Chinese Poems of the Tang and Sung Dynasties

Read by Lo Kung-yuan in Northern Chinese, Peking Dialect
English translations by Lo Kung-yuan and Ralph Knight
Chinese text and Romanizations included
INTRODUCTION

In this recording, Lo Kung-yuan, a teacher of the Chinese language at St. John's University, New York, reads in the Peking dialect of Northern Chinese. With some five hundred million speakers, Northern Chinese, the principal language of modern China, is the native tongue of more people than any other language--its nearest rival, English, being spoken by approximately three hundred millions.

The poems Mr. Lo reads, with one or two exceptions, were written in the Tang Dynasty (618-907) or the Sung Dynasty (960-1279). Since those times the pronunciation of Chinese has altered to a degree that can only be estimated by linguists. "In today's Northern Chinese," Mr. Lo writes, "we find that the Tang and Sung rhymes cannot be maintained. In order to keep the rhyme and the Northern Chinese pronunciation, I have made compromises at many points."

He writes further: "The Chinese generally read their poems as chanting. However, chanting does not seem to fit in with the purpose of making this recording, which is to show the structures, the meanings, the approach and the dialect sound of each poem."

In the writing of Chinese, however, a remarkable phenomenon exists. While the spoken language has been altered in the continuous changes usual to living tongues, writing has remained much more stable. This is because written Chinese does not attempt to render spoken sounds. In the Chinese picto-ideographic system--as opposed to our own phonetic writing system--the written character represents words and is influenced only insignificantly and indirectly by the spoken sound.

While linguists consider the phonetic writing system superior in most ways, the picto-ideographic system undoubtedly offers a benefit in this: These poems, many more than a thousand years old, and all Chinese literature of any era, are almost fully understandable to the modern reader. Tu Fu and Li Po seem "contemporary"--or, better, timeless--to the Chinese in a degree almost incomprehensible to us, who read Middle English literature with difficulty and Anglo-Saxon literature only as an acquired "foreign" language.

Making the translations into English, Mr. Lo and I have happily found ourselves in complete agreement as to aims. Mr. Lo has made the renderings into English. Then, together, we have gone over the words to seek more nearly perfect English equivalents. We have ignored the forms, the patterns of the original, except insofar as they may reveal themselves in line-for-line renderings, in the belief that forms are secondary to meaning and, further, that forms may be discerned in the readings. The result has been a careful and thoughtful attempt to bring over into English the pictures and concepts expressed in the Chinese.

In some instances we have found it impossible to use the literal expressions employed by the poet because these would be meaningless in English. A good example is in the second line of Tu Fu's marvelous poem, "To the Retired Scholar Wei Pa." Here the poet employed the Chinese names for the stars Orion and Antares for his brilliant figure that describes how "in life people don't often meet." To have been literal would have been inexact. The Chinese names, or even the English names, would not have produced the picture of wheeling stars created by Tu Fu. In his superb translations from Tu Fu, William Hung hit on the rendering "evening and morning stars"--picturesquely equivalent English--and we have followed Mr. Hung in this.

Nevertheless, such instances are few. For the most part we have tried to render literally, adding and subtracting nothing from the poet's meaning, even though this may occasionally present difficulties to the reader and, more often, seem crude. We ask forbearance for our inadequacies and invite critical comment from those who see how we can improve these versions. We earnestly hope that our small effort may help even more readers of English to a glimpse of the incredible riches of Chinese poetry, surely one of the greatest repositories of human genius in existence.

Ralph Knight
Ye Sz - Li Bai  
Chwang chyan ming ywe gwang  
Yi shr di shang shwang  
Jyu tou wang ming ywe  
Di tou sz gu syang  

NIGHT THOUGHTS  
by Li Po (701? - 762)  
In front of my bed the moonlight falls.  
I wonder whether there's frost on the ground.  
I raise my head to look at the sky,  
Then lower my head, thinking of my native home.  

Syun Yin Je Bu Yu-Jya Dau  
Sung sya wen tung dz  
Yan shr tsai yau chyu  
Jr dzai tsz shan jung  
Yun shen bu jr chu  

CALLING ON A SECLUDED SCHOLAR,  
BUT NOT MEETING HIM  
by Chia Tao (779-841)  
Of the little boy under the pines, I inquire for the scholar.  
He explains that his tutor has gone to gather medicinal herbs;  
He is nearby in this hill  
But, in the depth of the mists, he is not sure exactly where.  

