

A DICTIONARY OF  
OFFICIAL TITLES  
IN IMPERIAL CHINA

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# Preface

This is a reference aid for students and scholars who, from many disciplinary viewpoints, work with sources dating from or relating to premodern Chinese times, written principally in Literary or Classical Chinese (*wen-yen*). It identifies, defines, and places in their temporal and institutional contexts the official titles and agency names that abound in such materials. Items of unofficial (literary and colloquial) as well as official nomenclature are included, as are selected items of administrative terminology that seem especially relevant, particularly those in the realm of personnel administration. If less than absolutely comprehensive in its coverage, the Dictionary presses against the limits of practicality, and I am confident that it will serve most of the needs of its users.

My principal intent in undertaking the work was to relieve Sinologists who are not themselves institutional historians of the aggravations, confusions, and embarrassments they have endured in trying to cope with traditional China's ubiquitous governmental nomenclature. A secondary but important purpose was to provide a foundation, at least, for a history of China's governmental institutions. Acquaintances have suggested that the Dictionary may also prove to be a valuable source of data for social historians; if so, I shall naturally be gratified. I shall similarly be gratified if Sinologists generally accept my English renderings in their totality as a standard, since the troublesome and expensive use of Chinese characters in Sinological writings could thereby be reduced. However, I am aware that my work is not without imperfections, and that some Sinologists resist standardization of any sort as a matter of principle.

The work begins with a long Introduction that offers concise descriptions of governmental organization dynasty by dynasty from Chou to

Ch'ing, including simple organizational charts for most dynasties. The main body of the Dictionary, prefaced with a User's Guide, consists of 8,291 individual entries for titles, agency names, and related terminology, in which differing usages are explained and pan-dynastic evolutions are traced. This is followed by a finding-list of suggested English renderings (English Index), another for Chinese characters and compounds (Chinese Index), and a conversion table from Pinyin romanizations currently endorsed by the People's Republic of China to the Wade-Giles romanizations used in the Dictionary, which have been standard in English-language and German writings about China for so long and are still preferred by so many Sinologists that for the foreseeable future no premodern China specialist can afford not to know them.

Suggested English renderings are based on principles long used by institutional historians of China in efforts to avoid the pitfalls of making traditional Chinese government seem either too much like a modern Western government or an otherworldly, Gilbert and Sullivan-like quagmire of nonsense. These principles as I use them can be summarized as follows:

1. The ideal is a rendering that reveals both the actual function of the office and the literal sense of the Chinese title, but if that ideal is unattainable a rendering suggesting the function is ordinarily preferred to one reflecting the literal sense.

2. The most notable exceptions to the preference for functional renderings tend to be in the nomenclature used for the military, eunuchs, and palace women. Army of Inspired Militancy (literal), for example, is preferred to Second Army or Third Army (terms that could only lead to ultimate confusion in a traditional Chinese con-

text); Eunuch of High Rank (literal) is preferred to some guess about the title-holder's usually undescribed function; and Lady of Bright Countenance (literal) is preferred to, say, Secondary Imperial Wife of the Fourth Rank.

3. Titles that are very familiar to English speakers and might be misleading are avoided: President, Prime Minister, Premier, Mayor, Sheriff, and the like. However, many familiar military terms not only seem unobjectionable, but are often unavoidable: General, Army, Regiment, Company, and the like.

4. Except in the cases of honorific or unofficial designations (Grandee of the Fourteenth Order, for example), bizarre renderings that are too foreign-sounding and esoteric neologisms are avoided.

5. Usages that are solidly established in the Sinological tradition, such as Chancellery, Secretariat, Department of State Affairs, Bureau of Military Affairs, Censorate, and Grand Secretariat, are not abandoned without good reason.

The making of this Dictionary has been possible only because Chinese scholars and Western Sinologists have alike realized the importance and the complexity of governmental nomenclature in imperial China and have long tried to make it understandable. The Chinese consequently have the world's most detailed histories and encyclopedias of governmental organization; and manuals of governmental organization in all major dynasties have been translated or compiled by Western scholars. In the former category, the imperially sponsored encyclopedia called *Li-tai chih-kuan piao* is the principal research source for this Dictionary, despite the distortions that result from its treating all agencies and posts of prior eras as antecedents of Ch'ing dynasty institutions. In the latter category, I have benefited enormously from the modern Western works that are cited by abbreviations in the entries, as is *Li-tai chih-kuan piao* (see Abbreviations on page 102): Edouard Biot's translation of the classic *Chou-li*; Hans Bielenstein's *The Bureaucracy of Han Times*; Robert des Rotours' *Traité des fonctionnaires et traité de l'armée* for T'ang; Chang Fu-jui's *Les Fonctionnaires des Song: Index des titres* for Sung; and Brunnert and Hagelstrom's *Present Day Political Organization of China* for Ch'ing. The

citation of *chüan* (chapters) of *Li-tai chih-kuan piao* and of renderings from Western-language manuals that are found in a large proportion of entries are not to be thought of as complete documentation of sources; they are merely cross-references to noteworthy works for the user's convenience.

