

CONCERNING THE OFFICE OF THE SHU-MI SHIH

The recent monumental work on the *History of Chinese Society: Liao*, published by the American Philosophical Society (see List of Books Received for Review), deserves attention by all scholars, particularly those who have made a special study of this period of Chinese history. An essential part of the book deals with the governmental organisation of the Liao Dynasty, and pages 440-450 are concerned mainly with the highest political offices, the Shu-mi Shih 樞密使 or "Chancellors" as Dr. Wittfogel rightly translates them. Prior to receiving Wittfogel's book for Review, Mr. Fu Lo-huan 傅樂煥 submitted two articles for inclusion in the ASIA MAJOR (which we hope to bring out in Vol. II). In one of these entitled "Some Remarks on the Office of the Shu-mi Shih", he gives an account of the rise and development of this office, and in another, "Some Examples of Repetition in the Text of the Liao-shih", he describes the repetitive nature of the text of the Liao-shih. Mr. Fu's conclusions differ in important respects from Dr. Wittfogel's. The statement of Dr. Wittfogel and Mr. Fêng Chia-shêng about the offices of the Shu-mi Shih, which is based on the Liao-shih, may be shown in the following diagram:

(Northern Region) 北面 [<i>Ch'i-tan Shu-mi Yüan</i>]	{ <i>Ch'i-tan Pei Shu-mi Yüan</i> 契丹北樞密院 (Khitan Northern Chancellery) <i>Ch'i-tan Nan Shu-mi Yüan</i> 契丹南樞密院 (Khitan Southern Chancellery)

v.

(Southern Region) 南面
Han-jên Shu-mi Yüan 漢人樞密院
(Chinese Chancellery)

The real situation, however, according to Mr. Fu, was as follows:

(Northern Region)
Pei Shu-mi Yüan 北樞密院 = Khitan Chancellery
(Northern Chancellery)

v.

(Southern Region)
Nan Shu-mi Yüan 南樞密院 = Chinese Chancellery
(Southern Chancellery)

That is to say, the *Pei Shu-mi Yüan*, or Northern Chancellery, was the Chancellery for the administration of the affairs of the Khitan, and the

Nan Shu-mi Yüan, or Southern Chancellery, was the Chancellery for the administration of the affairs of the Chinese. Contemporaries might have called the Northern Chancellery the Khitan Chancellery and the Southern Chancellery the Chinese Chancellery. But the official titles remained Northern Chancellery and Southern Chancellery. In the text of the Liao-shih the terms *Ch'i-tan Pei Shu-mi Yüan* and *Ch'i-tan nan Shu-mi-Yüan*, or the "Khitan Northern and Southern Chancelleries", appear only in one passage. This is in one of the chapters on the officialdom and is apparently a mistake of the Yüan scholars by whom the present edition of the Liao-shih was prepared. Mr. Fu has tried to point out the reasons for this mistake by the Yüan scholars in his article "Some Examples of Repetition in the Text of the Liao-shih".

In addition, Dr. Wittfogel thought that the Chinese Chancellery was an organ concerned originally with military affairs, and one of Mr. Fu's chief arguments is that the office of the Shu-mi Shih, in the earlier stage of its development, including the Liao Dynasty, was a post comparable to that of the chief minister.