Syin Jya Nyang - Wang Jyan  
San r ru chu sya  
Syi shou dzwo geng tang  
Wei an gu shr sying  
Syan shyan syau gu chang  

THE NEW BRIDE  
by Wang Chien (circa 751-835)  
After three days she goes to the kitchen  
And washes her hands to prepare the soup;  
Unfamiliar with her mother-in-law's taste,  
She asks the younger sister-in-law to sample it.  

Wen Lyou Shr Jyou - Bai Jyu Yi  
Lyu yi syin pei jyou  
Hung ni syau hwo lu  
Wan lai tyan yu sywe  
Neng yin yi bei wu  

QUESTIONING MR. LIU  
by Po-Chu-i (772-846)  
I have newly brewed "green ant" wine  
And a little red clay stove.  
As evening arrives, the sky threatens snow.  
Shall we drink a cup or not?  

Dza Shr - Wang Wei  
Jyun dz gu syang lai  
Ying jr gu syang shr  
Lai r chi chwang chyan  
Han mei jwo hwa wei  

FROM "MISCELLANEOUS POEMS"  
by Wang Wei (689-759)  
You come from my native village  
And should know how things go there.  
In front of the silk-paned windows, when you left,  
Had the plum tree begun to bloom?  

Chwun Syau - Meng Hau Ran  
Chwun myan bu jywe syau  
Chu chu wen ti nyau  
Ye lai feng yu sheng  
Hwa lwo jr dwo shau  

SPRING MORNING  
by Men Hao-Jan (689-740)  
Sooner than I knew, the spring dawn arrived in my sleep.  
Singing of birds was heard everywhere.  
In midst of the sounds of wind and rain last night,  
Who knows how many blossoms fell?
A WOMAN'S GRIEF
(Anonymous)
The young woman in her deep chamber never knew what sorrow meant. In her beautiful dress she climbs the tower in the spring. Suddenly she sees the new green of the willows and regrets that she ever urged her husband to leave home to seek an official title.

SNOW ON THE RIVER
by Liu Tsung-yuan (773-819)
Over thousands of mountains no bird flies. Over thousands of paths there is no trace of footprints. On a lonely boat sits an old man with bamboo hat and cape, Fishing silently in the snowy river.

ANCHORING AT NIGHT BY THE MAPLE BRIDGE
by Chang Chi (circa 756)
The moon is setting, the crows crying and the dawn sky is frosty. The river maples and the fishing lamps are quiet in sorrow. The sound of the bell in Cold Mountain Temple outside Ku-Su City Arrives at the traveler's boat at midnight.

AFTER RETURNING HOME
by Ho Chia-Chang (659-744)
I left my native home in my youth and returned when I was old. My native accent had not changed, yet the hair at my temples was sparse. The children met, but did not recognize me. They asked smilingly where the guest came from.

SONG OF LIANG CHOW
by Wang Han (710 chin-shih)
The grape wine was beautiful in the glistening jade cups; As I was about to drink, the lute summoned me to mount my horse. Don't laugh at me if I fall drunken on the sandy battlefield. Since ancient times, how many soldiers could ever return home?

SORROW IN THE PALACE
by Po Chu-i (772-846)
Tears have drenched the whole handkerchief, but she is still awake. In the deep night, songs are sung in the front palace. The Emperor's love has ended before her beautiful face is old. In bed, she leans against the scented sachet, sitting until dawn.
TO MR. CHANG OF THE WATER DEPARTMENT
by Chu Ching-yu (circa 825)
In the bridal chamber, the red candles were burning.
She waited for dawn to pay her respect to the
father-and-mother-in-law in the parlor.
After completing her toilette, she asks her husband,
in a low voice,
Whether her eyebrows are painted fashionably.

A SONG OF THE FRONTIER
by Lu Lun
The moon is dark and the wild geese stream high.
The Tartar chief slinks away at night.
We send the lightly equipped cavalry in pursuit;
The thick snow covers bows and swords.

ANCHORED AT CHING HUAI RIVER
by Tu Mu (803-852)
Mist veils the cold water, moonlight veils the sand.
I anchored at Ching Huai River at night, near the
taverns.
The dancing girls do not understand the bitterness
of losing the country;
They are still singing "The Flowers in the Garden"
on the other side of the bank.

