THE IMPERIAL PRESENCE IN THE PALACE POEMS OF WANG CHIEN (CA. A.D. 768-833)

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In an article published twenty years ago,[1] Francis Woodman Cleaves extolled *kung-tz'u* (宮詞, the Palace Poems) of the Yüan dynasty poet K'o Chiu-ssu (柯九思, 1290-1343) for their value as documents for many aspects of court life, contrasting them to earlier palace poems whose content was limited to the typecast plaint of a palace lady. Professor Cleaves suggested that K'o Chiu-ssu was the first poet to write this new kind of palace poems with a broad range of subject matter.[2] A study of the palace poems of the T'ang dynasty poet Wang Chien (王建),[3] however, reveals that his works also contain much historical data concerning court life. Actually, this fact was recognized long ago by Chinese scholars, as can be seen in the following quotation from the *Ch'üan T'ang shih-hua hsü-pien* (全唐詩話續編, *Complete T'ang Poetry Talks Second Series*).

> The *Ku-chin shih-hua* (古今詩話, *Poetry Talks Old and New*)[4] states: In Wang Chien's one hundred palace poems there is much said about matters within the palace precinct; things not recorded in historical or fictional works are often found in these poems. For example: "For several days there's been no hubbub in the harem—/Passing around the butterfly paintings of Prince T'eng."[5] Prince T'eng, [Li] Yüan-ying, was Emperor Kao-tsu's son. Neither the *Hsin T'ang shu* (新唐書, *New T'ang History*) nor the *Chiu T'ang shu* (舊唐書, *Old T'ang History*) tells us anything of his special talents;[6] Ming-hua lu (名畫錄, *Record of Famous Artists*) refers to his skill in painting, but even it does not refer to this skill in painting butterflies related only in Wang Chien's poem.[7]
>
> 古今詩話云。王建宮詞百首。多言禁中事。皆史傳小說所不載者。往往見於其詩。如內中數日無呼喚。傳得滕王蛺蝶圖之類。滕王元嬰。高祖子。新舊唐書皆不著其所能。惟名畫錄略言其善畫。亦不言其工蛺蝶也。惟見于建詩耳。

It is not, however, the general historical information contained in these works which is of interest, but that which particularly refers to or describes the emperor. Throughout Chinese history, descriptions of the emperor, like imperial portraits, are highly stylized. The purely historical accounts record the imperial life as it touched upon and was influenced by the bureaucracy. In contrast, these poems of Wang Chien provide a unique opportunity to view something of the more human aspects of the life of a T'ang emperor.

Wang Chien had a long and many-sided career. Although traditional biographies of him (such as the *T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan* [唐才子傳, *Biographies of the Talented Men of the T'ang*][8]) report that he first served in several court positions under Emperor Te-tsung (德宗, r. 780-805), and later became a provincial official and military commander, it has recently been shown that Wang first served in the military (ca. 796-816), then received a provincial appointment (ca. 817-820), and finally came to court in 821 during the reign of Emperor Mu-tsung (穆宗, r. 821-824).[9] These findings are corroborated both by internal evidence in the palace poems, and by the poem (translated below) which Wang Chien wrote to Wang Shou-ch'eng (王守澄, d. 835). Thus when Wang Chien wrote these palace poems during the final years of the Yüan-ho reign period (806-820) while serving as the director of employees of Wei-nan County, he had not yet served at court. The impetus for their writing and the source for their detail seem to have been a eunuch relation, Wang Shou-ch'eng. An account of the relationship between these two men is given in the *Yün-hsi yu-i* (雲谿友議):[10]