Other materials used, which in general are less thorough and less readily available, are for those reasons not cited in the Dictionary entries. They are far too numerous to list here, but let me call special attention to the hitherto little-used *Ch'eng-wei lu* by the late Ch'ing scholar-official Liang Chang-chü, preserved in the collection of works on colloquialisms called *Ming-Ch'ing su-yü tz'u-shu chi-ch'eng*, which has been my principal source for unofficial usages through history; the abbreviated version of *Li-tai chih-kuan piao* by Huang Pen-chi, supplemented with brief dynasty-by-dynasty overviews of governmental structure, a considerable number of historical essays explaining individual titles, and a general index arranged by the four-corner system (Taipei, 1976); the *Chūgoku rekidai shokkan jiten* published by the Nitchū minzoku kagaku kenkyū-jo, a historical dictionary of 1,376 imperial Chinese titles, together with elaborate dynasty-by-dynasty charts of governmental structure (Tokyo, 1980); and the *Chung-kuo wen-kuan chih-tu shih* by Yang Shu-fan, my principal source for personnel-administration practices from Ch'in and Han through Ch'ing times, which has not received the attention from Western Sinologists that it deserves (Taipei, 1976).

While acknowledging my debt to all these and still other scholarly works, I must emphasize that the Dictionary is not merely a patchwork of data and English renderings easily plucked from the works of others. Both the introductory dynastic essays and the individual Dictionary entries are based largely on original research, and the suggested English renderings have been devised without obsessive adherence to those suggested by other Sinologists (or by myself in previous writings). My hope has been to achieve a coherent system of English nomenclature that accords with the continuities and discontinuities in Chinese usage over the long time span covered. Regardless of Ralph Waldo Emerson's famous pronouncement, I would like to have achieved

absolute consistency in this regard. I have failed to do so because of the enduring attraction of some long-established Western renderings, some memory lapses or perhaps capricious aberrations on my part, and my inability to maintain concentration on such matters at a high level through the years that passed as I drafted, revised, wordprocessed, copyread, and proofread the work. Now that the indexing has been done, I am sure I would do some things differently if I had the time—and the will—to go through it all again. However, I do not think my inconsistencies—mainly in such relatively petty matters as hyphenation and capitalization—detract significantly from the value of the work.

The Dictionary was originally conceived, as a vague project for some distant time, when I was a graduate student and in spare hours made an index to titles in the classic *Chou-li* for my own reference, and to an unusual and unanticipated degree it has been a one-man project. Actually initiated in 1976, the project has employed students of The University of Michigan and, at times in the past year, students of the University of Arizona as assistants with various kinds and levels of competence. But I alone wrote the Introduction, drafted and revised the entries, put the indexes in final form, tediously wordprocessed the English text and index on my personal computer for automated typesetting, contracted for the typesetting of Chinese characters throughout, supervised the cutting and pasting of Chinese characters into the English text, and did final proofreading of all parts of the Dictionary. Never before have I been so personally involved in the many stages of book-making. In consequence, putting the work between boards has taken far more time than I originally expected.

The principal reason for my personal absorption in the Dictionary for so long, and for the consequent delay in its publication, is that the process of compilation got under way just as personal computers came on the market, offering the possibility of automatically typesetting a work of this sort. My own infatuation with the new technology, coupled with the realization that rapidly rising publishing costs threatened to put the finished Dictionary completely out of the anticipated users' price range, led to an agree-

ment between the Stanford University Press and myself by which I would undertake to wordprocess the whole work and provide for the typesetting and insertion of Chinese characters into the text, and the Press would of necessity waive some of its normal editing prerogatives and keep the final published work at the lowest possible unit price. On both sides, it was an experiment whose consequences and complications could not be fully foreseen. In editorial and mechanical aspects alike, the result is perhaps less perfect than either of us would have liked; but what we have learned in the process should be of value to both of us, and others, in future.

In saying that preparation of the Dictionary has been largely a one-man process I do not wish to belittle the help, criticisms, and encouragement I have received from many others. Among the Sinologists who saw and commented usefully on sections of the work in draft form are Professors Hok-lam Chan of the University of Washington, John W. Dardess of the University of Kansas, Albert E. Dien of Stanford University, Edward L. Farmer of the University of Minnesota, A. F. P. Hulsewé of Leiden University, David N. Keightley of the University of California at Berkeley, James T. C. Liu of Princeton University, and Charles A. Peterson of Cornell University. Others who graciously contributed either published or unpublished materials of their own for my reference are Professors Priscilla Ching-Chung of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, R. R. C. de Crespigny of the Australian National University, Jack L. Dull of the University of Washington, David Farquhar of the University of California at Los Angeles, Penelope A. Herbert of Murdoch University, Igor de Rachewiltz of the Australian National University, and Daphne Lange Rosenzweig of the University of South Florida. If I have not fully profited from such help, the fault is mine alone, and I alone should be blamed for any factual errors as well as other flaws that may be found in the book.