TO MY BELOVED ON PARTING
by Tu Mu (803-852)
When love is deep, one always feels he doesn't love
enough.
I find it difficult to smile in front of you.
Conscious of our separation, the wax candle feels
our sorrow;
It sheds tears for us up to the dawn.

THE BALLAD OF LUNG HSI
by Chen Tao (circa 841)
Swearing they would sweep away the Hsi'ung-nu,
reckless of their own lives,
Five thousand men, clad in sable and silk, fell in
the barbarian's desert.
Alas, the bones strewn along the banks of the Wu-
ing River
Were still men in the dreams of the young women
in their deep chambers in the spring.

VIEWING SPRING FROM A HEIGHT
by Tu Fu (712-770)
The nation is shattered; hills and rivers remain.
As spring arrives in the city, grasses and trees
grow thicker.
Sorrowing over the times, flowers shed tears;
Disheartened by departure, birds feel their hearts
frightened.
Beacon fires of war have been burning for three
months;
A letter from home is worth ten thousand ounces
of gold.
My white hair becomes more scant as I scratch
it;
It can scarcely hold a hairpin.
RETURN TO CHIANG VILLAGE
by Tu Fu (712-770)
Red clouds, shaped like cliffs, gleam in the west.
The sun has fallen near to the earth.
By the wooden gate the sparrows are twittering
noisily.
The traveler returns from thousands of li's away.
Wife and children are startled when they see the
stranger;
After the first astonishment, they wipe their tears.
In this troubled world, I was driven from place to
place;
It is mere chance that I return alive.
Neighbors crowd over the fence to look; they sigh
and sob.
As night deepens, we light a candle;
It's as though we're in a dream, seeing each other
face to face.

CRICKETS
by Po Chu-i (772-846)
I hear crickets singing and feel that night will
never end,
Especially since it is a cloudy autumn night,
threatening rain.
It seems as though the crickets are purposely trying
to keep me awake in my sorrow;
They seem to come closer to my bed after each
chirp.

TO LAMENT THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE
by Yuen Chen (779-831)
Of my wealthy father-in-law's children, he loved
his youngest daughter the most.
When she married a poor scholar, her troubles
began.
Pitying that I had no clothes, she searched her
bamboo trunk.
Because I asked her to buy wine, she pulled off
her gold hairpins.
We found contentment in eating wild vegetables;
Looking up at the old locust trees, we hoped to
gather fuel by collecting fallen leaves.
Today my salary exceeds one hundred thousand;
But the only way I can express my love is with a
ceremonial offering.

WOMAN'S HEADDRESS
by Wei Chuang (855-920)
Last night at midnight, I, on my pillow, clearly
saw you in my dream.
We talked for a long while.
Your face was still like a peach blossom, and
repeatedly you knitted your willow-leaf
eyebrows.
Half shy and half happy,
You were leaving and yet lingering on.
When I woke and realized it was a dream,
The sorrow was more than I could bear.
無言獨上西樓月如鉤
寂寞梧桐深院鎖清秋
剪不斷理還亂是離愁
別有一番滋味在心頭

相見恨晚
李煜

Yu Mei Ren  Ting Yu - Jyang Jye
Shau nyan ting yu ge lou shang
Hung ju hwun lwo jang
Jwang nyan ting yu ke jou jung
Jyang kwo yun di
Dwan yan jyau syi feng
Er jin ting yu seng lu sya
Bin yi sying sying ye
Bei hwan li he dzung wu ching
Yi ren jye chyan di dyan dau tyan ming

醉花陰
李清照

Ju Feng Sying - Du Fu
Jyun bu jyan
Syau syang jr shan heng dzwei gau
Shan dyan ju feng sheng au au
Tse shen chang gu chyou chi chyun
Chr chwei kou jin syin shen lau
Sya min bwo nyau dzai lwo wang
Hwang chywe dzwei syau you nan tau
Ywan fen ju shr ji lou yi
Jin shr chr syau syang nu hau
LISTENING TO RAIN
by Chiang Chieh (1275)

In my youth, listening to rain in the inn, the dim light of red candles shone on the silky bed curtains.
In my years of strength, listening to rain while traveling on a boat, the river was wide, clouds low, and the lonely swan was crying in the west wind.
Now I am listening to rain in a hermitage;
My hair is already gray;
I am indifferent to sorrow, happiness, parting
and reunion.
Let the rain fall in front of the steps clear through to the dawn.