> When the Reviser of Texts Wang Chien was made Director of Employees of Wei-nan [County], he wrote palace poems. . . .While at Wei-nan he first fulfilled his obligations as a clansman towards the eunuch Imperial Commissioner of Political Secrets, Wang [Shou-ch'eng]. But the two were not peers and later Wang Chien seemed to feel he had been slighted and slandered. Suddenly, because he had drunk too much, he mentioned that when Huan and Ling [emperors of the Latter Han dynasty who ruled from 147 to 167 and 168 to 188 respectively] placed their trust in eunuchs, they often were plagued by factionalism and events arose which were to determine the fate of the dynasty. The imperial commissioner of political secrets, sorely vexed at this derision, said, "Those palace poems of my younger cousin are intoned everywhere throughout the country. But the harem is so remote, how is it that you have knowledge of it?" Wang Chien was unable to reply. Mr. Yüan [元稹, Yüan Chen] personally received an imperial edict ordering his works to be hidden away.[11] The court took into consideration K'ung Kuang's refusal to mention the [palace] greenhouse trees, and could not see the need for such caution.[12] Both of the gentlemen [Wang Chien and Wang Shou-ch'eng] were about to be reported in

memorials to the emperor when Wang Chien wrote a poem to chide Wang Shou-ch'eng and to get out of this dilemma. Wang Chien's poem read:

As the former emperor proceeded,
you followed as a guard;
The present sovereign was still in the Spring Palace
as you attended his youth.[13]
When he discards his robes,
he hands them to you;
As chargers are presented,
he orders you to ride.
Because of secret orders,
you have long not been home;
You alone inform him of outside affairs,
leaving the hall late;
Since we are clansmen,
you spoke confidentially;
But how could you let
an outsider know![14]

王建校書爲渭南尉，作宮詞。……渭南先祖內宮王樞密，盡宗人之分，然彼我不均，後懷輕謗之色。忽因過飲，語及『桓靈信任中官，多遭黨錮之罪，而起興廢之事。』樞密深憾其譏，詰曰：『吾弟所有宮詞，天下皆誦於口。禁掖深邃，何以知之？』建不能對，元公親承聖旨，令隱其文，朝廷以爲孔光不言溫樹，何其愼靜乎！二君將遭奏劾，爲詩以讓之，乃脫其禍也。建詩曰：『先朝行坐鎮相隨，今上春宮見長時。脫下御衣偏得着，進來龍馬每交騎。常承密旨還家少，獨奏邊情出殿遲。不是當家頻向說，九重爭遣外人知。』

The *T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan* version appends the following line: "Wang Shou-ch'eng was afraid of involving himself, and the affair was put to rest." (守澄恐累已，事遂寢).[15]

Whether the two men met first at Wei-nan (located just to the east of Ch'ang-an), or in the capital city itself can not be known. It seems evident, however, that palace poems came to be written as a result of their acquaintance. With the information supplied by Wang Shou-ch'eng, who served in Emperor Hsien-tsung's guard as well as in the retinue of the emperor's son, one thus finds in Wang Chien's poems a unique description of a Chinese court and its monarch.

The poems themselves were probably originally titled *kung-chung-tz'u* (宮中詞, Poems from Within the Palace),[16] a title which more accurately

reflects their source. Each of these works was a *chüeh-chü* (絕句), consisting of four seven-word lines. Although the number of poems in this sequence varies in different editions, the original total was probably exactly one hundred.[17] At least ninety of the extant works are considered authentic.[18] The series seems to have attained some immediate popularity.[19] It became, moreover, a model for many subsequent palace-poem series.[20] The translations below are numbered according to the carefully annotated Jingū Bunko (神宮文庫, manuscript copy text of "Higashi Kei" [東袈, by 青山伯頎, Aoyama Hakki, 1791-1849]),[21] which has served as the base text for this study. In the translations each line has been broken by vertical spacing in an attempt to represent the caesura of the original. Other editions[22] of these poems approximate Higashi's, and only important textual variants have been noted.