Among the students who assisted in my research work for the Dictionary at The University of Michigan I owe special thanks to Thomas P. Massey (now Dr.), who gleaned data from *Li-tai chih-kuan piao* and other Chinese and Japanese sources, and to Chi-sheng (Jason) Kuo

(now Dr.), who also worked in some of the Chinese sources; Maureen A. Flannery; and Cynthia Y. Ning. Alice Duan, Jennifer Lo, and Catherine Ehrlich at Michigan and Wayne Ten Harmsel and Lee Yi-ya of the University of Arizona also assisted, principally with indexing. I am heavily indebted to Barbara Congelosi and Diane Scherer, who far exceeded their obligations as members of the Publications Office of the Center for Chinese Studies at Michigan in helping me learn the fundamentals of word-processing and were always pleasant and helpful neighbors in Ann Arbor's memorable Corner House, where the Dictionary project was housed. In Tucson, Professor Stephen H. West, C. W. Fields, and Robert Arbogast sympathetically listened to my litany of technical problems and gave me knowledgeable advice that I greatly appreciate.

For encouragement and administrative support I am also greatly indebted to the successive chairmen of the Department of Far Eastern Languages and Literatures at Michigan, Professors Robert H. Brower and Luis O. Gómez, and their dedicated administrative assistant, Marjorie Petring; the successive directors of Michigan's Center for Chinese Studies, Professors Albert Feuerwerker and Robert F. Dernberger, and their administrative assistants, Rosalind Daly, Ann Detwiler, Eunice L. Burns, and Robert Eno; and the head of the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Arizona, Professor Robert M. Gimello, and his administrative assistant, Salley Wallin. Among my faculty colleagues at Michigan, Professors James I. Crump and Kenneth DeWoskin were especially interested and encouraging, and Dr. Hilda Tao was helpful in checking substantial numbers of my romanizations for the accuracy of their tonal markings.

Not taking into account Stanford University Press's costs and my own working time and not-inconsequential expenses, preparation of the Dictionary has been supported primarily by two grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and by cost-sharing funds and other kinds of contributions from The University of Michigan. Without the magnanimous financial support of both institutions, the project could never have been completed or undertaken at all. Supplementary grants from Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, Horace H.

Rackham School of Graduate Studies, and Center for Chinese Studies have been invaluable in maintaining the momentum of the work at critical times, as have grants from the Committee on Studies of Chinese Civilization of the American Council of Learned Societies and its successor, the Joint Committee on Chinese Studies sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council. The willingness of all these agencies to help bear the financial burden of such specialized work is of course greatly appreciated.

As for matters of technical production, I have wordprocessed the Dictionary on a TRS-80 Model III two-disk-drive microcomputer with an Okidata 82A microline printer attached, using a printer's special program built into the general wordprocessing program called Lazy Writer devised by David Welsh; both hardware and software have proved quite satisfactory. The English type used is New Times Roman, set by Edwards Brothers, Inc., of Ann Arbor, whose wordprocessing specialists, Nancy Firestone and Laurel Doty, have been consistently helpful. Chinese characters have been set by Asco Trade Typesetting Limited of Hong Kong, in its font called Basic Grotesk; its manager, Howard Wu, deserves great credit for the accuracy and promptness with which the work has been done. Keylining characters into the English text has been the work of Tucson Typographic Service; I appreciate the counsel and courtesies of its president, Larry Armstrong, and the always cheerful and resourceful help of its expert keyliner, José A. Fortuno. At Stanford University Press, Editor J. G. Bell and Associate Editor Barbara E. Mnookin have principally borne the heavy burden of collaborating with me in the publication process. Their professional expertise and, above all, their humane concern for my well-being, success, and gratification are greatly appreciated.

My wife, Myrl, has as always been understanding, tolerant, and supportive, at times in abnormally difficult circumstances, and I dedicate the work to her with all my love.

C.O.H.

