still strong enough to resist the Liao army. And

70 HCP, v. 58, pp. 1284-85, 1287, 1292-93, 1298.


72 Fu Pi belived that the Sung army in 1004 was inferior to that of the Liao because of the death of many experienced generals. He apparently underestimated the capability of the group of young commanders who emerged during the last years
because of the death of the Tangut ruler, Li Chi-ch'ien, in early 1004, it was not necessary to fight a war on two fronts. Moreover, Emperor T'ai-tsung had left a large group of capable, reliable and experienced administrators and field commanders who were indispensable in the accomplishment of K'ou Chun's objectives. Unfortunately, near the end of the Northern Sung, Emperor Ch'in-tsung (reigned 1126-1127) and his ministers represented by Li Kang (1083-1140) did not fully understand the circumstances of 1004 when K'ou Chun made his bold decisions. When they tried to imitate his actions in the 1126 crisis, tragedy rather than miracle was the result. They did not have the trump card K'ou Chun possessed in 1004.\(^3\)

K'ou Chun was undoubtedly a successful wartime leader. But the other side of the coin is that he was a poor player of factional politics. During a crisis, he spoke unreservedly but bluntly to the emperor and his colleagues. He acted on his own without seeking the approval of anyone. By word and

deed, he did in fact infringe upon the emperor's authority and wound the pride of his colleagues. Thus, he made himself vulnerable. Whereas he won respect and admiration for his leadership during a crisis, he also created enemies when that was not necessary. He also offended the palace women who were represented by Lady Liu (later Empress Liu). He charged Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en Yao-sou with cowardice and proposed they be subjected to capital punishment. And he supported Kao Chiung who humiliated Feng Cheng in front of the emperor. Though the spread of a spirit of defeatism was checked by such uncompromising acts, there was a price to pay. The hostility between his faction and Wang Ch'in-jo deepened. The people

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74 HCP, v. 56, pp. 1225-26; v. 58, p. 1284; v. 79, p. 1810; SS, v. 242, pp. 8611-12; SSCW, v. 7, p. 131; HSTT, v. 1, p. 1. The name of the palace woman who urged Chen-tsung to return to K'ai-feng immediately is not identified in the above accounts. Lady Liu, who had accompanied Chen-tsung on every previous tour, including that in 1004, was most likely the person. Besides Empress Kuo (976-1007), Lady Liu was the only consort who could speak to Chen-tsung in such a tone. Since Empress Kuo did not accompany Chen-tsung to Shan-chou in 1004, Lady Liu was likely the person K'ou Chun offended. According to the accounts of Ssu-ma Kuang and Ch'en Shih-tao, K'ou Chun compared the cowardly Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en Yao-sou with old farmers and women. The comparison conceivably hurt the pride of Lady Liu.

75 HCP, v. 57, pp. 1267-68; Wu Tseng (?-after 1170), Neng-kai chai man-lu (Free Recollections), hereafter NKCMIL, (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuation ed., 1979), v. 13, p. 388. According to Wu Tseng's account, K'ou Chun desired strongly to eliminate Wang Ch'in-jo. Wang Ch'in-jo's life was saved by Liu Shih-tao (961-1014), then the Acting Finance Commissioner.

76 HCP, v. 58, p. 1287.
K'ou Chun offended became the natural allies of Wang Chin-jo. When the honeymoon between the emperor and K'ou Chun was over, they launched a surprise attack on the careless but self-confident Grand Councillor, which led to his downfall.

Wolfgang Franke has praised K'ou Chun as a tragic hero.\textsuperscript{77} Ironically, the heroism which he reflected in his handling of the 1004 crisis was also his fatal weakness. His self-confidence was strengthened by that success, and eventually he was blinded by it. After the crisis passed, he failed to strengthen the ranks of his supporters, which consisted mainly of his t'ung-nien. And suddenly he fell from grace, and no one was in a position to save him.

\textsuperscript{77}Wolfgang Franke, \textit{loc. cit.}, pp. 202, 204.
CHAPTER VI

THE "GENTLEMEN" VERSUS THE "PETTY MEN":

FACTIONAL STRIFE AFTER THE PEACE OF SHAN-YÜAN

I. THE FALL OF K'OU CHUN: THE DEFEAT OF THE "GENTLEMEN"

K'ou Chun reached the high point of his career after the conclusion of the Treaty of Shan-yüan in 1005. During the following fifteen months, he enjoyed the trust and respect of the emperor, and he was supported and admired by most of his colleagues. When Pi Shih-an died in November, 1005, he became the sole Grand Councillor until his fall from power in March, 1006.1

K. F. Olsson argues that K'ou Chun's fall from power was due largely to the machinations of Wang Ch'in-jo, and partly to his own arrogance and intractability.2 This interpretation is somewhat simplified. Olsson fails to note that K'ou Chun's fall was the result of a long standing conflict between his clique and that of his adversaries; it was not merely a simple contest between K'ou Chun and Wang Ch'in-jo. Although his arrogance and intractability displeased many of his colleagues, it was apparently tolerated by Chen-tsung.3 Only

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1 HCP, v. 61, pp. 1369-70; v. 62, p. 1369.
2 Karl F. Olsson, op. cit., p. 142.
3 See Chapter V, Section I.
in the absence of powerful and influential allies whom K'ou Chun did not cultivate could Wang Ch'in-jo and his followers have secured victory so easily.

Wang Ch'in-jo had been suppressed by K'ou Chun and his group since the Hsien-p'ing period. During the 1004 crisis, Wang Ch'in-jo was at the edge of the blade. When he returned to the capital from Ta-ming Fu after the war, he was pressured still more by K'ou Chun, so that he was left no recourse but to resign from the Secretariat. When Chen-tsung created a new post for him, K'ou Chun deliberately ranked the new post below that of Hanlin Academician, which rank he had held long before.

Wang Ch'in-jo's friends were also purged by the powerful Grand Councillor. Liu Shih-tao, the Acting Finance Commissioner who had rescued Wang Ch'in-jo from trouble during the 1004 crisis, was demoted for having made a false accusation. It is noteworthy that the investigators of this case were Pien Su and Ts'ao Li-yung, K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien

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4See Chapter IV, Section III.
5See Chapter V, Section III, and note 76.

6HCP, v. 59, pp. 1307, 1313, 1329. Hsia Sung (985-1051), Wen-chuang chi (Collected Works of Hsia Sung), hereafter WCC, SKCSCP ser. 1, (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1935), v. 28, pp. 9-12, "Ch'i-kuo Wang Kung hsing-chuang" (The Record of Conduct of Wang Ch'in-jo). It is notable that Hsia Sung, the author of this text, was regarded as an opportunist by his contemporaries. See SS, v. 283, pp. 9571-9577.
and subordinate, respectively. Ch'en Yao-chih (?-after 1033), the younger brother of Ch'en Yao-sou, was also demoted for his involvement in this case.

K'ou Chun did not always enjoy a position of advantage. He was attacked by unidentified enemies after the conclusion of the Treaty of Shan-yüan. Though he had sought to minimize concessions to the Liao, his enemies still attacked him for giving too much away. In May, 1005, he was even accused of treason by a commoner. Fortunately, in both instances, Pi Shih-an, the Senior Grand Councillor and his patron, came to his aid. But his t'ung-nien were less fortunate. Pien Su, Ch'ao Chiung and Li Han-chang were all subsequently demoted for minor offences. Even Chang Yung and Yang I were charged with engaging in illegal communications, although they were

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7 HCP, v. 59, p. 1358.
8 Ibid., SS, v. 284, p. 9588.
9 WCMCYHL, v. 4, p. 71. According to Chu Hsi, K'ou Chun was accused of usurping imperial prerogatives at Shan-chou when he insisted on a hard line policy towards the Liao.
10 HCP, v. 58, p. 1259.
11 HCP, v. 59, p. 1327.
12 Pi Shih-an explained to Chen-tsung that the annual indemnity agreed to in the Treaty of Shan-yüan was reasonable, providing the Liao kept the peace. When K'ou Chun was accused of planning a coup, Pi Shih-an again stood up to defend him. K'ou Chun was proved innocent and his accuser was later executed. See CSC, p. 148.
13 HCP, v. 61, pp. 1357, 1359, 1368.
protected by K'ou Chun and trusted by the emperor. The death of Pi Shih-an in November, 1005, was a key turning point in the struggle between the factions of K'ou Chun and Wang Ch'in-jo. When K'ou Chun lost his patron and chief political ally, Wang Ch'in-jo was named Senior Academician of Tzu-cheng Hall, which gave him access to the emperor. At this critical time, K'ou Chun made a grave mistake. He failed to place either Chang Yung, Hsiang Min-chung or Wang Tan, his three most qualified t'ung-nien, in the Secretariat to fill the position vacated by Pi Shih-an. Over-confidence was very likely the cause of this mistake. Apparently, he did not wish to share the power of

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14 KSTY, v. 1, p. 13. According to K'ung's account, Chang Yung was accused of using so-called code words in a letter addressed to Yang I. K'ou Chun explained to the emperor that the so-called code words were just Chang Yung's jokes. He went on to explain that Chang and Yang were used to writing in this way. Chang Yung in fact did not transmit any secret message to Yang I.

15 HCP, v. 61, pp. 1367-68. The Senior Academician of Tzu-cheng Hall ranked above the Chief Hanlin Academician. Wang Ch'in-jo made use of an imperial audience from his promotion to charge that K'ou Chun had long been suppressing him. His accusation involving K'ou Chun resulted in his promotion to the Senior Academician of Tzu-cheng Hall. According to Li Tao's account, Chen-tsung was very much pleased to see Wang Ch'in-jo. The credulous emperor was always moved by Wang Ch'in-jo's articulate and beautiful words.

16 Hsiang Min-chung had already regained the favor and trust of Chen-tsung by his excellent performance during the 1004 crisis. Chang Yung and Wang Tan had long been regarded as candidates for Grand Councillor by Chen-tsung. See SS, v. 282, pp. 9543-44, 9555; v. 293, p. 9802; SSCW v. 6, p. 117.
Grand Councillor with other individuals, even his own t'ung-nien. He enjoyed the luxury of acting independently, and he believed that he could singlehandedly accomplish his goals and beat his rivals with his own hands. He sought followers but not allies, apparently forgetting how he had been removed from the post of Vice Grand Councillor in 996. He also failed to recognize the fact that his previous successes could be partly attributed to the support and patronage of his friends and t'ung-nien. The retirement of Kao Chiung in January, 1006, and the death of Wang Chi-ying two months later tended to isolate K'ou Chun from the court. When Wang Ch'in-jo launched an attack on K'ou Chun, nobody came to his defense. Chang Yung and Hsiang Min-chung were not in a position to speak up for him, and apparently Wang Tan was unwilling to do so.

Wang Ch'in-jo's friends included Feng Cheng, Ch'en Yao-sou and Ch'en P'eng-nien (961-1017). Feng Cheng was an

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17 HCP, v. 61, p. 1377; v. 62, p. 1387.

18 When K'ou Chun was dismissed in March, 1006, Hsiang Min-chung and Chang Yung were not in the capital. They were still serving in Shensi and Szechuan respectively. Wang Tan could have spoken on behalf of his t'ung-nien, but perhaps due to selfishness, he kept silent. Wang Tan's passive behavior in this instance earned him harsh criticism from Wang Fu-chih. See SL, v. 3, p. 53.

19 Feng Cheng and Ch'en Yao-sou had been humiliated by K'ou Chun during the 1004 crisis, and they were natural allies of Wang Ch'in-jo. Feng Cheng had expressed hostility towards K'ou Chun months before. Feng and Ch'en were among the councillors in the Liang Fu who complained of K'ou's
old foe of K'ou Chun, while Ch'en Yao-sou and Ch'en P'eng-nien had recently joined the ranks of the Wang clique. Ch'en P'eng-nien, an eminent scholar from the south, was the chief rival of Yang I, and he was ranked third in Wang Ch'in-jo's so-called clique of "Five Ghosts."

The powerful eunuch Liu Ch'eng-kuei (950-1013), who was later ranked fifth in the same clique, very likely participated in Wang Ch'in-jo's campaign to unseat K'ou Chun from power. In view of the close relationship between Wang Ch'in-jo and Lady Liu (later Empress Liu), we might infer that this influential palace woman was very likely an important inside collaborator. Liu Ch'eng-kuei may have served as an intermediary between Lady Liu and Wang Ch'in-jo.

Like Feng Cheng and Ch'en Yao-sou, Lady Liu was a natural autocratic ways. Ch'en P'eng-nien worked under Wang Ch'in-jo and became his close friend. See HCP, v. 62, pp. 1389-90; v. 64, p. 1434; HSYL, p. 44.

Wang Ch'in-jo, Ting Wei, Ch'en P'eng-nien, Lin T'e and Liu Ch'eng-kuei were called "Five Ghosts" by their contemporaries because they were said to communicate in secret ways. Also, their behavior was regarded as evil as the deeds of ghosts.

Empress Liu had been strongly supported by Wang Ch'in-jo in her pursuit of the title of empress. To return the favor, she reinstated Wang as Senior Grand Councillor when she assumed the regency in the early years of Emperor Jen-tsung. Liu Ch'eng-kuei worked closely with Wang Ch'in-jo in the compilation of the Ts'e-fu yuan-kuei (The Magic Mirror in the Palace of Books) and the proceedings in the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth. He was trusted by both the emperor and Lady Liu. See HCP, v. 78, p. 1786; v. 81, p. 1839; v. 101, p. 2332; SS, v. 466, pp. 13608-13610.
ally of Wang Ch'in-jo. K'ou Chun had offended her near Shan-chou in 1004. More importantly, he had apparently obstructed her attempts to gain the title of empress. There is reason to believe that she sought to undermine K'ou Chun's position from within while Wang Ch'in-jo slandered his enemy at court. Without the support of Lady Liu, it is doubtful that Wang Ch'in-jo could so easily have defeated his powerful adversary.

The positions of Ting Wei and Lin T'e at this moment are obscure. They were ranked second and fourth respectively in Wang Ch'in-jo's clique. Like Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en P'eng-nien, they were also southerners. In addition, Ting Wei was the t'ung-nien of Wang Ch'in-jo. However, they were also on good terms with K'ou Chun. Ting Wei had been highly recommended by both Wang Yü-ch'eng and K'ou Chun. In gaining a promotion to Acting Finance Commissioner in June, 1005, he was very likely recommended by K'ou Chun. Although he was accused of opportunism, it is unlikely that he betrayed K'ou Chun at this time. Lin T'e had once been K'ou Chun's deputy, and although K'ou Chun later came to detest him, there is no evidence to suggest that they had clashed prior to 1006. It

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22 See Chapter V, note 75.


24 HCP, v. 60, p. 1339.
is possible, therefore, that Ting and Lin both remained neutral in this phase of the power struggle between Wang Ch'in-jo and K'ou Chun.

K'ou Chun was dismissed from office in March, 1006. He was appointed Prefect of Shen-chou (in present-day Honan) and ordered to leave the capital. Wang Tan, who did not speak up for his classmate, benefited from his fall. Wang was promoted to Grand Councillor, a position that he had long coveted. Wang Ch'in-jo was named Administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs, while his friends Feng Cheng and Ch'en Yao-sou received similar appointments. In this way, Chen-tsung sought to balance power in the Liang Fu by appointing Chao An-jen (958-1018), Ma Chih-chieh and Han Chung-hsün as Vice Grand Councillor and Assistant Administrators of the Bureau. These three men had close relations with K'ou Chun and Wang Tan.

K'ou Chun has traditionally been recognized as a "gentleman" and a "good" minister. In contrast, Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique were condemned by Confucian-minded


26ICP, v. 62, p. 1389. Chao An-jen was the good friend of Wang Tan. Ma Chih-chieh was the worst rival of Wang Ch'in-jo in the Bureau. He was on good terms with both K'ou Chun and Wang Tan.
historians as crafty and evil men. This time, K'ou Chun, the "gentleman", was defeated by "petty men" as represented by Wang Ch'in-jo. The downfall of K'ou Chun reveals the weakness of "gentlemen" in the Chinese tradition, who generally tend to overlook the necessity of planning, tactics and group action in fighting against the "evil" men they opposed. Confucian principles frowned upon partisanship. Thus, as individuals of this type fought alone, they were defeated one by one by the co-ordinated efforts of their enemies who usually were not inhibited by such constraints.

This was K'ou Chun's third fall from power. He failed to learn from his previous failure, and he persisted in the belief that he was right. In matters of personnel administration, he repeated the practices which in 996 had led to his dismissal. Once again he ignored established and objective criteria, such as seniority and individual qualifications, and argued that a Grand Councillor should not be restrained by established rules in seeking excellence. In principle, he was right, but in practice, there was no guarantee that subjectivity would not be a factor in the
When he lost the emperor's favor, his practice of personnel administration was immediately cited by his enemies as evidence of favoritism, and this became the stated reason for his dismissal. When we consider the reasons for his two previous dismissals from office, we find that history does indeed repeat itself.

K'ou Chun's public career however had not come to an end. His t'ung-nien, his friends and the talented officials he had promoted, all continued to resist Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique. And several years later, K'ou was restored to power when Wang Tan realized that they should co-operate instead of compete in the management of state affairs.

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29 Yeh Shih discussed this issue in an essay concerning the matter of qualifications for office. He was sympathetic to K'ou Chun's practices, but he pointed out that such practices could easily be abused by "petty men" and "evil ministers". Ssu-ma Kuang also favored the way in which K'ou Chun recruited censors. See Yeh Shih, Yeh Shih chi (Collected Works of Yeh Shih), hereafter YSC, (Peking: Chung-hua punctuated ed., 1961), pp. 791-793; Ssu-ma Kuang, Ssu-ma Kuang tsou-i (Collected Memorials of Ssu-ma Kuang), hereafter SMKTI, (T'ai-yüan: Shansi Jen-min punctuated ed., 1986), v. 21, pp. 232-33.

30 HCP, v. 62, p. 1389; v. 64, p. 1434.

31 During his years as a Grand Councillor, K'ou Chun had promoted many young and talented men, including Wang Tseng, Li Ti (967-1043), Wang Chi and his son-in-law Wang Shu. They proved to be his loyal followers. Wang Tseng and Li Ti, in particular, later strongly resisted the Wang clique. See HCP, v. 59, pp. 1323, 1326; v. 61, pp. 1358-59, 1373.
II. WANG TAN AND WANG CH'IN-JO: A LONG STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE "GENTLEMEN" AND THE "PETTY MEN"

Wang Tan succeeded K'ou Chun as the head of the government and leader of the "gentlemen" faction in March, 1006. As Olsson has stated, Wang Tan was the most important single official at court from 1006 until his death in 1017.\(^{32}\) He was the sole Grand Councillor from 1006 until his t'ung-nien Hsiang Min-chung was reinstated as Junior Grand Councillor in 1012.\(^{33}\) Throughout his long administration of twelve years, although the state was not seriously threatened by the Khitans and Tanguts and enjoyed a lengthy period of peace, Wang Tan spent much of his time and energy resisting the Wang clique, which launched the destructive and wasteful Heavenly Texts Movement in 1008.

Traditional Chinese historians have long understood the emergence of this movement as the consequence of K'ou Chun's dismissal from office. Li Tao, for instance, has pointed out that when Wang Ch'ìn-jo argued that the Treaty of Shan-yüan was more a shame than an achievement, the credulous emperor was initially shocked but ultimately convinced by the logic of Wang Ch'ìn-jo's argument. Dismissing K'ou Chun as the

\(^{32}\)K. F. Olsson, op. cit., p. 142.

