Ts'ao Yin and the K'ang-hsi Emperor,
Bondservant and Master

BY JONATHAN D. SPENCE

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CHAPTER 1

The Imperial Household

Sometime during the Ming dynasty the ancestors of Ts'ao Yin moved from northern Chihli province to Shen-yang, the present Mukden, in the area known as Lioutung. This was a part of Ming China, but in 1621 the Manchu forces under Nurhaci captured and held the city of Shen-yang; many of the Chinese survivors surrendered and were enslaved. Among them was Ts'ao Yin's great-grandfather, who was made a bondservant in the military group known as the Plain White Banner. He thus became a member of that banner system which the Manchus made the central core of their organization before their conquest of China.

For thirty years before they captured Shen-yang the Manchus had been slowly consolidating their power north of the Great Wall: after learning to protect their scattered forces within fortified manors and towns, they moved on to adapt the Ming system of military garrisons as a model for their own banner organization, and finally deliberately used Chinese advisers to teach them Chinese bureaucratic techniques.¹

¹. The most useful introductions in English to this Manchu background (which I do not attempt to study in detail here) are: Wada Sei, "Some Problems Concerning the Rise of T'ai-tsu, the Founder of [the] Manchu Dynasty," Memoirs of the Research Department of Toyo Bunko, 16 (1957), 33-73; Franz Michael, The Origin of Manchu Rule in China (Baltimora, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1942); Piero Corrado, "Civil Administration at the Beginning of the Manchu Dynasty," Oritsu Extremis, 9 (1962), 133-153; and the relevant biographies in Eminent Chinese. Many Japanese scholars have made major contributions to the study of this preconquest Manchu period, the most prolific writer being Wada Sei. A bibliography of his numerous pioneering works on Manchu and Mongol geography and history is printed in Mem. Toyo Bunko, 19 (1960), iii-xix. For his special studies with reference to early Manchu-Chinese collaboration, cf. his essay on Kung Cheng-lu in Tsusho Kengyo: Manchu Hen (Tokyo, 1937), pp. 637-49, and also his essay on Li Ch'eng-lung in Tsusho Ronsô (Tokyo, 1942), pp. 161-79. Appropriately Wada Sei's essay on Li Ch'eng-lung first appeared in the congratulatory volume for another great Manchu scholar, Inaba Iwakichi (Inaba Hukushi kanrekki: MANCHU RONSO, 1938). Inaba Iwakichi's most widely influential work was probably his Shincho zenshi (Complete History of the Ch'ing...
But although they seemed to be increasingly sinified, and even developed Six Boards of their own in imitation of the Chinese administrative system, the Manchus kept their Eight Banner organization after they captured Peking in 1644 and subsequently became the rulers of China. They thus modified the institutional system that had prevailed in the Ming dynasty. As bondservants in the Plain White Banner—a status that was hereditary—the Ts'ao family accordingly became a part of this new order in China.

**Banners and Bondservants**

The Banner system was a means of both military and civil control: common soldiers were enrolled within it, but so were their families; military discipline was combined with a comprehensive registration of civilians; and the wages and grants of land made to the soldiers kept a whole people clothed and fed. Manchu historians dated the origin of the Banner system to the year 1601, when their leader Nurhaci (posthumously styled Emperor Ch'ing T'ai-tsu) organized his soldiers into groups of three hundred men called niru, the prototype of the companies the Chinese later named tso-ling. In 1615 the method of grouping these companies under banners of different colors was given a settled form: there were to be eight Banners, plain yellow, plain white, plain red, and plain blue, and bordered yellow, white, red, and blue. Each Banner was to contain five battalions (ts' an-ling); each battalion was to contain five companies (ts'o-ling). These companies were the basic organizational unit of the Banner system and more and more were created as the Manchus attracted new adherents. In 1634—

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Dynasty] (Tokyo, 1914), translated into Chinese the following year and published under the same title (Ch'ing-ch'ao ch'i-ts'ao-shih). Some of Inaba's detailed studies of the Manchus before 1644 appeared in H. Matsui, W. Yano, and I. Inaba, Beiträge zur Historischen Geographie der Mandschu ren, vol. 2 (Tokyo, 1912). A more recent major study of Banner organization is that by Abe Takeo, "Hakki Manšū niru no kenkyū" (On the Manchu Niru System of the Eight Banners), Tōka Gakubō, 20 (1951), 77-114.

However, none of these scholars were concerned specifically with bondservant problems, nor have I found other Japanese works dealing with this question. I have therefore concentrated on Chinese sources such as the Pa-ch'i Man-chou shih-constitutional P'ung-Fu (PCST) and the Pa-ch'i P'ung-ch'uan (PCCT), and on Chinese secondary works by Meng Sen, Chang T'ing, and others, which are cited below in the relevant footnotes.

2. PCCT, ch. 1, p. 41. 3. PCCT, ch. 1, p. 41. 4. PCCT, ch. 1, p. 41. 5. PCCT, ch. 1, p. 41. 6. PCCT, ch. 1, p. 41.

An official table of the Manchu-Chinese term changes was produced in 1660, and listed in eight Mongol Banners were set up on the same pattern, and finally in 1642 the increasing numbers of Chinese troops who had surrendered and gone over to the Manchus were divided into eight Chinese Banners (han-ch'üen). During the Shun-chih and K'ang-hsi reigns these bannermen lived in comfortable circumstances, the majority of them being stationed either in and around Peking (ch'ing-ch'üeh-ch'ao) or in the provincial garrisons (chu-fang). They had lavish allotments of land—much of the best land around Peking was made over to them after the conquest —and they were not yet suffering the awkward effects of having too many mouths to feed from the produce of that land. Moreover they enjoyed extraordinary security of tenure. Hereditary succession to military office did not merely develop after the Banner system had atrophied in the eighteenth century; it existed already at the beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty. For example, the office of company captain (tso-ling) passed directly down the male line of a given family in 72 percent of the companies in the Upper Three Manchu Banners, while the same family was in command most of the time in 87 percent of the companies. For the eight Chinese Banners there was a strong...
incidence of hereditary succession in 187 out of 270 companies, or almost 70 percent. In the seventeen Mongol battalions virtually every captain had hereditary command.6

Manchu, Chinese, and Mongol bannermen alike shared this prosperity and stability in the early Ch'ing period, but just because of the apparent solidity of the Banner system, it is necessary to remember that throughout the seventeenth century the position of the Manchu Emperors remained insecure. The most dramatic proofs of that insecurity were the long-drawn-out wars that the early Emperors waged: against Cheng Ch'eng-kung (Tsoinga) and the Southern Ming in the 1650s, against Wu San-kuei and the Southern Feudatories in the 1670s, against Galdan and the Ölés in the 1690s.7 Less dramatic, but equally telling, is the evidence from administrative records showing the caution with which the early Emperors appointed Manchus to major civil positions.8

The Manchus, who often had a poor knowledge of the Chinese language and might arouse hostility if given the chief civil posts in the provinces, were given the major military posts instead, and appointed in a ratio of one Manchu to one Chinese in the Six Boards and the Grand Secretariat; the Chinese worked with them in Peking or in provincial posts from the rank of governor downward. The majority of governors-general in the Shun-chih and K'ang-hsi reigns were Chinese bannermen (ben-chih), the natural intermediaries between Manchus and the mass of the Chinese people.9 In 1647, all nine officials with the rank of governor-general were Chinese bannermen; in 1661,

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5. Conclusion and figures arrived at by comparing the tables of governors-general, including the directors-general of river conservancy (ho-foo) and the directors-general of grain transport (tu-foo-yu) as they are listed in CS, pp. 2847-48, with the tables in PCTC (1793), ch. 339, which lists Manchus and Chinese bannermen who held positions as governors-general. These PCTC (1793) tables sometimes omit men who were in fact bannermen; e.g. Hung Ch'eng-ch'ao, who had been ordered to join the Bordered Yellow Banner (Eminent Chinese, p. 339), and in the eighteenth century Chang Kuang-san (ibid., p. 43).

6. This was Wu K'uan-lui, PCTC (1793), ch. 319, p. 1.

7. HTSL, p. 741 (ch. 13, p. 86). Almost all Kanus governors were also Manchus. PCTC (1793), ch. 340, pp. 1-79. The "Manchu" listed as being Kanu governor in 1647 (PCTC [1793], ch. 340, p. 28) was in fact not Manchu at all, but Chinese as is shown by the Manchu genealogy which states that Chang Wen-hsing (the governor concerned) was one of the Chinese families that had been taken into a Manchu Banner without being made bannermen (FCST, ch. 71, p. 41). (There is a different rendering of the last character of his name between FCST "hsing" on the one hand, and PCTC (1793) and CS "hsing" on the other. But all listings agree that he was in the Bordered Yellow Banner (though CS lists him as in the Chinese Banner), and governor of Kanu in the early Shun-chih reign, and there is slight chance of more than one man being represented by the two names.) Manchu were not frontier province governors; Ma Hu was governor of Kiangsu from 1669-76. (CS, pp. 909-24 reads Ma Yu.)
harmonious picture presented by the first known historian of the Banners. Writing in 1715, he described their composition and formation as follows:

T'ai-tsung ... organized the various peoples who followed the Dragon Standard and the sons and grandsons of officials from neighboring states who submitted to him, whether officials or commoners, into the Manchu Banners. Those bowmen from the northern deserts who admired our culture and came to join us were separately formed into the Mongol Banners. The sons and grandsons of the former Ming military officials in Liaoning, Chinese officials and commoners who surrendered and those who were captured, were separately attached to him in the Chinese Banners.15

The author of this passage, Chin Te-ch'un, was himself a Chinese bannerman16 and thus, though his book warned of the possibilities of military decay, was something of a propagandist. What he ignored, in describing the Chinese who were formed into their own Banners, were those Chinese who surrendered or were captured before the formation of the Chinese Banners—before 1631, that is, when the troops of T'ung Yang-hsing were used as the nucleus for the later Chinese Banner organization.17 It was these Chinese, not discussed by Chin Te-ch'un, who were made bondservants of the Manchus, and the Ts'ao family were among them.