Not all the poems in this series, however, deal with the emperor. The following verse (Higashi #12), a simple description of the paintings in the Hall of Assembled Sages,[23] may also be read as a metaphoric supplication on behalf of the palace-ladies. The harem girls, like these paintings in the Hall of Assembled Sages, were separated according to originals (those women who found favor with the emperor and were often in attendance upon him) and copies (those neglected), who remained locked in "cases of jade." Characteristic of this series, the plaint is not put into the words of a palace-woman persona, but depicted from the point of view of an outside observer, that of Wang Chien.

In the Hall of Assembled Sages–
paintings everywhere;
Examine their edges–
imperial seals![24]
Originals recognized by
their caption and signature,[25]
The copies stored
locked in cases of jade.

集賢殿內圖畫滿，黑勘頭邊御印同。
眞跡進來依數字，別收鎖在玉函中。

In some of these poems the reader is led outside the palace proper into the imperial hunting park north of Ch'ang-an. The following account of a falcon kill (Higashi #24) is a good illustration of the breadth of subject matter portrayed in this series.

The falcon's[26] cage removed,
loose his red jesses;

Eager for battle he struggles
from the hand held high,
Straight to the turquoise clouds,
then down–
Golden claws clutched in
a spotted fur.

內鷹籠脫 解紅條，鬪勝爭飛出手高；
直上碧雲還却下，一雙金爪掬花毛。

If not a firsthand record of an imperial hunting party, this poem may illustrate a part of the spectacle. Yet as material for a cultural history, it is admittedly wanting.

The next poem (Higashi #25), however, describes a prototype of the modern Dragon Boat Race as it took place on *P'eng-lai ch'ih* (蓬萊池, the Pondweed Pool) in the imperial palace. Although there are several such contests noted in the official histories of this period, and a lengthy discussion in Chao I's (趙翼, 1727-1814) *Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao* (陔餘叢考),[27] Wang Chien's description is the only "source" which gives details of an actual race, such as the silk-robed sailors and the "rules" of the competition.

Racing boats prow to prow,
the flag is dropped:
On both sides splashing
soaks the silken robes;
From the east bank
struggling toward the west;
First there is first to write
shang [上][28] and return.

競渡船 頭掉來旗，兩邊濺水濕羅衣。
池東爭向池西岸，先到先書上字歸。

In the works discussed above, the poet's intent was not at all to present historical fact. Yet these poems may supplement our knowledge of T'ang palace life. Similarly, with only a modicum of imagination, one may extract interesting details concerning the person of the emperor from certain of the poems. This material could then be cautiously appended to the official accounts of Hsien-tsung's (憲宗, r. 806-820) life.[29] The following composition, for example, portrays Hsien-tsung as a youth (Higashi #9).

When young the emperor
loved to plan out campaigns;
He would go himself to
the Gallery of the Wild Blue,[30]
And order the portraits
of loyal statesmen

Put on folding screens
in the Hall of Long Life.

少年天子愛邊功，親到凌烟畫閣中。
教覓勳臣寫圖本，長生殿裏作屏風。

Like the toy soldiers with which Henry the Fifth of England is said to have amused himself, the idea of the crown prince assembling the likenesses of great leaders helps to humanize the otherwise stylized historical cameo. The first indications of impetuosity and of an aggressive character[31] could perhaps already be seen (at least by psycho-biographers) in this poem. The young prince[32] seems more interested in the dynastic heroes than in attending to the lectures on the classics, which were also provided him in the Hall of Long Life. Yet this martial spirit did not completely dominate the portrait of the emperor one finds in this series, as the next poem reveals (Higashi #23):

Early autumn white rabbits,
bigger than a fist;
Red ears and frosted fur,
sleeping in the grass.
The emperor won't allow
anyone to shoot them;
His jade-handle whip protects them
from his horse's hooves.

新秋白兎大於拳，紅耳霜毛趁草眠。
天子不敎人射殺，玉鞭遮到馬蹄前。

Again the desire to protect mere rabbits unveils a flattering trait, especially in view of the common royal predilection for massive hunts.[33]

In the following poem (Higashi #21) the emperor is consorting with a lady at some remote place of assignation. A guard has been entrusted with ensuring the emperor's safety while not disturbing him, but fails in this sensitive situation to maintain both his watchfulness and his discretion.

