All goods which are poor in quality and not made according to law (standards), and all goods which are too ostentatious and lewd and exceed limits will be abolished.

In the Yeh-ling (月令) section of the Li-chi it says: In the last month of spring (the 3rd month), order the Kung-shih (工師: officials in charge of the manufacture of goods) to have the artisans inspect the goods in the 5 warehouses (Han, 4, p.413, carts, weapons, ritual objects, musical instruments, and banquet equipment). With respect to fur, gold, iron, leather, sinew, bone, teeth, feathers, arrow shafts (sal’tae 林), mulberry trees (ppongnamu 林), fat (ョ), pumk past(መ)(purye agyo), red dye (pyug’un mulgam 染), and lacquer (ch’il 薚), they should see to it that no poor articles are included among them. When the artisans (paekkong 百工) (make the goods), the supervisory official will supervise their work every day and see to it that what is made is not contrary to what (is demanded) at the time, or that the goods might be excessively ostentatious and thus might delude the mind of the ruler.

In the last month of winter (12th month), the Kung-shih will be ordered to inspect the results (of the manufactured work), lay out the ritual utensils, and see if they meet standard regulations seeing or skillfully (elaborately) to it that none are made too ostentatiously/lest they delude the mind of the ruler. He should assign the label "superior" (shang) to meritorious work (articles) that are finely made, and he should also have the name of the artisan carved on the object in order to make known his sincerity and merit (to the world). Anyone who does not meet standards (of manufacture) must be punished and the circumstances investigated. (Pang I 方鷺) says:

Artisanry is definitely a matter of skill. But if one goes to excess in his use of his skills, then the result is lewdness (ostentation, 明), and this ostentation is enough to confuse (t’ang 混) the mind of the ruler.
These procedures that were conducted in the late spring and late winter were both done to prevent the production of ostentatious and over-elaborate goods that might lead the ruler astray. Before the fact, they warned the artisans who were in the process of making the items; (in the spring), and (in the winter) after the fact, they punished them on the basis of the goods that had already been made, and warned them, too.

The Wang-chih (section of the Li-chi) says: Utensils for use which do not meet standards cannot be sold in the marketplace. Weapons and vehicles which do not meet standards are not to be sold in the marketplace. Cotton and silk products, fine or coarse, if they do not meet standards (for the number of threads per foot?) and if their width is too wide or too narrow and does not fit the standard rule (measure), they are not to be sold in the marketplace. And if their colors are either lewd or irregular, they are not to be sold in the marketplace.

Indented section: I note that in the age of former kings (of the Chou?), all the artisans received grain rations and salaries for performing their (specific) responsibilities. In general anyone who was an artisan had a fixed occupation and they were also able to earn a living from their work.

In addition there were prohibitions (against the sale of manufactured goods which did not conform to standards) and it was for this reason that with respect to such products as utensils, plates, thread and cloth, there were no poorly or roughly made garments that could not be used, and with regard to luxury items (that might delude the minds of people). But in our country, the laws and systems are not clear, and we use force to make regulations.
manufactured goods -3- sokpyon, sang

p.500, 25:50b) We have never had fixed taxes on artisans, and only when there is a royal decree do we force them to work without compensation for the cost (of producing the goods). (note: In ancient times artisans were taxed every year at a regular rate, and there were no arbitrary exactions made on them outside of the regular taxes. In the case of workers in the employ of the state (kongyŏk / grandfather ), they were always compensated for the value of the product (paid a price in compensation for the goods, sang ki xan ch'ipe). For this reason those with ability were able to live well and each of them was encouraged to develop their skills. But in our country, I have never heard of our having had a regular tax (on artisans). Whenever a magistrate hears of the name (of a good artisan), he uses his authority to force him to work (for him) without paying him a price (for his goods). It is for this reason that people with influence (in our country) also borrow orders from the magistrate, which (orders) are called "Haengha" (行下 ), which are used to force artisans to work (without compensation). (end note) (In ancient China) Artisans with ability were not subjected to difficult (forced) labor, and those without much ability were left alone and no harm done to them. And it was for this reason that there was not a single article manufactured by the ancient artisans (pai-kung 百工 ) that was poorly made. It was not because the talent and knowledge of people (at that time) was exceptional (that this was so); it was because the laws and regulations of the time made it that way. (in cha'ae-ji p.501, 25:51a) isu ye, pŏp kyo sayŏn ya. (note: Once the land system has been put into practice and laws have been established for schools (the way I have suggested), then as a matter of course the "four peoples" (people of the four social or occupational classes) will be able to "obtain their due" (tŭkso 得所). The artisans and merchants will have fixed taxes (levied on them), and there will be no arbitrary or excessive levies (forced labor) on them.
p.501, 25:51a) and with respect to official artisans, they will have regular salaries.

And if their rations are graded superior or inferior in accordance with an inspection of how skillful (they are in the manufacture of goods), then we will have a method by which to both encourage them (their skill) and provide warning (to those whose work is inferior). (end note)

And only after that (having laws to encourage and punish good and back workmanship) ought (we) order the responsible officials to from time to time to issue prohibitions (against the sale of certain shoddy goods) in the marketplace, and also to punish people who make poor goods, goods that are not up to standards, over-elaborate (ostentations) goods that exceed standards (of propriety) and delude the minds of men (lead man astray into a love of finery) (note: With regard to (such) matters, if you do not let people know about what is prohibited and prevent (their breaking the law) in advance, then once something becomes an established custom, it is difficult to reform (change) it. The present situation where we have poorly made cloth is also one example of this. Only after that will people know that in the age of former kings (of the Chou?), with regards to the goods made by artisans and sold in the marketplace, there were no cases without standards or prohibitions (against the sale of shoddy goods). The intention behind this was profound. This is the one road by which one rectifies the minds of men, promotes merit (skill) in affairs (in the manufacture of things?), unifies (makes same) all under Heaven, and protects customs (against bad influences). (end note)

Indented section: I also note that Li Kou said: The first thing to do in managing finances (goods? ) is to do away with falsehood (falsehood). If dishonesty and fraudulence among the people are what fills up (consumes) their ordinary feelings, then how much more so in the marketplace and the wells (gathering places of the people) will there be no
p.501, 25:51a) will people act to embellish things (make lousy goods look good) or conceal and hide (the truths about their products that they have for sale?) If (merchants, artisans?) use deceit to falsify (what are really) bad goods and can create confusion to deceive others (into thinking they are good products) in order to obtain profit, then people will compete with one another to pursue (this path). Do you think only the ignorant people will be deceived? Everyone will be made to obstruct their time (waste their time: pang'il) and abandon their (rightful occupations--productive occupations?) in order to make goods of no utility, and if people abandon their (true productive) occupations, they basically will not have enough (to subsist on).

If the goods (that are produced) are of no utility, then the state will not have enough. If (the people) below do away with what is fundamental (basic to their livelihoods), then (the rulers) on top will lose what they need (finances), and calamity will have its origin in this.

Chiu Chün (崔信) said: "Even though the goods that are laid out in the shops of the marketplace are the affair (business) of the artisan and merchant, nevertheless, such matters as whether customs tend to ostentation or frugality, whether human feelings (tend toward) fancy or true (things: hwa-sil), or whether the state has plenty or not enough for its finances--all these things depend on this.

What these two men had to say (Li Kou and Chiu Chün) are both profound. They had opinions which set forth the essentials of government and teachings, and we cannot help keep (their opinions) in mind.