Nurhaci launched his first strong attack on the Chinese in 1618, when he took the city of Fu-shun and captured many Chinese troops; in 1621 he captured and held Shen-yang (Mukden) and Liao-yang. These were vicious campaigns, and the fate of the captured was not always pleasant. An edict of 1618 directed "when people are captured in battle, don't strip off their clothes, don't debauch their women, don't separate men from their wives."18 Such an edict indicates the existence of the practices condemned. As late as 1626, a list of taxable

15. Chin Te-ch'un, Ch'i-shih chih, p. 1.
17. T'ung Yang-hsing's biography is in Eminent Chinese, p. 797. Of course men were still made bondservants later on in the dynasty for criminal offenses. Cheng Tien-t'ing, Ch'ing-shih T'ou-mi, p. 60, discusses the case of Giao Hua-ch'êe whose household were enrolled in a pao-i ta-ling after he had misappropriated military funds in 1683. He himself was later exiled from pao-i service, since it was not fitting for a member of the Giao clan. Other K'ang-hsi pao-i are listed in PCST, ch. 12, p. 20.
18. Quoted in Mo Tung-yin, Mau-tsu shih hsii-ying, p. 137.

items included men slaves, horses, cattle, donkeys, and sheep within a single classification.19 It is not strange that the early Manchus had slaves; for theirs was an aggressive and expanding nomadic tribal society in which farms were also cultivated, and as they grew increasingly powerful they inevitably captured many prisoners who could be put to work.

The first bondservants were slaves in private households.20 They had either been captured in battles with hostile tribes, Mongols, Chinese, and Koreans,21 or else they were the families of condemned criminals or men who voluntarily became slaves because they were impoverished or separated from their families.22 Tracing and recording such slave families is almost impossible, since they were in servitude well before the Banners were organized,23 and the families were often divided, some becoming slaves while others remained free men.24 Once enslaved, they and their descendants remained so in perpetuity, and could be freely bought and sold by their owners.25

The Chinese word for bondservant, pao-i, was adapted from the Manchu boo-i, meaning "of the house."26 The original bondservants were therefore probably used in menial positions in the households of their owners, though they were also widely used in agricultural work before the Manchu conquest,27 and even after the conquest many slaves were still used both as bailiffs and workers on the farmland of bannermen.28 The bondservants were rarely used in actual fighting.29 But this loose system of privately owned slaves was not acceptable to

19. Mo Tung-yin, p. 139.
20. Cheng Tien-t'ing, p. 60. PCST, ch. 48, p. 1, shows slaves given as presents to lin-t'ing before the conquest.
22. Cheng Tien-t'ing, p. 63.
24. Mo Tung-yin, p. 137.
27. Mo Tung-yin, p. 141.
29. For instance in the list of pao-i in PCST, ch. 2–9, and the pao-i lists in PCST, ch. 74–80, there are hardly any references to awards or promotions given in combat, though such references are common in the ordinary Manchu and Chinese Banner catego-
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Finally in the early 1630s the first of the Chinese Banners were formed.

Important figures like Li Yung-fang and T'ung Yang-hsing, who had held Ming official positions and defected openly to the Manchus, or Chinese who surrendered or were captured in the late 1620s or after, seem to have run little risk of becoming bondservants. Those in the first category were usually richly rewarded, while those in the second category were employed as soldiers in the Manchu or Chinese Banners. Examination of the extant records of Chinese bondservants suggests that the misfortune of a Chinese becoming a Manchu bondservant depended largely on specific coincidence of time and place. For 813 men of Chinese nationality (ni-kan hsiing-shih) are listed as having been made bondservants, and of these men, 532 are said to have been living in Shen-yang, 83 in Liao-yang, and 66 in Fu-shun. These were the three major cities captured by the Manchus between 1618 and 1621, and it is probable that the majority of the Chinese bondservants acquired their bondservant status at this time.

Ts'a Yin's great-grandfather, Ts'a Hsi-yüan, is listed in the genealogy of the Manchu clans as being a bondservant in the Plain White Banner, and formerly a resident of Shen-yang; the record adds that it is not known when he entered the Banner. The most likely answer is that he was captured at the fall of Shen-yang in 1621. The official history of the Manchu conquests states that after the fall of the city on May 4, 1621, "those who had been captured, and the booty, were registered and distributed among the officers and men." Since

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Manchu leaders with imperial pretensions, whose interests were increasingly directed toward centralized organization; and besides this political consideration, as the Manchus conquered increasing amounts of territory settled by the Chinese it became a practical necessity to organize the captured men in some way that was more formal than allotting them to leading Manchus in private bondage. Accordingly, sometime between 1615 and 1620, the bondservants were formed into companies and battalions on the model of the Manchu Eight Banner organization. The bondservants so organized were those belonging to the Emperor or the Manchu princes who commanded their own Banners; bondservants in private hands, owned by officials or members of the imperial clan, stayed on with their owners, though they gradually ceased to be called bondservants (pao-i) and were more usually referred to simply as "household slaves" (chia-nu, chia-p'yu).

This reorganization of slaves into bondservant companies was still no more than a stopgap measure. The successful Manchu campaigns of the 1620s brought increasing numbers of Chinese under Manchu control, and these men had to be treated on an equal basis, as allies. So in the late 1620s the surrendering Chinese were used increasingly in battle, in the command of Manchu or of defected Chinese generals.

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31. Chinese could be incorporated directly into Manchu Banners. Cf. both to-i-lung listings in PCCT, ch. 3-10, and the non-pao-i Chinese listed in PCCT, ch. 74-80.
32. Count taken from PCCT, ch. 74-80. The remaining 132 pao-i were from widely scattered areas in the north. Such events from early Ch'ing censuses can never be completely credible, since there are often errors, and the listings can be ambiguous. For the figures here cited, men listed in PCCT as being simply "Liao-tung men," men from the Liao-tung area, are not taken as being from one of the three cities, though they well might have been. The Kao and Ch'en families, later removed from the pao-i registers, are included here as peon-i, they were not freed until the 1720s.
33. PCCT, ch. 74, p. 8b.
34. Hsiao-Ching kuei-tao jang-li [Official History of the Founding of the Ch'ing Dynasty] (Shanghai, 1894 ed.), ch. 7, p. 2; and the same work translated by Erich Hauer, Die Gründung des Mandchuschen Kaiserreiches (Berlin and Leipzig, 1921), p. 205. The bondservants were also called shih-lu [The Veritable Records for the Reign of Nurhachi] (Taipei, 1964 reprint), p. 86 (ch. 7, p. 16b). Those receiving slaves and booty were ordered.

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35. Mong Sun, PCCT, p. 371, says that in the Lower Five Banners, pao-i "might sometimes follow their lord in the field." In the Upper Three Banners there is the example of Han Ts'en, pao-i in the Bordered Yellow Banner, who went on the campaign against Gildan, PCCT, ch. 74, p. 8.
36. Thesis of Mo Tung-yin, p. 131: "In the muchen society of Nurhachi's time, the two greatest classes already formed were those of the slaves and the slave owners; but at the same time within it was originating a feudal class and that class's concomitant peasant class..." There is little doubt that Mo Tung-yin greatly exaggerates the number of slaves, yet his evidence is still relevant. Similarly on p. 148: "The Manchu rulers developing and consolidating their political power wanted only not to be able to exercise control over the great Manchu clans in the field of administration but also in the economic field they wanted to have control over them... by control of their household servants (chia-jen), that is the slaves who were privately attached to them."
37. The date of the formation of these bondservant companies is usually given in PCCT as "at the founding of the dynasty (or nation)"—kuei-tao—"a vague term that could be applied to the beginning of Nurhachi's rise, to 1616, 1616, or 1644. The bondservant companies cannot have been formed earlier than the Banners in 1615, and were probably in existence by the fall of Shen-yang in 1621. Earlier, specialization of function had necessitated the separation of warriors from domestics, and the elevation of the former, who entered the ordinary Banners."
Ts'ao Hsi-yüan and his family were made bondservants in perpetuity. Ts'ao Yin's whole life and career were affected by this moment. But of comparable importance in shaping Ts'ao Yin's life was the fact that his great-grandfather was attached to the Plain White Banner, since the Banners of different colors were differently rated.

The basic division was between those Banners controlled by the Emperor, which were called the Upper Three Banners (shang-tsan-ch'ü), and the Banners controlled by the princes, which were called the Lower Five Banners (hsia-wu-ch'ü). These terms had arisen after the posthumous disgrace of the regent Dorgon in 1652, when the Shun-chih Emperor took Dorgon's Plain White Banner and added it to those that he already controlled—the Plain and Bordered Yellow Banners.28 This arrangement, initially a fortuitous political accident, was later institutionalized in the Ch'ing statutes and the Banner gazetteers. This division of the Banners, which occurred twenty years after Ts'ao Hsi-yüan's capture, remained a very real one even after the 1720's when the Yung-cheng Emperor broke the last control of the princes over their own bannermen.29

The division of the Banners was especially relevant to the bondservants, because they were totally in their master's control, and even in the eighteenth century could be treated as chattels, being divided up and reapportioned together with the households when their owner was disgraced.30 Thus those men who had been made bond-

38. This process is described by Fang Chao-yin in his biography of Dorgon, Eminent Chinese, p. 118.
39. Also discussed by Fang Chao-yin in the biography of the Yung-cheng Emperor, Eminent Chinese, pp. 91-6-17.
40. Two examples from the Yung-cheng period are in Yang-hsien lu, pp. 240 and 248.

servants in what became the Lower Five Banners became the household servants of princes; even their nominal commanders, the bondservant company captains (pao-i fso-ling) had little or no independent power.

The descendants of those men who had been made bondservants in what became the Upper Three Banners, however, became the household servants of the Emperor. With the formation of the Imperial Household (nei-wu-fu) to manage the Emperor's affairs, the bondservants were also institutionalized: the former bondservant overseers (boot amban) became the ministers of the Household (tsung-kuan nei-wu-fu ta-ch'üen), while bondservants in the Plain and Bordered Yellow Banners, and in the Plain White Banner, became the bannermen of the Imperial Household (nei-wu-fu shao-ch'ü).41 This term set them apart from all other bannermen, bondservants or free, by emphasizing their role as the Emperor's personal servants. Though technically servile, their position was thus an advantageous one, for the Emperor could feel free to use them for many of the confidential or lucrative assignments that in other dynasties had been performed by eunuchs.