TO THE TUNE OF "MEETING HAPPINESS"
by Li Yu (836-978)
Silently and alone, I climb the West Tower.
The moon is like a hook.
The desolate wu-ting tree in the deep courtyard embraces the clear autumn.
Cut with scissors, but not severed;
Disentangled, but not unraveled:
It is the sorrow of parting,
A strange, painful feeling in my heart.

DZWEI HWA YIN - LI CHING JAU
by Li Ching-Jau (1084-1144)

Thin mist, dense clouds and sorrow hang over the whole day.
Incense is burning in the gold bowl of animal shape.
Once again it is the happy festival of the ninth day of the ninth month.
Now the chill of midnight permeates the jade pillow and silk screen.
After the wine has been drunk over the east hedge in the dusk
My sleeves are flooded with subtle fragrance.
Do not tell me such things don't cast a spell of delight!
The curtains blow in the west wind
And I am even thinner than a yellow flower.

RED PHOENIX
by Tu Fu (712-770)

Do you not see that, among the mountains of Hu-nan, Heng Mountain is the highest?
On the peak a red phoenix cries.
It turns its body to search the distance for its own kind.
Its wings droop, its mouth is silent, its heart exhausted.
Below, it sees and pities the hundreds of kinds of birds in the net,
From which even the smallest, the yellow sparrow, cannot escape.
It is willing to share its bamboo fruits down to the ants,
Which causes all the owls to hoot angrily.
人生不相見，動如參與商，
今夕復何夕，共此燈燭光。
少壯能幾時，髮髮各已衰。
訪舊半為鬼，驚呼熱中腸。
曾聞向來境，努力行前行。
明月隔山岳，世事如雨霧。
Yu Lin Ling - Lyou Yung

Han chan chi chye
dwei chang ting wan
dzou yu chu sye
du men jang yin wu syu
jeng lyou lyan chuy
lan jou tswei fa
jr shou syang kan lei yan
jing wu yu yin ye
nyan chyu chyu chyan li yan pwo
mu ai chen chen chu tyan kwo
dwo ching dz gu shang li bye
geng na kan lengu lwo ching chyoy jye
jin syau jyou sying he chu
yang lyou an syau feng tsan ywe
tsz chyu jing nyau
ying shr lyang chen hau jing syu she
byan dzung you chyan jung feng ching
geng, syang he ren shwo

TO THE TUNE OF "RAIN FALLS ON THE BELL"
by Liu Yung (circa 1034)

The cicadas, in the chill, sing sadly,
In the Long Pavilion,* it grows dark.
There is no cheerfulness in our farewell drinking.
While we linger, the river boat is waiting to sail.
Holding hands and gazing into one another's tear-filled eyes,
We are speechless and feel choked with emotion.
This trip will take me over one thousand lis of
misty waves.
The evening haze grows darker and the sky grows
wider.

Since ancient times, people of deep feeling have
felt sad about parting,
Especially when autumn increases the feeling of
loneliness and solitude.

Where will I be when I wake up from my drunkenness?
Near the willow-lined river bank, in the dawn breeze,
under the fading moon.
Since this departure will be for a year, happy hours
and beautiful scenery in this place will, for
me, be meaningless.
Even if I had a thousand romantic feelings, whom I
can I talk with?

Dzeng Wei Ba Chu Shr - Du Fu

ren sheng bu syang yian
dung ru sen yu shang
jin syi fu he sya
gung tsz deng ju gwang
syau jwong neng ji shr
byin fa ge yi sang
fang jyow ban wei gwei
jing lu jing chang
yan jy er shr szai
chung shang jyun dz tang
syi bye jyewi hwen
er nyu hu cheng hang
yi ran jing fu jr
wen wo lai he fang
wen da nai wei yi
er nyu lwo jyow jyang
ye yu jyan chwun jyou
syin tsewi jyan hwan lyang
ju cheng hwei myan nan
yi jyu lei shr shang
shr shang yu bu dzwei
gan dz gu yi chang
ming r ge shan ywe
shr shr lyang mang mang

TO THE RETIRED SCHOLAR WEI PA
by Tu Fu (712-770)

