

Liu was always avid for bribes; any official, either appearing at or taking leave of court or leaving on deputation [to a post], always made substantial offerings. When supervising secretary Chou Yüeh had returned after investigating some affair, he committed suicide because he had no gold [for making presents]. Liu was told by a member of his faction, Chang Ts'ai:

Those things left for you as gifts by people from throughout the empire are not necessarily all [their own] private property. Instead [your officials] always borrow at the capital, then return home and repay with cash from the local treasuries. Whyever should you [want to] rake in resentments and bring on disaster?(80)

Liu agreed with him. And it just so happened that censors Ou-yang Yun and others, numbering in all more than ten, were sending in bribes as per the custom. Liu Chin exposed and punished every one of them. Subsequently, he sent a total of fourteen supervising secretaries and censors, each on a separate circuit, to make investigations. Civil officers contended with one another in making large, irregular exactions to pay back the state coffers.

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RESEARCH TOPIC: Note the remark in the keyed reading about a "great change" in the role of remonstrating officials when Hsü returned to court in the third year of the reign. A larger research topic might entail listing every interaction between Liu Chin and censorial or "speaking officials." Use MTC to get fuller contexts; note cliques and see if you can expand on the MS remark about the change, or if you agree with it.

(80)

KEYED READING: MS 306, pp. 7840-41  
Here there are variations in this speech. Do you see any particular method in the way the speech is edited for the Liu Chin biography?

Liu's agents, always zealous in their sycophancy, concentrated solely on making arrests, impeaching ministers Ku Tso, Ssu Chung, Han Wen, and others of lesser rank, numbering altogether several tens. The Chekiang salt transport commissioner Yang Ch'i died with tax arrears [outstanding], so they went so far as to sell his daughters and grandsons.(81) And supervising secretaries An K'uei, P'an Hsi-tseng, and censors Chao Shih-chung, Juan Chi, Chang Yü and Liu Tzu-li were thrown in prison with minor impeachments. An and Chang were cangued to the point of death. Li Tung-yang petitioned for their release, and only then were they set free, but made commoners. P'an and the others also were beaten, and those who were recalcitrant were reprimanded in varying degrees. On top of all this Liu forged an edict confiscating the household property of former censor-in-chief Ch'ien Yüeh, vice-president of the Ministry of Personnel, Huang Ching, and minister Ch'in Hung.

Whomever Liu had arrested, for one family with an offender, its neighbors and townsmen would all stand guilty; or if a family lived within sight of a river, then even the dwellers on the other side would be indicted. He held grand inquisitions frequently, and cries of injustice filled the roads. When the *Hsiao-tsung shih lu*(82) was done, the Hanlin compilers should have been promoted in -----

(81) For a discrepancy concerning this datum, see *K'ao-cheng*, pp. 28a-b.

(82) See Franke, pp. 8-11 for a description of *shih-lu* and their function in the Ming History Office. During the dynasty there were several notorious cases of tampering with these

rank, but Liu hated the Hanlin officials for their usual practice of not humbling themselves [to him], so he transferred expositor-in-waiting [in the National University](83) Wu I-p'eng and others, sixteen in all, to the six civil ministries in Nanking [as a demotion].

At this time Chiao Fang and Liu Yü of the Grand Secretariat, minister of the Ministry of Personnel, Chang Ts'ai, minister of the Ministry of War, Ts'ao Yüan, Palace Guard commanders(84) Yang Yü and Shih Wen-i were all Liu Chin's confidantes. In a change from the old system it was ordered that the grand coordinators(85) throughout the empire must come to the capital to receive edicts of appointment, [thus having] to bring in gifts for Liu. The grand coordinator for Yen-sui,(86) Liu Yü, did not come and was thrown in

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chronicles, and the *Hsiao-tsung shih lu*, (covering the reign of the emperor's father, 1488-1506) was one of them. In Wu-tsung's reign, Chiao Fang was adjudged guilty of malfeasance and of tampering with the data. It is interesting that these occasions were often widely known, discussed, and dealt with contemporaneously. (See Franke, pp. 17 ff.)