From the very beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty, measures had been taken to reduce the power of the eunuchs. In 1644 they were forbidden to collect rents from land, to be received in audience, or even to enter Peking from the provinces without authorization. Dorgon, who as regent for the young Shun-chih Emperor was virtual ruler of China, did not live in the inner palace, and he dispensed with eunuchs; cut off from the source of power, the eunuchs' influence dropped accordingly. Between 1644 and 1652 many eunuch offices were abolished, and eunuchs were forbidden to hold other offices such as that of textile commissioner (chiib-tsoo) which had been one of their special perquisites in the Ming dynasty.42 After Dorgon's death in 1650, the eunuchs regained some of their lost influence, and in 1653 the Imperial Household organization was abolished and replaced by that of the "thirteen yamen" through which the eunuchs exercised considerable power. But upon the death of the Shun-chih Emperor in

41. Cheng Tien-t'ing, p. 64, BH 71, 76, 97. This explains notes in the statutes, such as that in the Banner section of HTSL, p. 18,172 (ch. 111, p. 18), that for Shang-san-ch'ü pao-i fso-ling the reader should see the nei-wu-fu shih-li, not the pao-ch'i's shih-li, i.e. The Imperial Household rather than The Eight Banner Sections of the Statutes.
42. Cheng Tien-t'ing, pp. 61-67.
1661, the Imperial Household organization was restored, and the most influential eunuch, Wu Liang-fu, was executed. The eleventh item in the Shun-chih Emperor's posthumous "will" (a document produced by the four Manchu regents of the young K'ang-hsi Emperor) was an expression of regret that he had appointed the eunuchs in the thirteen yamen. A number of regulations to limit eunuch influence were issued by the regents for the young K'ang-hsi Emperor in 1661, the regents insisting that they were returning to the principles of the founders of the dynasty. But when the Emperor came of age, he added personal abuse to the existing institutional restriction. The eunuchs had already been shrewdly limited in influence by edicts that lowered their official ranks, and forced them to apply to the Board of Revenue for their funds. In an edict of 1681 the K'ang-hsi Emperor declared outright that "eunuchs are persons equivalent to the meanest of insects," and castigated them for failing to rise when ministers and guards officers came into the room. The K'ang-hsi Emperor was always a stickler for palace etiquette—he also issued edicts reprimanding girls for screaming in the corridors and concubines for fraternizing with the palace workmen—and in 1682 four of the eunuchs were duly given fifty lashes for sitting down before all officials were seated. In 1689 the eunuch body was strongly cautioned against corruption after they had been accused of drawing excessive supplies and wages. In such an atmosphere the bondservants flourished. But in fact the eunuchs proved irresistible, and many of the stern edicts were modified in obvious acknowledgment of the inevitable. Whereas an edict of 1665 had made it an offence for anyone to have sons or grandsons castrated, a new edict of 1684 limited the offence to those who forcibly castrated persons not in their families—in future, parents might castrate their children, or men might castrate themselves, without penalty. An edict of the previous year had permitted officials of the first and second rank to have their own eunuchs. By 1724 it had become necessary to forbid bannermen to make themselves eunuchs, which is a clear enough statement that Manchu martial ideals were in decay. In the same year, eunuchs' wages were almost doubled.

The early Ch'ing period, and the K'ang-hsi reign in particular, was an especially propitious time for those Chinese who were tied to the Manchu regime either as bannermen or as bondservants. The Manchus were as yet neither completely confident nor competent enough in language to handle provincial posts with ease; the ordinary Chinese could not yet be trusted to serve the dynasty with total loyalty; and the eunuchs were strongly held in check. It is thus no coincidence that the Ts'ai family, of Chinese origin but held in hereditary servitude in the Imperial Household as Plain White Banner bondservants, achieved their greatest influence precisely during these years—from the 1650s when Ts'ai Yen's grandfather was Chekiang salt controller, to 1728 when Ts'ai Yen's adopted son was finally dismissed by the Yong-cheng Emperor from his post as textile commissioner. But before considering the Ts'ai family history in detail, it is worthwhile examining the elusive bondservant status in more depth.

The task is difficult, because the bondservants rarely appear in official records. It is only by looking at the fragmentary data in the Manchu genealogies that some picture can be reconstructed of what the bondservants did. The great majority of bondservants held no office, but served in the palace either as guards or maintenance men.

43. HTSL, p. 1879 (ch. 170, p. 1). Eminent Chinese, p. 258. Cheng T'ien-t'ing, pp. 65–68. He dates the establishment of the thirteen yamen from an edict of 1653, and does not accept the dates of 1654 and 1656 sometimes given.
44. Cheng T'ien-t'ing, p. 73. Eminent Chinese, p. 258.
45. HTSL, p. 19197 (ch. 1216, p. 11b).
46. Ibid., p. 1919 (ch. 1216, p. 1).
47. Ibid., p. 19193 (ch. 1216, p. 8).
49. Ibid., pp. 1 and 2b, edicts of 1663 and 1687.
50. Ibid., p. 2b, edict of 31/5/8. The names of the four erring eunuchs were listed, so it may be assumed that they held senior positions.
51. Ibid., p. 3, edict of 28/1/3. "A eunuch has but one body and one mouth," the Emperor sarcastically noted.
52. HTSL, p. 19,197 (ch. 1216, pp. 11b–12).
53. Ibid., p. 19,207 (ch. 1217, p. 16). Though the officials were expected to curb their own eunuchs' excesses, thus in November 1711 the Manchu general Hai-hsun was punished for letting his eunuch Li Huan act in a reckless manner. Tung-hua Lu, K'ang-hsi, ch. 90, p. 8.
54. HTSL, p. 19,197 (ch. 1216, p. 12b).
55. Kuo-ch'ang Kung-shih, ch. 20, p. 2. The later history of eunuchs in the Ch'ing dynasty is discussed by Cheng T'ien-t'ing, pp. 78–80. He feels that eunuchs remained under tight control through the T'ao-kung reign, and that there were no recurrences of the "Ming eunuch catastrophe" largely due to the existence of the pao-i organization.
56. The crucial work being FCST, ch. 74–80, the sections of the genealogy of the Manchu clan dealing with Chinese clans attached to the Manchu Banners, and hence considered as Manchus by the compilers of the work.
The commonest offices for those who managed to rise out of the lowest level were either junior posts in the palace guards brigades, junior posts as clerks and secretaries in the Imperial Household, the slightly superior posts of department directors and assistant department directors or, most prestigious of all, as second- or third-class officers in the Imperial Bodyguard.57 Those in the Lower Five Banners held similar posts in the princely households (wang-fu).58

Bondservants could also be given posts in the provincial bureaucracy, though this happened rarely. Such promotions were made without regard to the Banner involved, probably when an appointment was suddenly open; it is possible that bondservant promotions to provincial posts were made on the basis of imperial or princely recommendations, rather than through the Board of Civil Office, for not all these officeholders took the examinations. Over seventy-five bondservants served as subprefects and magistrates in the first century of the Ch'ing dynasty; fifty-two were prefects.60 Other bondservants served in a variety of provincial and metropolitan offices: in the Grand Secretariat and the Hanlin Academy, in the Medical Department and the Transmission Office, as army colonels, and as grain or salt intendants.61 At least four bondservants obtained the chín-shih degree, two the military and two the civil; thirty-four are mentioned as having the chih-lun degree, but almost all these were in the Yung-cheng reign, suggesting that the system was becoming more flexible by the eighteenth century.

64. Ibid., 11/7 and 11/7b.
65. Ibid., 11/11b in Honan, 17/6b in Chekiang, 17/16b in Kiangsu, 17/10 in Kiangsi.
66. Ibid., 17/6b, 17/15b.
67. Ibid., 17/9b, Han Ts'ao-lin given eighth-grade title as yün-chih-yü (BH 944) for services in the campaign against Galdan. 74/8, Sung-ko was president of the Board of Civil Office. (Many of the Chinese bondservants took Manchu names, as in less favorable times during the early seventeenth century many Manchus had taken Chinese names. Cf. Ch'en Chih-hsien, Man-chou hung-ko (Studies on the Early Ch'ing Dynasty) (Taip'ei, 1963), p. 28, and English abstract, p. 3.) PCST, 74/8, Ts'ao Hsi was president of the Board of Works. Neither Sung-ko nor Ts'ao Hsi were listed as being substantive holders of these offices. However those of the nobondservant Chinese listed in PCST as attached to the Manchu Banners who are credited with Board titles, often held them substantively: Hsing Kuo (PCST, 74/8b) was Chekiang governor, 1729–30; Board of War president, 1733–35; Board of Civil Office president, 1735–38 (CS, pp. 193, 2621–28). Ch'ü-chih-ti (PCST, 79/1) was vice-president of the Board of Civil Office in 1716 (CS, pp. 2613). Chie Hsien (PCST, 50/1) was vice-president of the Board of Works from 1726–27 (CS, pp. 2613–14).
68. Ibid., 17/9b, Plain Yellow Banner bondservant. PCCT (1797), ch. 340, p. 18 (listed as ban-chun), CS, pp. 1029–31.
69. PCST, 74/4b, Border Yellow Banner bondservant. PCCT (1797), ch. 340, p. 9b (listed as ban-chun). CS, pp. 1023–25. A third biddervant might have been a government. The Chang Tsu-te (Plain White Banner, Shansi governor) in PCST, 74/1b, might be the Chang Tsu-te (two last characters different) listed in CS, pp. 1021–23, 1021–21, as Shenzi governor, 1619–60, and Honan governor, 1622–68. The CS variant appears in PCCT (1797), ch. 340, p. 5, where it is listed as Plain Yellow Banner ban-chun. A certain Cheng Fén (Manchur Plain Yellow Banner bondservant) is also listed in PCST, 74/9b, as being Kiangsu governor, but he is not so listed in CS, PCCT (1797), or CNCT.
70. On Wu Hsing-foo, cf. the long biography in Ch'ing-shih lueh-chuan, ch. 9, pp. 1–4, giving precise details of his rise and later dismissal. Both this work and his biography in PCCT,
and it is impossible to say what difference, if any, was made by his bondservant status.