\(^{33}\)HCP, v. 77, p. 1761.
responsible party, Chen-tsung asked Wang for advice as to how to wash away the shame. According to Li Tao's account, Wang asserted that the emperor could make the state secure, bring people everywhere to submit, and gain prestige among the Khitans and Tanguts by performing the traditional feng and shan sacrifices. But before the emperor could perform these sacrifices, he would need to receive auspicious tokens from Heaven as a sign of Heaven's approval of his plan. When Chen-tsung expressed some doubt that he would receive auspicious tokens, Wang Ch'in-jo stated that tokens which had appeared in various forms in previous dynasties were actually man-made. Chen-tsung's final hesitation in carrying out Wang's plan was removed when Tu Hao (938-1013), the eminent classical scholar, supported the idea of forging "Heavenly Texts" for what was taken to be a good cause. Ting Wei, then the Acting Finance Commissioner, supported the plan by reporting to the emperor that the state had a surplus of funds sufficient to meet the costs of the proposed feng-shan sacrifices. The last step was to convince Wang Tan, the Grand Councillor, to accept the plan.\(^{34}\)

Like K'ou Chun, Wang Tan was also given to an excess of self-confidence. He believed that his style of administration would lead to harmony in the bureaucracy and put the state on the right track. Evidently, this style was greatly different from that of his predecessor. He made himself popular by protecting the interests of colleagues, who supported him in return. He won the trust and respect of the emperor by strictly following established procedures. Moreover, he led a humble life and never sought privileges for his relatives.\[35\] And most importantly, he never challenged the authority of his sovereign, who therefore praised him as a model Grand Councillor. In career terms, he was more successful than K'ou Chun, who failed to keep a post more than two years. But unlike K'ou Chun, he did not have the courage to oppose his sovereign on serious matters. His prime concern seems to have been to preserve his power and position. He was cautious and calculating. Whereas he might disagree with the emperor, he

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\[35\] When K'ou Chun was in power, he requested special privileges for his son-in-law. Chen-tsung approved, but only with great reluctance. In contrast, Wang Tan never used his position to promote his relatives. His younger brother, his sons-in-law, and his sons did not advance to high positions when Wang Tan was in power. In addition, Wang Tan led a humble life, nor did he accumulate much wealth. These were the ways by which Wang Tan protected himself. Wang Tan's virtue was highly praised by Chen-tsung. The emperor even felt regret that he had not promoted Wang Tan's relatives. Ch'en Yao-sou, the enemy of K'ou Chun, was greatly impressed by Wang Tan's fairness in his administration. See HCP, v. 59, p. 1324; v. 63, pp. 1406-07; v. 74, p. 1685; v. 90, p. 2080.
would never challenge his authority. When he concluded that the emperor was unlikely to change his mind on the Heavenly Texts matter, he kept his mouth shut.³⁶

Wang Tan undoubtedly seriously miscalculated the situation when he forgot what Li K'ang had warned him about.³⁷ He did not foresee the disastrous consequences of Wang Ch'in-jo's plan, and he also failed to recognize the fact that Wang Ch'in-jo could expand his personal influence by means of the Heavenly Texts matter.

Wang Ch'in-jo ranked second in the Wang Tan government, and his ultimate goal must have been to replace Wang Tan. Allying himself with Feng Cheng and Ch'en Yao-sou in the

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³⁶On behalf of the emperor, Wang Ch'in-jo went to see Wang Tan and transmitted the emperor's wish. The next day after Wang Ch'in-jo's visit, Wang Tan was invited to the palace to have a drink with the emperor. Afterwards, Chen-tsung gave his Grand Councillor a bottle of pearls. Concluding that the emperor would not change his mind, Wang Tan kept his mouth shut on the matter of the Heavenly Texts. HCP, v. 67, pp. 1506-07. Wang Fu-chih was one of the few people to defend Wang Tan for his silence in the Heavenly Texts issue. He asserted that Wang Tan's lack of a response was not motivated by selfishness, but his concern that his opposing the emperor might result in his dismissal and the ascendency of Wang Ch'in-jo. If he fell, the camp of the "gentlemen" would collapse totally. See SL, v. 3, pp. 52-53.

³⁷When Wang Tan was serving as Vice Grand Councillor, Li K'ang asserted that in times of crisis, the emperor was mentally alert and judicious in his actions. But when peace obtained, the young emperor spent his time in personal enjoyment, in practicing sacrifices, or in constructing palaces. Li K'ang asked Wang Tan to bear his words in mind, but Wang Tan failed to do so. HCP, v. 56, p. 1243; v. 90, pp. 2080-81.
Secretariat and the Bureau, he further strengthened his clique by including Ting Wei and Lin T'e.\textsuperscript{38} Wang Ch'in-jo also received the support of Lady Liu and the powerful eunuch Liu Ch'eng-kuei of the inner palace. Through their active participation in the forging of the so-called Heavenly Texts and the subsequent sacrificial activities which took place after February, 1008, Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique greatly expanded their influence at court. They were trusted by the emperor and feared by their colleagues, and Wang Tan was unable to stop the growth of their power. Like K'ou Chun, he failed to utilize fully his potential allies in the bureaucracy.

Wang Fu-chih, who later sought to defend Wang Tan for his failure to respond to the Heavenly Texts issue, pointed out that Wang Tan should be blamed for not speaking out for K'ou Chun in March, 1006. He argued that if K'ou Chun had not been dismissed, later on Wang Tan would not have found himself in such a helpless position.\textsuperscript{39}

Li Tao also lamented that if Chang Yung had been at court, the power and influence of Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique


\textsuperscript{39}\textit{SL}, v. 3, pp. 52-53.
might have been checked and the tragedy of the Heavenly Texts prevented.\footnote{KYC, "appendix", p. 22. The waste involved in performing the sacrifices and the costs of constructing the Taoist temples to house the so-called Heavenly Texts led to the bankruptcy of the Sung state treasury in the later years of Chen-tsung. \textit{HCP}, v. 85, pp. 1944, 1956.}

Arrogance was Wang Tan's weakness, as Wang Fu-chih and Li Tao have implied. Instead of co-operating with his two strong \textit{t'ung-nien}, Wang Tan chose to compete with them. It is evident that both K'ou Chun and Chang Yung looked down upon Wang Tan.\footnote{\textit{HCP}, v. 84, pp. 1923-24; \textit{HSYL}, "shang", pp. 3-4. When Wang Tan was appointed Grand Councillor in 1006, Chang Yung felt uncomfortable and criticized Chen-tsung's decision. In Chang Yung's eyes, Wang Tan, who was a literary man and did not have any knowledge of military matters, should not have been promoted to Grand Councillor. K'ou Chun shared his friend's view. Probably he did not appreciate Wang Tan's administrative style. When K'ou Chun returned to power in 1014, he addressed Wang Tan as "\textit{t'ung-nien}" instead of "Your Excellency" as required by protocol.} And conceivably, as a consequence Wang Tan was unwilling to cooperate with them. Wang Tan had strong confidence in his own ability to control the Wang Ch'in-jo clique without outside assistance. He had already won the respect of Feng Cheng and Ch'en Yao-sou by protecting their
interests. He also became the patron of many young and talented officials, such as Yang I, Li Tsung-e (965-1013), Wang Tseng and Lü I-chien. And most importantly, he was trusted by the emperor. He had been granted the authority to handle minor issues without informing the emperor, and his opinions were highly respected and mostly accepted by his master on key issues. However, he was unable to control the opposition and unwilling to seek to stop the Heavenly Texts Movement. Among his associates, few possessed the strength and ability to challenge Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique. Chao An-jen was slandered by Wang Ch'in-jo and lost his post. Yang I was persecuted by Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en P'eng-nien and forced to resign. General Ma Chih-chieh was the only man

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42 HCP, v. 72, p. 1684; v. 74, pp. 1680, 1685. When Feng Cheng was attacked by Wang Ssu-tsung, Wang Tan stepped forward to protect Feng Cheng. Wang Tan also won the respect of Ch'en Yao-sou by not using his influence to promote his son-in-law Su Ch'i (987-1035). Though allied with Wang Ch'in-jo, Feng Cheng and Ch'en Yao-sou showed great respect to Wang Tan. There is no evidence to indicate that Feng and Ch'en supported Wang Ch'in-jo in attacking Wang Tan.


44 HCP, v. 78, pp. 1786-87.

45 HCP, v. 67, pp. 1509-1510; v. 76, p. 1730; v. 80, pp. 1828-30. Yang I had long been the enemy of Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en P'eng-nien, who were jealous of his literary talent and his close relationship with K'ou Chun and Wang Tan. Yang I had worked under Wang Ch'in-jo in the compilation of the Ts'e-fu yüan-kuei. But Yang I and other junior compilers boycotted the chief compiler for his unfairness. Wang Ch'in-jo wrote a harsh report on his subordinates and recommended they be punished. At that moment, Wang Tan, the patron of Yang I, stood up to speak for his client and Yang was pardoned. Yang
who had the courage forthrightly to challenge Wang Ch'in-jo, but he was no match for his crafty senior. His frank comments only led to his dismissal.\textsuperscript{46}

After 1008, Wang Ch'in-jo attracted many opportunists into his faction through the mechanism of the Sacrifices to Heaven and Earth. Those who supported or participated in the "Sacred Movement" were promoted and awarded. The construction of T'ien-ch'ing Temples in every prefecture of the empire to consecrate the Heavenly Texts, as well as paraphernalia related to the Sacrifices, offered a golden opportunity to corrupt officials, as was pointed out by Wang Tseng.\textsuperscript{47} Evidently, Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei accumulated

\textsuperscript{46}HCP, v. 82, pp. 1882-83; WCWKIS, pp. 848-49; FWCKC, v. 5, p. 49, "Yang Wen-kung hsieh-chen tsan" (Praise to the Portrait of Yang I). Ma Chih-chieh was praised by Fan Chung-yen as the most straightforward official of his time. Ma Chih-chieh hated Wang Ch'in-jo, and he once told Wang Tan that if it would not frighten the emperor and Wang Tan, he would certainly beat Wang Ch'in-jo with his club.

\textsuperscript{47}HCP, v. 70, pp. 1560-61; v. 71, pp. 1593-94, 1611-15; v. 73, p. 1674. Liu Ch'eng-kuei, Wang Ch'in-jo and others accumulated great fortunes from the Sacrifices. Wang Tseng pointed out in a memorial precisely how corrupt officials made money in this way.
considerable wealth from the movement.\textsuperscript{43}

The "Heavenly Texts Gang" captured both the heart of the emperor and the resources and energy of the state. The emperor enjoyed touring to Mountain T'ai (in present-day Shantung) and the Fen River (in present-day Shansi) to sacrifice to Heaven and Earth. He enjoyed listening to reports of propitious omens, seemingly forgetting that the so-called Heavenly Texts were things of his own creation. Wherever Heavenly Texts were found, temples were constructed to consecrate the "sacred gifts." Everyone was caught up in the frenzy: emperor, senior and junior ministers, and commoners were fully occupied by the business of the Heavenly Texts and the Sacrifices. Enormous resources and energy were wasted on imperial tours and the constructions of temples. Virtually no significant reform was carried out for years after the beginning of this unusual affair.\textsuperscript{49}

Wang Ch'in-jo also consolidated his power by supporting Chen-tsung in his decision to invest Lady Liu with the title of empress. Chao An-jen, who frankly voiced his opposition

\textsuperscript{43}SSCW, v. 7, p. 136; SS, v. 283, p. 9570. Both Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei were corrupt officials. When Ting Wei's properties were confiscated in 1023, it was discovered that he had accepted innumerable bribes. When Wang Ch'in-jo died, his accumulated wealth was greater than Ting Wei's, according to the estimation of his contemporaries.

\textsuperscript{49}The Tea Reform carried out by Lin T'e in this period was of a controversial nature. See Section IV.
to this investiture, was criticized by Wang Ch'in-jo and eventually dismissed from office.\(^5\) Unable to protect his friend, Wang Tan recommended Li Tsung-e to fill the position vacated by Chao's departure. But he was trapped by Wang Ch'in-jo. Chen-tsung rejected Wang Tan's recommendation, and for the first time showed suspicion of his Grand Councillor.\(^5\) Wang Ch'in-jo was victorious in this battle: Ting Wei, whom he had recommended, was promoted to the post of Vice Grand Councillor. Wang Ch'in-jo's victory alarmed Wang Tan, and now he began to give thought to those classmates of his who might be able to assist him in resisting the Wang Ch'in-jo clique.

Five months earlier, Hsiang Min-chung had been reinstated as Junior Grand Councillor.\(^5\) Although the old gentleman could not put a stop to Wang Ch'in-jo's plans, he did serve as a buffer between the two Wangs while relieving Wang Tan of some of his responsibility. As a good friend of both Wang Tan and K'ou Chun, he served as a bridge between these two men who had competed for such a long time.\(^5\)

\(^{5}\)\(\text{HCP, v. 78, pp. 1786-87.}\)
\(^{5}\)\(\text{HCP, v. 78, p. 1787.}\)
\(^{5}\)\(\text{HCP, v. 77, p. 1761.}\)

\(^{5}\)Hsiang Min-chung was a good friend of K'ou Chun. He also co-operated well with Wang Tan. K'ou Chun frequently exchanged poems with his old t'ung-nien, expressing their enduring friendship. See KCMKSC, pp. 64-65.
The court was already divided into two rival camps when Hsiang Min-chung returned to office. Those who belonged to Wang Ch'in-jo's "Heavenly Texts Gang" were labelled "petty men" by their contemporaries. Those who opposed the "Sacred Movement" were praised as "gentlemen". Since Wang Ch'in-jo, Ting Wei, Ch'en P'eng-nien and Lin T'e were all southerners, there was an impression of a power struggle between northerners and southerners. However, Wang Ch'in-jo's faction included many northerners,54 while many southerners, such as Yang I and Sheng Tu (?-after 1039), were among the supporters of Wang Tan.55 Therefore, it is questionable that the factional strife between Wang Tan and Wang Ch'in-jo was simply the result of regional alignments.

54 Feng Cheng, Ch'en Yao-sou, Ch'en Yao-chih, Liu Shih-tao and Liu Ch'eng-kuei were all northerners.

55 Yang I was a native of Chien-chou (in present-day Fukien province). Sheng Tu was a countryman of Ting Wei. Other protégés of Wang Tan included Lu Chen (957-1014), Liu Yün (971-1031), Hsia Sung and Sung Shou (991-1041). Both Lu Chen and Hsia Sung were southerners. Liu Yün was the countryman of Wang Tan, while Sung Shou was a relative of Yang I. See SS, v. 283, p. 9571; v. 291, pp. 9732-33; v. 292, pp. 9759-61; v. 305, pp. 10088-89; v. 441, pp. 13060-62; HCP, v. 81, p. 1845.
III. K'OU CHUN AT THE "NORTHERN GATE"

After 1006, K'ou Chun and most of his surviving t'ung-nien were forced out of the capital. K'ou Chun sojourned as Prefect of Shen-chou for more than two years. The former Grand Councillor showed little enthusiasm for the administration of a small city, and he spent his time giving luxurious banquets, or in cultivating wine, poetry and Buddhism, which apparently served as outlets for his frustration.

K'ou Chun's surviving t'ung-nien included Wang Tan, Hsiang Min-chung, Chang Yung, Ch'ao Chiung, Chang Ping, Hsieh Mi, Li Han-chang, Ma Liang, Ch'en Jo-cho and Pien Su. Besides Wang Tan, the only man remaining in the capital was Ch'ao Chiung who served as a Hanlin Academician. Hsiang Min-chung returned to the capital only after October, 1008. Chang Yung was suffering from illness and was unable to take any assignment in the capital. Chang Ping served as examiner from 1008-1009. But after 1009, he was sent out of the capital. In July, 1012, he quarrelled with Ch'en Jo-cho at T'ai-yüan and was transferred to Hsiang-chou (in present-day Hopei). Both Chang Ping and Ch'en Jo-cho did not return to the capital prior to their deaths. Hsieh Mi did not return to the capital until 1012, but he died shortly after his return. Pien Su was again demoted in 1012, when he was charged by Wang Ssu-tsung with corruption in T'ung-chou. Li Hang-chang did not return to the capital before he died. Ma Liang served in Kiang-chou for years. Though he was nominated by Chen-tsung as a candidate to succeed Wang Tan, he was not summoned back to the capital until 1018. HCP, v. 68, pp. 1529-30, 1533; v. 70, p. 1560; v. 71, p. 1616; v. 72, p. 1642; v. 73, p. 1654; v. 77, pp. 1749, 1763-64; v. 78, p. 1778; v. 81, p. 1847; SS, v. 298, pp. 9916-17; v. 301, pp. 9983-84, 9996-97; v. 305, pp. 10085-86; v. 306, pp. 10096-97.

HCP, v. 65, p. 1466; HSYL, "chung", pp. 34-35; CHTC, p. 60.
K'ou Chun lost an old friend when Kao Chiung passed away in August, 1006. He also failed to regain the favor of the emperor when he was summoned to Lo-yang in March, 1007. Very likely he was further slandered by Wang Ch'in-jo and received no help from Wang Tan. His only accomplishment in Shen-chou was winning over the friendship of Wei Yeh (960-1019), a famous recluse.

K'ou Chun did not openly oppose the Sacrifices to Heaven and Earth. Though he did not believe in the so-called Heavenly Texts, he realized that he was not in a position to influence his master. Possibly having learned from previous failures, K'ou Chun changed his tactics. In order to regain the favor of the emperor, he indicated approval of

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58 HCP, v. 63, pp. 1411-12; v. 65, p. 1445. When Kao Chiung was about to die, Chen-tsung decided to visit his old servant. But Wang Ch'in-jo argued that Kao Chiung should not receive such an honor. Wang Ch'in-jo's antipathy towards Kao Chiung was undoubtedly caused by Kao's support of K'ou Chun.


60 When K'ou Chun was living in Shen-chou, one day he saw many crows flying across the sky. He told his subordinates and guests that if Ting Wei saw such a scene, he would certainly describe them as cranes of fortune. The apparent intent of this remark was to satirize Ting Wei for his deeds in the "Sacred Movement". K'ou Chun's opposition to the movement was clearly stated in his biography written by Liu Pin. See WMCYHL, v. 4, p. 73; THPL, v. 2, pp. 18-19; Liu Ching-chen, op. cit., pp. 226-27, note 9.
the Sacrifices by asking to participate in the ceremonies.\textsuperscript{61} Apparently satisfied with K'ou Chun's actions in this instance, Chen-tsung gave him a more important assignment, that of the Administrator of Ta-ming Fu and Commander-in-chief of the local garrison.\textsuperscript{62}

K'ou Chun guarded the "Northern Gate" from January, 1009 to January, 1014. This was his second posting to the Northern Capital,\textsuperscript{63} and now he was the highest Sung official in the Hopei Region. He exercised supreme authority over civilian and military affairs at what he called the "Northern Gate." His presence at Ta-ming Fu served to guarantee that the Treaty of Shan-yüan would be observed.

K'ou Chun had a better time at Ta-ming Fu than at Shen-chou. He was popular among the local gentry as well as the soldiers and his subordinates.\textsuperscript{64} He was generous in feasting friends and subordinates \textsuperscript{65} and he was energetic in recommending talented individuals to the court. These

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{61}HCP, v. 69, p. 1557.
\item \textsuperscript{62}HCP, v. 70, p. 1582.
\item \textsuperscript{63}Ta-ming Fu was elevated to the status of Northern Capital in 1042 during the reign of Jen-tsung. SS, v. 11, p. 214.
\item \textsuperscript{64}HCP, v. 65, p. 1466; v. 73, p. 1653.
\item \textsuperscript{65}Kao Hui-sou 賈 HOUR (12th Cent.), Chen-hsi fang-t'an 謝 頭大談 (Open Talks in the Luxury Banquet), hereafter CSFT, TSCCCP ed., "shang", p. 6.
\end{itemize}
included General Liu P'ing (?-1040), General Li Yün-tše, General K'an Huai-te (945-1017), Jen Pu (?-after 1050), Chang Ts'un (984-1071) and Wang Shu. Wang Shu, who had been highly praised by K'ou Chun, was then married to K'ou's eldest daughter and his chief deputy.

K'ou Chun also won the respect of the Khitans, his previous enemies on the battlefield. His display of bravery in 1004 had apparently impressed the Liao officialdom. Nevertheless, when a Liao envoy stopped in Ta-ming Fu and expressed his admiration of K'ou Chun, an embarrassing question was raised. K'ou Chun was asked why he was not employed in the Secretariat. In the mind of the Khitan envoy, the prestigious Sung minister should not have been posted to the

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66 HCP, v. 73, p. 1669; SS, v. 288, pp. 9682-83; v. 309, pp. 10168-69; v. 325, p. 10499; MCPCVYCC, "chung", v. 11, p. 2; CHTC, v. 8, p. 86. Jen Pu and Chang Ts'un were K'ou Chun's deputies at Ta-ming Fu. Chang Ts'un made his name by defending his hometown during the 1004 crisis. K'an Huai-te had long known K'ou Chun, and he shared K'ou Chun's love of wine.