Tucson  
June 1984



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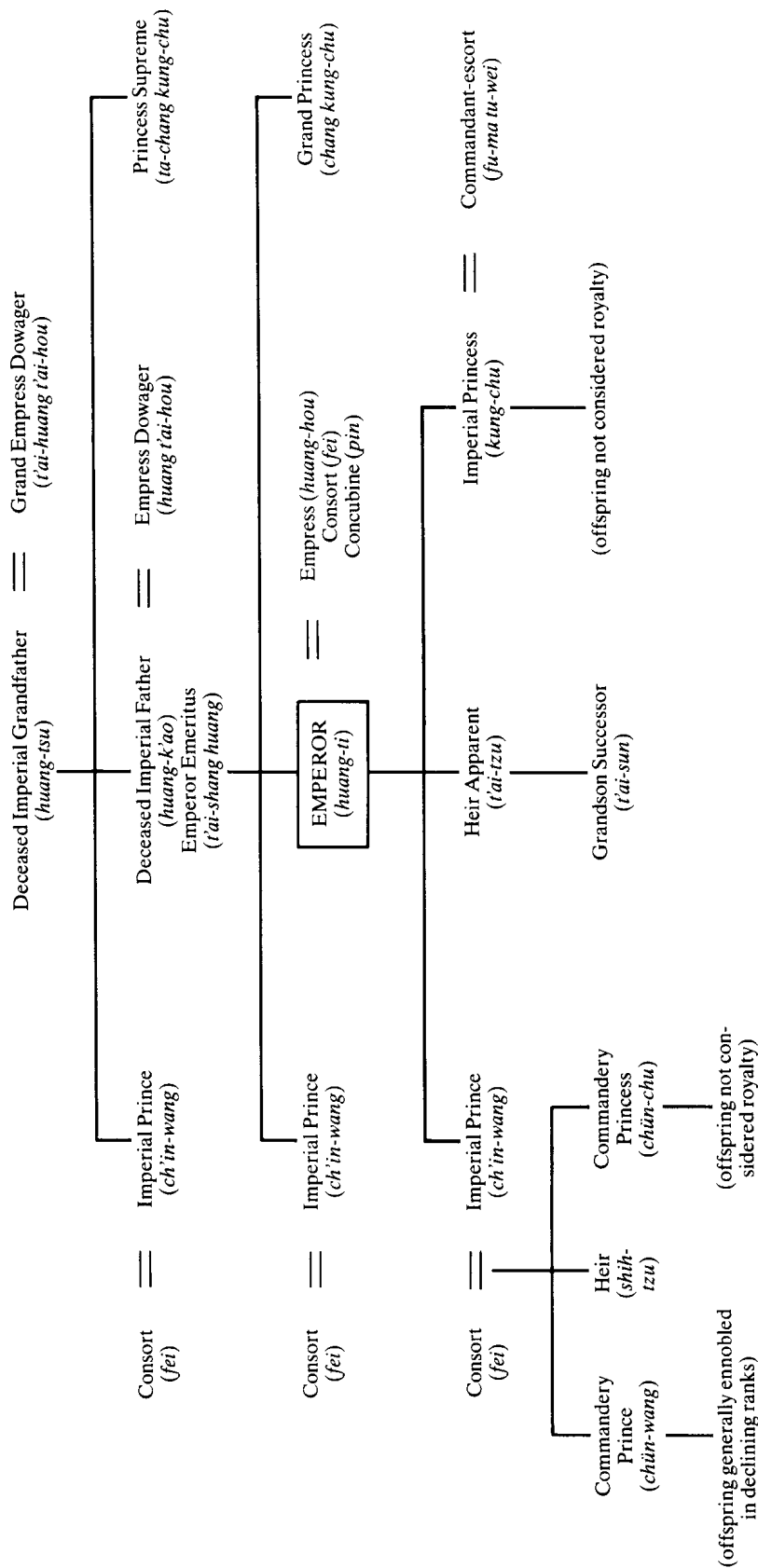
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**INTRODUCTION: GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATION ERA BY ERA**

## Conventional Titles for Members of the Imperial Family



# Some General Continuities

Some scholars seem to believe that the patterns of government in Imperial China never fundamentally changed. Dispelling that notion should be one of the principal achievements of this dictionary. Nevertheless, some aspects of Chinese government did persist almost unchanged throughout history, and others endured through very long stretches of time. To avoid unnecessary repetition in the era-by-era descriptions of governmental organization that follow, some of the most notable of these continuities are dealt with here at the outset.

## Ruling Families Throughout History

Among the most stable patterns in traditional Chinese government was official nomenclature for the supreme ruler, his close relatives, and his places of residence. The single most significant change was made in 221 B.C., when the ancient but long depreciated title *wang* 王, which Westerners have traditionally rendered as King, was replaced as the designation of the supreme ruler by the newly coined title *huang-ti* 皇帝, translated as Emperor.

From 221 B.C. to the end of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1912, China was ruled by Emperors who lived in a walled compound or Palace (*kung* 宮), commonly known as the Great Within (*ta-nei* 大內) or the Forbidden City (*chin-ch'eng* 禁城), which contained many buildings called Halls (*tien* 殿, *ko* 閣) or individually named palaces. Around this core was a larger walled area commonly called the Imperial City (*huang-ch'eng* 皇城), enclosing the halls, or residences, of the intimate personal attendants of the Emperor and his immediate family. Buildings housing agencies of the central government were also clustered in the Imperial City or lay close outside it.