The careers of many men were, however, basically determined by this same bondservant status. This was especially true of bondservants in the Upper Three Banners who showed some special ability and were selected by the Emperor to carry out certain special tasks. Ts'ao Yin and his brother-in-law Li Hsü were two such men, both bondservants in the Plain White Banner who served as textile commissioners and salt censors, performed various commissions for the K'ang-hsi Emperor, and also sent in secret memorials on provincial matters. Ts'ao Yin's friend Sun Wen-ch'eng was a bondservant in the Plain Yellow Banner; he was Hangchow textile commissioner and one of the first Hoppo of Canton. Kao Pin, a bondservant in the Bordered Yellow Banner, had a career that closely paralleled Ts'ao Yin's as he rose from being a department director in the Imperial Household to become a textile commissioner and salt censor. But because of his exceptional ability, he was transferred into the regular bureaucracy as a financial commissioner; and after his daughter had been made a concubine of the Ch'en-lung Emperor, the Kao family were officially freed from their bondservant status. Yet another was T'ang Ying, a bondservant in the Plain White Banner, who was a supervisor of customs revenues and connected with the imperial porcelain manufactory in Ching-te-chen for over twenty years. Many other bondservants were appointed to these important financial posts that dealt with textiles, salt, and customs revenues.

By using their bondservants in these posts, the early Ch'ing Emperors ensured that they would keep a tight personal control over several large sources of revenue. Substantial sums of money flowed directly into the Imperial Household, bypassing both the provincial govern-

ment and the Board of Revenue. The K'ang-hsi Emperor especially relied on his bondservants such as Ts'ao Yin for money and information. There was also the political advantage that Ts'ao Yin and the other bondservants mentioned were Chinese within the Manchu system, and could thus work easily with the Chinese people for the benefit of their Manchu Emperor. Many of the bondservants picked by the K'ang-hsi Emperor had already been captains of their own bondservant companies; he probably got some knowledge of them by seeing them engaged on their various duties in the Imperial Household.

The bondservants were a group that filled the vacancy left by the eunuchs, and they were used accordingly by the K'ang-hsi Emperor both as checks on the bureaucracy and as "instruments for the implementation of autocracy"; they were private bureaucratic agents whom the Emperor could use in the provinces to "withdraw, for associates of his own, some stores of strength from the field open to official depredations." They were above provincial law and untouched by military law; when the servants of a Plain White Banner bondservant in 1698 beat up a respected Soochow gentleman, no action could be taken until officials from the Imperial Household had conducted an investigation. The bondservants worked for the Emperor only; just

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74. Robert B. Crawford, "Eunuch Power in the Ming Dynasty," T'ung-ch'ao, 49 (1961), 116, in describing the basis of eunuch power. This power in the Ming of course far exceeded anything that any bondservant ever attained.

75. Joseph R. Levenson, "The Problem of Monarchical Decay," in Confucian China and Its Modern Fate, 2 (London, 1964), 43. I disagree with Levenson's analysis that "simple Manchus became the centralizer's tools," and suggest that the bondservants rather than Manchu bannermen were "agents" forming a "personal corps," or "a set of instruments," or "a third force." The bondservants were the Emperor's men in a sense that ordinary Manchus never were. On the other hand the complex of the regular Manchu banner organization was a power center of its own, that until the 1720s was not only not subservient to the Emperor, but was frequently in tension with him; it does not seem that Ming eunuchs and Ch'ing Manchus were "functionally equivalent" (Levenson, ibid., p. 46). The bondservants were more nearly equivalent, but they never developed power of their own, nor were they recklessly used. The Manchus performed a peacekeeping, garrisoning, and self-supporting role that was largely passive yet also country-wide to an extent impossible for place-based eunuchs, even when on provincial assignment.

76. Li Hsieh Memorial, pp. 4-5, both dated K'ang-hsi 18/6-7. It is probable that Li Hsi's bondservant Li Yung-shou was the same man (with different character for final "shou") listed in PCST, ch. 75, p. 106, as a Plain White Banner bondservant and storehouse-keeper (su-k'ou, a chih-tao appointment like that of wu-lin-ta which Li Hsi mentioned as his current post).
because they were his servants, he protected them and appointed them to lucrative office, so that at some indeterminate point servility became prestige.

The Rise of the House of Ts'ao

The Ts'ao family were originally from Feng-jun in northern Chihli, but sometime during the Ming dynasty a branch of the family moved northeast to Liao-tung. It was probably here that Ts'ao Yin's great-grandfather Ts'ao Hsi-yüan was captured by the Manchus while he was living in Shen-yang and made a bond servant in the Plain White Banner. When this branch of the family crossed the frontiers into China with the victorious Manchus, the other branch of the family were not made bond servants and continued to live peacefully in their Feng-jun homes. Furthermore, some of the Ts'ao family in Liao-tung avoided capture and continued to live there as free men; fifty years later, Ts'ao Yin was friendly with one of these Liao-tung relations, a young cousin who had been sent south as a magistrate in Kiangsi. So it was only a section of the family that became bond servants, and, as already suggested, it was through this very bond servant status that they achieved wealth and prestige. 77

77. Knowledge of the Ts'ao family was minimal until the classic essay by Hu Shih, "Hsi-lou meng a-kou-ch'ing," a study of the Du-stu of the Red Chamber written in 1921. In this essay (especially pp. 186-93) Hu Shih ran down the vague existing information (and misinformation) about the Ts'ao family, and established a firm basis for future study of them on the basis of local gazetteers, the Manchu genealogy, and the literary works of Ts'ao Yin and his contemporaries. Not surprisingly he believed that Ts'ao Yin had two sons, Ts'ao Fu and Ts'ao Yang, both of whom served in the Manchu government. The works of these two men were ably summarized and synthesized, and some new information added, by Ts'ao Lien-te in his biography of Ts'ao Yin in Eminent Chinese

The most important work, however, and the one most widely used in this study, is the work of Chou Ju-ch'ang entitled Hung-lou meng lien-ch'eng, published in Shanghai in 1933. His book is a brilliant work of research on the Ts'ao family background, as well as being a mine of information. So far as the notes on Ts'ao Yin and his friends that the book is virtually a collection of documents on the literary life of the K'ang-hsi period. This section of chapter 1 and much of chapter 2 are based on his studies.

Chou Ju-ch'ang's discovery of the Ts'ao family collateral branch can stand as an example of his method. He listed every Ts'ao (it is a common name) in the Shen-yang and Liao-yang

Almost nothing is known of Ts'ao Hsi-yüan except that he had been living in Shen-yang. In 1668 he was posthumously granted the title of the second rank zm-cheng ta-fu, and his wife, née Chang, was given the posthumous title of fu-jen at the same time. These honorary titles were granted as rewards to his grandson, so it does not follow that they had relevance to Ts'ao Hsi-yüan's actual achievements, which may have been slight since he had no official post that has been recorded. 78

With Ts'ao Yin's grandfather, Ts'ao Chen-yen, the family began to rise. The only known son of Ts'ao Hsi-yüan, Ts'ao Chen-yen was probably born about 1610; 79 a bond servant in the Plain White Banner, he obtained a licentiate's degree which different local histories record as either sheng-yüan or kung-sheng. Others ignore it completely, merely describing him as a man from Feng-t'ien, Lintung, or Liao-yang. 80 Whether for literary merit or because he had proved his competence in some other way, in 1650 Ts'ao Chen-yen was made department magistrate of Chi-chou, P'ing-yang-fu, in the province of Chou of Feng-t'ien, and checked them all for connections with the Ts'ao Yin family. He eventually discovered that the courtesy name (fzu) of a Feng-t'ien Ts'ao, Ts'ao Ping-ch'un, was Chih-nai, and remembered that, in the note at the end of a poem sending off a friend, Ts'ao Yin had written "my second younger brother (meaning young cousin) Chih-nai is your fellow traveler." The rest was easy: HLMHC, pp. 118-21.

78. It is even possible that Ts'ao Hsi-yüan's real name was Ts'ao Shih-k'uan, since this is the same writer as the posthumous scroll (hao-ming) that was presented to his grandson in 1668. The name form appearing on this scroll may therefore be more accurate than the name of Ts'ao Hsi-yüan, which is found in the Manchu genealogy printed in 1745. There is no doubt that it is the same man referred to in both cases. No other references to him have yet been discovered. (Some further information may be given in a family record (chih-fu) of the Ts'ao family that has recently come to light, and which was on view in a traveling exhibition of genealogies relating to the family of the novelist Ts'ao Ch'en, sent by the Chinese government to Tokyo in the winter of 1964. However, at that time exhibition authorities would allow no closer examination or copying of this document, which has since been returned to China. For this information I am indebted to Professor Denis Twitchett.)

This permit for the honorary title is preserved in the library of Yenching University, where it and two other scrolls dealing with the Ts'ao family were discovered by Cho-Ju-ch'ang. They are described in HLMHC, pp. 121-2, and the text of this one is given on pp. 213-14. The title zm-cheng ta-fu is BH 945, fu-jen is BH 945, pt. 2.

79. And was therefore a young child when his father was captured. It is unlikely that he was born later than 1610, since his son Ts'ao Hsi was born in 1636, and bond servants rarely married young.

80. Different local history listings are detailed in HLMHC, pp. 212 and 310. Degrees applied to him are sheng-yüan and kung-sheng, used as an alternate term for kung-sheng.
The head of the salt administration in his area, salt censor Ts'ao Chien-ming, singled him out for special praise in a memorial to the Emperor. In the year 1658 he died in office, probably shortly before the birth of his grandson Ts'ao Yin. Nearly all the Ts'ao males died before they reached their middle fifties.

Salt appointments could be enormously lucrative, as an examination of Ts'ao Yin's career as Liang-huai salt censor will show. And though it cannot be known how much money Ts'ao Chen-yen made or how he lived, for the above sketch contains all the facts at present known about him, there is no doubt that he had made sufficient mark as an administrator to lift his family out of the ranks of the ordinary bondservants.