East of the city and north—
the Pavilion for Cloud Gazing;[34]
Half-lowered pearl shades,
the crescent moon half-risen;
At a distance a rider
passes quickly by,
Then, suddenly, encounters
the emperor at the gate.

城東北面望雲樓，半下珠簾半上鉤；
騎馬行人長速過，忽防天子在樓頭。

In a less risqué, yet still informal scene, Wang Chien describes the preparations for an imperial birthday celebration (Higashi #59).[35]

His Majesty's birthday
will be tomorrow;
Secretly an order to assemble
all the eunuchs;
Each personally signs
a gold-flecked red card,[36]
To present at court
with the phoenix robe. [37]

聖人生日明朝是，私地教人屬內監；
自寫金花紅牓子，在前進上鳳凰衫。

Other festivities are also staged in this series. The bathing ceremony on the third day after the birth of a child, in this case a prince,[38] for example, provides the impetus for the following poem (Higashi #71). In this ritual the infant was washed in a basin which had been lined with coins. After the bathing it was customary to distribute the coins among the women and servants of the house.[39] Although one is not afforded a view of the emperor himself, his presence as the object of the apotheosis and entreaties of the women is sensed.

Midday sun in the hall
and incense smoke;
Cries of "long life" echo then
heave against heaven.
Court ladies are in the close
on this great day,
While singing girls plead
for coins from the basin.

日高殿裏有香烟，萬歲聲長重九天。
妃子院中新降誕，內人爭乞洗兒錢。

The next verse (Higashi #10) presents his majesty in an official attitude as he returns from south of the capital, having performed there the sacrifices connected with the solar solstice.[40]

The Red Phoenix Tower Gate
opens to torches:
The first rank of the procession
into the Pondweed Palace;[41]
Before the grandstand horsemen
pass the word:
The emperor has returned from
a night in the Southern Suburb.

丹鳳樓門把火開，先排法駕出蓬萊。
棚前走馬人傳語，天子南郊一宿迴。

This suggests a picture of crowds gathering either within the palace (the exact nature of the "grandstand" *[p'eng,* 棚 *]* remains unclear) or in the streets south of the palace grounds, hoping to catch a glimpse of the imperial carriage. The horsemen may be announcing the arrival of the emperor in order to clear the way. Since the area of the city surrounding the palace gates was inhabited primarily by high officials and is not the place where one might expect a large assembly of curious onlookers, the grandstand may be a temporary palace structure where the palace staff and ladies awaited the emperor's return.

In the last poem we will look at, the emperor is presented in his consumate omnipotence, as the ruler of all under heaven, overlooking the approach of a foreign tribute mission. This entourage, from Tibet, would have come through the Silver Terrace Gates[42] in the western wall of the palace and assembled before the *Lin-te tien* (麟德殿, Unicorn Virtue Hall), also known as the Three-sided Hall.[43] Since under Hsien-tsung's reign the Tibetans had again begun to send regularly the annual tribute cortege (often neglected in the years following the An Lu-shan Rebellion) this mission, possibly the richly laden group of 817,[44] must have represented an acme in the life of the ruler.

In the pre-dawn the
Nine-fold Gates open:
Dragons gilded yellow
on a rainbow of banners;
Straight to the Silver Terrace
in military order they close;
His Majesty, aloft in the Three-sided Hall,
confronts Tibet. [Higashi #8]

未明開着九重關，金畫黃龍五色幡，
直到銀臺排仗合，聖人三殿對西蕃。

An aggrandized impression of the sovereignty of the T'ang palace emerges from this scene where the son of heaven looks down defiantly upon "Tibet."[45] With officialdom and military no doubt strongly represented, the Tibetans must have been truly awed as they gazed into porticos filled with the elite of the Great T'ang.