67 Wang Shu was appointed Fiscal Commissioner of Hopei in July, 1011. According to a doubtful account, he impeached K'ou Chun at this post. His strict manner and upright behavior was admired by K'ou Chun, who gave his eldest daughter to him in marriage. Although Wang Shu was a t'ung-nien of Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei, he did not side with them. Wang Shu was later transferred to Shou-chou (in present-day Anhui province) for overlooking the corruption of Pien Su, a t'ung-nien of his father-in-law. See HCP, v. 76, p. 1729; v. 78, p. 1780; KCMKSC, p. 12; HNHSWC, v. 12, p. 58; LCWCV, v. 1, p. 12. Although the date and some data appearing in the account mentioning Wang Shu's impeachment of K'ou Chun are inaccurate, it is still possible that Wang Shu was supported by K'ou Chun.
provinces. K'ou Chun replied at length, stating that he was the only individual able to hold the key to the "Northern Gate" in time of peace.\textsuperscript{68} It is unclear whether his explanation convinced the Khitan envoy or not, but K'ou Chun's pride had undoubtedly been hurt. However, he retained his unshakable sense of self-confidence.

In order to regain the favor and confidence of the emperor, K'ou Chun ceased his feasting and drinking and directed his attention to local administrative matters. Perhaps Hsiang Min-chung's example had enlightened him in this respect.\textsuperscript{69} Following the path of his good friend, K'ou Chun gradually regained a positive image through his accomplishments in his current assignment. In October, 1012, he was given the concurrent assignment of General Commissioner of the Military Inspectorate of Hopei to suppress bandits in

\textsuperscript{68}HCP, v. 70, p. 1582; HSYL, "hsia", p. 44. According to Wen Ying, another Khitan envoy asked K'ou Chun with admiration whether he was the Grand Councillor who had not constructed a grand residence for himself.

\textsuperscript{69}Hsiang Min-chung regained Chen-tsung's favor by his excellent performance in the administration of various local governments. Following in the tracks of his old friend, K'ou Chun also paid much attention to the administration of the entire region of Hopei. Concerning the flooding problem in Tien-chou (in present-day Hopei), he strongly proposed that the city be moved to a safer location. His proposal was later implemented when he was reinstated as Commissioner of Military Affairs. See HCP, v. 65, p. 1446; v. 77, p. 1761; v. 84, pp. 1914-15; SSCW, v. 7, pp. 138-139.
the entire region. Finally, he regained the trust of his sovereign. In January, 1014, he was appointed Acting Governor of K'ai-feng when the emperor set out on a tour to Po-chou. When the emperor returned, K'ou was appointed Director of the Department of State Affairs (p'an tu-sheng 判議省). Several months later, he was returned to the center of power.

The deep friendship between K'ou Chun and Wei Yeh was strengthened in these years. The hermit was invited to Ta-ming Fu from Shen-chou. They exchanged poems and ideas on current affairs. While praising his friend's honesty and uprightness in a well-known poem, Wei Yeh suggested that K'ou

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70 HCP, v. 78, p. 1784.
71 HCP, v. 79, p. 1809.
72 HCP, v. 81, p. 1854.
73 SS, v. 281, p. 9532.
75 The famous poem entitled "Shang Chih-fu K'ou hsiang-kung" 上如府相公 (To Governor K'ou, the Respected Grand Councillor) was even known by the Khitans. In the first and second lines, Wei Yeh praised his friend for his incomparable talent in civilian (wen 文) and military (wu 武) affairs. In the third and fourth lines, Wei Yeh went on to say that although K'ou Chun had attained the high post of Grand Councillor, he had not built a personal residence. See TKC, v. 1, p. 3; HSYL, "hsia", p. 44.
Chun leave the life of public service. Wei Yeh advised him to avoid in the stormy sea of politics. In one poem, he implicitly advised him to leave the political scene as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{76} K'ou Chun did not accept Wei's advice, however, for he was confident that when he regained the emperor's trust, he would be able to eliminate Wang Ch'in-jo's pernicious influence in state affairs. That he regarded as his responsibility. How could the hero of Shan-yüan retreat from the battlefield?

In 1013, K'ou Chun was fifty-two years old and in good health. Whereas Wang Tan, Hsiang Min-chung and Chang Yung were all suffering from ill health,\textsuperscript{77} K'ou Chun returned to the capital full of confidence, where he was warmly welcomed by his t'ung-nien.

\textsuperscript{76}\textit{HCP}, v. 75, p. 1714; v. 94, p. 2175; \textit{TFC}, v. 1, p. 4; \textit{SSLX}, v. 36, pp. 464-465. Wei Yeh presented a poem to K'ou Chun as a birthday gift. In that poem, Wei Yeh suggested that his friend retire as soon as possible. It is unclear when this poem was written. Some accounts record that Wei Yeh wrote it at Ta-ming. According to \textit{HCP}, Wei Yeh was in Shen-chou by April, 1011. Probably he stayed in Ta-ming for a while before returning home.

\textsuperscript{77}\textit{HCP}, v. 78, p. 1778; v. 84, p. 1923; \textit{SS}, v. 282, p. 9556.
IV. WANG TAN AND K'OU CHUN: COMPETITION OR CO-OPERATION?

Wang Tan's health deteriorated after 1012, partly due to the necessity of participating in numerous sacrificial ceremonies which he did with great reluctance. He was unable to slow the growth of the opposition party; however, he was still respected and trusted by the emperor. In October, 1012, Wang Ch'in-jo and Ch'en Yao-sou were named Commissioners of Military Affairs. Ting Wei replaced Chao An-jen as the Vice Grand Councillor, Lin T'e was promoted to Acting Finance Commissioner, and Ch'en P'eng-nien, who had gained the approval of the emperor for his rich store of knowledge, was promoted to Auxiliary Academician of Lung-t' u Hall and was promoted again to Hanlin Academician six months later. Liu Shih-tao was reappointed as Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs upon the strong recommendation of Wang Ch'in-jo.

Although Wang Tan received the help of Hsiang Min-chung, who was reinstated as Junior Grand Councillor in May, 1012, he failed to protect Chao An-jen, Li Tsung-e and Yang I who

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78 HCP, v. 84, p. 1923; v. 90, pp. 2080-81.
79 HCP, v. 78, pp. 1786-89; v. 80, pp. 1830-31.
80 HCP, v. 77, pp. 1760-61; NKCM, v. 13, p. 388.
fell victim to Wang Ch'in-jo's attacks.\textsuperscript{81} As a matter of fact, Wang Tan was not exempt from the criticism of Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei.\textsuperscript{82} As his health deteriorated, his worries increased. Perceiving that Hsiang Min-chung was not the kind of man who could suppress the Wang Ch'in-jo faction, he thought of his prestigious t'ung-nien, the hero of Shan-yüan, who had beaten Wang Ch'in-jo during the 1004 crisis.

Chen-tsung was also concerned with the question of Wang Tan's successor. Many senior statesmen, including Wang Hua-chi, Wen Chung-shu, Kuo Chih and Chao Ch'ang-yen, had all

\textsuperscript{81}HCP, v. 78, pp. 1786-87; v. 80, pp. 1827-30. Li Tsung-e died in June 1013.

\textsuperscript{82}When Chao An-jen was dismissed, Wang Tan consulted Wang Ch'in-jo for his recommendation that Li Tsung-e should become the successor of Chao. Wang Ch'in-jo told Wang Tan that he agreed with the Grand Councillor's nomination. But he secretly reported to the emperor that Wang Tan's nomination of Li Tsung-e was motivated by selfish reasons. He told the emperor that since Li Tsung-e owed a lot of money to Wang Tan, if Li was appointed Vice Grand Councillor, he could pay his debt with the grants given by the emperor for his promotion. The credulous emperor believed Wang Ch'in-jo, and the next day, he denied the nomination. And for the first time, he viewed Wang Tan with suspicion. Ting Wei also criticized Wang Tan on many occasions. It is interesting to note that in P'an Ju-shih's writings, he boasts that his father-in-law was highly regarded by Wang Tan. But in the account by Wang Su, the youngest son of Wang Tan, it was clearly stated that Wang Tan satirized Ting Wei frequently. When Ting Wei proposed a marriage with one of Wang Tan's sons, Yang I, on behalf of Wang Tan's sons, declined Ting's proposal and stated that it had not been the wish of the deceased Grand Councillor to have marriage relations with Ting Wei. See HCP, v. 78, p. 1787; SSCW, v. 6, p. 118; TCKTL, pp. 457-58; WCWKIS, pp. 854-55, 867, 873, 882.
passed away before 1012. Among the remaining ministers, the emperor favored Chang Yung and Ma Liang, both t'ung-nien of Wang Tan. But quite expectedly Wang Tan strongly recommended K'ou Chun as his successor. Chen-tsung declined that nomination immediately, saying that he could not tolerate K'ou Chun's stubbornness. But when Wang Tan insisted that K'ou Chun was the only candidate he could recommend, Chen-tsung acceded to the recommendation.

The "gentlemen" enjoyed good times from 1013 to 1014. Wang Tan recovered from his sickness, K'ou Chun returned to the capital in January, 1013, and in a most encouraging development, Wang Ch'in-jo was dismissed from office in July, 1014.

On several occasions in 1014, Wang Ch'in-jo's craftiness and practice of favoritism was exposed and he gradually lost favor with Chen-tsung. Finally, he was dismissed. Ch'en Yao-sou and Ma Chih-chieh, his follower and rival, respectively, also lost their offices.

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83 HCP, v. 72, p. 1630; v. 73, pp. 1655, 1674; v. 74, p. 1681. Chen-tsung had implicitly expressed his intention to reappoint Wen Chung-shu to the Secretariat before his death.

84 HCP, v. 78, p. 1777. Chang Ch'i-hsien was very sick when he asked permission to retire.

85 HCP, v. 84, p. 1923; SSCW, v.6, pp. 116-117.

86 HCP, v. 82, pp. 1871, 1873-74, 1881-83; WCWKIS, p. 849.
Wang Tan was understandably pleased to see the fall of Wang Ch'in-jo. At his strong urging, K'ou Chun was appointed Commissioner of Military Affairs, and Wang Tan indicated a willingness to co-operate with his old t'ung-nien in putting down the Wang Ch'in-jo faction.

Nevertheless, K'ou Chun apparently desired to compete rather than cooperate with Wang Tan. He had not lost any of his aggressive instincts, and he must have assumed that he was indispensable to the emperor. Apparently he did not realize or would not believe that his return to power was solely due to Wang Tan's recommendation. Instead of thanking his t'ung-nien, K'ou Chun criticized him frequently. He reported to the emperor the mistakes Wang Tan had made in his administration, and apparently he still looked down upon Wang Tan.87

Pride constituted a barrier to communication between the two men. They did not exchange opinions on state matters until and unless it was necessary,88 and they chose to act independently of one another. Wang Tan did not warn K'ou Chun what the emperor really thought of him, nor did K'ou Chun consult with Wang Tan when he attacked Lin T'e. Although they had many friends in common, Hsiang Min-chung, Ch'ao Chiung, Li Wei (?-1034), Yang I and Wang Tseng could not bring the

87 HCP, v. 82, p. 1883; v. 84, pp. 1923-24.
88 HCP, v. 84, p. 1924; WCWKIS, p. 869.
Grand Councillor and the Commissioner together. 89

The Wang Ch'in-jo faction was in a weakened position at that time. In addition to the dismissal of Wang Ch'in-jo, Liu Ch'eng-kuei had died in August, 1013. 90 But the remaining members of that faction knew how to protect themselves. Ting Wei and Ch'en P'eng-nien continued in the good graces of the emperor because of their enthusiastic participation in the Heavenly Texts sacrifices. 91 Although he failed to regain K'ou Chun's friendship, Ting Wei was successful in finding new allies, including Ts'ao Li-yung and Ch'ien Wei-yan (798-1033). Ts'ao had been promoted to Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs when K'ou Chun returned to power, and he became a natural ally of Ting Wei after K'ou Chun discriminated against him in the Bureau. 92 Ch'ien Wei-yan was

89 Hsiang Min-chung and Ch'ao Chiung were t'ung-nien and good friends of both Wang Tan and K'ou Chun. Li Wei was the younger brother of Li K'ang. Wang Tseng was highly regarded by both K'ou Chun and Wang Tan, and Yang I was a close associate of both men. Both Ch'ao, Li and Wang Tseng served as Hanlin Academicians after 1013. Yang I resumed his post after the fall of Wang Ch'in-jo. See HCP, v. 83, pp. 1891-93.

90 HCP, v. 81, p. 1839. When Liu Ch'eng-kuei was about to die, he requested the emperor grant him the honorary title of Military Commissioner. But Wang Tan rejected this request. He argued that if such a post was granted to the eunuch, higher positions such as Commissioner of Military Affairs would be requested in the future. The emperor was convinced.

91 HCP, v. 82, pp. 1867, 1875, 1881; v. 83, pp. 1891, 1901-02, 1904; TCKTL, pp. 455-57.

the son of the last king of the Wu-Yüeh Kingdom. Through intermarriage, he was closely attached to Ting Wei and the influential Empress Liu. Like Wang Ch'in-jo, Ting Wei gained the support of the empress, for he had enthusiastically supported her investiture as empress.

Among the men of Wang Ch'in-jo's clique, Lin T'e became the prime target of K'ou Chun. Lin T'e was a loyal follower of Ting Wei and had impressed the emperor greatly by his hard work and deep knowledge of financial matters. In the eyes of Chen-tsung, Lin T'e was a model minister. He was submissive to his seniors and respectful of his subordinates. K'ou Chun apparently underestimated his former subordinate's strength and overestimated his own. In May, 1015, he launched an attack on Lin T'e. But his biased charges were rejected by the emperor. When he insisted that Lin T'e should be punished for mismanagement, Chen-tsung became annoyed and decided to dismiss K'ou Chun instead. In the eyes of the emperor, K'ou Chun treated Ts'ao as a servant, not realizing that Ts'ao had acquired considerable self-confidence and pride after a long period of meritorious service. It is recorded that K'ou Chun once barked at Ts'ao Li-yung for declining his offer of a drink. K'ou Chun was well-known for forcing his subordinates to drink, Ts'ao's refusal annoyed the hot-tempered Commissioner. K'ou Chun scolded his deputy in front of his colleagues. Publicly humiliated by K'ou Chun, Ts'ao Li-yung therefore sought revenge and allied himself with Ting Wei.


94 HCP, v. 81, p. 1840.
Chun was a trouble-maker who quarrelled with almost everybody. Wang Tan was disappointed by K'ou Chun's rash behavior, but this time he was unable to convince the emperor of K'ou Chun's usefulness at court. K'ou Chun was appointed Military Commissioner of Wu-sheng Chün (in present-day Hupei) and Commissioner-Councillor as a consolation for his dismissal. Wang Tan was of great assistance in his receiving these honors. The two old men at last came to an understanding and developed a friendship.

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95 HCP, v. 77, pp. 1763-64; v. 84, pp. 1922-23; v. 85, pp. 1940-41, 1946; v. 95, p. 2196; SSCW, v. 6, p. 106; SS, v. 283, pp. 9564-65. K'ou Chun also quarrelled with his deputies in the Bureau of Military Affairs, including Wang Ssu-tsung and Ts'ao Li-yung. Li T'e was also accustomed to criticizing his colleagues. When the emperor inquired about state affairs, he secretly slandered his enemies. He proposed a Tea Reform, with the sale of tea to be monopolized by the state. It was a controversial issue within the bureaucracy. Wang Tan and his group apparently opposed this reform. For more information concerning this reform, see Tomi Saeki 作田宗, "Sodai Lin T'e no chaho kaikaku ni tsuite" 広代林特の茶法改革について, in Tomi Saeki, Chugoku shi kenkyu 日本史研究 (Studies in Chinese History), (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 1971), v. 3, pp. 105-130.

96 HCP, v. 84, p. 1924; WCWKIS, pp. 847-48, 869. Wang Ying-ch' en 汪英臣 (1118-1176), Wen-t'ing chi 文廷集 (Collected Works of Wang Ying-ch'en), hereafter WTC, TSCCP ed., v. 10, p. 116. According to the accounts of Wang Su and Li Tao, K'ou Chun requested Wang Tan through a third party (probably Hsiang Min-chung or Yang I) to offer him the next appointment as Commissioner-Councillor. But Wang Tan declined, saying he had no authority to do so and should not make such private deals. K'ou Chun was very unhappy, but quite unexpectedly, he was granted the honorary position he sought. When he went to the palace in tears to thank Chen-tsung, the emperor told him that he was given the honor because of Wang Tan's recommendation. K'ou Chun felt ashamed and for the first time admitted that he was inferior to his t'ung-nien. K'ou Chun
K'ou Chun and Wang Tan never met again. When K'ou Chun returned to the capital in 1019, his old friend had already passed away.\(^7\) In his last years, Wang Tan continued to oppose Wang Ch'in-jo, who returned to power shortly after K'ou Chun's dismissal.\(^8\) Wang Tan also tried his best to protect his old t'ung-nien.\(^9\) Considering these events from the vantage point of historical hindsight, K'ou Chun was at fault in missing a golden opportunity to cooperate with Wang Tan. But to be fair, Wang Tan was also partly responsible, for he was willing to co-operate with K'ou Chun only if his t'ung-nien submitted to his leadership, which was difficult for K'ou Chun to accept. K'ou Chun's open challenge to Wang Tan's leadership probably resulted in the Grand Councillor's silence at a critical moment. Wang Tan dared not, or chose not to warn then called upon Wang Tan to express his gratitude. They drank together and cemented their friendship. Wang Su's account was questioned by Wang Ying-ch' en, who did not believe that K'ou Chun would request the position of Commissioner-Councillor in such an improper way.

\(^7\)WCWKIS, pp. 848, 886; HCP, v. 90, p. 2080. Wang Tan died in October, 1017. When K'ou Chun returned to the capital two years later, he went to Wang Tan's house to perform a memorial ceremony for his old friend. In addition, he promoted Wang Tan's eldest son, Wang Yung 善隆 (988-1045), to express his respect for him.

\(^8\)HCP, v. 84, p. 1925.

\(^9\)When K'ou Chun was in Ch'ang-an, he was charged with overstepping his authority. Chen-tsung was very much annoyed, and Wang Tan stood up to protect him, explaining that K'ou Chun was simply crazy. Chen-tsung was convinced and pardoned K'ou Chun. See WCWKIS, p. 850.
K'ou Chun about the dangers he faced, and Wang Tan was the eventual winner in the competition because of the trust he enjoyed with the emperor. But he was also a loser in the power struggle between his faction and that of Wang Ch'in-jo. The reason for this failure was that he chose to compete rather than co-operate with his t'ung-nien. He and K'ou Chun were both victims of their own arrogance.
CHAPTER VII

THE LAST GAMBLE OF K'OU CHUN: THE SCRAMEBLE FOR THE REGENCY

I. THE NEW BALANCE OF POWER AT THE SUNG COURT AFTER 1015

Empress Liu's influence greatly increased after 1016 when Chen-tsung's health deteriorated. She was entrusted with substantial authority by her husband. An ambitious and yet cautious woman, she steadily and carefully expanded her power. In the palace, she was assisted by Consort Yang (962-1021), who took care of the young prince (later Jen-tsung). In the court, she was supported by Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique. She also had other supporters. These included Hsia Shou-en (?-after 1033), Liu Mei (962-1021), Yang Ch'ung-hsün (976-1045), and Chang Ch'i, who commanded the imperial armies. And Ch'ien Wei-yen served as her

1Wang Tseng, Wang Wen-cheng kung pi-lu (Notes Written by Wang Tseng), hereafter WWCKPL, PCHSTK ser. 8, p. 509; WCWKIS, p. 844; HCP, v. 90, p. 2073. According to Wang Tseng's account, Chen-tsung's health deteriorated in 1016. And in August, 1017, Chen-tsung told Wang Tan that he was in poor health.


3SS, v. 242, pp. 8612-18; SSCW, v. 8, p. 153; HCP, v. 82, pp. 1868-69, 1881. Consort Yang was called "Hsiao Niang-niang" (Junior Empress) by Jen-tsung. She was much trusted by Empress Liu.

4HCP, v. 78, pp. 1786-87; v. 80, pp. 1828-29.
spokesman in her dealings with the emperor. Because of the
authority she now exercised, she was the de facto Regent in
the last years of Chen-tsung's reign.