Study of the Ts'ao family is made difficult by the almost total absence of any mention of them in the various biographical collections of the Ch'ing period; if a man had no post in the provincial administration, and no literary friends, he not surprisingly disappears entirely and defies the historian's efforts to disinter him. Such is the case with Ts'ao Erh-cheng, son of Ts'ao Chen-yen and uncle to Ts'ao Yin. The Manchu genealogy records that he was grandson to Ts'ao Hsi-yuan and was made a company captain (tsao-ling); the Banner gazetteer lists him as the third ch'i-ku tsao-ling of the fifth pao-i ts'an-ling in the Manchu Plain White Banner, which can be translated as captain of a standard-bearers and drummers company in the fifth bondservant battalion.

From this post he was later dismissed. That is the beginning and end of all official mention of Ts'ao Erh-cheng's existence, and he could well be left out of the story entirely were it not for the fact that this promotion of his uncle probably had considerable effect on Ts'ao Yin's own career, owing to the curious principles of hereditary succession practiced in the bondservant companies.

In the regular Banner organization, described above, the heavy in-

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87. HLICHC, p. 208.
88. These datings of Ts'ao Chen-yen's life and career are fairly tentative. His appointment is magistrate and prefect, and the date of the patent scroll are known. But there are contradictions in the Salt Gazetteers about the date of his appointment, which might have been as early as 1653 and run as late as 1659. These problems are discussed in HLICHC, pp. 208-09.
89. Ch'iu Ju-ch'ang does not find a definite answer possible on the basis of existing records. He thinks Ts'ao Chen-yen died in 1658, aged 55, thus placing his birth in 1603 (p. 210).
90. PCST, ch. 74, p. 38.
91. Terms adapted from Ts'ao Yin's biography in Eminent Chinese, pp. 740-41.
cidence of hereditary succession arose because the Emperors either rewarded brave warriors with hereditary captaincies or were content to leave trusted Banner families to run their own companies. The bondservant companies, however, had little or no hereditary succession since the bondservants were rarely used in fighting and could not earn the attendant rewards. In seventy-seven bondservant companies in the Lower Five Banners, only about twelve percent show strong hereditary succession; in the thirty-three Upper Three Banner bondservant companies there was almost no hereditary succession, either stated or suggested by the recurrence of identical family names.92

Such a state of affairs is not surprising. It merely supports the conclusion that the bondservants were at the disposal of their princely or imperial masters and had little say in the matter of their careers, whereas in the regular Banner organization an elite had formed which largely perpetuated itself. So it was extremely important for a bondservant family to establish its claims to any given official position. Though he was dismissed, Ts’ao Erh-cheng’s holding of the company captain’s rank in the fifth battalion was clearly an important step forward for the family, and reflected their growing prestige. After two men had followed Ts’ao Erh-cheng at this post, it was given to his nephew Ts’ao Yin.93 Also, in 1695 an additional company was created in the same battalion, and one of the captains appointed in the early eighteenth century was Ts’ao I, Ts’ao Yin’s younger brother.94

92. PCTC, ch. 3–10, the bondservant companies being listed at the end of each Banner. One exception to the hereditary balance is the special company of Korean po-po-tuo-lung in the Plain Yellow Banner, PCTC, ch. 4, p. 38, which has hereditary succession stated throughout, despite many changes of name. The possibility of further exceptions appearing cannot be denied. For example, the Shen family of Plain Yellow Banner bondservants as listed in PCST, ch. 78, p. 3, have five successive members of the family, spanning four generations, appointed as po-po-tuo-lung. However, this did not mean firm succession. For the first of these men (the sixth-generation Shen Ya—his name has different homophones in PCST and PCTC) was the fourth ch’i-ku-tuo-lung and is listed in PCTC, ch. 4, p. 38b, whereas the second and third (Su Po and Ya-erh-tai) were in the first ch’i-ku-tuo-lung and are accordingly listed on PCST, ch. 4, p. 40. Furthermore they were divided by another incumbent, definitely not of their family. The fourth and fifth family members are listed in PCST (1755), ch. 5, pp. 36b and 38a as being in the fifth ch’ien-lung; Yang Chung being in the first ch’i-ku-tuo-lung, and Cho-erh-tai in the third.

93. PCTC, ch. 5, p. 41.

94. Ibid., second ch’i-ku-tuo-lung. For his relationship with Ts’ao Yin, cf. PCST, ch. 74, p. 8b.

RISE OF THE HOUSE OF TS’AO

The Ts’ao family were clearly on the rise: insignificant in the first generation, affluent and respected in the second, in the third generation with Ts’ao Hsi, younger son of Ts’ao Chen-yen, they achieved both wealth and prestige. Ts’ao Hsi (?1630–84) was an official in the Imperial Household in Peking when his eldest son Ts’ao Yin was born in 1658, and his successful career as textile commissioner had not yet begun; but he had already made a marriage that did much to assure his future good fortune.

Ts’ao Hsi’s wife, née Sun, was born in 1632,95 and in her early twenties was a nurse to Prince Hsüan-yeh, the later K’ang-hsi Emperor.96 She must therefore have been among the women from the Manchu Banners, probably one of the Upper Three Banner bondservants. For a statute of 1661 (almost certainly the ratification of current practice), laid down that the Upper Three Banner captains and palace overseers97 must send annual records of the daughters of those in their charge who had reached the age of 13 sui to the chief eunuch, who thereupon requested permission to bring them to the Emperor for inspection. Those selected were made female attendants on the Emperor (kung-ni), and could be later taken as imperial concubines.98 They were returned to their families when they reached the age of 25 sui.99 When an imperial birth was imminent, the chief eunuch instructed the captains and palace overseers to send in the names of

95. HLMHC, p. 205, prints the congratulatory essay written on her sixtieth birthday (reaching sixty sui) as dated 1691.

96. This important fact is recorded only in Yang-huien Lu, p. 360, where in a biographical note on Ts’ao Yin is found the phrase “mu Wei Sheng-tzu pao-mu”—his mother was the K’ang-hsi Emperor’s nurse. This reference is taken as definite evidence because the Yang-huien Lu is extraordinarily accurate about all other details of the Ts’ao family, and if Yin’s mother was the Emperor’s nurse, many puzzling aspects of the relationship between them and the Emperor are explained. Chou Ju-ch’ang accepts Yang-huien Lu as one of his “major historical sources” (HLMHC, p. 35).

97. The nei-kuen-lung, BH 141D, who were bondservants. They are listed with the pao-i-tuo-lung and the ch’i-ku-tuo-lung in the PCTC, ch. 3–10. Up to 1683, there were twenty of them with twenty assistants. They took charge of maintenance work within the inner palaces, “sprinkling, sweeping, pasting, adorning” and had charge of materials for incense and sacrifices, some of the rice and salt storerooms for the palaces, the wine and the ice. They were in charge of some 445 artisans at the stores alone, who may well have been more lowly pao-i. Cf. HT (1728), ch. 126, p. 7, and ch. 132, pp. 20–22.

98. HTRL, p. 1912 (ch. 1218, p. 7).

99. Ibid. This statute is dated 1723, but there is no reason to doubt that it reflected existing palace practice.
women suitable for selection as wet nurses (ju-nu) or nurses (pao-nu). Ts'ao Yin's mother was one of the latter, a nurse on palace duty. If Sun were released from palace service at the age of 25 sui, she would have rejoined her family in 1656; shortly after this she married Ts'ao Hsi, and their first son, Ts'ao Yin, was born on October 3, 1658. Prince Hsüan-yeh lived for a part of his childhood with his nurses outside the Forbidden City, in an Inner City house. The Inner City was the home of the Manchu bannersmen, and it is possible that Sun continued to nurse the Prince after she was 25 sui, or even after her marriage. After the Prince became Emperor he clearly remembered her with affection and showed her special favor. On the death of her husband in 1684 he visited her house in person to offer his condolences, and in 1689 on his third Southern Tour she was summoned in audience. One version of the Emperor's words on this occasion runs "this is an old lady from my home," the type of colloquialism that matches the language he is known to have used with her son. This account may be fictional, but the Emperor did then take a brush and write the three characters hsüan jui t'ung, "hall of celebrations for a distinguished mother," an act which various contemporaries recorded and held to be quite unprecedented. The Emperor's affection for Sun cannot have had any influence on the appointment of her husband as textile commissioner in 1663, however, since though he was now the K'ang-hsi Emperor, he was only nine years old and controlled by regents. But in noting the later career of Ts'ao Hsi and following in detail that of his son Ts'ao Yin, it is important to remember that the Ts'ao family were no longer mere bond-servants who had made a hard-earned name for themselves; they were also royal favorites.

Ts'ao Hsi was appointed textile commissioner at Nanking in 1663, 109. Ibid., p. 19, 114 (ch. 11, p. 11), statue of 1663. A note to the statue adds that imperial wet nurses who had employed other wet nurses to suckle their own children were to be paid eighty tails. 110. HLHMC, pp. 209–10, gives evidence for the October 3 birth date, rather than the October 13 date given in Eminent Chinese, p. 740. 111. Fang Chiao-ying in Eminent Chinese, p. 328. 112. HLHMC, p. 219, citing Hsiang Te'-lu's eulogy for Ts'ao Hsi. 113. Ch'ing pai li-lü, section 10, p. 11: "ts'ao wu-chia tao-jen yeh." HLHMC, p. 319. 114. Cf. K'ang-hsi endorsements in Ts'ao Yin Memorials. 115. Some are quoted in HLHMC, pp. 316–20.

under a new ruling that the posts were to be filled by specially selected personnel from the Imperial Household. He accordingly moved south with his family to take up residence in Nanking, and he remained commissioner until his death in 1684. The exact duties of his office, which involved the management of the three government silk factories in the city, the purchase of raw materials, and the dispatch of the requisite quotas of silk to the Court in Peking, will be examined in detail with regard to his son Ts'ao Yin who held the same post from 1692 to 1712. No official record of Ts'ao Hsi's administration has survived, but he must have been extremely efficient, for in 1669 he was summoned to an audience in the capital and presented with a ceremonial robe embroidered with dragons (mang-fu) and raised one rank. In January 1668 he was granted two patents awarding titles of the second rank to his paternal grandfather and grandmother, and at some stage he was given the honorary title of president of the Board of Works while his wife was made first-rank fu-jen. These were the highest honors ever awarded to members of the Ts'ao family. These patents and honorary ranks might have been given either in recognition of his services or because he contributed to the Imperial Household Treasury; in any case the office brought the wealth, and the prestige was the whether bought or earned. Ts'ao Yin was therefore brought up in Nanking from the age of five and, together with a younger brother, received a strict Chinese classical education from his father. The Manchu Banners and bond-servant duties seem very far away in the scraps of affectionate reminiscence that have survived—a tranquil record of an apparently tranquil period.

