

Preliminary Study of the Extant T'ang Household
Registers with Reference to the T'ang-Ling 唐令

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The arguments of my thesis may be summarized as follows.

In the first place, the writer notes that the way of description in the extant household registers differs among the localities of Tun-huang 敦煌 and Turfan 吐魯番 and in each period of the T'ang Dynasty. For instance, the *chi-t'ien* 給田 or State-provided fields in T'ien-pao 天寶 and Ta-li 大曆 period is described in the register in a markedly simple way in comparison with the description in the preceding period of the T'ang Dynasty.

When we compare the records of the extant T'ang household registers with the regulations of the *T'ang-ling* or the statutes of the T'ang Dynasty about their ways of descriptions, it becomes clear that among the set of rules established in the twenty-fifth year of Kai-yüan 開元 Era (737), many of the rules in fact were already in effect from the seventh year (719) and some even go back to the seventh year of Wu-te 武德 Era (624). However, this case of *T'ang-ling* should not be generalized. For, close examination of the extant T'ang household registers will reveal the following points concerning the four rules of the *Hu-ling* 戶令 or household statutes established in the seventh year of Kai-yüan Era compiled in the *T'ang-lu-t'ien* 唐六典

(a) Rules concerning the *Chiu-teng-hu* System 九等戶制 (rank order of households into nine grades) were issued in March, the ninth year of Chen-kuan 貞觀 Era (635);

(b) Rules concerning the *chi-nien-tsa-chi* 季年造籍 (registering the households every second, fifth, eighth and eleventh year of the twelve-horary signs) were issued during the period of the third year of T'ien-shou 天授 Era (692) and the first year of Ta-tsa 大足 Era (701);

(c) Rules concerning the *chung-nien-ting-hu* 中年定戶 (enforcing of the household ranking system i.e. *Chiu-teng-hu* system every second, fifth, eighth and eleventh year of the twelve horary signs) were issued in the preceding year of the *chi-nien-tsa-chi*;

(d) Rules concerning the *hu-teng-chu-chi* 戶等注籍 (filling in the specific grade of the household into the register) were issued during the period of the fourth year of Chang-an 長安 Era (704) and the second year of Hsien-t'ien 先天 Era (713). At first, these were issued separately as temporary ordinances. Later, with the revision of the *Hu-ling* in the seventh year of Kai-yüan Era they were compiled together in it. What is evident from this development is that the *Hu-ling* is not merely the repetition or enumeration of the previous household statutes but it is a complete collection of all the rules issued so far, including the ordinances as well which were

issued in times of socio-political upheaval some time before the seventh year of Kai-yüan Era.

The latter part of the thesis deals with the registers (MSS. No. P. 3877V) found in Tun-huang 敦煌 which is presumed as belonging to the fourth and tenth years of Kai-yüan Era. Problems arise when they are compared with the *T'ang-ling* as regards their descriptions of *hu-k'ou* 戶口 and *chi-t'ien* 給田 and errata in the description as well. These household registers seem to have compiled purposely together the incomplete ones; thus they cannot be regarded as the official documents as such, but rather as a sort of drafts for making the registers. Bearing these points in mind in analyzing the statements in these two *chi-t'ien*, following points have been clarified.

(a) The records during the period of the first and the fourth years of Kai-yüan Era show a sudden decrease in the acreage of the *i-shou-k'ou-fen-t'ien* 已受口分田 or the arable fields which have already been granted by the Government;

(b) This implies the close correspondence with the registers of the tenth year of Kai-yüan Era. Coming six years later, it records that not a single the *k'ou-fen-t'ien* 口分田 was granted by the Government. It corresponds also with the considerable decrease of the *yung-yeh-t'ien* 永業田 or the fields which may be inherited forever and are not bound to the Government;

(c) The fact that the acreage of the *i-shou-t'ien* 已受田 (Government-provided fields) per household hardly reached that of the *ying-shou-yung-yeh-t'ien* 應受永業田 (fields that may be inherited which are to be granted by the Government) per *ting-nan* 丁男 or adult male, that is to say, 20 *mou* 畝 (20 Chinese acres), must be an exceptional case and only to be found in the registers of this period.

(d) From these assumptions, the writer is of opinion that the decrease in the acreage of the *i-shou-t'ien* i.e. *k'ou-fen-t'ien* and *yung-yeh-t'ien*, does not imply that it was actually returned to the Government. Rather, it suggests the diminishing influence of the *Chün-t'ien* System 均田制 or land allocation system.

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