(83) *shih-chiang [hsüeh-shih]*; See Hucker, "Govt. Organ.," p.37.

(84) [*chin-i wei*] *chih-hui*; See Hucker, "Govt. Organ.," p. 59.

(85) *hsün-fu*; See Hucker, "Govt. Organ.," p.39-40.

(86)

KEYED READING: MS 306, pp. 7838-39

Again we are "referred" to the important group biography of factional (collusive) officials. Under Liu Yü we find that he had had the distinction of being the first sycophant to make the "customary" bribe to Liu Chin in the amount of 10,000 oz. of silver, thereby setting a new standard. His upward advance thereafter was rapid until his demise here.

prison. The grand coordinator for Hsüan-fu,(87) Lu Wan arrived after [the set time] and was almost punished, but after tendering a gift he was instead demoted to provisional(88) office holder.

For any Peking guard commander and lower [ranked officer] seeking a transfer with promotion, Liu would simply write out on a slip of paper: X gets X job. The Ministry of War would then carry out the matter without daring to submit a further memorial [proposing formal appointment]. When border generals broke the law, if their bribes came in there was no inquiry; on the contrary, they were sometimes promoted. Furthermore, in order to survey the military farmland in the border regions, Liu sent his partisans, who ruthlessly demanded and extorted. The border troops could stand no more and burnt down public buildings. [The disturbance] was settled only after the officials in charge exposed the matter. When supervising secretary Kao Fang conducted the land survey at Ts'ang-chou(89) he impeached and tried sixty-one people; he even -----

Yen-sui was one of the "nine border garrisons," located in NE Shensi, right at the wall. Aoyama does not list it, but Atlas does.

(87) Another of the "nine," located in the NW corner of Pei Chih-li, just inside the Great Wall, about 120 km. from Peking.

(88) *shih-chih*; See Hucker, "Govt. Organ.," p.15.

(89) This area is in modern Hopei; in Ming times it was the southern part of Pei Chih-li, about 150 km. SE of Peking near the coast.

KEYED READING: MS 186, pp. 4943-44

Once again things are dramatized a bit in the Liu Chin biography. The compiler seems to have been drawing his

impeached his father, Kao Ch'üan, just to curry favor with Liu.

Because of [his hatred for] Hsieh Ch'ien, [Liu] ordered that natives of Yü-yao(90) not be allowed to receive Peking appointments. He took advantage of the inquest involving Champa emissary A-Liu's sedition, in order to cut back by fifty the provincial exam quota for Kiangsi, And also, because Chiao Fang hated P'eng Hua, he forbade [Kiangsi officials'] receiving Peking appointments, as in the case of Yü-yao.(91) On his own [authority] Liu increased to 100 the Shensi exam quota, and for Chiao's sake also raised Honan to 95 in order to favor their fellow provincials.

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narrative either from the section of the MS keyed here or from equivalent materials. Kao's father had already been a victim of Liu Chin's wrath, was sent to prison and suffered the grain-levy punishment (see note #75). When his son indicted him he escaped ultimate punishment, which would only have been dismissal without investigation. Nevertheless, to impeach one's father just for currying political favor was a heinous act. What kind of ethos is the MS historian trying to evoke in the Liu Chin biography? Does he actually distort facts in the process?

(90) The place in Chekiang where Hsieh's family was registered (DMB:550). It is near the coast, off the Bay of Hangkow.

(91) P'eng was from An-fu, Kiangsi. He died in 1496, only a few years before these events and had apparently been a controversial career-builder, rising to the Grand Secretariat before illness ended his career.

KEYED READING: MS 306, p. 7836

The events described in this paragraph of the translation are clarified in the keyed reading. A-liu's revolt and any controversies caused by P'eng were secondary to Chiao Fang's hatred of Kiangsi regionals. (See *K'ao-cheng*, p. 28b on this point.) Chiao's speeches and those of a certain Yang Yen-ho show a specious type of historical theorization, but the repartee is interesting. Translate the exchange and comment on Chiao's historical allusions.