The famous scholar Yu Tung, who spent twenty-two years in leisurely retirement from 1656 to 1678, as compensation for the fa-
tigués of his four-year stint as a magistrate in Chihli, recalls them thus:

When T'sao Hsi opened up the office in Nanking, he planted a lien tree with his own hands in the gardens of his yamen, and there he built a thatched pavilion, with balcony railings interlacing. He sent his two sons to study beneath it. Summer day or winter night, one heard their shrill voices.\textsuperscript{115}

In an essay written forty years later, T'sao Yin recalled his childhood contact with Chou Liang-kung,\textsuperscript{116} a formidable figure who had fought the Manchus in 1642 and later in a stormy civil career was twice condemned to death for corruption, though both times reprieved:

When my father was in Nanking, and I was just a little boy, Chou Liang-kung was grain intendant at Nanking and the two men became very close friends. Later Chou became good friends with me and often embraced me and sat me on his knee, making me run through the Classics and helping me to punctuate passages.\textsuperscript{117}

The Manchu poet Singde,\textsuperscript{118} in an essay written the year after T'sao Hsi's death, recorded one of his conversations with T'sao Yin. The melancholy is sincere enough, but T'sao Hsi emerges nevertheless as a rather forbidding person:

T'sao Yin said to me: "My father was ordered to manage the imperial textiles in Nanking which he did with an integrity and kindness that was known throughout the southeast. . . . When not busy in his office he would have me and my brother at his side. When we were still young children our studies of the Classics continued through heat and cold. Outside his library T'sao Hsi planted a lien tree which is still flourishing today. Before the spring petals had blossomed, when the autumn pods were not yet scattered, he would stand there as if at Court, wearing hat and sword, dignified as if on a solemn occasion. Oh, how long ago that was. The tree of those bygone days is now a tree that my hands can no longer span, the person of those bygone days is no longer a child." When he had finished speaking, T'sao Yin grew melancholy, recalling his father.\textsuperscript{119}

Such, even if in rather idealized form, was the upbringing of T'sao Yin. And it was with a thoroughly Confucian education, though probably a good knowledge of Manchu as well, that he was sent off to Peking to seek employment in the Imperial Household.

Service in the Imperial Household

T'sao Yin probably went to the Imperial Household at the age of fourteen or fifteen to apply for a suitable job. In the same way, in March 1709, he was to send off his own son to Peking, mentioning the fact to the Emperor in a memorial but apparently seeking no favors and having no particular job in mind. He wrote: "I have one son, and this year I am letting him go to Peking to seek employment, and sending my daughter with him."\textsuperscript{120}

It is unlikely that T'sao Yin had been back to Peking since he left with his father as a child of five. There are various hints that T'sao Yin may have been employed in the palace at some stage as a childhood reading companion of the young Emperor K'ang-hsi, but they are tantalizing hints and nothing more;\textsuperscript{121} and though it is true that in some memorials late in his life T'sao Yin wrote that he had served the Emperor since he was a child,\textsuperscript{122} this could equally well mean no more than that he had served in the Imperial Household since his early teens.

\textsuperscript{115} Yu T'ung, Kuo-chai chu'an-huo (wen), ch. 5, p. i. This is quoted in full in HLMHC, pp. 333-35. The lien tree, a recurring motif in T'sao Yin's life, and a part of his favorite studio name, was the welsa xun, and is described in chapter 2 below.

\textsuperscript{116} Eminent Chinese, pp. 171-74.

\textsuperscript{117} T'sao Yin Wen, p. 13. Cited in oratio oblique in HLMHC, p. 203.

\textsuperscript{118} Eminent Chinese, pp. 662-63.

\textsuperscript{119} Quoted in HLMHC, p. 234.

\textsuperscript{120} T'sao Yin Memorials, p. 136, dated 4/12/8.

\textsuperscript{121} Chou Ju-ch'ang discusses this point in HLMHC, p. 235. He states that he was told by a scholar in Peking that there was in the Yen-ts å library a book in 8 fascicles (tsê) dealing with administrative points arising from the K'ang-hsi reign, which mentioned that T'sao Yin had been a "chieh ti tsu," reader to the Emperor. The scholar could not remember the name of the book, nor could Chou Ju-ch'ang find it, despite an intensive search. In HLMHC, p. 225, Chou Ju-ch'ang finds further hints, in poems, that T'sao Yin had been a palace reader. He in fact admits the inadequacy of the evidence by ignoring this possible occupation in his summary of Yin's life, ibid., pp. 43-45. In wealthy families, the sons did have reading companions who could be either from free or slave families.

\textsuperscript{122} E.g., T'sao Yin Memorials, p. 23, dated 50/3/9: "Since my childhood I have labored in office, and received the Emperor's favors."
It is not easy to determine exactly what Ts'ao Yin's status was at this period, and whether he could expect privileged treatment or not. His parents were both in the Emperor's favor, but their son does not seem to have had any hereditary privilege (yin), for which even bondservants could be eligible. Ts'ao Yin's brother-in-law and close friend, Li Hsiü, for instance, was granted the yin privilege; and though, like Ts'ao Yin, he was a bondservant in the Plain White Banner, after a short spell as a secretary in the Grand Secretariat he was made a prefect in Kwangtung. The office Ts'ao Yin finally obtained, by what means we know not, was that of controller of the sixth class in the Imperial Equipage Department.

The Imperial Equipage Department (luan-i-wei) was one of the more or less autonomous departments, concerned with imperial regalia and ceremonies, on the fringes of the Imperial Household. The evidence that this was where Ts'ao Yin's career started comes from the funeral eulogy written at his death by Chang Po-hsing, onetime governor of Kiangsu. The few sentences in the eulogy are all that we know about this stage of Ts'ao Yin's career. They run:

In his youth he was a skillful calligrapher and adept at mounted archery. Appointed i-yü and transferred to be i-cheng, how Respectfully he tended the leopard's-tail and dragon-head banners, how loftily he strode with sable hat and feathered arrows.

I-yü and i-cheng are abbreviations of two offices that recur through the lower echelons of the Imperial Equipage Department; they may be translated here as controller of the sixth class and assistant section chief. These offices were in fact not as insignificant as they sound; they gained their value from the fact that their incumbents, like officers in the Imperial Bodyguard (shih-i-wei), had chances of contact with the Emperor and always had their appointments ratified in a formal audience with him.

The Imperial Equipage Department was similar to the Ming dynasty department in organization. It was given its new name luan-i-wei in 1645, and in 1654 the ranks and duties were fixed in the form that remained unchanged in essentials throughout the Ch'ing dynasty. The basic concern of the Department was all matters relating to the concrete embodiments of imperial pomp. It was in charge of the imperial carriages, "of maintaining the distinctions of their names and types and arranging them in the correct order." It sent heralds to warn people of the Emperor's approach, prepared equipages for the Empress and the concubines, and ensured that the right insignia were displayed on all occasions. On difficult questions it acted in consultation with the Board of Rites, the Court of Sacrificial Worship, and the Court of State Ceremonial. The descriptions of the Department in the statutes are full of the lavish ritual for getting the Emperor into and out of his various carriages, of horses and elephants with their magnificent trappings, of the flags and banners in embroidered silks, of the ceremonial swords, bows, and spears.

There had to be completely perfect arrangements made in the four main categories of imperial journeys: processions to the Three Great Sacrifices, to the Ancestral Sacrifices, processions within the imperial city, and royal progressions to the provinces. One description of the Emperor's retinue at the Three Great Sacrifices has, besides the many

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123. Li Hsiü's offices are listed in the biographical collection Pei-ch'uan-chu, ch. 66, p. 1, in the biography of his father Li Shih-ch'en. It was first cited by Li Hsiü-po, "Ts'ao Hsiü-ch'ü in chia-shih hsin-k'ao," section 11 (misprinted as ch. 6). The reference to the fact that Li Hsiü was appointed by yin privilege is mentioned in the gazetteer of Ning-po, cited in HLMHC, p. 231; (ibid., p. 274 cited Li Shih-ch'en reference correctly). The Li Shih-ch'ên listed in the Index to Thirty-three Collections of Ch'ing Dynasty Biographies, p. 141, is being in the Ch'ing-shih lieh-chuan, ch. 72, p. 504, is in fact a Chia-ch'ing official of the same name. Li Hsiü's Grand Secretariat office was wei-ko chuang-shu, BH 157.


126. Sections of the eulogy are quoted in A man by Chou Ju-ch'ang, and he cites it in full in HLMHC, p. 388.

127. BH 125 and 123. The reasons for selecting shih-i-ch'eng, BH 121, rather than chih-i-ch'eng, BH 123, are given below and only BH 125 closely fits Chang Po-hsing's description.

128. Appointments to luan-i-wei and shih-i-wei sometimes overlapped; cf. HTSL, p. 18,150 (ch. 1108, pp. 108-111), where it is also stated that sixth-class controllers and upward were received in audience to have appointments ratified.

129. Li-tai chih-kuan piao [Table of Official Positions in Successive Dynasties], ch. 4. The work is printed in Ts'ung-chu chi-ch'eng, vols. 045-65.

130. HTSL, p. 18,145 (ch. 1108, p. 1).

131. HT, p. 085 (ch. 81, p. 1).

132. Ibid., pp. 083-086 (ch. 81, pp. 1-8b).

133. Ibid., pp. 083-086 (ch. 81, pp. 1-8b). The four categories were t'ang-ta-tsun, cbi-tsun, hsiung-tung yü hsiung-t'ung, sheng-fang in ta-yüeh.
officers of the Imperial Bodyguard and other officials in attendance, over 1,700 subordinates from the Imperial Equipage Department controlled by fifty-eight Department officials. All senior appointments to the Department were made on the basis of recommendations from the Board of War submitted to the Emperor; Manchus were selected from the senior officers in the Imperial Bodyguard, Chinese from military men in the provinces. But the expenses, down to such details as extra funds for feeding the elephants, were handled by the Board of Revenue.