Having thus returned Hsien-tsung to the stylized, external view of the official histories, we may reflect upon the more personal, internal view of the emperor as seen in the preceding poems from within the palace walls. In a culture like that of traditional China where so much of what was called history

is not (at least not in the contemporary understanding of the term[46]), it should come as no surprise that among what would ordinarily be labelled belles lettres there can be found sources of historical significance. Although the evidence in these poems is "second-hand" at best and its manner of presentation is certainly not that of an historian, it may still prove valuable if considered as background or supplementary data. It has the advantage of having escaped the historical censor and is at least equal in stature to anecdotal sources. Indeed, for the humanistic historian, these poems represent an invaluable, albeit incomplete, source for viewing the spirit and mechanics of court life in the early ninth century, and perhaps even afford the best obtainable picture of the imperial visage in that era.

Notes

The author would like to thank Professors Craig Fisk, Irving Yucheng Lo, and Ronald C. Miao for their suggestions. He alone, however, is responsible for the contents of this study.

Abbreviations used in the notes but not otherwise explained are *ch./chüan* (卷), fol./folio page, *HJAS/Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, SPPY/Ssu-pu pei-yao* (四部備要), *SPTK/Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* (四部叢刊).

1. Francis Woodman Cleaves, "Fifteen 'Palace Poems,' by K'o Chiu-ssu," *HJAS*, 20(1957), 391-479.
2. Aside from Wang Chien's works, however, it would seem that one of the characteristics of the *kung-tz'u* is their historical nature; see Wen I-to (聞一多), "K'ung-t'i-shih te tzu-shu," (宮體詩的自贖) in *Wen I-to ch'üan-chi* (聞一多全集) (Shanghai: Hsin-hua shu-tien, 1957), IV, 11.
3. Wang Chien has no biography in the official histories. Standard accounts of his life are found in the *T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan* (唐才子傳) (Taipei: Kuang-wen shu-chü 1969), *ch.* 4, fol. 10b, *T'ang-shih chi-shih* (唐詩紀事) (Shanghai: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1965), *ch.* 44, pp. 677-678, and Ogawa Tamaki (小川環樹), *Tōdai no shi jin—sono denki* (唐代の詩人—その傳記) (Tokyo: Taishokan shoten, 1975), pp. 357-62.
4. This is the same work as the *Ku-chin shih-hua lu*(古今詩話錄). According to the bibliographic notice of this work in the *Sung shih* (宋史), *ch.* 209, fol. 12a (*Po-na* [百衲] edition; this edition was used for all references to dynastic histories in this paper), it was written by Li Ch'i (李頎, *fl.* 1115); cf. Lo Ken-ts'e (羅根澤), *Chung-kuo Wen-hsüeh p'i-p'ing-shih* (中國文學批評史) (Shanghai: Jen-wen shu-tien, 1934), III, 273-274.
5. The complete text of the poem, Higashi #60, is as follows:

   Because of the heat in the palace
   no dice are tumbled;
   Instead one sits by the well
   to spit water at baby crows;

For several days there's been no
hubbub in the harem—
Passing around the butterfly paintings
of Prince T'eng.