Although K'ou Chun's group suffered a considerable loss
of power and influence due to the dismissal of K'ou Chun and
the death of Chang Yung in 1015, it retained part of its
former position because many junior members had recently risen
to positions of importance. These new men were tied to their
elders either by reason of kinship or patron-client relations.
They included Li Wei, Wang Tseng, Hsüeh Ying (?-after
1024), Lü I-chien, Han I (972-1044), Wang Shu, Chang Shih-
hsün, Lu Tsung-tao (?-1029), Li Ti, Chang Chih-p'ai (?-
1028), Chou Ch'i (?-after 1024), Sheng Tu, Ts'ai Ch'i

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7HCP, v. 85, p. 1944; KYC, appendix, pp. 21-22. Chang Yung died in September, 1015. In his last memorial, he voiced a strong protest against the practice of the Sacrifices, which had led to the bankruptcy of the state. He asked the emperor to behead Ting Wei who initiated the disastrous movement. Chen-tsung ignored Chang Yung's protest totally. Chang Yung was the first high ranking official to openly and strongly protest the "Sacred Movement". Li Tao later lamented that if Chang Yung was not troubled by sickness that made him reside outside the capital, he might have blocked Ting Wei in the "Sacred Movement" by his strong influence with the emperor.
... (986-1037), and General Ts'ao Wei. Their emergence as a political force was crucial to the maintenance of a balance of power at the Sung court after 1015.

On the other hand, Wang Ch'in-jo had expanded his influence after his return to power in 1015. He blocked the advancement of individuals associated with K'ou Chun and...
promoted his favorites. He himself ultimately attained his objective of becoming a Grand Councillor in September, 1017, the first southerner to do so. Wang Tan tried his utmost to stop his rival's advancement, but he failed. Wang Tan died deeply regretting his failure one month after Wang Ch'in-jo took a seat in the Secretariat.

Ch'en Yao-sou and Ch'en P'eng-nien, long time allies of Wang Ch'in-jo, cooperated in their fight against K'ou Chun's group. Ch'en Yao-sou was restored to his post as the Commissioner of Military Affairs, while Ch'en P'eng-nien finally attained the position of Vice Grand Councillor in October, 1016. But both passed away in early 1017 before
Wang Ch'in-jo attained the position of Grand Councillor.\textsuperscript{12}

In the meantime, Wang Ch'in-jo also lost the support of Ting Wei. Ting Wei was as ambitious as his t'ung-nien. He sought to replace Wang Ch'in-jo, and in order to do so, he established his own clique. Feng Cheng, Ts'ao Li-yung, Ch'ien Wei-yen, Jen Chung-cheng (?-after 1024), Lin T'e and the eunuch Lei Yün-kung (?-1022) became the core members of this faction. In October, 1016, however, Ting Wei resigned from office for unknown reasons.\textsuperscript{13} Probably his falling out with Wang Ch'in-jo led to his temporary retreat.

Jen-tsung, the sole surviving son of Chen-tsung, was born in 1010.\textsuperscript{14} He was adopted by Empress Liu as her own son.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{HCP}, v. 89, pp. 2046-47, 2055.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{HCP}, v. 82, pp. 1874-75; v. 88, p. 2011; v. 95, pp. 2196-97; v. 96, p. 2230; Su Ch'e (1039-1112), Su Huang-men lun-ch'uan pieh-chih (Miscellaneous Notes Written by Su Ch'e at Lung-ch'uan), hereafter \textit{SHMLCPC}, TSCCP ed., "shang", p. 7. \textit{SS}, v. 299, pp. 9938-44; v. 301, pp. 9987-90. Ting Wei's other followers included Hu Tse (?-after 1024), Li P'u (?-after 1024), Hsüeh Yen (?-after 1024) and K'ou Han (?-1031). Li P'u was a relative of Lin T'e and an advocate of the Tea Reform Bill carried out by Lin T'e. Hu Tse was a loyal follower of Ting Wei, and the only person to send his respects to Ting Wei after 1023 when Ting was banished to the extreme south. Lei Yün-kung greatly helped Ting Wei in his advancement. He was trusted by Empress Liu. Li P'u, K'ou Han, Hsüeh Yen, Lei Yün-kung were northerners, while Hu Tse and Wu Yao-ch'ing were southerners.

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{SS}, v. 9, p. 175.
When Chen-tsung's health worsened, he considered making Wang Tan the protector and regent of the young prince, but he was disappointed with the early death of the Grand Councillor he trusted most. In the second year of the T'ien-hsi period (1018), the young prince was formally invested as the crown prince. He was eight years old at the time. He was tutored by Li Ti and Wang Shu, the two Advisors to the Heir Apparent. Much relied upon by Chen-tsung after 1015, Li Ti was promoted to Vice Grand Councillor in October, 1017. One anecdote indicates that he was regarded by the emperor as a candidate for regent. The other candidate, according to the same source, was Wang Shu's father-in-law, K'ou Chun.

The crown prince's deputies also included Chang Shih-hsün, Lu Tsung-tao, Yüeh Huang-mu, and the powerful eunuch Chou Huai-cheng (?-1020). Chou Huai-cheng was appointed Director of the Office of the Crown Prince. Trusted officials appointed as the crown prince's attendants were Ts'ui Tsun-tu (954-1020) and Yen Shu (991-1055).
by the emperor but disliked by the empress, it would have been disastrous for him had the empress been named the regent. For his own interests, he favored the rival of the empress, K'ou Chun. 19

There was no precedent in 1018 for naming an empress become regent. The lesson of Empress Wu Tse-t'ien of T'ang (reigned 684-704) alarmed the "gentlemen" faction represented by K'ou Chun and his followers. They supported the idea that the crown prince should reign provisionally when the emperor was unable to perform his duties, and until the crown prince attained his majority, he should be assisted by regents chosen from among the ranks of the councillors. The empress should not be named regent, nor should she be allowed to rule from behind the curtain. Consequently, K'ou Chun's group gathered around the crown prince, and the rival faction found shelter with the ambitious empress. The power struggle now shifted to a struggle between the pro-crown prince faction and the pro-empress faction. The previous dispute over the sacrifices and the Heavenly Texts was displaced by the dispute over the regency.

II. THE DILEMMA OF K'OU CHUN: TO RETURN TO HIGH OFFICE OR TO RETIRE?

Ten years after K'ou Chun's death, Ou-yang Hsiu criticized his actions, saying that his ultimate mistake was his refusal to retire at the right time. Wang Shu, who had witnessed his father-in-law's fall, did not object to the remarks of his young subordinate, apparently accepting the correctness of that analysis.20

Wei Yeh was among K'ou Chun's friends who advised him to retire as soon as possible. This notion was explicitly expressed in a poem addressed to K'ou Chun. It was his opinion that K'ou Chun should not remain in the whirlpool of court politics any longer than necessary. Instead, the hero of Shan-chou should retire to enjoy his last years as a great statesman.21 But K'ou Chun did not accept his friend's advice.

20Ou-yang Hsiu served as Wang Shu's deputy at Lo-yang after 1030. On one occasion, Ou-yang Hsiu was criticized by Wang Shu for his excessive drinking. Wang Shu recalled the fact that K'ou Chun, his father-in-law, leaked his plans to his rivals in 1020 after a bout of heavy drinking, and this led to his downfall. Ou-yang Hsiu argued that K'ou Chun was destined to fail when he refused to retire. Wang Shu did not seek to defend the reputation of his father-in-law, and instead recommended Ou-yang Hsiu to the court for a promotion. See Chou Hui (1126-after 1198), Ch'ing-po tsa-chih (Notes by One Who Lives Near the Gate of Ch'ing-po, Hang-chou), hereafter CPTC, TSCCCP ed., v. 9, pp. 80-81; SS, v. 286, pp. 9632-33.

21TKC, v. 1, p. 4; KSTY, v. 1, p. 8. According to K'ung P'ing-chung's account, K'ou Chun later regretted not listening to Wei Yeh's advice. During his banishment in the south, he
K'ou Chun was absent from the capital for four years before returning in 1019. He was first posted to Teng-chou and he was then transferred to Lo-yang the following month (June, 1015).\(^{22}\) In March, 1016, he was transferred again, this time to Ch'ang-an where he remained for three years.\(^{23}\) Evidently K'ou Chun was not satisfied with life away from the capital. His love of power and his unfinished mission of curbing the "petty men" constituted a strong motive to return. Although he was already fifty-nine years of age in 1019, he was in good health, both mentally and physically. As usual, he was self-confident and optimistic when he returned to the Secretariat. But this optimism and his long absence from the capital led to an incorrect assessment of the changed political situation.

When he was serving at Ch'ang-an, he was accused of treason and the abuse of authority. However, he failed to realize the dangers implicit in that fact since he was recited Wei Yeh's poem frequently.

\(^{22}\)HCP, v. 84, pp. 1922, 1928.

\(^{23}\)HCP, v. 86, p. 1971; v. 89, p. 2046; v. 90, p. 2076; SS, v. 281, p. 9532. K'ou Chun's biography and Li Tao's account recorded that K'ou Chun had been transferred to Hsiang-chou (in present-day Hupei) in March, 1017. But K'ou Chun was still serving at Ch'ang-an in August, 1017. And in 1019, he went to the capital from Ch'ang-an instead of Hsiang-chou. It is evident that he had not left Ch'ang-an since March, 1016. Probably his request to remain in Ch'ang-an was accepted finally.
protected to some extent by Wang Tan and Lü I-chien. 24 He also received support from the powerful eunuch Chou Huai-cheng. But his alliance with Chou only served to place him in a position opposed to Empress Liu whom he had offended before. 25 The most dangerous element was the fact that the emperor had lost his ability to rule. His authority was easily usurped by K'ou Chun's rivals, who had his ear. 26

K'ou Chun paid a huge price for his return to power. In order to regain the favor of his master, he approved an absurd plan advanced by his subordinate, General Chu Neng (?-1020). He reported from Ch'ang-an that another Heavenly Texts had been found at Ch'ien-yu Mountain . K'ou Chun was well-known for his opposition to the idea of the Sacrifices and the so-called Heavenly Texts, but this time he abandoned principle in favor of political expediency. 27

Chen-tsung was pleased with the news that a Heavenly Text had been discovered, for he had become addicted to the myth which he had helped create. Several natural disasters,

24 HCP, v. 88, p. 2025; WCWKIS, p. 850.
26 Liu Ching-chen, op. cit., p. 212, note 70; HCP, v. 95, pp. 2196-97; v. 96, pp. 2212-13. Chen-tsung suffered from lapses of memory and consciousness in the final decade of his life. He did not remember what he had promised K'ou Chun, and even forgot that K'ou Chun had been banished by his order.
27 HCP, v. 93, pp. 2141-42.
especially a plague of locusts in 1016-1017, had dashed his dreams of personal greatness bestowed by Heavenly Grace. All he needed at this moment was a miracle to heal his physical and mental distress. Chou Huai-cheng apparently understood this, and Chu Neng, a henchman of the powerful eunuch, thus forged a Heavenly Text to comfort the distraught emperor. 28

K'ou Chun's report successfully regained the trust of his master. He was summoned to the capital in May, 1019. But K'ou's involvement in yet another Heavenly Text incident greatly shocked the "gentlemen" faction and his personal followers. Upon his departure for the capital, one of his disciples offered some frank advice: remain at Ho-yang and request transfer to another post, but not the capital. A second option was to disclose the fraudulent nature of this latest Heavenly Text at an imperial audience immediately upon his return to the capital. The worst option, his disciple suggested, was to accept the post of Grand Councillor at the expense of his personal reputation. But the lure of power caused K'ou Chun to reject this advice. 29


29 HCP, v. 93, pp. 2142-43, 2148. Sun Shih (962-1033), a reputable scholar who made a name for himself by opposing the Heavenly Texts and the Sacrifices as soon as Wang Ch'in-jo proposed the plan in 1008, memorialized the emperor again, pointing out the fact that the Heavenly Texts found by Chu Neng was a forgery. Although he did not criticize K'ou Chun explicitly, he was astonished by K'ou Chun's participation in this matter. Lu Tsung-tao, a follower of K'ou Chun, also voiced his opposition. The name of the
K'ou Chun's decision in this instance was a controversial one. While most people believe his involvement in the Heavenly Texts Movement did serious harm to his reputation, others have argued that the means were justified by noble ends, providing that evil forces at court could be suppressed. Considering his personal character, there is some reason to believe that K'ou Chun decided to gamble at this critical moment, and his wager was his reputation and career.

K'ou Chun perhaps perceived the country was in crisis by 1019. The emperor was handicapped by illness and the crown prince was too young to reign. The empress was ambitious and desired to achieve power by means of a regency. Moreover, the bureaucracy was seriously divided into several camps, those disciple who advised K'ou Chun not to return to the capital is not known.


31 Hu Tzu, Lü Chung and Ch'en Chi-ju defended K'ou Chun in this matter. Hu Tzu argued that K'ou Chun based his decision on the nobility of his objectives. He did not consider his personal interests in such a brave move. Hu Tzu went on to say that the retirement of Wang Tan should not be over-praised. In his opinion, Wang Tan fled from his responsibility. See THYYTHHC, v. 20, p. 138; Lü Chung, op. cit., v. 6, p. 48; Ch'en Chi-ju (1558-1639), Tu-shu ching (Lessons Learned from Studying Books), hereafter TSC, TSCCCP ed., v. 6, p. 41.
of K'ou Chun, Wang Ch'in-jo, and Ting Wei. K'ou Chun thus concluded that it was his mission to solve the crisis, as he had done in 1004.

K'ou Chun remained as confident as ever. He still enjoyed high prestige, and he had supporters in the palace and at court. He still enjoyed some favor with the emperor, but he apparently underestimated the strength of the empress and the coalition of power she had crafted. K'ou Chun also did not possess the ability of Lü Tuan, who had skillfully resolved the succession crisis of 997, and unfortunately he did not realize this fact. To return to office or to retire? In deciding this question, K'ou Chun apparently made the wrong choice due to a miscalculation of his own strength and that of his enemies, as well as a misjudgment of the entire situation.

As in the past, K'ou Chun continued to recommend many young talented men to office, such as Fan Yung, P'eng Ch'eng, Wang K'ai (995-1067), Yen Su, Hu Su (995-1067), Chang Pao-yung (995-1067), Li Shu (995-1067), Ti Fei (995-1067), Li Chi (995-1067), Chang Hsi-p'u (995-1067), and his own youngest son-in-law Chang Tzu-kao (990-1040). They became his

followers and admirers, and some of them later advanced to high positions. From that vantage point, they contributed greatly to his posthumous rehabilitation many years later.\footnote{Fan Yung later attained the post of Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs. He was the compiler of K'ou Chun's poetry. He later contributed greatly to the rehabilitation of K'ou Chun's name. Ti Fei attained the post of Auxiliary Academician of the Bureau of Military Affairs. Li Chi advanced to Executive Censor. Yen Su attained the high post of Auxiliary Academician of Lung-t'u Hall, while Li Shu was named Academician of the same office. Hu Su also attained the post of Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs, and like K'ou Chun, he was also as a devout Buddhist. See \textit{SS}, v. 318, pp. 10366-69; \textit{KCMKSC}, pp. 15-17.} However, they were not then able to prevent his return to the capital or to offer any great help in that situation.
III. THE POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN K'OU CHUN AND TING WEI

K'ou Chun and Ting Wei returned to power at the same time. K'ou was reinstated as Grand Councillor, and Ting Wei was reappointed to the position of Vice Grand Councillor.\(^3\) Their common enemy, Wang Ch'in-jo, was dismissed for accepting bribes from his subordinates.\(^3\) But K'ou Chun did not perceive that the enemy of Wang Ch'in-jo could become a political ally. Ting Wei attempted to reestablish amicable relations with K'ou Chun, but he was rebuffed by him and his associates. K'ou Chun made his stance clear by openly humiliating Ting Wei.\(^3\)

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\(^3\)HCP, v. 93, p. 2152.

\(^3\)HCP, v. 90, p. 2079; v. 93, p. 2149; SSCW, v. 7, p. 137. Wang Ch'in-jo gradually lost Chen-tsung's favor. In October, 1017, Chen-tsung reappointed Wang Ch'in-jo's chief rival, Ma Chih-chieh, as Administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs, very likely to check and balance the power of Wang Ch'in-jo. Other councillors in the Liang Fu were either close to K'ou Chun or Ting Wei, and thus Wang Ch'in-jo was isolated before his dismissal. When he was charged with bribery, nobody was willing to speak up for him. He tried to defend himself, but Chen-tsung would not listen. He was then dismissed and sent to Hang-chou. It is said that Yang I refused to attend a farewell party for Wang Ch'in-jo.

\(^3\)Sheng Tu, Hanlin Academician and a countryman of Ting Wei, refused to draft an appointment decree for Ting Wei. Wang Tan's sons also declined Ting Wei's proposal of a marriage alliance between the two families after consulting with Yang I. Even Wang Chia-yen \(^{1-2}\) (989-1035), the second son of Wang Yü-ch'eng, kept away from his father's old friend. Ting Wei tried his best to regain the friendship of K'ou Chun. During a councillors' working dinner, he showed his submissiveness by brushing dirt from K'ou Chun's beard, but K'ou Chun responded by satirizing Ting Wei instead. Publicly humiliated, Ting Wei made up his mind to eliminate K'ou Chun. See HCP, v. 93, p. 2152; WCWKIS, p. 873; Liu Pin \(^{1-2}\) (1022-
As a result, Ting Wei had no choice but to eliminate the powerful Grand Councillor if he could.

K'ou Chun enjoyed a position of superiority in the power struggle that resulted. In the palace he was supported by Chou Huai-cheng, the powerful eunuch who had exposed the crimes of Wang Ch'in-jo, and was the Director of the Crown Prince's Household, an important post designed for the protection of the young crown prince. Chou Huai-cheng was much trusted by the emperor and the crown prince, but he was regarded as a key obstacle by the empress.

K'ou Chun was also supported by his remaining t'ung-nien and the junior members of his faction. His t'ung-nien included Hsiang Min-chung, Ch'ao Chiung, Ma Liang and Pien Su. Ch'ao Chiung was the chief Hanlin Academician, Ma Liang had recently been promoted to Executive Censor, and Pien Su had been rehabilitated after a lengthy period of banishment. In

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1088), P'eng-ch'eng chi (Collected Works of Liu Pin), hereafter PCC, KHCPTS ed., v. 37, pp. 493-95, "Wang-kung mu-chin-ming" (Tomb Record and Inscription of Wang Chia-yen); SSLY, v. 11, p. 126.

37HCP, v. 93, p. 2149; SHYCK, "chih-kuan" (Officials), 78:10, p. 4166.

38HCP, v. 96, pp. 2208-09.

39HCP, v. 90, p. 2070; v. 94, p. 2169; v. 95, pp. 2186-87, 2192. Hsiang Min-chung remained in the Secretariat until his death in April, 1020. Ch'ao Chiung left the Hanlin Academy at the same time. Ma Liang had served as Executive Censor since November, 1019. And Pien Su was restored to his former post in July, 1017. It was a great blow to K'ou Chun when Hsiang Min-chung and Ch'ao Chiung left the political
the Liang Fu, K'ou Chun was assisted by Li Ti, Chou Ch'i and General Ts'ao Wei.\(^4^0\) In the Hanlin Academy, Yang I, Sheng Tu, Liu Yun and Sung Shou represented additional sources of support.\(^4^1\) K'ou Chun's son-in-law, Wang Shu, occupied the important post of Advisor to the Heir Apparent.\(^4^2\) As Ch'ien Wei-yen later said to the emperor, two thirds of the ministers at court were K'ou Chun's men.\(^4^3\)

Possessing these advantages, K'ou Chun was confident of his ability to fight a two-front war. Although he made Ting Wei his prime target, he also challenged the empress. On one occasion, he insisted that relatives of the empress who committed crimes in their hometowns not be pardoned. Apparently he sought in this way to intimidate the empress, scene at a critical moment in early 1020, though K'ou's rival, Wang Ssu-tsung, was forced to retire in June, 1020. Ma Liang was transferred to Chin-ling in the middle of 1020, while Pien Su had not yet received an appointment in the capital. They could only offer moral support.

\(^{40}\)HCP, v. 90, p. 2078-79; v. 95, p. 2178. In September, 1017, Li Ti and Chou Ch'i were appointed Vice Grand Councillor and Co-administrator of the Bureau of Military Affairs, respectively. They kept their posts when K'ou Chun returned to power. Ts'ao Wei was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs in February, 1020.

\(^{41}\)HCP, v. 95, p. 2187; v. 96, p. 2215. Yang I was restored to his post as a Hanlin Academician in May, 1020, upon the retirement of Ch'ao Chiung. Liu Yun and Sung Shou were then Drafters in the Secretariat.

\(^{42}\)HCP, v. 92, p. 2127.