In life people don't often meet,
Moving like the evening and morning stars.
What a night this is!
We are together in the same candlelight.
How long can one be young and strong?
Our hair has turned gray;
Visiting old friends, you find half of them already
ghosts.
We are amazed and feel warm to our innermost beings.
How was I to know that after twenty years
I would call upon you in your house?
When we last parted, you were not yet married;
Now, suddenly, your sons and daughters stand in a
row.
They courteously greet their father's friend
And ask where I come from.
Even before we are through with our greeting
Your sons and daughters begin to bring wine to us.
Spring scallions are cut in the evening rain;
Rice is freshly cooked;
And the host exclaims how rare it is that we meet.
We lift our cups of wine and drink ten.
Even ten cups do not make me drunk
Because I am so deeply moved by your affection for
an old friend.
Tomorrow there will be mountains between us;
The affairs of each will become hazy to the other.

*Long pavilions were places located a few miles
outside city walls, constructed for the purpose
of drinking farewell toasts to departing friends.
MY THATCHED HUT IS WRECKED BY THE AUTUMN WIND
by Tu Fu (712-770)

At high autumn, in September, an angrily howling wind
Rolls the three layers of thatch from my roof.
Flying across the river, it scatters along the bank.
Some is entangled high in the tops of tall trees,
Some flies and tumbles and sinks into the ponds.
The boys of the southern village, finding me old and weak,
Have the audacity to be thieves to my face;
They boldly carry off the thatch into the bamboo woods.

I shout at them until my lips are parched and my mouth dry
Then I return to my hut, lean on my staff and sigh.
In a while the wind subsides, the clouds grow black as ink,
The autumn day drags on toward the dark.
My old quilts are cold as iron;
My beloved son thrashes about in his sleep and kicks through the rents,

The roof is leaking, there's no dry place in the bed,
And the rain pours in like unbroken hemp.
Since the rebellion began, I have had little sleep.
When will this long night of rain come to an end?
How can I get a vast mansion of ten thousand rooms
To shelter all the poor scholars of earth so they would be happy.

That, secure as a mountain, would not be shaken in wind and rain?
Alas, when shall I see such a mansion?
If my hut were wrecked and I should die of cold, I would die content.
Chang Gan Sying - Li Bai

Chye fa chu fu o
Je hwa men chyan jyu
Lang chi ju ma lai
Rau chwang nung ching mai
Tung jyu chang gan li
Lyang syau wu syan tsai
Shr sz wei jyung fu
Syou yan wei chang kai
Di tou syang an bi
Chyan hwan bu yi hwai
Shr wu shr jen maei
Ywan tung chen yu hwai
Chang tawun hau ju syin
Chi shang wang fu tai
Shr lyou jyin ywan sying
Chyu tang yan yu dwe
Wu ywe bu ke chu
Ywan sheng tsan shang ai
Men chyan chr sying ji
Yi yi sheng lyu tai
Tai shen bu feng sau
Lwo ye chyou feng dzau
Ba ywe bu dye hwang
Shwang fei syi ywan tsau
Gan taz shang chye syin
Dzwo chou hung yan lau
Dzau wan sya san ba
Yu jyang shu bau ja
Syang ying bu dau ywan
Jrjr chang feng sha

SONG OF CHANG-KAN
by Li Po (701? - 762)

When my hair was first long enough to cover my
forehead
I was plucking flowers, playing in front of the
gate.
You came along riding a bamboo stickhorse
And we played games with green plums as prizes.
We lived in the Chang-Kan Village
And we two children were never quarrelsome.
At fourteen I became your wife.
I always felt shy;
With my head down, I faced the shadowy wall
And refused to answer though you called a thousand
times.
At fifteen I began to feel at ease and understand
love.
I was willing to become dust and ashes with you.
Always trusting you deeply, there was no need for
me to mount the mound. *
When I was sixteen, you went on a long journey.
The waves in Chu-tang Gorge were broken on Yen-
yu Rock.
Those rapids are not passable in rainy May
And the walls of the gibbons reecho to the sky.
Before the gate you left your footprints
And each one was overgrown with green moss
So deep it can't be swept away
And leaves fell in the early autumn wind.
Then in September the yellow butterflies
Hovered in pairs over the grass in the west garden.
Touched by the sight, I feel heartbroken;
Sitting sorrowfully, I feel my beauty fading.
When, someday, you leave Three Pa district,
Please write a letter home beforehand.
To meet you, I am not afraid of the long distance,
Even all the way to Long Wind Sands.