In the same year the emperor issued an Act of Grace, [but] Liu Chin's cruel punishments went on as usual. Minister of justice Liu Ching had no one to impeach and Liu berated him. Frightened, Ching charged three members of his own staff, including Wang Shang-pin. Only then was Liu Chin satisfied. When supervising secretary Ch'ih K'uei investigated the [military] achievements at Yü-lin(92) he was fearful that he had displeased Liu Chin, so he hanged himself. Supervising secretary Ch'ü Ch'üan and chancellor of the National University(93) Wang Yun-feng petitioned to compile all the [government] matters carried out by Liu; these were promulgated as codes and statutes.

In the fifth year [of the Cheng-te reign], fourth month [most of May and the beginning of June 1510], the Prince of An-hua, [Chu] Chih-fan, rebelled and promulgated a formal manifesto, listing Liu  
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(92)

KEYED READING: 1) MS 90, pp. 2208 f.  
2) MS 91, pp.2237 f.

In the first keyed reading Yü-lin wei is one of 29 *wei* (plus 18 *so*, 4 *ssu*, and 3 *chün-mu so*) listed under Shen-hsi tu-ssu. The second tells us about the building of the great fortifications at Yü-lin ch'eng under Wang Chen in the Cheng-t'ung era, and the emergence by the time of Wu-tsung of three important garrisons in Shensi, the *san-pien*. One of these was Yen-hui, which included Yü-lin wei. (Atlas shows only Yü-lin so.)

Pokotilov-Franke, Notes, pp. 16-17 describes the difficulty in determining which were the "Nine Garrisons." But the phrase actually came from a later period of the Ming. In earlier times the border garrison system was still in flux.

(93) *chi-chiu*; See Hucker, "Govt. Organ.," p.38. (In Section I of this work, note #43, the term is translated "National Academy.")

Chin's crimes.(94) At this point Liu became afraid. He hid the manifesto and recalled censor-in-chief Yang I-ch'ing and eunuch director Chang Yung to be supreme commanders to put down the prince.

Previously, Liu's fellow Eight Tigers -- Ma Yung-ch'eng, Ku Ta-yung and the others -- had come to resent him for not responding to most of their [personal] requests during his monopoly of the government. [Liu] also had tried to get rid of Chang Yung, who concocted some excuse and saved himself. So now, as Chang came back from the campaign, he thought about taking advantage [of his position] to have Liu executed. When Yang I-ch'ing drew up a plan, Chang's mind was at once made up.(95)

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(94)

KEYED READING: MS 117, pp. 3590-91

This short reading gives some details on how the rebellion started and its anti-Liu motives. Neither here nor in MTC:1614-16 are the specifics of the manifesto stated.

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KEYED READING: MS 198, pp. 5525-31 & 304, pp. 7792-93

Yang had an interesting and complex role during the Liu Chin era. He had been a very successful military expert, but was throttled by Liu, imprisoned, and rescued. He resigned in April 1507.

RESEARCH TOPIC: Note that Yang was released from prison on the basis of appeals by Li Tung-yang and Wang Ao (MS:9227). See Li Tung-yang's biography in MS, and the discussion of him and Yang in Wang Ao, third *ch.*, pp. 22a f. and 29a f., respectively. Note also the detailed conversation between Yang and Chang, MS: 5227-28. One might now add information or qualification to the problem of cliques raised earlier.