The larger city in which the Imperial City was located, itself normally walled, was designated

the Capital (*ching* 京, *tu* 都; commonly with a hierarchical or directional prefix). A much larger area that was dominated by and administered directly from the capital, a special territorial jurisdiction as large as a modern Province (*sheng* 省), was the Metropolitan Area (*ching-shih* 京師, *ching-chao* 京兆, *chih-li* 直隸).

The Emperor had several categories of wives. There could be only one principal wife at any one time, the Empress (*huang-hou* 皇后); others were categorized as Consorts (*fei* 妃) and Concubines (*pin* 嬪)—designations normally prefixed with auspicious or laudatory epithets making such titles as Honored Consort (*kuei-fei* 貴妃). All such wives were known by their maiden surnames—as Empress Li, Honored Consort Yang, and the like. A child borne by any wife was considered legitimate and formally treated the Empress as its mother. The residence of the Empress was commonly called the Western Palace (*hsi-kung* 西宮).

Intimate personal attendants of the Emperor and his various wives were of two sorts. One was a group of lower-status palace women (*kung-nü* 宮女, *nü-kuan* 女官, and variants), who in principle could be promoted even to the status of Empress at the Emperor's whim, but who generally were servants of the Emperor and his wives. From T'ang times on, they were commonly organized hierarchically into Six Palace Services (*liu chü* 六局), each with a specified realm of responsibility, and each headed by one of the so-called Six Matrons (*liu shang* 六尚).

The other group of intimate attendants were eunuchs (*huan-kuan* 宦官, *nei-shih* 內侍, *t'ai-chien* 太監, and variants), among whom strong individuals or cliques sometimes exploited their close relations with the Emperors and their wives to such a degree that they gained great governmental authority—notably in Later Han, in late T'ang, and in Ming. Nominally, however, they

were palace servants, organized—sometimes together with palace women—into a Palace Domestic Service (*ch'ang-ch'iu chien* 長秋監, *nei-shih chien* 內侍監, *nei-shih sheng* 內侍省) or a Court of Palace Attendants (*hsüan-hui yüan* 宣徽院).

Many members of the government who did not live in the palace nevertheless had important palace responsibilities. Perhaps most importantly, these included large numbers of Imperial Guardsmen (*shih-wei* 侍衛), whose duty it was to protect the imperial family and the palace. Others staffed such agencies as the Court of Imperial Entertainments (*hung-lu ssu* 鴻臚寺) and the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*t'ai-ch'ang ssu* 太常寺), which had heavy responsibilities for provisioning and otherwise caring for the palace and the imperial family. Some central government agencies even had limited supervisory authority over the palace and its personnel. Such, for example, were the Han office of the Chamberlain for the Palace Revenues (*shao-fu* 少府), the T'ang-Sung Palace Administration (*tien-chung sheng* 殿中省), and the Ch'ing Imperial Household Department (*nei-wu fu* 內務府).

All sons of Emperors were Imperial Princes (*ch'in-wang* 親王), all daughters Imperial Princesses (*kung-chu* 公主). All other close relatives also had noble status, as shown in the accompanying table. The Emperor's most important offspring was the Heir Apparent (*t'ai-tzu* 太子), normally so designated during the father's reign and normally the eldest son by the Empress, except in the case of non-Chinese rulers such as the Mongols and the Manchus, who did not feel bound by traditional Chinese inheritance practices. Like the Empress, the Heir Apparent had his own establishment within the palace compound, commonly referred to as the Eastern Palace (*tung-kung* 東宮); it was managed by a large agency known from T'ang on as the Household Administration of the Heir Apparent (*chan-shih fu* 詹事府).

Other imperial offspring, especially sons, were usually enfeoffed with domains, real or nominal, named after ancient Chou feudal states, and had supporting staffs of officials constituting Princely Establishments (*wang-fu* 王府). Into T'ang times, Imperial Princes often served in important governmental posts, but in later

Chinese dynasties efforts were made to dissociate them from government and especially, as soon as they reached maturity if not before, to move them out of the palace and the capital into imposing residences scattered throughout the empire. All offspring of males descended from Emperors were normally granted noble status; eldest sons succeeded their fathers, and younger sons usually received lesser titles and emoluments. Descendants of Emperors through daughters, however, did not have such advantages. Since they did not bear the imperial surname, they were not considered members of the nobility and could not expect any special consideration from the state, especially if they were several generations removed from their imperial forebears.

The management of all imperial kinsmen's affairs, including the maintenance of strict genealogical records, was entrusted to an agency called the Court of the Imperial Clan (*tsung-cheng ssu* 宗正寺, *tsung-jen fu* 宗人府).

### Official Ranks

Even in the ancient Chou dynasty there was a systematized gradation of government personnel into rank categories. Our understanding of such gradations becomes firm only with the Han dynasty, when officials were ranked in terms of annual salaries stated in grain payments, from fewer than 100 up to a maximum of 10,000 bushels. From Han on, officials were nominally paid at least partly in grain, although even the grain portions of their salaries were commonly converted to copper coins, bolts of silk, bulk silver, eventually paper currency, and other sorts of non-grain commodities—often at confusingly varied rates of exchange. In some regimes that followed close after Han, ranks continued to be stated in bushels of grain; but generally speaking, post-Han regimes to the end of Ch'ing used a system of gradations called the Nine Ranks (*chiu p'in* 九品).