*Outside the village, where the women went to
watch for the return of their husbands.
長恨歌
白居易

漢皇重色思傾國，
御宇多年求不得。
楊家有女初長成，
自是傾城傾國色。

一朝選在君王側，
四眼一笑百媚生。
環佩鳴玉步生輝，
侍兒扶起嬌無力。

春宵苦短日高起，
雲鬢花顏金步搖。
侍兒扶起嬌無力，
春暖花香賦凝脂。

從此君王不早朝。

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春暖花香賦凝脂。

從此君王不早朝。
SONG OF EVERLASTING SORROW
by Po Chu-i (772-846)

The Chinese emperor, infatuated with beauty,
desired one whose beauty could cause a
nation to collapse;
In the imperial reign he sought her many years
in vain.
The Yang family had a daughter just reaching
womanhood,
Brought up in her deep chamber and unknown to
outsiders.
Heaven had given her beauty that she herself
could not ignore.
One day she was chosen to be presented to the
emperor.
When she turned her head and smiled, a hundred
seductive charms arose,
All the beautiful women of the six palaces paled by
comparison.
The emperor granted her the favor of bathing in
Hwa-ching Pool in the cool spring.
The warm spring water was soothing and clear,
washing her skin white and smooth.
The maidens helped the delicate, fragile one to
get out.
This was the beginning of possessing the Imperial
favor.
Her coiffure like a cloud, her face like a flower,
her hair ornaments swinging,
They spent the spring evenings behind the warm bed
curtains embroidered with hibiscus flowers.
The spring evenings were regretfully short and the
sun rose too early on high.
From that time on the emperor never gave an early
audience.
She received his favor and waited at his feasts with
no time for herself;
In the spring she followed him wherever he went and
was always with him at the evening carousals.
In the back palace there are three thousand beauties
But three thousand favors are given to one.
In her gold house she made herself beautiful to
attend him in the evening;
In the jade tower when the feast ended they came
together, intoxicated and in love.
Her sisters and brothers were all given high titles.
Alas, shining glories grew over her family house.
These glories caused the parents of the world to
change their hearts--
They began to think more of daughters than sons.
The palace of Li rose as high as the azure clouds.
Fairy music, riding the breeze, was heard
everywhere;
Graceful singing and waving dancing were in harmony
with the sound of the zither and flute.
The emperor relished these things all day and his
eyes were never satiated.
From Yu-yang suddenly came the roll of drums,
causing the earth to tremble,
Breaking up "The Song of the Rainbow Skirt and the
Coat of Feathers."
Smoke and dust rose in the capital city;
Thousands of chariots and horsemen went southwest;
The emperor's kingfisher flag trembled forward and
halted
Westward out of the gate of the capital city some
one hundred odd li.
The six armies refused to go any further and there
was no help for it.
She knitted her moth-like eyebrows and killed herself
in front of the horses.
Her flower-like hair ornaments were thrown to the
ground and no one picked them up--
Kingfisher feather work, gold birds and hairpins of
jade.
The emperor could not save her but could only bury
his face.
He looked back toward her, tears mingled with
blood.
The yellow dust was blowing and the wind was cold
and bleak;
Across bridges of boards and planks, the mountain path turned and wound up to the Sword Pass. Few walked under the shadow of Omei Mountain. The banners and flags were dull in the dim sunlight. The streams of Szechwan were green and the hills blue.
The emperor was deep in sorrow for her morning and evening. In the traveling palace he saw the moon and was heartbroken; In the rain at night, the tinkling of bells twisted the entrails. Heaven and earth revolved, and the emperor’s dragon chariot returned.
When he arrived at the place of her death, he, hesitant and undecided, could not go any further.
In the dust and mud of Ma-wei slope He could not find the place where the face of jade died.
The emperor and his ministers looked at each other and their clothes were wet with tears. Eastward toward the gates of the capital they let their horses carry them home.
Once returned, he found ponds and gardens as they were before; By the Tai-ye Lake, the hibiscus and by the Wei-yang Palace the willows were unchanged. The hibiscus were like her face and the willow leaves were like her eyebrows.
How could he restrain the tears, seeing all these? Peach and plum trees bloomed on the days when the spring breeze blew, The wu-ting trees shed their leaves at the time when the autumn rain fell.
In the western and southern palaces the autumn grass was abundant; Fallen leaves covered the steps with red but no one cared to sweep them away.
The actors of the Pear Garden had grown white-haired;
The eunuchs and palace maids of the Pepper Room had aged.
At night, in the hall when the fireflies flit, he thought, silently; The wick of the lonely, single lamp was burned to the end, and yet sleep would not come. Throughout the long night the drums and the bells were marking the slowly passing hours; The bright stars gradually yielded to the daybreak. The mandarin-duck-shaped roof-tiles turned cold under the thick frost; The kingfisher colored quilts were chilly, and who was there to share them with him.
Slowly and sadly a year had passed since dead and living were parted; Even her ghost had not come into his dreams. In Lin-chyung there was a Taoist monk, an archivist in Hung-tu, Who was able to communicate with spirits by his faith.
To console the endless longing of the emperor The priest was asked to seek out the dead with all his power.
Borne on the clouds and riding the wind, he rushed like lightning; He flew up to heaven and down to earth to seek everywhere;
排空駄氣奔如電
升天入地求之徤
上窮碧落下黃泉
兩處茫茫皆不見
忽聞海上有仙山
山在虛無縹緲間
樓閣玲瓏五雲起
其中繚繞多仙子
其中有一人字太真
金闕西廂叩玉門
轉教小玉報雙成
聞道漢家天子使
九華帳裏夢魂驚