避暑昭陽不擲盧，井邊含水噴鴉雛。
內中數日無呼喚，傳得滕王蛺蝶圖。

6. Li Yüan-ying (李元嬰) was the twenty-second son of Emperor Kao-tsu (高祖). His biographies are found in the *Chiu T'ang shu* (舊唐書, *Old T'ang History*) (hereafter cited as *CTS*), *ch.* 64, fol. 14b-15a and the *Hsin T'ang-shu* (新唐書, *New T'ang History*) (hereafter *HTS*), *ch.* 79, fol. 12b.
7. Ting Fu-pao (丁福保, 1874-1952), *Ch'ing shih-hua* (清詩話) (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1963), p. 636.
8. See note 3.
9. Pien Hsiao-hsüan (卞孝萱), "Kuan-yü Wang Chien te chi-ko wen-t'i" (關于王建的幾個問題 "Several Questions Concerning Wang Chien"), *Wen-hsüeh i-ch'an tseng-k'an* (文學遺產增刊), 8 (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1961), pp. 107-19, especially pp. 115-9.
10. *Ch.* 10, fol. 3a-4b (*Pai-hai* 稗海 ed.).
11. This reference remains obscure. I have not been able to locate an instance of such an edict.
12. K'ung Kuang (孔光) was a *Shu-ching* (書經) scholar who lived during the reign of Emperor Ch'eng of the Former Han (r. 33-6 B.C.). K'ung never discussed palace affairs when at home. Once when asked about trees growing in a government greenhouse, he changed the subject and refused to answer; see *Han shu* (漢書), *ch.* 81, fol. 18a.
13. "The former emperor" refers to Hsien-tsung; "the present sovereign" is Mu-tsung.
14. There are several parallel versions of this anecdote, all quite similar: cf. *T'ang-shih chi-shih*, v. 2, *ch.* 44, p. 677, *T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan, ch.* 4, fol. 10b-11a, and Hu Tzu (胡仔), *T'iao-hsi* yü-yin *ts'ung-nua* (苕溪漁隱叢話), *ch'ien-chi* (前集), *ch.* 22, fol. 5b (*SPPY* ed.).
15. *Ch.* 4, fol. 11a.
16. See Pien, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
19. See Wang Shou-ch'eng's testimony of the popularity of these works in *Yün-hsi yu-i, ch.* 10, fol. 3b (p. 3 above), and Arthur Waley, *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1951), p. 225, where Waley notes that the two collections carried back to Japan in 847 by the pilgrim Jikaku were those of Po Chü-i and Wang Chien.
20. The one-hundred palace-poem series written by Hua-jui fu-jen (花蕊夫人), a wife of Meng Ch'ang (孟昶), the last ruler of Hou Shu (後蜀), was modeled on Wang Chien's work.
21. *Tō Ō Kan jūshi ippyakushu* (唐王建宮詞一百首) (Kyoto: Kyoto University Department of Literature, 1953), 17 folio pages. I am indebted to Professor James Robert Hightower who provided me with a copy of this manuscript.
22. Besides this text, the *San-erh chia kung-tz'u* (三二家宮詞), the *T'ang-shih chi-shih*, and the *T'ang-jen chüeh-chü wan-shou* (唐人絕句萬首) (Hong Kong: Shih-chieh ch'u-pan-she, 1957), v. 1, pp. 394-407 have been consulted.