The Nine Ranks system originated at the very end of Han, in A.D. 220. At first, ranks were specified in the following scheme:

- 1: upper-upper (*shang-shang*)
- 2: upper-middle (*shang-chung*)
- 3: upper-lower (*shang-hsia*)



- 4: middle-upper (*chung-shang*)  
 5: middle-middle (*chung-chung*)  
 6: middle-lower (*chung-hsia*)  
 7: lower-upper (*hsia-shang*)  
 8: lower-middle (*hsia-chung*)  
 9: lower-lower (*hsia-hsia*)

Later there were subgradations of various sorts, with as many as 36 categories. But the standard, enduring pattern that soon evolved provided for nine numbered ranks (*p'in* 品) from 1 down to 9, each divided into two grades, classes, or degrees (*teng* 等), namely, upper (*cheng* 正) and lower (*ts'ung* 從). Throughout this dictionary, as in most Sinological writings, such rank indicators are rendered 3a (*cheng san-p'in*: rank 3, upper class), 5b (*ts'ung wu-p'in*: rank 5, lower class), and the like. In some eras one further level of gradation was used, indicated here in the forms 6a1, 6a2, and so on.

In general, from the era when the Nine Ranks system was established, official posts were assigned ranks in the same fashion; and when a rank 4b post became vacant it was normally filled by an available rank 4b official or one ready for promotion to such rank. Ranks of posts and appointees did not always precisely match, however; and it is often very difficult to determine how an official's rank was affected when he was shifted from one post to another.

Salaries paid according to ranks were often supplemented by special allowances of many sorts, some determined by the specific posts that men occupied.

### Lesser Functionaries

Officials with rank status (*kuan* 官) never comprised the entire body, or even the majority, of personnel in government service. In the military they constituted the officer corps that commanded multitudes of ordinary soldiers; similarly, in the civil service they were the executives, so to speak, who directed hordes of administrative, secretarial, and other assistants who did the drafting, record keeping, and menial labor required in all government agencies. These lesser functionaries (in Chinese called *li* 吏 or *hsü-li* 胥吏) are here referred to collectively by such designations as "unranked subofficials" and "non-official specialists." They were by no means be-

neath the notice of the central government, which commonly established quotas for them and prescribed their pay schedules; and they were usually differentiated by gradations similar to the ranks of their official superiors. Some of them—possibly very large numbers of them at times—were promoted to official status after meritorious service. But in general they were held in low esteem, considered to be "outside the current" (*liu-wai* 流外) that moved their betters up through the ranks of the hierarchy of officials. Traditional Chinese writers about governmental institutions tended to ignore them, so that they get little attention in the following descriptive essays and in individual dictionary entries; but students of Chinese government should always be aware of their presence and their influence.

### "Avoidances"

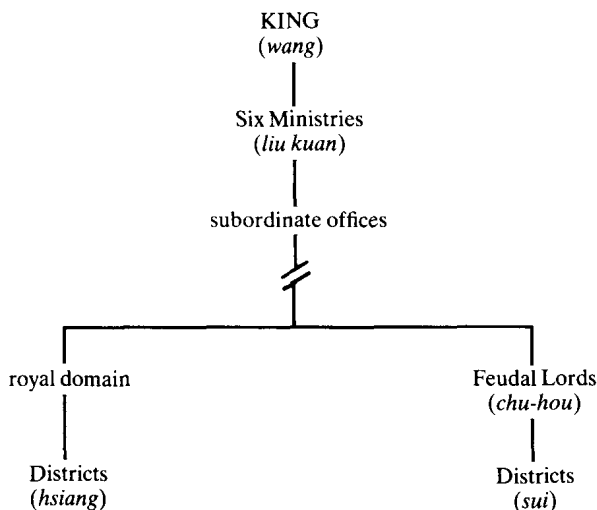
From very early Han times if not earlier, Chinese rulers recognized the dangers of collusion among officials on the basis of kinship relations and bonds of geographic neighborliness. They consequently established principles that generally governed personnel administration throughout imperial history, generically known as "avoidances" (*hui-pi* 迴避), which eliminated or at least minimized opportunities for officials to collaborate with one another to their selfish advantage and to the disadvantage of the state.

One consequence was that lesser functionaries in units of territorial administration almost always were (and sometimes were rigidly required to be) natives of the jurisdictions in which they served, so that executive officials could not staff such agencies with personal hangers-on imported from their own native areas. On the other hand, officials were normally forbidden to serve in territorial jurisdictions of which they were themselves registered natives, or even at times in jurisdictions of which their wives were registered natives.