Ts'ao Yin was lucky to get a post as controller of the sixth class, for in 1684, only about ten years after his appointment, it was decreed that in future only bannermen holding hereditary office or men who had passed the military ch'in-shih degree should be selected for this office. As controller, Ts'ao Yin may have been employed in any of the subdepartments of the Imperial Equipage Department, since “controllers of the sixth class were not given specific appointments but were kept on call for jobs that needed doing.” The controllers had to keep their attention on their work, for they could forfeit six months' salary if any collisions or mishaps occurred in their section of the processions, nine months' salary if they lost any of the insignia in their care, and one year's salary if they covered up the fact than an official had hired substitutes to march in a procession in his place. Ts'ao Yin apparently avoided these pitfalls, and was promoted. He may have sat for one of the special examinations held by the Department, the results of which were confidentially transmitted to the Board of War and the Board of Civil Office, who in turn submitted them to the Emperor.

On the basis of Chang Po-hsing's eulogy mentioned above, it is most likely that Ts'ao Yin went as an assistant section chief in the third subdepartment, the ch'ung-su, which had two sections, dealing with pennons and flags. These flags were known as fan, and two assistant section chiefs, who were in charge of four dragon-head fan and four leopard's-tail fan, marched in the processions to the Three Great Sacrifices, in which the Emperor traveled in his "jade coach" with seven elephants before. In the third subdepartment alone there were over five hundred menials whose duty it was to accompany the carriages and carry the insignia. So it was perhaps in one of these splendid processions to the Temple of Heaven, at the head of his own detachment, that Chang Po-hsing portrayed his friend: Ts'ao Yin at twenty, striding out proudly with his sable hat on his head and a quiverful of feathered arrows on his back, the banners flying behind him.

While Ts'ao Yin was employed in the Imperial Equipage Department, the captain of the third bondservant company in the fifth battalion of the bondservant section of the Plain White Banner was dismissed. This was the post that Ts'ao Yin's uncle Ts'ao Erh-cheng had once held, and now Ts'ao Yin himself was appointed to fill the vacancy. At times in the Ch'ing dynasty bondservant company captains came under the control of the chamberlains of the Imperial Bodyguard; but between the years 1674 and 1695 they were controlled entirely by the ministers of the Imperial Household, and so Ts'ao Yin became an official in that organization.

It was in service in the Household, either directly in one of its departments, or indirectly as an agent of the Emperor, that Ts'ao Yin...
was to spend the whole of the rest of his life. The term "Imperial Household," the common translation of nei-wu-fu,\textsuperscript{147} is not really adequate; a nearer translation would be the "Emperor's personal bureaucracy," since this would show more clearly the scope of this large and complex organization. In the context, the nei means "pertaining to the Emperor," rather than being literally "inner" as in "the inner palaces" or "the inner city"; and nei-wu-fu is thus the "Bureau for managing the Emperor's affairs." These "affairs" of course extended far beyond the Emperor's immediate household.

The Imperial Household was a self-contained bureaucracy, "in charge of the receipt and allocation of all the wealth and resources of the Imperial Household, and of sacrifices, state feasts, fine food, clothes, and of making rewards and punishments, of maintenance, and of education."\textsuperscript{148} The ministers of the Household were described as "being in charge of the administration of the bondservants of the Upper Three Banners, and managing the palaces and the Forbidden City."\textsuperscript{149} They selected and promoted their own staff, the Emperor choosing the highest officers, and the Six Boards had no say in their affairs.\textsuperscript{150}

In Ty ao Yin's time there were six main departments within the Imperial Household, which dealt with the imperial treasures of bullion, fur, and silk; the imperial hunts; court ceremonial, and the pasturage on Banner lands; the accounts and rents from imperial land leased to the bannermen; the maintenance of royal properties; and discipline and justice.\textsuperscript{151} All of these departments had been reorganized in 1677 with complete staff and their own official seals. In 1684 a seventh department was added to deal exclusively with pasturage, which prior to this had been concurrently managed by the Ceremonial Department.\textsuperscript{152} For some reason this new department remained semi-independent until 1723 when it came under Imperial Household control. With this exception, the reorganization of 1677 became the set form for the remainder of the dynasty, though there were dozens of minor changes in personnel.

\textsuperscript{147} BH 77.
\textsuperscript{148} HT (1732), ch. 216, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{149} HT, p. 9003 (ch. 89, p. 1).
\textsuperscript{150} As is explicitly stated in HT, p. 9006 (ch. 89, p. 3).
\textsuperscript{151} HTST, pp. 18,749-74 (ch. 1170), for histories of the various departments. As listed in HTST they are BH 77, 80, 79, (81), 78, 82, and 81.
\textsuperscript{152} HTST, pp. 18,712-73 (ch. 1170, pp. 8-9).

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Besides these major departments there were all the smaller offices that dealt with specific areas—armories, stud farms, gardens and parks, the various palaces inside Peking or in Jehol, temples, libraries, dispensatories, butterns, and the imperial mausoleums at Mukden.\textsuperscript{153} In nearly every office there were numbers of changes made in organization and personnel which show that the Imperial Household bureaucracy was kept constantly under review. The time of greatest administrative change was between 1661 and 1677, from the death of the Shun-chih Emperor to the attainment of a successful working system. Eunuch control was ended, and the places were filled by Upper Three Banner bondservants at the lower levels, and by princes or members of the Imperial Bodyguard at the top. The K'ang-hsi reign was the high point of Imperial Household independence; as early as the 1720s the Boards began to assume some control over its affairs.\textsuperscript{154} The Chinese historian Meng Sen has pointed out how entirely different this K'ang-hsi system was from that existing in the Ming palaces, which were controlled by eunuchs. The Manchu Imperial Household was based on earlier tribal principles and (with the exception of the thirteen-yamen interlude from 1654-61) run according to military law, often by military men.\textsuperscript{155}

Ty ao Yin's new post as a bondservant company captain is a good example of Meng Sen's point. The organizational form of the Upper Three Banners in the Imperial Household was decided in 1644, immediately after the Manchus entered China.\textsuperscript{156} In each of the three

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., pp. 18,735-73 (ch. 1171-72).
\textsuperscript{154} A good case study is the feng-ch'en-yuan, Bureau of Imperial Gardens and Hunting Parks (BH 90), as described in HTST, pp. 18,718-62 (ch. 1171, pp. 7-16). First managed by an early version of the tu-yi-shen, Department of the Household Guard and the Imperial Hunt (BH 90), it was given over to eunuch control in 1646, on the grounds that it was concerned with forbidden areas. It was put under joint Imperial Guards and Imperial Household control, an obvious compromise, in 1671, before being returned in 1672 to the newly reorganized tu-yi-shen. But even then there was further compromise, and Imperial Guards and Imperial Household continued to run it jointly. In 1684 it was reformed as the feng-ch'en-yuan and given a seal that was to be held by an Imperial Household minister. In 1726 it was decided that in future feng-ch'en-yuan vacancies must be reported to the Board of Civil Office, who would select candidates to fill the vacancies. This assumption of Board control shows a weakening of Imperial Household autonomy.
\textsuperscript{155} Meng Sen, FCQTKS, p. 376.
\textsuperscript{156} Before this date they may have been loosely organized in a similar way (and of course the Palace White Banner only became truly the Emperor's after Deng's disgrace). The HTST, p. 12,252 (ch. 543, p. 36), records that the nei-kuan-ling (who equal pao-i-ka, palace overseers) were organized in the nei-wu-fu before the conquest, though there were only
Banners were placed three Manchu bondservant captains (pao-i tso-ling) and four other captains (ch'i-ku tso-ling). The Ts'ao family were registered under one of the latter, and it was one of these companies that members of the family later commanded. The phrase ch'i-ku in fact seems to have been coterminus with the Chinese nationality of the officeholders, for a check through the names of the ch'i-ku captains shows that nearly every one has an ordinary Chinese name, whereas nearly all the pao-i tso-ling have Manchu names.

Each ch'i-ku captain, regardless of how many actual bondservants were in his company, was also in command of fifty cavalymen of the first class (ma-chia). He also had six corporals to help with discipline. In 1663 each captain was allotted one lieutenant to be his second-in-command. There were also privates from the Guards Division (hsu-ch'ien), ten for each company. As was the case with the six departments of the Imperial Household, major reorganization took place in 1677. Each of the Imperial Household Upper Three Banners was divided into five battalions (ts'au-ling) in the care of two colonels.

At this time, when Ts'a'ao Yin was a captain, the organization remained simple and practical. The only reform that might have affected him was one in 1684, fixing that each captain should command eighty cavalymen. In 1680 the whole process of gradation of the ts'au-ling seems quite inadequate for the probable number of bondservants at that time, and there must have been many who were outside the Household organization who were brought in in 1624, the same being true of pao-i and ch'i-ku tso-ling.

Either HTSL, p. 12332, is in error here, or PCTC, ch. 3, pp. 36-38, for the latter has only three ch'i-ku tso-ling in the Bordered Yellow Banner dated early, then one in 1678, and two in 1685. The statistics are more likely to have back-dated the 1678 company.

Some random correlations are: K'uei P'ing-hung (PCTC, s.368 and PCTC, 7s.4/s, Manchu Bordered Yellow ch'i-ku tso-ling and Chinese pao-i), Kao Kuo-yuan (PCTC, s.41 and PCTC, 7s.10, Manchu Plain White ch'i-ku tso-ling and Chinese pao-i), and Cheng Lin (PCTC, s.41 and PCTC, 7s.6/e, Manchu Plain White ch'i-ku tso-ling and Chinese pao-i). Also Ts'a'ao Yin, Kao Pin, and T'ang Ying, listed in the first part of this chapter. Naturally many Chinese took Manchu names, but cross checks back from pao-i tso-ling in PCTC not listed in PCST support the general conclusion that more pao-i tso-ling were Manchus.

This round number of fifty ma-chia for ch'i-ku tso-ling was fixed in 1644. At the same time the arrangements for Manchu pao-i tso-ling were more flexible—each had one ma-chia for every two bondservants in his company. Thus the larger companies, which presumably had the largest resources, controlled the most regular troops. HTSL, p. 19,046 (ch. 1801, p. 1).