珠箔銀屏遮遠聞
雲髻半偏新睡覺
風吹仙袂飄飄舉
猶似霓裳羽衣舞
玉容寂寞淚闌干
禁花一枝春帶雨

一別音容兩渺茫
別時容易見君王
合情凝睇謝君王
昭陽殿裏恩愛絕
回頭下望人寰處
不見長安見塵霧

唯將舊物表深情
鈔留一扇合一面
但教心似金針堅
天上人間會相見

七月七日長生殿
夜半無人私語時
在天願作比翼鳥
在地願為連理枝

天長地久有時盡
此恨緣緣無絕期
He went to the end of the blue sky and down to the
d other world,
But in neither of these places could she be found.
Suddenly he heard that on the sea there was a fairy
island mountain,
A mountain engulfed with clouds and mist,
Where elegant palaces and towers rose up among
the colored clouds,
And there were many beautiful immortals.
Among them there was one by the name of Tai-chen
Whose snow-white skin and flowery face might be
hers.
He knocked at the jade gate of the west wing of the
gold palace
And asked Hsia-yu to inform Shuang-cheng.
Upon hearing of the arrival of the emperor's envoy,
She was startled and awakened behind the embroidered
bed curtains.
Putting on her clothing, she pushed the pillow aside
and walked and hesitated.
The pearl-studded curtains and the silver screens
were drawn open.
As she had just waked, the cloud-like coiffure was
disarranged;
The flowery headdress was in disarray as she came
down the hall.
Her sleeves rose and floated in the air as the breeze
blew;
It was as if she were still dancing to the tune of "The
Rainbow Skirt and the Coat of Feathers."
Her jade-like face was sad and drawn and her tears
fell profusely;
She looked as beautiful as a spray of pear blossoms
sprinkled with spring rain.
Subduing her emotion, with controlled gaze, she
thanked the emperor.
Since the parting, appearances and voices had grown
indistinct;
His love and benevolence in the Chao-yang Hall had
ended.
The days and nights in the fairy Peng-lai Palace
were so long.
Turning around, she looked down at the world of men;
Chang-an city could not be seen, but only the dust and
haze.
She could only express her deep love with the old
keepsakes;
Inlaid case and the gold hairpin would be sent over;
Of the pin she reserved half and of the box she kept
the lid.
The yellow gold of the pin was broken and the flower
work of the box was divided.
If the hearts endure as the gold and metal
There would someday be a meeting again in the world
of heaven.
When the Taoist was parting, she confided an
imploring message.
In the message was an oath which only the two lovers
knew.
Spoken on the seventh day of the seventh month in the
palace of Chang-sheng,
Whispered at midnight while no one was present.
"In the sky we wanted to be birds with wings flying
together;
On the earth we wanted to be trees with branches
intertwined.
Heaven and earth will pass away someday;
This sorrow will last forever without end."