It was equally the rule, for the central government as well as for units of territorial administration, that no man could serve in any agency where a kinsman was already employed; the junior had to withdraw in deference to the senior, and if he failed to do so he could be punished severely.

# Chou

1122(?) - 256 B.C.



In Chou times the Chinese were organized under a King (*wang* 王) in a varying and changing feudal (*feng-chien* 封建) pattern, dominated by a hereditary aristocracy. Subsequent Chinese believed that Chou government conformed to a description found in the work called the *Chou Rituals* (*Chou-li* 周禮), although it is clearly an idealization drawn up perhaps as late as the third century B.C. Because of the great influence of this work on later Chinese thought about government, the structure of government it describes is briefly outlined here.

## The Central Government

The Chou King was reportedly supported and advised by a council of trustworthy kinsmen called Elders (*chang-lao* 長老), with honorific titles in two categories. One category was the Three Dukes (*san kung* 三公): the Grand Preceptor (*t'ai-shih* 太師), Grand Mentor (*t'ai-fu* 太傅), and Grand Guardian (*t'ai-pao* 太保). The

second category was the Three Solitaries (*san ku* 三孤): the Junior (*shao* 少) Preceptor, Junior Mentor, and Junior Guardian.

General administration (especially of the royal domain, but to some extent of the empire as a whole) was in the hands of Six Ministers (*liu ch'ing* 六卿, *liu kuan* 六官), namely, the Ministers of State (*chung-tsai* 冢宰), head of the Ministry of State (*t'ien-kuan* 天官, lit., "heavenly officials"), a kind of general agent or prime minister for the King; of Education (*ssu-t'u* 司徒), head of the Ministry of Education (*ti-kuan* 地官, "earthly officials"), principally responsible for civil administration and social welfare; of Rites (*tsung-po* 宗伯), head of the Ministry of Rites (*ch'un-kuan* 春官, "spring officials"); of War (*ssu-ma* 司馬), head of the Ministry of War (*hsia-kuan* 夏官, "summer officials"); of Justice (*ssu-k'ou* 司寇), head of the Ministry of Justice (*ch'iu-kuan* 秋官, "autumn officials"); and of Works (*ssu-k'ung* 司空), head of the Ministry of Works (*tung-kuan* 冬官, "winter officials").

Each Minister reportedly had a large staff of subordinates, many with narrowly specialized functions.

### Territorial Administration

In the Chou feudal age, territories outside the directly controlled royal domain were allocated to Feudal Lords collectively known as "the various Marquises" (*chu-hou* 諸侯), whose fiefs were called States (*kuo* 國). There were five grades of lords, in descending order of eminence as follows: Dukes (*kung* 公), Marquises (*hou* 侯), Earls (*po* 伯), Viscounts (*tzu* 子), and Barons (*nan* 男). Each state, according to the *Chou Rituals*, had an administrative organization patterned after that of the royal domain but on a lesser scale. The lords were expected to appear for audience at the royal court regularly, and they were visited by royal overseers called Grand Master Inspectors (*ta-fu chien* 大夫監).

In theory, residents of both the royal and the lordly domains were organized for economic and fiscal purposes on 900-*mou* plots of agricultural land (one *mou* = one sixth of an English acre), each plot divided equally into 100-*mou* sections to resemble a tick-tack-toe design, or the Chinese character for a well, *ching*; hence the term well-field (*ching-t'ien* 井田) system. Eight families occupied each plot, communally working the central section to provide for their overlord and separately working the eight surrounding sections for themselves. For purposes of general administrative and military service, however, residents were reportedly organized in an overlapping hierarchy (terminology differing between areas in the royal domain and those elsewhere) in which five families constituted a Neighborhood (*pi* 比 in the royal domain, *lin* 鄰 elsewhere), five neighborhoods a Village (*lü* 閭, *li* 里), four villages a Precinct (*tsu* 族, *tsan* 鄴), five precincts a Ward (*tang* 黨, *pi* 鄙), five wards a Township (*chou* 州, *hsien* 縣), and five townships a District (*hsiang* 鄉, *sui* 遂). At each of these levels of social organization, tradition holds, there was a popularly elected head, the hier-

archy culminating in District Grand Masters (*hsiang ta-fu* 鄉大夫, *sui ta-fu* 遂大夫) in overall administrative control of 12,500 families.

### The Military

The governing elite of Chou times was a chariot-riding class of warriors consisting of the King, the Feudal Lords, and the retainers who filled the posts in the royal and lordly courts. Serfs provided infantry support for the charioteering aristocrats.