It is most likely that Ts'ao Yin was in the second Brigade, the Imperial Household.

Service in the Imperial Household.
rial Guards, who guarded the palaces and formed the Emperor's retinue when he traveled, supplementing the elite forces of the Imperial Bodyguard. Since Ts'ao Yin's youngest brother Ts'a'o I rose to be a colonel in this same Brigade and was a ch'i-ku captain in an extension of what had been Ts'ao Yin's company, it is probable that the company was seconded to this Brigade.

In this Brigade, too, Ts'a'o Yin would have had the chance to practice his archery. Mounted archery was a Manchu speciality; there was even a special school for the crack archers of the Upper Three Banners, and Ts'a'o Yin's skill at this difficult art, mentioned in Chang Po-hsing's eulogy, may have brought him preferment. In the Imperial Guards he would have had a chance to join in the great imperial hunts which the Kang-hsi Emperor led the bannermen on with such gusto. As a Chinese contemporary wrote:

Every year in autumn and winter they had hunting exercises beyond the borders. Private soldiers, commanders, and captains were divided into groups to follow the Emperor on the hunts. These hunts were in fact a cover for military maneuvers.

In the early Manchu dynasty it was unlikely that an excellent mounted archer in a Banner command position would have had a purely sedentary job. An early poem of Ts'ao Yin's shows him at Kupei-k'ou, a town by the Great Wall in northern Chihli through which the Emperor used to pass on his way to the northern hunting grounds, and where he paused on occasion to inspect his troops and to shoot pheasant and quail. In the poem Ts'ao Yin contrasts the frontier scenery, as typified by the little town of Wo-niu on a tributary of the Yellow River in northern Shensi, with the softer views of Shan-chou in central China:

"At Kupei-k'ou, mid-autumn"

Blue-green the mountains and white the waters at
Wo-niu on the Great Wall,

The wide banners fly and countless horses neigh.
At midnight in Shan-chou, viewing the autumn moon
River and mountain blend together, increasing each
other's luster.

There was, of course, a Chinese genre of such "frontier poems"; literati sitting peacefully at home would extoll the virtues of landscapes they had never seen. Ts'ao Yin, however, might well have written this modest verse when he was in Kupei-k'ou, accompanying the Emperor to the north as a member of his retinue, a captain in the Plain White Banner attached to the Imperial Guards Brigade. He would have passed through Shan-chou while taking the land route from Peking to visit his family in Nanking; Wo-niu he perhaps visited on the Emperor's Western Tour of 1683. Certainly Ts'ao Yin's love of mountain scenery was sincere; elsewhere he wrote of it in unaffected terms:

The border mountains stand out like clean-drawn eyebrows,
Washed by the rain their cover of foliage glistens.
When I arrived, summer was newly over;
The rocky track coiled round the lofty peaks,
A fresh breeze swept the scattered clouds,
And glinting mist brightened the face of autumn.

Ts'ao Yin was a captain in his Banner, young and successful and probably personally known to the Emperor, who might have got to know him during his palace work—the bondervant yamen was inside the Forbidden City—or for his skill in the hunt and at archery, or because he had been received in audience on his appointments, or because his troops may have gone on to Fu-k'ou-hsiien.

169. The hu-chün ying, listed in BH 57A as nei hu-chün ying; the meaning is identical.
171. PCST, ch. 74, p. 8b.
172. PCCT, ch. 5, p. 41.
173. Ch'ing hai lei-ch'ao, section 22, p. 6.
174. Chin Ts'ch'un, Ch'i-ch'en chih, p. 5.
175. Ts'ao Yin Shih, ch. 1, p. 11b. The poem is also included in the anthology by Hsu Shih-ch'ang, Wan Ch'ing-sih shih hui [Collected Poems of the Ch'ing dynasty] (T'ien-tai, 1961), vol. 2, ch. 50, p. 5.
176. Wo-niu was northwest of Fu-k'ou-hsiien in northern Shensi; Shan-chou was the T'ung name for Fu-yang-hsiien, which during the Ch'ing period was part of Ta-ming-fu in southern Chihli. (Cf. Liu Ch'uan-juan, Chang-hua ti-ming fa ch'u-tien [Peking, 1939], pp. 713, 653, 581, and 616. The Emperor's activities in Kupei-k'ou are described by Father Gerbillon in Da Halde, History of China, 4, 358.
177. For the Western Tour, cf. Shih-lin, ch. 107, p. 17b through ch. 128, p. 1. The Emperor did not get beyond the Wu-ch'ai-shan area in Shensi, but some of his troops may have gone on to Fu-k'ou-hsiien.
178. Yung-hsiian lu, p. 67, mentions the position of the huo-yamen in describing officials privileged to ride into the Forbidden City.
cause his mother was the Emperor's affectionately remembered nurse. It was at this time that he had the best chance in his life of throwing off the family bondservant status; for though bondservants were technically the princes' or Emperor's slaves in perpetuity, they could occasionally be given their freedom.

There seem to have been three main ways in which this was effected. Firstly, one of the women from a bondservant company could become an imperial concubine, and in gratitude for service rendered, the Emperor could then free the members of her family. This happened in 1735 to the Kao family, who had been Borderers Yellow Banner bondservants, and in 1734 to the Ch'en family of the same Banner. Later in the eighteenth century the famous official Chin Chien was removed from the bondservant registers partly because of his own successful career but mainly, one suspects, because his sister bore the Emperor Ch'ien-lung three sons.

Secondly, those who had been enslaved at the end of the Ming dynasty could be freed on humanitarian grounds. This apparently happened to many of the earliest captured Chinese, who were made members of the regular Chinese Banners after they had been captured and enslaved. A number of edicts during the seventeenth century directed that Chinese slaves of Manchus be returned to the registers as free men.

Thirdly, a large number of bondservants were reallocated during shuffles of personnel within the Banner system, and since those affected were often ch'ü-shù captains, Ts'ao Yin might have gained his freedom in this way. In the first century of the Ch'ing dynasty, at least eight

178. PCST, ch. 74, pp. 3 and 48.
179. Ch'ing hai lei-Ch'in, section 27, p. 87. Eminent Chinese, p. 159. It could be extremely dangerous to use a family concubine to bring pressure on the Emperor. In Shiang yi hsiao-ch'i (The Emperor Yong-ch'eng's Edicts to the Eight Banners), t77 4, p. 69, there is a famous edict to those trying to save the family of Acina (Yin-tsu). The concubine, his mother, had been extremely ambitious, told the Emperor, ending with a typically sarcastic flourish: "If among them there is a single man who makes reckless proposals that might stir up trouble among the people, and I hear about it, the whole clan shall be executed. Send down this edict to them, and see if they have anything further to say." Acina's mother had been the commonborn concubine of the K'ung-hsi Emperor (Eminent Chinese, p. 925).

180. Ch'ing hai lei-Ch'in, section 24, p. 3. This may be what is referred to in An Outline History of China (Peking, 1958), p. 187: "Honchoachi Murachchus's son who succeeded him, released the Han from the status of slaves and organised them into civilian households to be administered by Han officers," i.e. put surplus slaves and pao-i into the han-chia.

182. References in PCTC, 7/17, 7/12, 8/13b, 8/15b, 8/32b, 9/33b, 9/56b, 9/16b, 9/23b.
185. Chen-ch'ing chung-shu cheng-chüan (pao-ch'i) (On the military Affairs of China, Eight Banners), compiled by Pao Ning (1808 ed. in 32 ch'uan), ch. 4, p. 18.
187. Shen-shing-shii long-chung, BH 81.
188. HT, p. 2015 (ch. 81, p. 1). BH 81 says that this Department deals with cases relating to the Imperial Clan Court. This is an error. HTSL, p. 191 (ch. 10, p. 1), records that the Imperial Clan Court settled its own minor cases, and requested special edicts in all cases that called for severe penalties.
promoted to lang-shu (the office of a department director, lang-chung), 189 and a local history records that Ts’ao Yin had been the "nei hsing-pu shih-lang." 190 The nei hsing-pu, "Imperial Household Board of Punishment," clearly refers to the Judicial Department. But shih-lang, senior vice-president of a Board with rank 2A, is meaningless here; so Chang Po-hsing’s lang-chung fills the gap.

Ts’ao Yin was one of three department directors in the Judicial Department; they had a staff of six assistants and fourteen clerks, 191 and directed the Police Bureau, 192 which was responsible for cases involving eunuchs. The Judicial Department did not have very wide powers. It could pass judgment and apply the penalties in all cases meriting a punishment of 100 blows or less; in such cases department personnel did the actual beating. It had charge of the prisons for minor offenders, and had to make sure that men and women were kept in separate cells. 193 Basic rations were stipulated and had to be distributed fairly; in the hottest summer months each prisoner was entitled to two lumps of ice per day in addition to his food. 194 Furthermore, the prisoners’ condition had to be checked, and those seriously ill were to be treated by a doctor sent from the Board of Punishments. 195

But in every serious matter, the Department had to request guidance from above. Board of Punishments’ personnel were brought in when it was necessary to question prisoners under torture, and their coroners came to investigate all murders. 196 The Three High Courts of Judicature took over all cases in which the death penalty was recommended. And all cases had to be tried in accordance with the existing codes of the Board of War and the Board of Civil Office. 197

189. HLMHC, p. 588.
190. Ibid., pp. 231-32, citing Shang-Chiang gazetteer, and the problem is further discussed in HLMHC, p. 43.
192. fan-ai ch’un, BH 31.
193. HT, p. 0919 (ch. 91, p. 1).
194. HT (1732), ch. 133, p. 12. The ice suggests the grilling heat of the cells rather than eviscerism. With the passionate attention to unforfeivable detail that characterizes much of the statutes, it was on record that the palace overseers should ensure that in the five ice stores there were 29,226 pieces of ice. Ibid., ch. 132, p. 21b.
195. Ibid., ch. 133, p. 12.
196. HTSL, p. 19,749 (ch. 1221, p. 3b), edict of 1661.
197. Ibid., p. 19,748 (ch. 1222, p. 3), edict of 1672. The three high courts were the san-fe-shu, BH 215.