\(^{43}\)HCP, v. 96, p. 2206.
who was his potential competitor for the regency. Supported by Chou Huai-cheng, K'ou Chun proposed a plan to establish a regency. He convinced the emperor of the need to invest the crown prince as chien-kuo (Acting Monarch) when the emperor was unable to reign due to sickness. With this new authority, the crown prince would be assisted in his duties by regents selected by the emperor. K'ou Chun must have thought that he would be named Chief Regent, and when he held that power, he could easily eliminate Ting Wei and his clique.

Having received approval from the emperor, K'ou Chun immediately proceeded with his plan. Yang I was assigned to draft the necessary document relating to the investiture. Realizing the importance of this decree, Yang I locked himself in his bedroom and let nobody know what he was doing. Unfortunately, it is said that K'ou Chun carelessly disclosed the secret in a drinking bout. Empress Liu and Ting Wei took

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4"HCP, v. 95, pp. 2196-97.

5"HCP, v. 95, pp. 2196-98; v. 96, pp. 2208-09; SSLY, v. 11, pp. 126-27.

4"HCP, v. 95, p. 2197; SSLY, v. 11, p. 127; SHMLCPC, pp. 5-6. According to Su Ch'e's account, Wang Shu did not agree with his father-in-law's plan, which he asserted was too risky. But K'ou Chun insisted on making the plan known to everybody, and Wang Shu was commissioned to circulate the draft decree to the prefectures and circuits. Seeing the danger of that action, Wang Shu kept the draft decree a secret. Unfortunately, K'ou Chun himself leaked the secret. The draft decree was not made public until the death of Empress Dowager Liu in 1033, when it was used as evidence for the rehabilitation of K'ou Chun and Yang I.
alarm at this plan, and they immediately accused K'ou Chun of having usurped the emperor's power and indulging in political favoritism. The emperor was convinced of the charges and in July, 1020, K'ou Chun was again removed from the Secretariat. The plan to elevate the crown prince to the role of acting monarch was thus abandoned, as the emperor forgot what he had promised K'ou Chun and Chou Huai-cheng.

After the dismissal of K'ou Chun, Chen-tsung desired to maintain some balance among his ministers. Li Ti, a follower of K'ou Chun, was promoted to Grand Councillor along with Ting Wei, even though the honest Li Ti had been slandered by Ch'ien Wei-yen. Feng Cheng and Ts'ao Li-yung were both named Commissioners of Military Affairs. K'ou Chun was allowed to remain in the capital and was granted the prestigious title of Grand Mentor of the Heir Apparent (T'ai-tzu t'ai-fu) and enfeoffed as the Duke of Lai. He had not entirely

47 HCP, v. 94, pp. 2170-71; v. 95, p. 2183, 2192-93, 2197-98; v. 98, p. 2268; SS, v. 292, p. 9753. K'ou Chun requested extra privileges for his daughter, the wife of Wang Shu, on the one hand, and suppressed Wang Ch'in-jo's countryman, Li Tzu (?-after 1033), and disciple, Ch'en Ts'ung-i (?-after 1024), on the other. Li Tzu and Ch'en Ts'ung-i were generally regarded as good ministers. K'ou Chun had also forced Wang Ssu-tsung to retire. He was thus vulnerable to a charge of favoritism.

48 HCP, v. 95, p. 2197.

49 HCP, v. 96, pp. 2205-07; Liu Ching-chen, op. cit., pp. 219-222.

50 HCP, v. 96, p. 2207.
lost favor with the emperor and was occasionally summoned to the palace for consultation on state affairs. 51

K'ou Chun did not, however, give up the struggle. Seeking to strike back at his enemies, he charged in an imperial audience that Ting Wei had formed a clique with Ts'ao Li-yung to pursue their own selfish interests, and he sought to defend himself against the charges which had previously led to his dismissal. Unfortunately, he chose an inopportune moment. The emperor was not in good spirits and became annoyed at K'ou's remarks. Nevertheless, he did not expel him from the capital. 52

Empress Liu and Ting Wei realized that it was difficult to negate the trust Chen-tsung placed in K'ou Chun, so they adopted other tactics. After careful planning, the empress accused Chou Huai-cheng of attempting to engineer a coup. Chou Huai-cheng was arrested, and he and his associates were executed immediately after a secret trial. 53 K'ou Chun was

51 HCP, v. 95, p. 2197; v. 96, pp. 2205-06.

52 HCP, v. 96, p. 2208.

53 HCP, v. 96, pp. 2208-2210; v. 115, pp. 2692-93, 2705; SSS, v. 466, pp. 13614-17; SSCW, v. 6, p. 107; Chuang Ch'o (ca. 1090-ca. 1150), Chi-le pien (The Chicken's Ribs), hereafter CLP, TSSCCCP ed., "hsia", p. 99; CNC, v. 57, pp. 756-759; v. 60, pp. 807-809. Chou Huai-cheng was rehabilitated in 1034. His younger brother charged that Yang Ch'un-hsüan, a henchman of Empress Liu, was responsible for Chou Huai-cheng's unjust verdict. According to Ssu-ma Kuang's account, Chou Huai-cheng did not seek to engineer a coup. He was falsely charged by Yang Ch'ung-hsun, who served as a tool of the empress. Yang's biography by Sung Ch'i mentions Chou
demoted in August, 1020, for having associated with Chou Huai-cheng. The following month, he was again demoted and banished to Tao-chou (in present-day Hunan province) for his association with Chu Neng, who had mutinied. It is ironic that Ting Wei, who had participated in the forgery of Heavenly Texts, now came forth to charge that Chu Neng and Chou Huai-cheng had forged the Ch'ien-yu Heavenly Text.

K'ou Chun had lost his last gamble, but Ting Wei was not a winner, either. The sole victor in the game was Empress Liu. After the death of her husband, she became the first female regent in the Sung dynasty.

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Huai-cheng's case in ambiguous language. Very likely Sung Ch'i did not want to recall this matter in the summer of 1020.

54 HCP, v. 96, pp. 2210-11. K'ou Chun was demoted to Chamberlain for Ceremonials (T'ai-ch'ang ch'ing) and sent to Hsiang-chou first, then transferred to An-chou (in present-day Hupei).

55 HCP, v. 96, pp. 2212-13. K'ou Chun was further demoted to Assistant Commander of Tao-chou (Tao-chou Ssu-ma). Chen-tsung, however, forgot what had happened to his trusted Duke of Lai. One day he asked his attendants why he had not seen K'ou Chun for a long time, but no one had the courage to reply. Tightly controlled by the empress, it is probable that the demotion decree was issued by the empress in the name of the emperor.
IV. THE TRAGIC HERO IN BANISHMENT

K'tou Chun was banished to Tao-chou in September 1020. He was accompanied by his wife, Madame Sung, his favorite concubine Ch'ien-t'ao (1021), his sons, and a group of loyal servants. For the old man, the journey to the southern mountain city was difficult and dangerous. When they crossed the mountains at Ling-ling (in present-day Hunan), they were robbed by the Man, a minority people. Fortunately, the chieftain of the tribe was an admirer of K'tou Chun. When he found out his men had offended K'tou Chun, he immediately apologized and returned everything to the former Grand Councillor. K'tou Chun arrived at the mountain city safely in the fall of 1020, where he was warmly received by the local officials and populace of Tao-chou.

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56 Tseng Ts'ao, op. cit., v. 52, pp. 3436-37; KCMKSC, p. 12.
57 KCMKSC, pp. 7-8; HCP, v. 96, p. 2212.
K'ou Chun resided at Tao-chou for one and a half years. Although he had suffered a severe setback, he continued to behave as normal, and was confident and optimistic in outlook. Unperturbed by the loss of power and wealth, every morning he put on his official gown and performed the proper ceremonies to the emperor. With the assistance of the local people, he built a small tower to house his books, and when he had the time, he retired to the tower to study. He read widely in the Confucian Classics, the Taoist Canon and Buddhist scriptures. Nor did he abandon his hobbies: he continued to drink with guests and write poetry.\(^59\) Seemingly, he possessed few regrets.

Ting Wei was not yet in a position to celebrate victory in the continuing struggle. Although he had purged tens of K'ou Chun's followers,\(^60\) his power was not secure. The "gentlemen" faction was now led by Li Ti and ready to strike back. On the other hand, the ambitious Wang Ch'in-jo had

\(^{59}\) HCP, v. 96, p. 2212; KCMKSC, pp. 8, 14, 81.

\(^{60}\) K'ou Chun's followers who were purged by Ting Wei included Wang Shu, Sheng Tu, Chou Ch'i, Ts'ao Wei, Jen Pu, Tu Yao-ch'en (?-after 1024), General Li Fu (?-1023), Wang Sui (?-after 1038) and Shen Ts'ung-ch'i (?-after 1023). See HCP, v. 96, pp. 2210, 2213-17; SS, v. 288, p. 9683.
already requested permission to return to the capital.\textsuperscript{61} Ting Wei now found it necessary to fight a two-front war.

Li Ti closely followed the strategy of K'ou Chun in his struggle against Ting Wei and the empress. He proposed to Chen-tsung that the empress's influence be minimized for the good of the crown prince and the emperor himself.\textsuperscript{62} He argued that K'ou Chun was innocent of any offense, and he charged that Ting Wei was guilty of abusing power in his administration.\textsuperscript{63} But his words had no effect on the sick emperor, and eventually he lost his post in December, 1020.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{61}\textit{HCP}, v. 96, pp. 2211, 2218-20, 2223. When K'ou Chun was transferred to An-chou, Li Ti had already quarrelled with Ting Wei over the latter's change of the emperor's order which was to K'ou Chun's disadvantage. Ting Wei asked Li Ti bluntly whether he intended to patronize K'ou Chun, and he insisted that it was Chen-tsung's order that K'ou Chun be transferred to remote An-chou. Ting Wei also suppressed Li Ti on other occasions. Li Ti became annoyed and later made a rash move which only resulted in his dismissal.

Wang Ch'in-jo held the honorary title of Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent by September, 1021, and he used this title as an excuse to return to the capital. He argued that since he was the Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent, he should serve in the capital. His request was approved. He returned to the capital from Hang-chou in October, 1021, and assumed his duties the next month.

\textsuperscript{62}\textit{HCP}, v. 96, pp. 2210, 2225-26. Li Ti also protected the crown prince when the emperor wanted to punish him after the execution of Chou Huai-cheng.

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{HCP}, v. 96, pp. 2223-24.

\textsuperscript{64}\textit{HCP}, v. 96, pp. 2224-26; \textit{SSCW}, v. 6, p. 118. Li Ti also charged Feng Cheng and Ts'ao Li-yung of allying themselves with Ting Wei, and he went on to accuse Lin T'e's son of killing somebody, but escaping punishment because of Ting Wei and Lin T'e. Finally, he urged the emperor to dismiss himself and Ting Wei. His resignation was approved, but Ting Wei
Wang Tseng employed a different tactic. He was reinstated as Vice Grand Councillor in September, 1020, but unlike Li Ti, he assumed a low profile when he returned to power. On the one hand, he was submissive toward Ting Wei, and on the other, he adopted a cooperative attitude toward the empress who wished to be named regent. He convinced her that the crown prince should be protected if she wished to gain the support of the bureaucracy. His foresight greatly impressed her, and his willingness to support her bid for the regency made him the ultimate victor in the power struggle between his faction and that of Ting Wei.

Ts'ao Li-yung also expanded his influence at this time. He had been very helpful to Ting Wei in defeating K'ou Chun and Li Ti. In return, he received the honorary title of Director of the Chancellery (Shih-chung), his friend, convinced his master that he should be kept in the Secretariat. Undoubtedly, Li Ti was trapped by Ting Wei.

HCP, v. 96, p. 2224, v. 98, p. 2285; Chu Pien (7-1144), Ch'u-yü chiu-wen (Ancient Stories Heard in Ch'u-yü), hereafter CYCW, TSCCCP ed., v. 1, p. 4; MC, p. 4. Wang Tseng won the trust of Ting Wei adopting a submissive attitude. He did not speak for Li Ti when Chen-tsung inquired about the dispute between Li Ti and Ting Wei. Although he was the son-in-law of Li K'ang and had close ties with K'ou Chun and Wang Tan, Ting Wei did not suspect him. Apparently, Ting Wei underestimated Wang Tseng.

HCP, v. 96, p. 2233.

HCP, v. 96, pp. 2208-09, 2224.

HCP, v. 98, p. 2273.
Chang Shih-hsün, was promoted to Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs, and his father-in-law, Li Shih-heng, was also promoted. It is notable that Chang Shih-hsün and Li Shih-heng had been associated with K'ou Chun, and they were able to retain their positions under the patronage of the powerful Commissioner of Military Affairs. Ts'ao Li-yung had his own ambitions. When Wang Tseng launched a surprise attack on Ting Wei in 1022, he did not come to the support of his former ally, but was happy to see him fall.

K'ou Chun must have been pleased to see his enemies fighting against each other. Upon his dismissal, Wang Ch'in-jo immediately requested permission to return to the capital. This alarmed Ting Wei, and Wang Ch'in-jo became his next target. In January, 1021, the sick emperor suddenly decided to reinstate Wang Ch'in-jo as Grand Councillor, but he could not remember the proper procedures. Taking advantage of this situation, Ting Wei changed the wording of the appointment to read Commissioner-Councillor (Shih-hsiang), and the

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69 HCP, v. 84, p. 1922; v. 97, pp. 2240, 2245; v. 107, pp. 2494-95. K'ou Chun attacked Lin T'e for the sake of Li Shih-heng. But he was the rival of Li's son-in-law.

70 HCP, v. 98, p. 2285; v. 99, p. 2291. Ting Wei begged Ts'ao Li-yung to speak for him when Empress Dowager Liu summoned all the councillors except Ting Wei to the palace to discuss the punishment of Ting who was charged with treason. But Ts'ao Li-yung turned against Ting Wei, instead. He was further promoted after the fall of Ting Wei.
ambitious Wang Ch'in-jo was sent to Lo-yang. Ting Wei again repulsed his former ally in late 1021 when Wang Ch'in-jo again attempted to return to the capital. It is ironic that Wang Ch'in-jo who was well known for his skill in maneuver should fall victim to Ting Wei's counter moves. He was subsequently demoted and banished to Ying-t'ien Fu (in present-day Honan, the Southern Capital of Northern Sung), thus sharing the fate of K'ou Chun and Li Ti.

There is evidence to indicate that Ting Wei was extremely unpopular with the bureaucracy and the common people, while K'ou Chun enjoyed popular support. It was said that if a good measure was initiated by the government, people attributed it to K'ou Chun. If a bad policy was adopted, Ting Wei was the

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71 HCP, v. 96, p. 2230.

72 HCP, v. 97, p. 2257. In December, 1021, Wang Ch'in-jo requested permission to return to the capital for medical treatment. His intention was perceived by Ting Wei, who sent someone to Lo-yang to see him. Ting's messenger deceived Wang into believing that the emperor missed him and wanted to return. The messenger suggested that Wang Ch'in-jo should go to the capital before the formal approval arrived. Wang Ch'in-jo was thus convinced that his surprise return would please the emperor. When he arrived in K'ai-feng without the emperor's approval, he was immediately charged with abandoning his duties at Lo-yang. He was subsequently tried by Hsüeh Ying, a son-in-law of Li K'ang and the Executive Censor, found guilty, and demoted and banished to Ying-t'ien Fu. Ting Wei posted the charges on the Hall of Imperial Audience, thus proclaiming this matter to all prefectures so as to humiliate Wang.
man to be blamed.⁷³ A popular folksong stated, "There is no better option than to reinstate the aged K'ou as Grand Councillor in order to secure peace and happiness; and there is no better way to restore peace than to remove the nails from our eyes (meaning Ting Wei).”⁷⁴

Ting Wei was very much concerned about the possible return to power of K'ou Chun. Therefore, in early 1022, he adopted preventive and preemptive measures. K'ou Chun and Li Ti were banished to remote places in the last edict issued by Chen-tsung, who passed away in March, 1022. K'ou Chun was banished to Lei-chou, the southernmost city in continental China at that time. Li Ti was banished to Heng-chou (present-day Heng-yang, Hunan).⁷⁵ Once again Ting Wei revealed his deep-rooted hatred of K'ou Chun and Li Ti. He forced Sung Shou, the Drafter of the Secretariat, to draft a

⁷³Ch'iang Chih (Chin-shih 1046), Han Chung-hsien kung i-shih (A Collection of Reminiscences regarding Han Ch'i), hereafter HCHKIS, TSCCCP ed., p. 6.

⁷⁴JLKI p. 22. It was said that many commoners put the portraits of K'ou Chun and Ting Wei in public places such as markets and bars. They praised K'ou Chun but scolded Ting Wei.

⁷⁵HCP, v. 96, pp. 2212-13; v. 98, p. 2274; WCMCVHL, v. 4, p. 75. Ting Wei worried that one day the emperor would summon K'ou Chun back to the capital. The death of Chen-tsung did not, however, relieve Ting Wei of that worry. According to an anecdote, when Jen-tsung ascended the throne, the Liao emperor sent an envoy to congratulate the new emperor. At a feast, the Liao envoy suddenly asked his host who was K'ou Chun. Finally, Ting Wei replied that K'ou Chun was in the south suppressing unrest and would return to the capital soon.
harsh decree condemning the former Grand Councillor. He posted charges against K'ou Chun and Li Ti on the Hall of Imperial Audience and he proclaimed their "unpardonable crimes" to all prefectures. Even more, he attempted to arrange the murder of his opponents. Li Ti almost committed suicide in panic when Ting Wei's messenger brought news of his latest demotion.

K'ou Chun responded to the visit of Ting Wei's messenger with little show of alarm. Disguised as the messenger of death, the messenger reputedly frightened K'ou Chun's colleagues and guests, but he remained calm. He demanded that the messenger produce the decree immediately, saying "If the emperor really wants my head, just take it. But I must see the decree first." After reading the decree, K'ou Chun went back to his feast to enjoy his last bottle of wine.

\[76\] HCP, v. 96, p. 2212; v. 98, p. 2274.

\[77\] HCP, v. 98, pp. 2274-75. Ting Wei's messenger hung a sword wrapped in a silk container on his saddle. When he arrived, he refused to answer any question and did not hand over the decree to Li Ti. The unusual appearance of the messenger terrified Li Ti, who thought that the messenger had brought his death warrant. He thus hung himself. Fortunately, he was rescued by his son. Knowing the intention of the eunuch messenger, Teng Yü (?-after 1024), a guest, stood up bravely to protect Li Ti. Teng Yü warned the eunuch that if he killed Li Ti, Teng would kill him at once. Teng Yü then accompanied Li Ti to Heng-chou.

\[78\] HCP, v. 98, p. 2275; SSLY, v. 11, p. 125. According to Chiang Shao-yü's account, when K'ou Chun left Tao-chou, the local population blocked the road to prevent his departure. K'ou Chun thanked them in tears, stated that he did not understand why Ting Wei treated him in this way, and then went
K'ou Chun left Tao-chou the next day. The journey to Lei-chou was dangerous and exhausting. It is said that Ting Wei deliberately ordered half of the rest stations closed on the road to Lei-chou. However, K'ou Chun survived and his strong determination greatly impressed his companions. Disease, bad weather and other difficulties did not erode his will, and he arrived safely at his destination in the summer of 1022.

Lei-chou is a sea port located at the southern tip of the Lei-chou Peninsula, opposite Hainan Island. This small sea port was thinly populated. When K'ou Chun arrived, his subordinates handed him a map of the port area, and suddenly he remembered a poem he had written in his youth. The geographical setting of the eastern gate of Lei-chou was similar to the gate described in the poem. At that moment, it is said, the Buddhist Grand Councilor felt enlightened:

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79THTC, v. 2, p. 16.

80HCP, v. 98, p. 2275. On the way to Lei-chou, there were many sections which K'ou Chun could not pass through on horseback. He had to walk. When the local officials brought bamboo-made sedar-chairs to their respected former Grand Councillor, K'ou Chun declined their offers. K'ou Chun said that he could walk. He stated that he would be further charged if he took the sedar-chair. It was said that he travelled 100 li in one day in bad weather.
one's success or failure is determined by destiny.\textsuperscript{81}

K'ou Chun lived peacefully in Lei-chou, believing it be his final home. Living conditions were poor, and the tropical climate was difficult to adapt to for a northerner.\textsuperscript{82} But he was still strong, both physically and mentally. He remained optimistic and confident, and believed that "petty" men like Ting Wei would ultimately be punished.