Liu Chin was given to calling in diviners, and there was a certain Yü Jih-ming who wildly predicted that Liu's brother's grandson, Erh-han, was destined for the greatest of high positions. The eunuch director of the weapons depot Sun Ho often left weapons [with Liu]. The eunuch grand defenders of Liang-Kuang [Kwangsi and Kwangtung], P'an Kan and Ts'ai Chao, also had crossbows made for him. Liu kept all of these hidden at his house.(96)

Chang Yung's victory memorial [announcing victory over the Prince of An-hua] had arrived at court. He was to present prisoners on the fifteenth day of the eighth month [17 September 1510]. Liu made him postpone it. Chang worried that there was going to be an incident, so he came ahead of schedule. When the presentation was over, the emperor gave Chang Yung a celebration, at which Liu and the others were all in attendance. That night, after Liu Chin had withdrawn, Chang brought out the manifesto of the Prince of An-hua, and based on it memorialized to the emperor about seventeen cases of Liu Chin's wrongdoings.(97) The emperor, already sotted, lowered his head and said, "Chin has betrayed my  
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(96) This may suggest that Liu Chin had been urged through this divination to lay in arms in order to seize the throne for Erh-han, whom he apparently had adopted (see DMB:944). It established grounds for his subsequent execution for treason. (*K'ao-cheng*, p. 29a, emends the MS here, claiming that Erh-han was the brother's son.)

(97) *K'ao-cheng*, pp. 29b-30a, calls attention to the fact that these were not seventeen but nineteen, and given by an authority other than Chang Yung. Is the other authority and the textual basis for it preferable to that narrated by the MS?

trust." Yung replied, "This [matter] cannot be delayed." Ma Yung-ch'eng and the others also supported him.

They snatched Liu right away, and held him in the vegetable warehouse. They dispatched guard officers separately to seal off his private residences inside and outside the palace city. The next day, after the late audience, the emperor took out Chang's memorial and showed it to the grand secretaries. He demoted Liu to palace attendant and had him banished to Feng-yang.(98) When the emperor personally ordered the confiscation of [the belongings in] Liu's household, he obtained one counterfeit imperial seal, 500 passes into the private [imperial] apartments and also body-armor, crossbows, imperial ceremonial garments, jade belts and all sorts of other proscribed articles. Even the fan that Liu usually carried had hidden inside it two sharp daggers. Only at that point did the emperor really become furious; he said, "That slave was actually [planning to] rebel!!" He quickly had Liu jailed. When the case had been documented the emperor ordered that he be executed by slicing in the market,(99) and his head displayed. The articles of the inquiry and drawings of the execution were posted in order to make it known throughout the empire. Liu's clansmen

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(98) In central Nan Chih-li (modern Anhwei). This was the home region of the dynastic family, and was a heavily garrisoned territorial prison.

(99) The date was 27 September 1510. A more detailed account of Liu Chin's execution appears in MSL "Wu-tsung," *ch.* 66, p.1460. It is quite graphic.

and treasonous partisans were all executed. Chang Ts'ai died in prison and his corpse was dismembered. The officials in the Grand Secretariat Chiao Fang, Liu Yü and Ts'ao Yüan; and others below them: ministers Pi Heng and Chu En, et al., numbering altogether more than sixty, were all demoted and exiled. Afterward, ministers presented memorials at court concerning Liu's changes in administrative regulations: 24 items involving Ministry of Personnel [procedures]; more than 30 in the Ministry of Finance; 18 in War and 13 in Works. The emperor ordered that in every case they be rectified so as to be exactly like the old system.(100)

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(100)

KEYED READING: MS 16, pp. 203-04 & 213

The description of these events in the *pen-chi* of Wu-tsung's reign once again raises the problem of the differences in source genre and historiographic intent within virtually any standard Chinese history. Here the result of the MS compilers' careful editing is a terse description of Liu Chin's demise: the rebellion of Chu Chih-fan takes on the appearance of an expected, even anti-climactic signal of the end, afterward Liu's partisans begin to resign or be demoted, the emperor's interest in defense perks up, and Liu is executed. One should realize that the aims of the MS did not include analytical history with the study of cause and effect. Moral judgment was far more important, something which is apparent from reading the encomium. Wu-tsung was seen to be simply incapable of ruling, and was no better after Liu Chin was out of the way. After studying something of traditional eunuch institutions, fiscal problems and maneuvers, usurpation of bureaucratic posts, eunuch-official cliques and alliances, and court terror, how might you criticize or actually rewrite this keyed reading (in classical Chinese if you can)?