23. The Hall of Assembled Sages (集賢殿, *Chi-hsien tien*) was established by Emperor Hsüan-tsung (玄宗) in 724. It functioned as an archive of sorts. Edward Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand* (Berkeley; University of California Press, 1963), p. 271, calls it an "academy for the preservation of literature." It also functioned as a place where young *chin-shih* (進士) graduates received "on-the-job training", see Yang Shu-fan (楊樹藩), *T'ang-tai cheng-chih shih* (唐代政治史) (Taipei: Cheng-chung shu-chü, 1967), pp. 196-8.
24. On the seals and signatures affixed to paintings at this time, see William Acker, *Some T'ang and Pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1954), pp. 216-41.
25. Another interpretation of this line might be that the paintings were counted (and assigned a number?) as they were presented to the collection.
26. For further information on falconry at this time see Schafer, "Falconry in T'ang Times," *T'oung Pao*, 46(1958), 293-338.
27. *Ch.* 21, fol. 2a-3b (Taipei: Shih-chieh shu-chü, 1970).
28. There are several interpretations for *shang* (上) possible here: "emperor," "first, best," "ascended (the bank)," etc.
29. Li Shun (李純, 778-820), Emperor Hsien-tsung, was the grandson of Emperor Te-tsung (德宗); see Hsien-tsung's annals, *CTS, ch.* 14, fol. 14a-21b and *ch.* 15, and *HTS, ch.* 7, fol. 11b-17a.
30. *Ling-yen ko* (凌烟閣), literally the "Gallery which Transcends the Mists." The name has, however, certain necromatic connotations which led me to my translation. The gallery is located slightly to the west of the crown prince's palace. Several times during the T'ang various portraits of loyal and meritorious subjects were added to this collection.
31. On Hsien-tsung's attempts to restore the T'ang royal house see Charles A. Peterson, "The Restoration Completed: Emperor Hsien-tsung and the Provinces," in *Perspectives on the T'ang* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 151-91.
32. There is certainly the possibility that Wang Shou-ch'eng had given Wang Chien information about Li Heng (李愃, 795-824), later Emperor Mu-tsung, for it is unlikely that the eunuch knew Hsien-tsung before he became emperor.
33. Nevertheless this poem stands in contradiction to Higashi #24 discussed above.
34. I have not been able to locate the *Wang-yün lou* (望雲樓).
35. Since the reign of Emperor Hsüan-tsung (712-756) the *Ch'ien-ch'iu chieh* (千秋節, the Festival of One-thousand Autumn) had been celebrated on the respective Emperor's birthdays, see "Li-yüeh chih" (禮樂志 "Monograph on Rites and Music"), *HTS, ch.* 22, fol. 3b.
36. This gold-flecked colored paper seems to have been common at court; see F.A. Bischoff, *La Forêt des pinceaux* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), pp. 52-3.
37. Cf. Cleaves, "Palace Poems," p. 421 for a similar passage in the poems of K'o Chiu-ssu.
38. This poem might record the birth of any of seven of Hsien-tsung's sons who were probably born during his reign; see *CTS, ch.* 175, fol. 2a-2b. None of the seven achieved positions of importance.
39. See *Tung-ching meng-hua-lu* (東京夢華錄), *ch.* 5, fol. 5b-6a (*Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan* 學津討原 edition).
40. For this sacrifice the emperor left the palace for two days and a night. On the first day he sacrificed at his ancestral temple, the *T'ai-ch'ing kung* (太清宮, Palace of Extreme Purity). Then, after spending the night at the nearby *Hsing-ch'ing kung*

(興慶宮, Palace of Flourishing Blessings), he and his procession went to the Southern Suburb where the sacrifices to heaven were performed. They returned late on the second day through the main southern gate of the palace, the *Tan-feng-lou men* (丹鳳樓門, Red-Phoenix Pavilion Gate). See *T'ang hui-yao* (唐會要) (Taipei: Shih-chieh shu-chü 1963), *ch.* 10A, p. 203.

41. Pondweed Palace (P'eng-lai kung, 蓬萊宮) was another name for *Ta-ming kung* (大明宮, the Palace of Great Splendor). It was the main T'ang palace.
42. The Silver Terrace Gates (銀臺門, *Yin-t'ai-men*) were located in the western wall of the palace. They led to *the San-mien tien* (三面殿, Three-sided Hall), also known as the *Lin-te tien* (麟德殿, Hall of Unicorn Virtue), where foreign delegations were received; cf. Bischoff, *La forêt,* pp. 18 and 76.
43. See note 42.
44. See *T'ang hui-yao,* v. 3, *ch.* 97, p. 1737.
45. Cf. the illustration of a similar Ch'ing dynasty audience in John K. Fairbank, *et. al., East Asia, The Modern Transformation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1965), plates 8-9 opposite p. 49.
46. There have been a number of recent studies, such as Leo Braudy, *Narrative Form in History and Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) on the relationship between history and belles lettres in the West. On poetry as a historical source, see Gisela Wickert-Micknat, "Dichtung als historische Quelle," *Saeculum,* 21(1970), pp. 57-70. On the historical foundations of Chinese verse, see Howard S. Levy, "The Original Incidents of Poems," *Sinologica,* 10(1968-9), pp. 1-53.