Empress Liu was happy to see the fall of K'ou Chun and Li Ti, the chief obstacles to her gaining the regency. She was a firm enemy of K'ou Chun, and Ting Wei only served as her vehicle.\textsuperscript{83} When she finally consolidated her power, she was ready to sacrifice the unpopular Ting Wei in order to gain support of the bureaucracy.

Ting Wei became reckless and incautious after his triumphs over K'ou Chun, Li Ti and Wang Ch'in-jo. He did nothing to restore his popularity with the bureaucracy. He openly stated that he was unconcerned over criticism of his ill-treatment of Li Ti,\textsuperscript{84} and he encouraged his subordinates

\textsuperscript{81}\textsc{HCP}, v. 98, p. 2275; \textsc{TPHYC}, v. 169, pp. 461-62, "Lei-chou"; \textsc{KCMKSC}, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{82}\textsc{THTC}, \textit{op. cit.}, v. 2, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{83}\textsc{Li Han}, \textit{loc. cit}, pp. 307-310.

\textsuperscript{84}\textsc{HCP}, v. 98, p. 2275.
to take revenge on K'ou Chun and Wang Ch'in-jo. At his instruction, a large scale purge of the supporters of K'ou Chun was set in motion, excepting only Yang I, for whom he had the highest respect.

In July, 1022, Wang Tseng seized an opportunity to launch a surprise attack on Ting Wei. Ting Wei was charged with collaborating with the eunuch Lei Yun-kung in relocating the site for the late emperor's Imperial Grave. He was accused of harboring evil motives in this affair. Empress Dowager Liu was happy to make Ting Wei the scapegoat in her elimination of K'ou Chun and Li Ti. She accepted Wang Tseng's charges and demoted Ting Wei immediately. It is ironic that Feng Cheng, Ch'ien Wei-yen and Ts'ao Li-yung all failed to come to his aid, and only Jen Chung-cheng spoke up on his behalf.

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85 HCP, v. 97, p. 2257; v. 98, pp. 2268-69. Ting Wei deliberately appointed Chang Chih-pai as the Prefect of Ying-t'ien Fu where Wang Ch'in-jo was banished. Chang Chih-pai had been repressed by Wang Ch'in-jo. Ting Wei thought that Chang would take revenge on Wang Ch'in-jo at Ying-t'ien Fu. But Chang Chih-pai did not do what Ting expected. Ting Wei also assigned Ch'en Ts'ung-i as the Fiscal Commissioner of Ch'ing-Hu Circuit (present-day Hupei) where Tao-chou located. Ch'en Ts'ung-i, a close disciple of Wang Ch'in-jo, had been discriminated by K'ou Chun. Ting Wei encouraged Ch'en Ts'ung-i explicitly to take revenge on K'ou Chun. But Ch'en Ts'ung-i refused to do so.

86 HCP, v. 96, pp. 2210, 2227. Yang I was very much afraid that Ting Wei would purge him for his close relationship with K'ou Chun. But Ting Wei did not take any action. Yang I died in January, 1019.

87 HCP, v. 98, pp. 2283-87; v. 99, p. 2300; HSYL, "hsü-lu", p. 71. Wen Ying recorded that Feng Cheng had already shown his hostility towards Ting Wei before his fall. When
Ting Wei was banished to Ya-chou (present-day Hainan), the southernmost city in the Sung empire. It is said that Ting Wei had earlier desired to banish K'ou Chun to this place rather than Lei-chou. In addition, his property was confiscated, and his followers and associates were purged. What he had done to K'ou Chun and Li Ti, he was now compelled to endure.

K'ou Chun showed his broadmindedness by sending a cooked goat to Ting Wei when he passed by Lei-chou. In turn, Ting Wei asked to see K'ou Chun to submit his apology, but K'ou Empress Dowager Liu summoned all the councillors to the palace except Ting Wei to discuss his punishment, Ting Wei begged Ch'ien Wei-yen, a relative of the regent, to rescue him. Ch'ien Wei-yen promised Ting that he would try his best. Feng Cheng immediately warned Ch'ien not to promise Ting anything. Perceiving that the regent was determined to punish Ting Wei, Ch'ien turned against him in order to protect himself. This opportunistic behaviour was despised by Feng Cheng, who now became the Senior Grand Councillor.

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88 HCP, v. 99, pp. 2293-94; THTC, v. 3, p. 24; JLKI, p. 15; HSYL, "hsü-lu", p. 71; Shao Po-wen (1057-1134), Shao-shih wen-chien lu (Stories Told by Shan Po-wen), thereafter SSWCL, v. 7, pp. 63-64. According to Shao Po-wen's account, a large portion of Ting Wei's belongings was stolen by bandits on the road.

89 HCP, v. 98, p. 2287; v. 99, pp. 2291-94, 2298-2300; v. 100, p. 2326. SSWCL, v. 7, pp. 63-64; CS, p. 46. Ting Wei's associates who were purged at this time included Jen Chung-cheng, Lin T'e, and Ch'ien Wei-yen. This time Sung Shou drafted a harsh decree condemning Ting Wei. He deliberately copied the decree with only minor moderations which Ting Wei had previously drafted in condemning K'ou Chun. Ting Wei followed the same route as K'ou Chun on his way south. At Kan-ch'uan Temple near Ting-chou, he read K'ou Chun's poem. He also left one of his own to defend himself. He suffered ill health on his way to Ya-chou.
Chun declined to see him. K'ou Chun also prohibited his servants from taking revenge on Ting Wei. K'ou remained in his house drinking and gambling with his loyal servants as Ting Wei crossed the straits to Ya-chou.  

Wang Tseng was promoted to Grand Councillor after the fall of Ting Wei, and Lu I-chien and Lu Tsung-tao were appointed Vice Grand Councillors. Most of K'ou Chun's followers who had been purged by Ting Wei were gradually restored to their positions. Finally, K'ou Chun was partly rehabilitated in October, 1023, and was allowed to return to the north. But before the order arrived at Lei-chou, the old man passed away.

K'ou Chun's death was marked by mystery. It was reported that he seemed to know death was at hand, and that he therefore sent a servant to Lo-yang to fetch a valuable waistband, awarded him by T'ai-tsung. When the servant returned, he bathed, put on the waistband and his official gown, bowed to the north where the emperor resided, went to

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90 HCP, v. 99, p. 2294; SSLY, v. 11, pp. 125-26. According to Chiang Shao-yü's account, Ting Wei put all responsibility for K'ou's fall on Ts'ao Li-yung. But K'ou Chun did not accept his explanation.

91 HCP, v. 99, pp. 2291, 2300, 2306, 2316, 2336; SS, v. 286, p. 9637. Wang Shu, Chou Ch'i, Ts'ao Wei and Li Ti were restored to their posts after the fall of Ting Wei. Liu Yun and Li Wei returned to the capital and occupied important posts. Ts'ai Ch'i, who had resisted Ting Wei's offer of support, was promoted to Censor and continued to defend K'ou Chun.
bed, and passed away peacefully.\textsuperscript{92}

K'ou Chun failed in his last gamble to gain the regency. As a result, he lost both power and wealth and died in banishment. He did not, however, lose his sense of self-confidence or his upright manner. For this, he was remembered and admired by his contemporaries and the people of later dynasties.

\textsuperscript{92}HCP, v. 101, p. 2336; KCMKSC, pp. 8-9; SS, v. 306, p. 10097; Ch'i Sung 筆硯 (1011-1072), Hsün-chin chi 素注 (Collected Works of Master Ch'i Sung), SKCSCP ser. 10, v. 1, pp. 22-23.
I. THE REHABILITATION OF K'OU CHUN

The rehabilitation of K'ou Chun involved a long process. Although his colleagues regained power and influence after the fall of Ting Wei, they were cautious on the question of K'ou's rehabilitation since the Regent Empress Dowager Liu had been a key adversary of K'ou Chun. The Regent's attitude towards K'ou Chun was made clear when Ch'ien Wei-yen, her spokesman, deliberately dropped K'ou's name from the newly compiled list of Auxiliary Academicians of the Bureau of Military Affairs, giving the reason that K'ou had committed the high crime of treason. The Regent did not relent even when Ch'ien Wei­yen's unpopular action invited strong opposition from the bureaucracy. She secretly summoned Wang Ch'in-jo to the capital and reinstated him as Senior Grand Councillor to replace Feng Cheng, who had passed away in early 1022. The

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1 HCP, v. 99, pp. 2299-2300.

2 HCP, v. 99, pp. 2299-2300; SS, v. 286, p. 9637; v. 317, pp. 10340-41. Feng Cheng and Ts'ai Ch'i deeply resented this action. As a result, Ch'ien was removed from the Bureau of Military Affairs in December, 1022, under strong criticism for opportunistic behavior.

motive for this appointment was clear: the Regent desired to balance the power of K'ou Chun's followers, who were headed by Wang Tseng, Lü I-chien, Lu Tsung-tao and Wang Shu. The presence of Wang Ch'in-jo in the Secretariat would serve to block any demand for the rehabilitation of K'ou Chun. As the Senior Grand Councillor, Wang Ch'in-jo was automatically designated the General Compiler of the Annals of Chen-tsung. As a result, this official history portrayed K'ou Chun in an unfavorable light. 4

Wang Tseng and his colleagues moved cautiously in laying the ground work for the rehabilitation of K'ou Chun. Rather than irritated the Regent on this sensitive issue, they preferred to wait. While K'ou Chun's death was mourned almost nation-wide by people from all walks of life, the court took little interest in the matter. 5 K'ou Chun was allowed to be

4 HCP, v. 93, pp. 2149-50; v. 102, p. 2353; Ma Tuan-lin 马端临 (1254-1325), Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao ching-chi-k'ao 文獻通考 (General Investigation on Important Writings, Classics and Texts), hereafter WHTK, (Shanghai: Huatung ssu-fan ta-hsueh Press, punctuated ed., 1985), v. 21, pp. 524-25. The authenticity of the Annals of Chen-tsung as compiled by Wang Ch'in-jo was widely questioned and criticized by people of the time.

5 HCP, v. 101, p. 2336; v. 103, p. 2393; Liu Ch'ang 刘攽 (1019-1068), Kung-shih chi 公是集 (Collected Works of Liu Ch'ang), hereafter KSC, KHCPTS ed., v. 49, p. 587; KCMKSC, p. 12. It is said that when K'ou Chun's coffin passed by Kung-an (in present-day Hupei), people came from everywhere to mourn, and a private shrine was built at Kung-an in his memory. The court showed little concern, and only a small sum was allocated for his funeral. But when Wang Ch'in-jo died in December, 1025, the Regent broke precedent in approving a costly ceremony in honor of her favorite. Wang's relatives
buried in Lo-yang near his parents. And his relatives were pardoned. However, his honors and titles were not restored. Two admirers of K'ou Chun, the eminent Fan Chung-yen and Chia T'ung (fl. 1023), a scholar from Ch'ing-chou, boldly petitioned the throne requesting the rehabilitation of K'ou Chun in early 1023. Their request was not approved, nor were they punished for their bold suggestion.

Wang Ch'in-jo's return to power could bring no further harm to K'ou Chun. He was extremely unpopular among his colleagues, and although he was strongly supported by the Regent, he was ignored and frustrated by K'ou Chun's followers. He died in disgrace in December, 1025.

were also given extra privileges in memory of his contributions to the state.

6HCP, v. 101, p. 2336.


8HCP, v. 101, p. 2333; v. 103, pp. 2384, 2393. Wang Ch'in-jo once again was charged with accepting bribes from his subordinates. Lü I-chien, who was named to investigate the charges, reported to the Regent that Wang Ch'in-jo should be pardoned so as not to damage the prestige of the Regent, who had personally reinstated Wang as Grand Councillor. The Regent naturally agreed to Lü's proposal and Wang thus escaped from punishment. However, Lu Tsung-tao, who had frequently challenged Wang Ch'in-jo in the Secretariat, openly satirized him at an Imperial Audience. Wang was shamed, but he could do nothing since he was completely isolated in the bureaucracy. The Regent also could not offer any help. All she could do was grant extraordinary privileges to Wang's relatives upon his death.
Ch'ien Wei-yen and Ts'ao Li-yung shared the disgrace of Wang Ch'in-jo. The former was impeached and ordered from the capital. The latter was purged and later murdered on his way into banishment in 1029.

The last barrier to K'ou's rehabilitation was removed when Empress Dowager Liu passed away in 1033. Upon the request of Lü I-chien and Wang Shu, Emperor Jen-tsung approved his formal rehabilitation. The emperor approved an imperial

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9 HCP, v. 99, p. 2300; v. 101, pp. 2331-32; v. 110, p. 2553; v. 113, p. 2635; v. 115, pp. 2690, 2702. Ch'ien Wei-yen was harshly criticized by many officials, and he was never able to return to the capital after his departure. He died in 1034 at Lo-yang. Upon his death, Chang Huan, the son-in-law of Wang Ch'in-jo and a grandson of Chang Chi, proposed a condemnatory posthumous title like "Wen-mo" was most appropriate for a corrupt official like Ch'ien Wei-yen. When Ch'ien's relatives protested, the emperor accepted the posthumous title "ssu " denoting that Ch'ien later regretted his previous mistakes.

10 HCP, v. 107, pp. 2491-99. Ts'ao Li-yung offended the Regent on many occasions. He also sought to suppress the eunuchs whom the Regent favored. Perceiving that Ts'ao Li-yung was a potential threat to her rule, Empress Dowager Liu decided to eliminate him. Obtaining the understanding of Wang Tseng, the Regent charged that Ts'ao had supported his nephew in engineering a coup. He was thus demoted and banished. On the road to banishment, he was murdered by a group of eunuchs. His associates, like Chang Shih-hsün and Li Shih-heng, were also demoted after his fall.


12 HCP, v. 113, pp. 2643-44; v. 114, pp. 2672-73; WCMCYHL, v. 6, p. 105. Lü I-chien and Wang Shu were named Grand Councillor and Commissioner of Military Affairs respectively. Wang Tseng was not at the capital in 1033.
inscription for K'ou Chun's tombstone, praising his loyalty. All of his honors and titles were restored. As compensation for his service to the state, his descendants, including his son-in-law Chang Tzu-kao, were given government posts. K'ou Chun was also granted the posthumous title of "Chung-min" honoring his loyal service and lamenting his unsuccessful attempt to combat the forces arrayed against him. In addition, the emperor instructed the Vice Grand Councillor, Sun P'ien, to compose an official biography of K'ou Chun, recognizing his contributions to the state. K'ou Chun was granted numerous honors, but not a place in the Imperial Shrine which his t'ung-nien Li K'ang and Wang Tan had been granted in 1023.

Jen-tsung's formal recognition of K'ou Chun's accomplishments and his open condemnation of Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique helped greatly in restoring his image as a trusted

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13KCMKSC, p. 1.
14HCP, v. 113, p. 2643; KCMKSC, p. 12.
15HCP, v. 117, p. 2745; Sung Hsiang (996-1066), Yuan-hsien chi (Collected Works of Sung Hsiang), hereafter VHC, TSCCP ed., v. 25, pp. 263-64.
17HCP, v. 99, p. 2300. It was the highest honor a deceased official could receive to have his spirit tablet placed in the Imperial Shrine. Besides Li K'ang and Wang Tan, General Li Chi-lung was also granted that honour. Wang Tseng, Lü I-chien and General Ts'ao Wei were all similarly honored somewhat later.
and loyal official. Fan Yung, a protégé of K'ou Chun, compiled and published K'ou's poems after 1033. And Liu Pin wrote a laudatory biography several years later. Apart from these two works, K'ou Chun's admirers composed hundreds of poems and prose essays in his honor. Prominent figures in the Sung dynasty, including Fan Chung-yen, Wang An-shih, Su Shih, Li Kang, and Lu Yü, were among the contributors. While scholar-officials and literati expressed their deep sympathy and great admiration for K'ou Chun, commoners, military men and Buddhists also celebrated the Grand Councillor in legend, story and myth. While the individual perspective of these

18SS, v. 283, p. 9564. Jen-tsung openly condemned Wang Ch'in-jo as a crafty and evil minister. Wang Tseng went on to tell the emperor that the infamous clique of Wang Ch'in-jo, Ting Wei, Ch'en P'eng-nien, Lin T'e and Liu Ch'eng-kuei was referred to as the "Five Ghosts" by their colleagues during Chen-tsung's reign.

19KCMKSC, pp. 15-18. Fan Yung himself wrote the preface to K'ou Chun's poems. The exact date of publication is unclear, but it was probably published after 1033, since Fan Yung was appointed Prefect of He-yang in this year, the year in which the book was compiled.

20PCC, v. 27, pp. 373-74. A celebrated historian, Liu Pin was the chief deputy of Ssu-ma Kuang in the compilation of the Tzu-chih t'ung-chien. In a letter to a friend, Liu Pin stated explicitly his motives and methodology in writing the biography of K'ou Chun. Although he came from the same prefecture as Wang Ch'in-jo, he and his elder brother, Liu Ch'ang, were admirers of K'ou Chun. His work was praised by his contemporary Han Piao (1159-1224), a descendant of Han I. See SS, v. 319, pp. 10383-88; Han Piao, Ch'ien-ch'üan jih-chi (Day after Day Notes), hereafter CCJC, SKCSCP ser. 2, "hsia", p. 9. Liu Pin's biography of K'ou Chun did not survive. Only fragmentary sentences are scattered in Chu Hsi's WCMCVHL.
works varied considerably, their portrayal of K'ou Chun's followed the same general direction: K'ou Chun was the personification of the loyal minister and the moral man. In the following section, I will discuss the image of K'ou Chun that emerged from this process.
II. K'OU CHUN IN THE EYES OF SCHOLAR-OFFICIALS

In the eyes of scholar-officials since the Sung Dynasty, K'ou Chun was both a fine poet and a model Grand Councillor. As a literary man, K'ou Chun attained an excellent reputation. His eminent t'ung-nien, such as Li K'ang, Wang Tan and Hsiang Min-chung, though also praised as model Grand Councillors, never achieved the reputation as a poet that K'ou Chun did, nor did his friend Chang Yung. Among K'ou Chun's adversaries, Ting Wei and Ch'ien Wei-yen made names for themselves in the field, but their behavior in politics won very little praise. Fan Chung-yen and Wang An-shih, both excellent poets and famous statesmen, admired his literary skills.

K'ou Chun's image as a person active in contemporary political life has been confused by his poetry. On the basis of his extant poems, he would appear to have been a recluse rather than an active participant in politics. As a poet, he was sometimes compared with such eminent T'ang poets as Wang Wei 王维 (699-759), Wei Ying-wu 維英武 (ca. 740-ca. 830), Chia

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22 Ibid. Ch'ien Wei-yen attained the post of Commissioner-Councillor. He was regarded as a representative of Hsi-k'un style poetry.
Tao Tao (9th Cent.), Yuan Chen (779-831), and Liu Yu-hsi (772-842), who either ended their lives as recluses or failed to achieve much success in their official careers. As a statesman, however, he was compared with Huo Kuang, Hsieh An (320-385) and P'ei Tu (8th Cent.), eminent Han, Chin and T'ang statesmen who rescued the nation from crisis.

These different and conflicting comparisons have been noted by some of his admirers. How could the author of reclusive verse also lead such an active and eminent public life? Some have suggested that the reclusive and passive elements in K'ou's poetry can be comprehended as strange foretellings of his banishment. Yoshikawa Kojiro explains...

23 KCMKSC, pp. 11, 16-17, 90; HSYL, pp. 8-9.


25 Hu Tzu has noted such a difference. See THXYTHHC, v. 20, p. 137.

the melancholic strain in his verse as a continuance of the T'ang manner, with its persistent note of ch'ou 酒, or melancholy. According to T'ang conventions, it was regarded as appropriate for the poet to reflect a pessimistic view of life, and to speak of personal grief and the joys of retirement from public life.27

Although the above question is worthy of study, few of K'ou Chun's admirers have paid much attention to the seemingly contradictory elements in K'ou's poetry. While they do not deny K'ou Chun's shortcomings in character and personal behavior, they have not shown any interest in exploring his subego or shadowy areas. In their eyes, K'ou Chun was a man of high stature, and since he fulfilled the Confucian standard which made loyalty to the emperor and the state the first priority, all his shortcomings are perceived as secondary. Conceivably his extravagant life style, his excessive drinking habits, and his blunt criticism of his colleagues were all justified by his contributions in other ways or interpreted positively by his admirers.28


Loyalty was the key virtue of K'ou Chun. His posthumous title "Chung-min" recognized his loyalty to the state. The two biographies by Sun P'ien and Liu Pin respectively stressed his loyalty. Fan Chung-yen interpreted K'ou Chun's actions in the 1004 crisis as solid evidence of his loyalty. And some of his admirers have further stated that K'ou Chun's fearless struggle against Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei was motivated by loyalty to the emperor and the state. In the minds of most scholar-officials, K'ou Chun was worthy of praise as a loyal minister because he was able to defend the state from barbarian invasion and because he fought fearlessly against evil forces in the court.

