

Liang Tsai-yen's authorship; if he had obtained the work from T'ien T'ung, the author would be some other man. It is possible, however, that, in the case of this book of *mirabilia*, the story only refers to the effort of the real author to carry it back to an earlier date. T'ien T'ung is unknown, and so is Lu Shên. Liang Tsai-yen was a doctor of 675 (cf. *Chih-chai shu-lu chieh-t'i*, *loc. cit.*; *Chiu T'ang shu*, 190 b, 4 a) and wrote several works about the end of the 7th cent. (cf. the *Harvard-Yenching Index Series*, No. 10, III, 46; MASPERO's indication of «the second half of the 9th cent.» in *BEFEO*, XIV, 8, 39, must be a slip). Whether the author be Chang Yüeh or Liang Tsai-yen or Lu Shên, the work cannot be prior to the 7th cent.; although pretending to deal with events of the beginning of the 6th cent., it is of value only as relating data current when it was written; for instance, LAUFER was mistaken (*The Diamond*, 8) when he thought that the occurrence of Fu-lin (= From < Rom) in the *Liang ssü kung chi* afforded proof that this designation of the Mediterranean Orient was already in use in China c. 550 A. D.

From beginning to end the *Liang ssü kung chi* is a book of fiction, and the queer names of the four «gentlemen» are also clearly fictitious; nothing is said of their origin (LAUFER's statement in *TP*, 1915, 203-204, that one of them was from Shu, *i. e.* Ssü-chu'an, is a slip due to the misreading of the surname (蜀 Hui) of the first gentleman as 蜀 Shu and the arbitrary combination of this with the surname and name of the second); not one of them occurs anywhere else. But, though writing fiction, the author, certainly a clever man, has made good use of the lore of his time; in particular, he was well acquainted with the Turfan region, and for instance employs a name, 無半 Wu-pan, which is otherwise known in Chinese books only from the Life of Hsüan-tsang (cf. *Taishō Tripitaka*, 50, 226), although he does not seem to be indebted for it to the account of the great pilgrim.

Among the stories of the *Liang ssü kung chi*, there is one which concerns the Kingdom of Women. It has been translated by D'HERVEY DE SAINT-DENYS as an appendix to his version of Ma Tuan-lin's paragraph on Fu-sang (*Ethnographie, Orientaux*, 395-397), but from an incomplete text which leaves out the final and most interesting section. For a proper understanding of the text, one must keep in mind that the four imaginary gentlemen are supposed in the text to have made their appearance at the court of the Liang early in the 6th cent., and that the second of them was 霽免杰 Wan Chieh. On a certain occasion, «Chieh kung», Mr. Chieh (*i. e.* Wan Chieh), is stated to have spoken to the Court scholars about the various countries at the limit of the world, beginning with Fu-sang in the east (cf. *infra*); afterwards he spoke of Fu-lin in the west, and then of the Kingdom of Women:

«About 10,000 *li* north-west of the Four Seas, there is the Kingdom of Women (Nü kuo), where serpents are taken as husbands. The male [children] are serpents, who do not bite people and live in holes (穴處 *hsüeh-ch'u*). Girls fill the offices of both men and women, and live in palaces (*kung-shih*). Their custom is not to use written deeds, but to believe in sworn formulas; nothing happens to those who are right; the wrong die on the spot. The divine Way (神道 *shên-tao*) has established the doctrine, and nobody would dare to infringe it.» Wan Chieh then proceeds with Fire Island in the extreme south (this and the following paragraphs have been mistakenly referred by D'HERVEY DE SAINT-DENYS to countries bordering on the Kingdom of Women, whereas Wan Chieh actually locates them, like the foregoing ones, in relation to the borders of the world in general). When Wan Chieh's speech came to an end, «the Court [people], clasping their hands, laughed and jested, and considering that it was reckless extravagance said: 'This is talk of [the