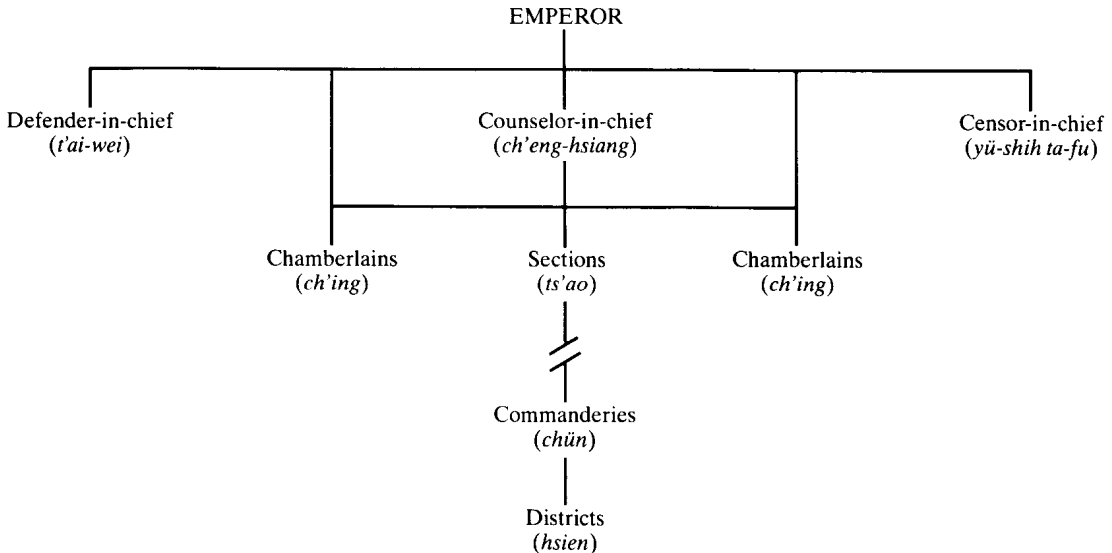
According to the *Chou Rituals*, the hierarchical administrative organization of the agricultural population described above served also as a military organization. Five men, presumably chosen from the five families in a neighborhood, made a Squad (*wu* 伍), five squads a Platoon (*liang* 兩), four platoons a Company (*tsu* 卒), five companies a Battalion (*lü* 旅), five battalions a Regiment (*shih* 師), and five regiments an Army (*chün* 軍) of 12,500 men commanded by a General (*chiang* 將). The King maintained six armies; Feudal Lords were authorized from one to three armies similarly organized, depending on the size of their domains.

### Personnel Administration

Although the *Chou Rituals* suggests that aristocratic officials were subject to a sophisticated system of personnel administration, few details are provided. Aristocrats in the service of the King or the Feudal Lords were graded in three large categories, in descending order of rank: Ministers (*ch'ing* 卿), Grand Masters (*ta-fu* 大夫), and Servicemen (*shih* 士). Grand Masters and Servicemen were subdivided into senior (*shang* 上), ordinary (*chung* 中), and junior (*hsia* 下) grades; and the whole aristocracy, including Feudal Lords, was overlaid with a complicated rank pattern called the Nine Honors (*chiu ming* 九命), ranging downward from 9. Available evidence indicates that virtually all official posts, like the status of Feudal Lords, were hereditary in practice.

# Ch'in

221-206 B.C.



Ch'in established China's first fully centralized, bureaucratic, nationwide empire. Its organization and workings are known only in sketchy outlines.

## The Central Government

After King Cheng of Ch'in unified China in 221 B.C., he abandoned the traditional title King (*wang*) in favor of the new, more auspicious title that Westerners consistently render Emperor (*huang-ti*), which was used by all subsequent dynasties. His capital was at Hsien-yang near modern Sian, Shensi Province. His palace staff was a large one, made up of palace women, eunuchs, military guardsmen, a Supervisor of the Household (*chan-shih* 詹事) for the Empress and another for the Heir Apparent, various Receptionists (*yeh-che* 謁者) and Attendant Physicians (*shih-i* 侍醫), as many as 70 Erudites

(*po-shih* 博士), and a substantial corps of Court Gentlemen (*lang* 郎).

A kind of imperial household administration existed in the form of the so-called Nine Chamberlains (*chiu ch'ing* 九卿). There were actually eleven Chamberlains, each assisted by an Aide (*ch'eng* 丞) and various lesser subalterns: the Chamberlains for Ceremonials (*feng-ch'ang* 奉常, *t'ai-ch'ang* 太常); for Attendants (*lang-chung ling* 郎中令); for the Palace Garrison (*wei-wei* 衛尉); for Law Enforcement (*t'ing-wei* 廷尉); for the Capital (*nei-shih* 內史); for the National Treasury (*chih-su nei-shih* 治粟內史); for Dependancies (*tien-k'o* 典客); for the Imperial Clan (*tsung-cheng* 宗正); for the Imperial Stud (*t'ai-p'u* 太僕); for the Palace Revenues (*shao-fu* 少府); and for the Palace Buildings (*chiang-tso shao-fu* 將作少府).

Empire-wide administration was supervised by three central government dignitaries known