The paramount image of loyalty attaching to K'ou Chun's name caught the attention of scholar-officials, especially in times of crisis. When the Sung empire encountered serious threats to its borders from both the Khitans and the Tanguts in the mid-eleventh century, many officials remembered the

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29 KCMKSC, pp. 18-19; YHC, v. 25, pp. 263-264.
30 FWCKC, v. 5, p. 49.
31 THYYTHHC, v. 20, pp. 138-139.
hero of Shan-yüan who had successfully resisted barbarian invasions.

Su Shih and Wang An-shih reminisced about his exploits when they passed by Pa-tung and Shan-chou respectively. They expressed the utmost admiration for K'ou Chun in their poems. In praising Fu Pi's accomplishments in resolving the crisis of 1042, Su Shih compared him with K'ou Chun. K'ou Chun's image was further enhanced and enlarged during and after the Ch'ing-k'ang Crisis (1126). At that time, the hawks at the Sung court, represented by Li Kang, recalled K'ou Chun's successful experience in 1004 in supporting a pro-war policy. Li Kang, an admirer of K'ou Chun, was compared to the hero of Shan-yüan by his supporters, hoping that he could be as successful as K'ou Chun in resolving the new crisis.

The collapse of the empire in 1127 further convinced them that men like K'ou Chun were indispensable when the country

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34 See Chapter V, note 74. Li Kang himself was an admirer of K'ou Chun. When he was banished to Lei-chou, he wrote a poem at the Shrine of K'ou Chun to express his sympathy for his idol. See Ts'ao Hsüeh-ch'üan (1574-1647), ed., Shih-ts'ang li-tai shih-hsüan (Poems Selected from Previous Dynasties by Master Shih-ts'ang), hereafter STLTSH, SKCSCP ser. 8, v. 171, pp. 33-34.
was in danger. Wang Shih-p'eng 王士朋 (1112-1171), an eminent essayist and poet in the early Southern Sung, held the belief that if someone like K'ou Chun had taken charge of the state in the 1126 crisis, the tragedy of Ching-k'ang might have been avoided. The great Southern Sung poet Lu Yu 陸游 (1125-1210) also shared Wang Shih-p'eng's view. Both of them wrote tens of poems in praise of K'ou when they passed by Pa-tung where he had served as an official. It is notable that Yu Yün-wen, the hero of the Battle of Ts'ai-shih 石希 (1161), was also compared with K'ou Chun. Yu Yün-wen himself was also an admirer of K'ou Chun.


37 Wang Chih 王訔 (1001-1045), Hsüeh-shan chi 鮑山集 (Collected Works of Wang Chih), TSCCCP ed., v. 8, pp. 92, 94; v. 11, p. 129. Wang Chih was Yu Yün-wen's associate. In two letters addressed to Yu, he compared his friend with K'ou Chun. When Yu died, he further praised Yu's contribution to the country. He asserted that Yu's situation in 1161 was more difficult than that faced by K'ou Chun. When Yu
As the image of K'ou Chun grew, that of his t'ung-nien, Wang Tan, diminished. During his own lifetime and for some time thereafter, Wang Tan enjoyed a better reputation, but after the mid-eleventh century people began to view him less favorably. Su Ch'e, the younger brother of Su Shih, pointed out that Wang Tan should be held responsible for the wasteful Heavenly Texts Affair. This view was shared by his contemporaries and the people of later times. In terms of historical image, K'ou Chun thereby fared much better than his t'ung-nien, who had won a seat in the Imperial Shrine.

Nevertheless, there were still some scholar-officials, especially those from the south, who viewed K'ou Chun convinced Emperor Hsiao-tsung to invest Kuang-tsung as crown prince, he cited the precedence of K'ou Chun. See Chapter III, note 83.

38 WCWKIS, p. 1. Wang Su wrote a book during the reign of Jen-tsung praising his father. Wang Tan's image was effectively enlarged by his son's account, and it remained so more than half a century after his death.

39 SHMLCPC, p. 4.

40 See: Yuan Wen (1119-1190), Weng-yü hsien-p'ing (Criticism Made in the Kitchen and by the Window), hereafter WYHP, (Shanghai: Ku-chi punctuated ed., 1985), v. 8, p. 80; JCSE, v. 4, pp. 54-55; KLTY, v. 2, pp. 13-14; MCPC, v. 1, p. 10; Hao Ching 蒋侍 (1223-1275), Ling-ch'uan chi 樂川志 (Collected Works of Hao Ching), SKCSCP ser. 4, v. 15, p. 22; Wu Ch'eng 胡澄 (1249-1331), Wu Wen-cheng chi 胡文澄集 (Collected Works of Wu Ch'eng), SKCSCP ser. 2, v. 62, p. 16; Ch'en Yü-pi 陳履（1538-1600）, I-chien 評章 (Opinions), TsCCCP ed., p. 14; Huang Chen 黃震 (1213-1280), Huang-shih jih-ch'ao 黃氏獨抄 (Daily Notes of Huang Chen), SKCSCP ser. 2, v. 50, p. 42.
differently. They criticized his actions in the 1004 crisis as risky and irresponsible. They satirized his return to court in 1019 as "stupid", and they defended Ting Wei, who had long been condemned as the most evil minister of early Sung times. It is fair to say that K'ou Chun's admirers exaggerated his accomplishments, but at the same time, some of his critics were biased against him because he was perceived as having discriminated against southerners.

The belief that K'ou Chun was ill disposed to people from the south was rather widespread. Even Lu Yu, an admirer, and the great Ch'ing historian Ch'ien Ta-hsin held such notions. K'ou Chun did oppose Hsiao Kuan.

41See Chapter V, note 62 and 63.


43The representatives represented by Lü Hui-ch'ing (1031-1110) and Chang Tun (1035-1105) defended Ting Wei and criticized K'ou Chun. Some southerners such as Wen Ying were sympathetic to Ting Wei. Some argued that if Ting Wei survived during the Tangut's invasion in 1040, he could have resolved the crisis. See HCP, v. 506, p. 8b; HSYL, pp. 9-10; Wang Ying-lin, K'un-hsüeh chi-wen (Notes written by Chiang Hsiu-fu), hereafter CLCTC, PCHSTK ser. 1, p. 18.

44Chiang Hsiu-fu (1005-1060), Chiang Lin-chi tsai-chi (Notes written by Chiang Hsiu-fu), hereafter CLCTC, PCHSTK ser. 1, p. 18.

45LVC, "Wei-nan wen-chi", v. 3, p. 1994; Ch'ien Ta-hsin, Nien-ehr shih k'ao-ji (Reappraisal of the Twenty-two Standard Histories), TSCCCP ed., v. 77, p. 1263.
and Li Tzu, both came from the hometown of Wang Ch'in-jo.\textsuperscript{46} He also was unsupportive of Yen Shu and Ch'en Ts'ung-i, who also came from the south.\textsuperscript{47} These actions were believed to reflect a personal bias against all southerners, and contributed to the illusion that he regularly practiced a policy of discrimination based on regional origin.

The issue of regionalism, however, is not clear cut. K'ou Chun did have many enemies from the south. Wang Ch'in-jo, Ting Wei, Ch'en P'eng-nien, Lin T'e, Ch'ien Wei-yen and Chang Chi were all southerners. But K'ou Chun also had many friends and followers from the same area. Besides his southern t'ung-nien, Ch'en Shu, Yang I, Sheng Tu, Cha Tao, Hu Su, Ti Fei, Li Shu, and Hsia Sung were all close friends or trusted deputies.\textsuperscript{48} Even Chang Chi and Ting Wei had at one time been recommended strongly by him. The reasons why K'ou Chun opposed Hsiao Kuan, Li Tzu and Ch'en Ts'ung-i was that

\textsuperscript{46}SS, v. 292, p. 9753; v. 442, p. 13072; CLCTC, p. 18; HCP, v. 95, p. 2183.

\textsuperscript{47}SS, v. 300, pp. 9978-79; v. 311, p. 10195; HSYL, p. 70. Wen Ying recorded that K'ou Chun appreciated Yen Shu's talent instead of discriminating against him. But Wen Ying's account was questionable since K'ou Chun never served in Chin-ling.

\textsuperscript{48}Hsia Sung was later regarded as a "petty man" by the Ching-li reformers. But he had been supported by both Wang Tan and K'ou Chun. He drafted many memorials for K'ou Chun. See WCC, v. 1, pp. 1-9; SS, v. 283, pp. 9571-76.
they were Wang Ch'in-jo's disciples. The Yen Shu case is questionable. It is true that K'ou Chun strongly resisted the actions of Wang Chin-jo and his clique, but it would be an oversimplification to argue that he generally discriminated against all southerners as a matter of personal belief and conviction.

In sum, K'ou Chun's image in the eyes of Confucian scholar-officials was one of near perfection. His loyalty, as celebrated by Fan Chung-yen, won him numerous admirers. Hundreds of poems and prose essays were penned by later admirers in reminiscence of his places of residence, such as Pa-tung, Shan-chou, Tao-chou and Lei-chou. As a result, his

49 Hsiao Kuan and Li Tzu were Wang Ch'in-jo's countrymen. Ch'en Ts'ung-i was a native of Ch'uan-chou. He was a close disciple of Wang Ch'in-jo. It is interesting to note that three men from Wang Ch'in-jo's hometown were admirers of K'ou Chun. They were Liu Ch'ang, Liu Pin and Liu Ch'ing-chih (12th Cent.). Liu Pin was the biographer of K'ou Chun. Liu Ch'ang wrote many essays praising K'ou Chun. Liu Ch'ang later memorialized the throne requesting special privileges be granted to K'ou Chun's descendants. He also wrote the inscription for K'ou's shrine. Liu Ch'ing-chih received his chin-shih degree during Kao-tsung's reign (1127-62). He was a disciple of Chu Hsi, and it is said that he built a Taoist temple in honor of K'ou Chou and some Neo-Confucians. See SS, v. 319, pp. 10383-88; v. 437, pp. 12953-57; KSC, v. 49, pp. 587-88; v. 49, pp. 493-94; FCC, v. 27, pp. 373-74;

50 See note 47.

51 Scholar-officials and literati who wrote poems in remembrance of K'ou Chun when they passed by Pa-tung included Sun Ying-shih (1154-1206), Ch'eng Kung-hsü (12th Cent.) and Wang I (13th Cent.). Li Fu (chin-shih 1079) and Chang Lei (1052-1112) wrote poems praising him when they passed by Shan-chou. Hu Ch'i-yü (1227-1293) and Wu Shih-tao (1283-1344) wrote poems at Kung-an
The image was steadily enhanced, sometimes to the point of exaggeration and distortion.

reminiscing about his famous bamboo. Hua Chen 築齋 (11th cent.) wrote a poem to celebrate the small tower he ordered rebuilt at Tao-chou. Li Hung 令 ine (12th cent.) also wrote an essay praising his accomplishments. See Sun Ying-shih, Chu-hu chi 楚湖集 (Collected Works of Sun Ying-shih), SKCSCP ser. 4, v. 20, p. 12; Ch'eng Kung-hsü, Ts'ang-chou ch'en-fou pien 洞州景物詳 (The Dust Covered Compilation at Ts'ang-chou), SKCSCP ser. 1, v. 10, p. 11; Wang I, I-pin chi 伊品集 (Collected Works of Wang I), SKCSCP ser. 1, v. 7, p. 10; Li Fu, Yü-shui chi 樂水集 (Collected Works of Li Fu), SKCSCP ser. 2, v. 11, p. 10; Hu Ch'i-yü, Tzu-shan ta-chüan chi 祖山談軒集 (Collected Works of Hu Ch'i-yü), SKCSCP ser. 4, v. 7, p. 48; Wu Shih-tao, Li-pu chi 類書 (The Collected Works of Wu Shih-tao), SKCSCP, ser. 12, v. 8, p. 20; Chang Lei, K'o-shan chi 顧山集 (The Collected Works of Chang Lei), TSCCCP ed., v. 13, pp. 147-48; Hua Chen, Yün-hsi ch'u-shih chi 玉軒詩集 (Collected Works of Hua Chen), hereafter YHCSC, SKCSCP ser. 1, v. 5, pp. 9-10; Li Hung, Yün-an lei-kao 玉軒稿 (Classified Drafts of Essays Written at Yün-an), SKCSCP ser. 1, v. 6, p. 24.
III. K'OU CHUN IN THE EYES OF MILITARY MEN, BUDDHISTS AND COMMONERS

Few civilian officials in the early Northern Sung could have won so much respect from military men as K'ou Chun did. In their eyes, the hero of Shan-yuan was virtually a Grand Marshal wearing the gown of a Grand Councillor. He was their loyal friend and trustworthy ally. In resisting the barbarians and the civilian ministers, K'ou Chun lent them his unreserved support. He was a friend as well as a patron. This image of K'ou Chun represents a major theme in many novels and dramas which circulated among military men. The best example of this kind can be found in the popular tales recounting the adventures of the Yang family. Here K'ou Chun is portrayed as the loyal friend and patron of these martial heroes.52 Whenever and whereever these heroes were persecuted by evil ministers, such as Wany Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei, K'ou Chun steps forth immediately to help them.53


53 Ibid.
K'ou Chun was regarded as having military talents by specialists in that field, and it is evident that he had many military friends. He himself was the son-in-law of an eminent military man. As a matter of fact, he shared many common traits with the military. Physically, he was tall and strong, with a loud voice resembling that of a soldier. In terms of personal behavior, he adopted the life style of that profession: he loved to drink, and was reputed to have a large capacity for intoxicating beverages, he loved gambling, and he could ride and shoot well. He favored straightforward talk and strong action. In the eyes of military men, K'ou Chun could have become a great soldier had he not followed the path of a civilian official.

Buddhists also liked K'ou Chun, for he was often portrayed as a devoted adherent of that faith. Reports of his birth and death were clothed and colored with religious themes in the writings of Buddhist monks. And lay Buddhists were proud of this eminent follower.\(^{54}\) It is notable that many of his t'ung-nien and friends, such as Su I-chien, Chang Kao, Ch'ao Chiung, Sung Shih, Li K'ang, Ma Liang, Wang Tan, Chang Yung, Chang Ping, Hsieh Mi, Yang I, Wang Shu and Cha Tao were

\(^{54}\) WTHC, v. 6, p. 19; Shih Chüeh-an (1286-?), Shih-shih chi-ku lueh (Survey of the History of Buddhism), SKCSCP ser. 3, v. 4, p. 15.
also practicing Buddhists. In the eyes of Buddhists generally, K'ou Chun was a liberal-minded Confucian scholar who practiced a syncretic form of Buddhism and Confucianism. Conceivably, the more his image was enhanced, the more assistance it would lend Buddhism against the attacks of orthodox Confucians.

The general public initially viewed K'ou Chun as a strict and upright minister, but later they worshipped his spirit as a local deity. Shrines dedicated to his time were built and rebuilt in Pa-tung, Tao-chou, Kung-an, Teng-chou, Lei-chou and Cheng-tu. Myths concerning his supernatural powers spread

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56 MHWHSC, "hou-chi", v. 26, pp. 457-58; YHCSC, v. 5, p. 9; SSLY, v. 69, p. 929; P'eng Ch'eng, Hsu Mo-k'o hui-hsi (Continuation of Scattered Illuminations from the Ink-guest), Yuan-wei pieh-ts'ang ed., hereafter YWPT, v. 8, pp. 131; STLTSH, v. 171, pp. 33-34; CS, "chung", p. 25; Fan Ch'eng-ta (1126-1193), Wu-ch'uan-lu (Record of the Boats of Wu), TSCCP ed., "hsia", p. 22; SHYCK, "li" (Rites), 20:39, p. 770; Hu Chung-jung (12th Cent.), Ch'eng-tu wen-lei (Classified Articles of Chengtu), SKCSCP ser. 3, v. 35, pp. 17-18. Shrines dedicated to K'ou Chun were ordered erected by Emperor Che-tsung (reigned 1086-1100) and rebuilt by Kao-tsung. It is not recorded where they were built in K'ai-feng and Hang-chou.
widely among the common people. It was said that when his funeral procession passed Kung-an, the people voluntarily went into the streets to hold memorial ceremonies for their idol. Some people placed sacrificial offerings on cut bamboo poles stuck in the ground. The next day, the bamboo poles flourished and grew into trees, thus causing everyone to believe that Heaven was impressed by his loyalty and therefore caused this miracle to happen. Accordingly, this kind of bamboo was named the Bamboo of Master K'ou. 57 It is also said that when one local official at T'eng-chou sought to destroy the shrine of K'ou Chun, suddenly he saw the deceased Grand Councillor take form before his eyes. Consequently, he abandoned the idea. 58 The myths about K'ou Chun grew to the point where he came to be portrayed as King Yen Lo, the Judge of the Underworld. It was widely believed by the common people of that time that he was made the powerful Judge of the Underworld after his death. 59 Therefore, people posted his portrait on their houses to expel ghosts. 60 Some people on

57SSLX, v. 69, p. 929; CS, "hsia", p. 7.
58MKHH, v. 8, p. 131.
59HSTT, v. 6, pp. 63-64; Tseng Ts'ao, op. cit., v. 52, pp. 3437-38.
60Sun Shao-yüan 陳師道 (12th Cent.), Sheng-hua chi 刑瞭集 (Collected Poems on Portraits), SKCSLP ser. 8, v. 1, p. 10. The poem was written by the Northern Sung poet Ho Chu 何薳 (1052-1125).
awakening from a coma said that they had seen King Yen Lo in the underworld, and that he looked exactly like K'ou Chun.⁶¹ In the eyes of commoners, the strict and upright Grand Councillor served as the scourge of Heaven in punishing evil men. Fan Chung-yen and Pao Cheng (1000-1063) were also believed to have become King Yen Lo after their deaths.⁶² But in terms of position, character and prestige, K'ou Chun was considered to be the most appropriate person of the Sung dynasty to assume that legendary role.

⁶¹KIC, v. 4, pp. 1839-40.
IV. K'OU CHUN'S DESCENDANTS AND HIS IMAGE

K'ou Chun had no son. He therefore adopted his younger brother's son, K'ou Sui (e1-1033), as was the custom. K'ou Sui and his son K'ou Yen did not attain high positions in government. In general, his offspring and their immediate descendants were relatively poor, since K'ou Chun's estate was rather small considering his illustrious career. Ssu-ma Kuang attributed their poverty to K'ou's luxurious life style, and believed that this was Heaven's punishment for the spendthrift ways of the Grand Councillor. Nevertheless, in the eyes of most people, the poverty of his descendants further cemented the honest and upright image they had of the man. People like Liu Ch'ang, for instance, felt obliged to speak up for K'ou Chun's descendants.

K'ou Chun's great-grandson, K'ou Tsung-shih (fl. ca. 1116), contributed to his ancestor's illustrious image by compiling all documents relating to him and his accomplishments in a book entitled Lai-kung hsün-lieh.

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63 KCMKSC, p. 12.
64 Ch'ao Kung-wu (1161-1171), Ch'u pen chün-chai tu-shu chih (Memoirs of My Readings in the Chün Studio), Hereafter CPCCTSC, YWPT ed., v. 9, pp. 635-36.
65 KSC, v. 41, pp. 493-94. Liu Ch'ang memorialized the throne requesting granting of special privileges to K'ou Chun's descendants, who lived in poverty.
K'ou Tsung-shih remained a low-level official throughout his life and did not engage in partisan politics. He spent much time in the study of pharmacology.\(^6^7\)

Some of K'ou Chun's descendants did become involved in factional strife, however. Wang I-jou \(\text{王子》} (1015-1087), the son of Wang Shu and the maternal grandson of K'ou Chun,\(^6^8\) joined in the factional struggles fought between the Ching-li Reformers and their adversaries. Wang I-jou became a target of attack when he composed a song satirizing the sages during a banquet. Like his maternal grandfather, he indulged in drinking and outspoken comment on public figures. Su Shunch'in, maternal grandson of Wang Tan and paternal grandson of Su I-chien, and two sons of Chou Ch'i, were charged with showing disrespect to the emperor.\(^6^9\) Ironically, the persons who launched this attack were Hsia Sung, once the protégé of K'ou Chun and Wang Tan, and Chang Fang-p'ing, the son of Chang Kao, a \textit{t’ung-nien} of K'ou Chun.\(^7^0\) Aided by Han Ch'i, they

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\(^{6^6}\) \textit{WHTK}, v. 41, pp. 493-94.

