Hui Shu, PhD  
Associate Professor of Art History

It seems the thrust of your lecture was that there is always some kind of agency, even under very oppressive circumstances, where women found a way to make and promote art, even in a context where their sex was disvalued. There seemed to be a parallel between Su Hui and Empress Yang. Both artworks discussed were produced to appeal to a particular man, as a way of winning his affection. Su Hui's palindrome on silk, and Empress Yang's very personal poem were both directed to the men they loved. A nice illustration, elucidating to the limits of agency, but also the way they manage to maneuver within those limits.

This brings to mind the role of art and music in very repressive countries. Visual artists and singers can, sometimes, get away and not be punished if they present their ideas in a hidden manner. For example, Picasso's Guernica, and Manuel Serrat or Raymon as singers in different times of Franco's dictatorship. We can see it also with Hitler and movies he approved that were anti-repressive.