\(^{6^7}\) \textit{CPCTSC}, v. 15, p. 464; Herbert Franke, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 512.

\(^{6^8}\) \textit{SS}, v. 286, pp. 9632-36. He was the second son of Wang Shu.

\(^{6^9}\) \textit{HCP}, v. 153, pp. 3715-17.

\(^{7^0}\) \textit{LCC}, v. 40, pp. 2-3.
narrowly escaped from heavy punishment. Wang I-jou remained in the camp of the reformers when Wang An-shih carried out his grand reform. However, he died before he could become involved in the power struggle between the reformers and the conservative bloc headed by Ssu-ma Kuang. It is notable that Wang I-jou was one of the few people who had the privilege of reading the draft of Ssu-ma Kuang's masterwork, the Tzu-chih t'ung-chien. Besides Wang I-jou, K'ou Tsung-yen (12th cent.), probably a brother of K'ou Tsung-shih, was also involved in factional strife. His name appeared on the black list of the Yüan-yü party and was purged by the New Party headed by Chang Tun and Ts'ai Ching (1046-1126). He was rehabilitated only in the early Southern Sung. It is worth noting that many people who were regarded as members of the Yüan-yü party were descendants of K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien,

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72 SS, v. 286, pp. 9635-36. Ssu-ma Kuang said that Wang I-jou was one of the few people who had the patience to read his monumental work from the opening page to the end. Though Wang I-jou supported governmental reforms, he offended Wang An-shih in front of Shen-tsung. Therefore he was disliked by Wang An-shih, who sent him away from the capital. He died at the age of seventy-two.

73 Yang Chung-liang (1241-1271), Hsu tzu-chih t'ung-chien ch'ang-pien chi-shih pen-mo (Topical History from the Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government), YWPT ed., v. 123, p. 3824; v. 124, pp. 3837, 3857, 3866.
such as the Han and Lü brothers. They inherited their ancestors' political ideology, which was marked by conservatism, as well as the positive image of "gentlemen". When the conservatives, or the Old Party, ultimately gained a victory in Southern Sung, the positive image of the Yüan-yü men as well as their ancestors was established. In response to a request by K'ou Chun's admirers, Emperor Kao-tsung granted privileges to K'ou Chun's descendants in remembrance of his merits won at Shan-chou.

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74ss, v. 311, pp. 10210-16; v. 315, pp. 10297-10312. Han I's sons and Lü I-chien' sons were core members of the Yüan-yü Party.

CHAPTER IX
CONCLUSION

The emphasis in this study of K'ou Chun's life and career has been his role in the factional strife of early Northern Sung politics, in which he and his t'ung-nien were central figures in a lengthy power struggle within the bureaucracy. The successful candidates of the chin-shih examinations of 980, praised by their contemporaries as members of the "List of Dragons and Tigers", played a positive role in the resolution of political crises arising from internal problems and external threats during the reigns of Emperor T'ai-tsung and Chen-tsung. K'ou Chun, in particular, was given much credit for his part in the resolution of the political crisis caused by the question of T'ai-tsung's succession, and most importantly, for his lasting solution to the Sung-Liao dispute which was marked by the conclusion of the Treaty of Shan-yüan in 1005.

K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien, particularly Li K'ang, Wang Tan, Hsiang Min-chung and Chang Yung, also contributed greatly in bringing peace and order to the Sung empire during the last years of T'ai-tsung. Through their combined efforts, the Sung empire enjoyed more than forty years of peace after the 1004 crisis. In Fan Chung-yen's words, K'ou Chun, Li K'ang and Wang Tan were the greatest statesmen during the early years
of the dynasty. They were praised as "gentlemen", while most of their adversaries were seen as "petty men", or men of little principle. The words and deeds of the "gentlemen" were admired and imitated by generations of scholar-officials in Sung and later times. They were perceived as model ministers.

Among the eminent figures of the chin-shih of 980, K'ou Chun and Chang Yung belonged to one type of upright bureaucrat, while Li K'ang and Wang Tan could be categorized as belonging to another type of good minister. K'ou Chun and Chang Yung, generally viewed as the models of Confucian-Generals, possessed the outlook and personality of professional military men. They were strict, courageous, self-confident, and uncompromising in spirit. To uphold Confucian principles, they did not hesitate to challenge the imperial authority or openly to criticize their colleagues, though either action could result in the deterioration of their relationships with their masters and colleagues. Putting forth their frank remonstrances and blunt criticisms, they acted in their own way, disregarding the feelings of their masters and colleagues alike. They were also no more calculating and less tactful in playing the game of politics than their political rivals. As a result, they were often the losers in the game of partisan politics.

Li K'ang and Wang Tan were more cautious and calculating than either K'ou Chun or Chang Yung, as a result, they never
lost the emperor's favor and trust. They were tactful in protecting themselves as well as their t'ung-nien and associates. They did not confront their rivals directly and were willing to compromise if necessary. Consequently, they were more successful in their respective careers than either K'ou or Chang.

Most of the political rivals of K'ou Chun's group came from the chin-shih classes of 977 and 992. The former group was represented by Lü Meng-cheng, Chang Ch'i-hsien and Wang Min, while the latter was represented by Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei. K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien fought a long battle with the 977 chin-shih from 988 to 1003, and after 1004 Wang Ch'in-jo and his clique became their chief opponents. Lü Meng-cheng and his associates were rarely perceived as "petty men".¹ Lü's personality was similar to that of Li K'ang and Wang Tan, while Chang Ch'i-hsien belonged to the same type of person as K'ou Chun.² The factional strife between the 977 and 980 chin-shih was perceived merely as a dispute between two groups of "gentlemen". But the struggle between the 980

¹Wang Mien and Wen Chung-shu have been labelled "petty men", but their images were better than those of Wang Ch'in-jo's clique, who were generally held to be typical "petty men" under traditional Confucian standards.

²It is interesting to note that Lü Meng-cheng's nephew, Lü I-chien, became a junior member of K'ou Chun's faction. And Chang Ch'i-hsien's grandson became K'ou Chun's son-in-law. SS, v. 265, p. 9148; v. 311, pp. 10206-09; HNHSWC, v. 17, pp. 89-91.
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chin-shih and Wang Ch'in-jo and his followers, which was customarily oversimplified as a power struggle between northerners and southerners, was actually a conflict between "gentlemen" and "petty men" in the traditional sense, whose stances and behavior were clearly reflected in the 1004 crisis and the Heavenly Texts Affair which took place after 1008.

The wills of emperors and empresses were decisive and crucial in these power struggles. The rise and fall of K'ou Chun from high political office once again reveals the fact that the Sung professional bureaucrats greatly depended on their sovereigns, although they sought to build up their own identity, dignity and pride. K'ou Chun was one of the few Grand Councillors in Northern Sung times who attempted to establish autonomy in the administration of state affairs. He was successful on some occasions when he enjoyed the support of his colleagues. He held greater power than his successors, like his t'ung-nien Wang Tan during the reign of Chen-tsung, but Wang was less autocratic. Nevertheless, K'ou Chun could not retain his post when the emperor or the regent empress felt that their authority was challenged or threatened. Sung Grand Councillors like K'ou Chun and Wang Tan were powerful, but their power came solely from their sovereigns. They did not have their own power base; to realize their goals, they had to secure the support of their sovereigns.
Sung rulers, though theoretically holding absolute power, had to share political power with their ministers. Factional strife among the ministers was openly regarded as harmful to the interests of the state, but it was perceived by Sung rulers as an effective means of controlling their ministers. Empress Liu utilized factional strife between K'ou Chun on the one hand and Wang Ch'in-jo and Ting Wei on the other to consolidate her own power. She was the sole victor in that struggle.

K'ou Chun's time was a golden age for female rulers. When Empress Dowager Hsiao of Liao left the political scene in 1009 after dominating the Khitan Empire for twenty years, Empress Liu emerged in the Sung to become the de facto rule when her husband, Chen-tsung's health deteriorated after 1015. Empress Liu then became in 1022 the first Regent Empress of the Sung dynasty in 1022 when Chen-tsung died. K'ou Chun was successful in checking the aggression of Empress Dowager Hsiao at Shan-chou in the 1004 crisis, but he failed in stopping the ambitious Empress Liu from becoming the unprecedented Empress Regent. K'ou Chun's political game has been likened to what a Chinese proverb describes as "risking all on a single throw". It is evident that he risked all on a single throw in the 1004 crisis and in the political crisis that broke out in the last years of Chen-tsung. He won the first gamble but lost the second. Ironically, he was underestimated by Empress
Dowager Hsiao in 1004, but it was his turn in 1020 to underestimate and misjudge the capability of Empress Liu; this led to his failure in the power struggle.

K'ou Chun, Wang Tan and their group did not carry out any significant reforms in domestic affairs after 1005 when threats from the Khitans and Tanguts were temporarily alleviated. The lack of reform was partly due to the conservative dispositions of K'ou Chun's men, who tended to follow the policies of Chao P'u and Lü Tuan, and partly due to the waste of human energy and resources in the enduring power struggle within the bureaucracy after 1005.

K'ou Chun, though defeated by his rivals in these power struggles, won final victory by means of his later followers. The faction which he and his t'ung-nien constituted proved to be the most cohesive group in the bureaucracy, and it illustrated the potential power of a bloc based on that relationship. They supported each other in their individual struggles up the bureaucratic ladder, and cultivated their sons, sons-in-law, and protégés as their successors in order to prolong their influence. Headed by Wang Tseng, Wang Shu and Lü I-chien, the junior members of K'ou Chun's faction were successful in eliminating Ting Wei and his clique and in checking Wang Ch'in-jo's power. Co-operating with the Regent Empress, they continued the conservative policies of K'ou Chun
and Wang Tan during the period of regency.\(^3\) The next round of factional strife, ironically, took place when Wang Tseng, Li Ti, and Lü I-chien were in power, and they were later joined by the Ch'ing-li reformers represented by Fan Chung-yen, Han Ch'i, Fu Pi and Ou-yang Hsiu. The above figures were closely related to K'ou Chun's group and were regarded as "gentlemen".\(^4\) A thorough study of the junior members of K'ou Chun's faction in the future would certainly be helpful in arriving at a comprehensive understanding of factional politics in Northern Sung times, which reached its peak during and after the Ch'ing-li Reform Movement of 1041.

\(^3\)Wang Tseng and Lü I-chien were successful in stopping the ambitious Empress Dowager Liu, who desired to follow the practice of Empress Wu of T'ang Dynasty. They cooperated with the empress dowager on most occasions, but made no concession in decisions on vital issues. Lacking powerful supporters, the regent had to compromise with Wang Tseng and his group, who were dominant and popular in the bureaucracy. HCP, v. 113, p. 2652. Fu Pi frankly stated this fact in his memorial submitted to Jen-tsung.

\(^4\)See JLLI, pp. 16-17; SS, v. 310, pp. 10174-75, 10185; v. 311, pp. 10208-10210. When Wang Tseng was dismissed by the Regent in 1029, Lü I-chien became the Senior Grand Councillor. After the death of the regent, Wang Tseng and Li Ti returned to power. But their former ally, Lü I-chien, became their rival in a new power struggle. Li Ti was trapped by Lü and lost his post of Grand Councillor. Wang Tseng also quarrelled with Lü on many occasions. Ts'ai Ch'i, Sung Shou and Sheng Tu were all involved in the dispute between Wang Tseng and Lü I-chien, and they were all dismissed by Jen-tsung. Being the protégés of Wang Tseng, the Ch'ing-li reformers, represented by Fan Chung-yen, launched several attacks on Lü I-chien when he was restored to his post of Grand Councillor. It is evident that they were supported by Wang Tseng for their actions.
However, this preliminary study of the junior members of K'ou Chun's faction, still reveals some of the complex nature of that strife. The patron-client relationship, which was either established through examiners-examinees ties, or constituted by superior-subordinate relations, or made by kinship relations, was generally held to be another important element constituting bureaucratic factionalism among civilian officials. Such relationships existed evidently between K'ou Chun and junior members of his faction. The patron-client relationship was intertwined with the t'ung-nien relationship in the formation of a powerful political faction such as K'ou Chun's.

Of course, we must bear in mind that all these relationships were not legally or institutionally restraining. The men involved were only morally obliged to be loyal to their t'ung-nien, patrons and clients. They turned against their t'ung-nien or patrons occasionally due to personal hatreds or calculations of personal interest, though such betrayals were usually seen as unpardonable and could lead to a certain degree of shunning within the bureaucracy. As a matter of fact, K'ou Chun's t'ung-nien group, though the most

cohesive t'ung-nien group in early Northern Sung times, could not avoid internal power struggles which were fought between individual members of the group. K'ou Chun himself attacked one of his t'ung-nien, and was attacked by his "own men" in return. K'ou Chun also competed with Wang Tan for power, apart from their common cooperation. We can only conclude that human relationship is so complex that no single formula can be applied to explain all the phenomenon arising from bureaucratic factionalism in imperial China. The t'ung-nien relationship, after all, is just another possible perspective for exploring the complexity of bureaucratic factionalism and the interpersonal relations of early Northern Sung civilian officials.

In Chapter VIII, I have argued against the oversimplified theory that the bureaucratic factionalism in early Northern Sung was a rivalry between northerners and southerners; equally I do not conclude that the power struggles between the early Sung civilian officials were solely wars fought between different t'ung-nien groups. The t'ung-nien relationship is stressed only because this special relationship within the educated class in imperial China has been long overlooked by historians.

It is not easy to answer the question: what are the exact constituents of bureaucratic factionalism in early Northern Sung times. On the one hand, common interests, beliefs and
ideologies appeared to be the rational grounds for scholar-officials in establishing their factions. On the other hand, the scholar-officials who shared the same glorious experience of receiving their degrees, i.e., as t'ung-nien, or shared the same customs and dialects of a certain locality, i.e., as t'ung-hsiang (countrymen), or benefited from a certain patron-client relationship, would easily come together and form factions or close groups. Looking at K'ou Chun's faction, we find that it was established through the t'ung-nien relationship and patron-client ties. They also shared a common ideology, even religious belief. The members of K'ou Chun's faction believed that they were defending Confucian principles and the welfare of the state against internal and external enemies. They perceived each other as "gentlemen" and their opponents as "petty men". From their point of view, they were fighting a "holy war" against Wang Ch'in-jo and his group, who spread defeatism during the 1004 crisis and initiated the "sacred movement" of Sacrifices and the Heavenly Texts Affair after 1008. Those who shared these notions, no matter whether southerners or northerners, were regarded as comrades. Since they began to seek their allies and supporters from among the people who were tied to them by special relationships, the t'ung-nien relationship conceivably became one of the cohesive elements in the formation of a faction. The t'ung-nien relationship might overlap with the
On most occasions, these three different kinds of interpersonal relations co-existed. It was natural for scholar-officials to seek their allies and supporters from their t'ung-nien, countrymen, relatives, colleagues, and superiors and subordinates and to establish their factions accordingly. Therefore, it is not easy to define the constituents of any particular faction before making a careful examination of the people involved. However, for K'ou Chun's faction, I am confident that the t'ung-nien relationship did play a major role in its making and its growth. And K'ou Chun's career was closely influenced by the strength of his faction, especially those possessing t'ung-nien bonds. Without the support of his t'ung-nien, he could not have attained his remarkable success in the 1004 crisis. Moreover, he could not have returned to power after consecutive setbacks in his career if he had not been protected and recommended by his t'ung-nien. Of course, he had tried his best to patronize his t'ung-nien and his followers when he was in power.

As a statesman and the leader of the "gentlemen faction", K'ou Chun greatly impressed his contemporaries and people of later ages by his words and deeds, as well as by his dramatic career. He was also a reputable poet and a devout Buddhist, but he has rarely been studied from either of these perspectives. The latter dimension has drawn the most
attention. It is interesting to note that most of K'ou Chun's eminent t'ung-nien and associates shared his belief in Buddhism. The impact of their religious beliefs on their political ideas and actions and on the circle of scholar-officials who were their admirers and followers is worthy of further study. K'ou Chun and his t'ung-nien have left us a positive image of the Sung scholar-official, and their individual careers reveal new perspectives in the study of Sung history.

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6See Chapter VIII, Section III, note 56.
APPENDIX A

EMINENT RELATIVES OF THE 980 CHIN-SHIH

Chang Kao 张燧 (?-?):
son: Chang Fang-p'ing 张方平 (1007-1091), Vice Grand Councillor.

Chang Ping 张乘 (961-1016):
father-in-law: Chao An-i 趙安易 (930-1005), younger-brother of Chao P'u 趙普 (921-991), Grand Councillor.
son: Chang Chao-yun 张昭允 (?-1008), son-in-law of P'an 韩 昭 (925-991), Commissioner-Councillor.

Chang Yung 张泳 (946-1015):
son-in-law: Wang Chia-yu 王弟兄 (fl. 1004), eldest son of Wang Yü-ch'eng 王韞 (954-1001), Hanlin Academician.
grandson-in-law: Chao Ch'i 趙彝 (11th Cent.), Academician of Lung-tu Hall.

Ch'ao Chiung 趙通 (951-1034):
son: Ch'ao Tsung-i 趙宗彝 (?-after 1047), Vice Grand Councillor.

Ch'en Jo-cho 謝宗陽 (955-1018):
Grandfather: Ch'en Ssu-jan 謝述 (903-974), Military Commissioner.

Hsiang Min-chung 胡敏中 (948-1019):
fathers-in-law: Chang Ch'u-hua 張表華 (938-1006), Right Policy Critic Adviser.
Wang Shen-chi 王沈琦 (925-974), Commissioner-Councillor.
Grandson-in-law: Ch'u Shih-heng 程士衡 (?-after 1029),
Granddaughter: Empress Hsiang of Shen-tsung 宋氏 (1047-1102).

K'ou Chun 柯承 (962-1023):
father: K'ou Hsiang 柯紘 (10th Cent.).
fathers-in-law: Hsü Chung-hsuan 許仲瑗 (930-991),
Reviewing Policy Adviser.
sister-in-law: Empress Sung of T'ai-tsu 宋氏 (952-
son: K'ou Sui (995).
  Pi Shih-ch'ang (938-1005), son of Pi Shih-an (938-1005), Grand Councillor.
  Chang Tzu-kao 張之寜 (938-1040), grandson of Chang Ch'i-hsien 張齊獻 (943-1014),
  Grand Councillor.
Grandsons: K'ou Yen (1037)
  Wang I-kung (1034), son of Wang Shu.
  Wang I-jou (1015-1087), son of Wang Shu.
Great-grandsons: K'ou Tsung-shih (fl. 1116).
  K'ou Tsung-yen (12th Cent.).

Li K'ang (947-1004):
brother: Li Wei (947-1034), Hanlin Academician.
  Hsüeh Ying (978-1043), Executive Censor.

Ma Kao (949-998):
son: Ma Chiang (974-1048), Executive Censor.

Ma Liang (959-1031):
son-in-law: Lü I-chien (978-1043), Grand Councillor.
Grandsons: Lü Kung-chu (1018-1081), Grand Councillor, son of Lü I-chien.
  Lü Kung-pi (1018-1081), Commissioner of Military Affairs, son of Lü I-chien.

Pien Su (958-1018):
son-in-law: P'ang Chi (988-1063), Grand Councillor.
  grandson-in-law: Sun Mien (998-1066), Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs.

Su I-chien (958-996):
grandsons: Su Shun-yuan (1006-1054).
  Su Shun-ch'i (1008-1048), son-in-law of Tu Hsien (936-1057), Grand Councillor.
Sung K'ang (950-1000), Assistant Commissioner of Military Affairs.

Wang Huai (949-991), Vice Grand Councillor.

Wang Tan (957-1017):
father: Wang Ku (924-987), Vice Minister of War.
father-in-law: Chao Ch'ang-yen (945-1009), Vice Grand Councillor.
brother: Wang Mien (949-991), Vice Grand Councillor.
brother-in-law: Lu Meng-cheng (946-1011), Grand Councillor.


cousin: Shih Chung-li (928-984).

Yüeh Shih (930-1007):
son: Yüeh Huang-mu (Reviewing Policy Adviser).
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