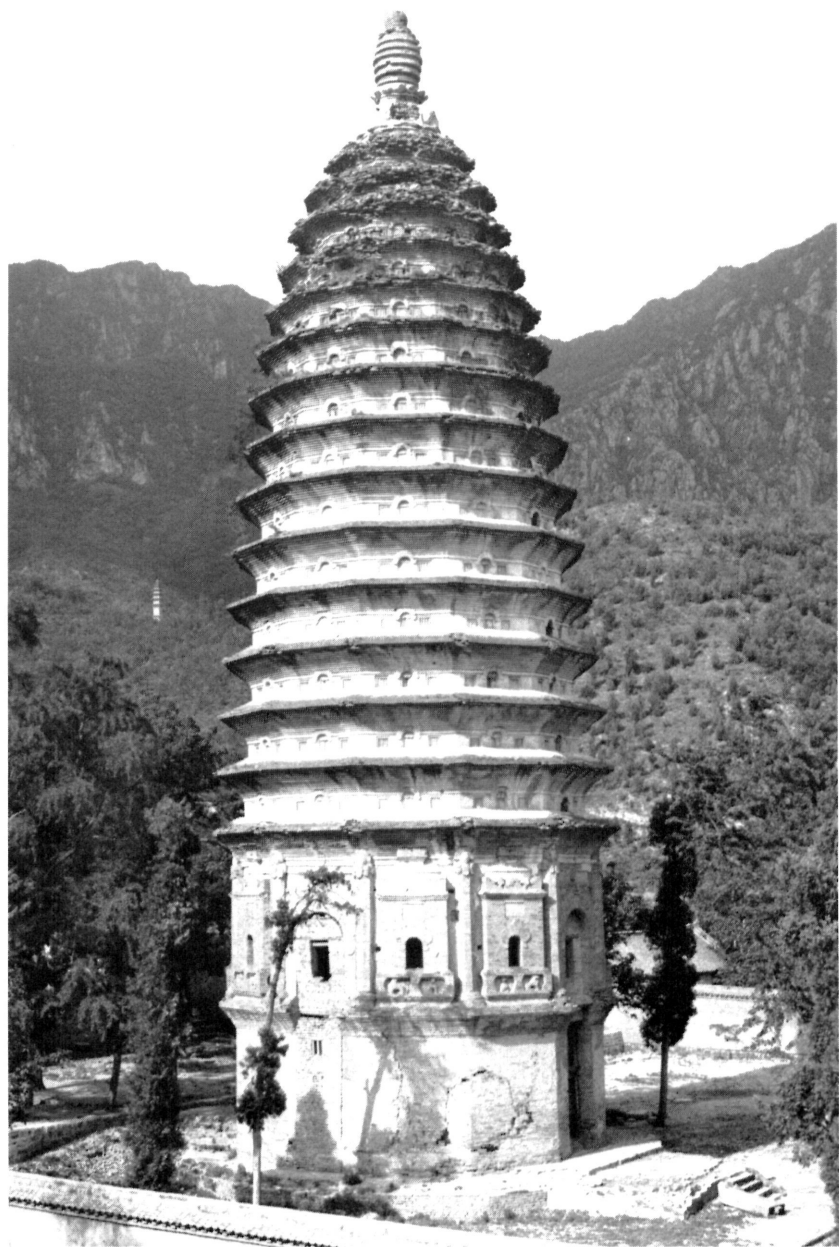


# CHINA OMNIBUS

Edited by  
*Delbert M. Shankel*  
*Chu-tsing Li*  
*Chae-Jin Lee*

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*A Report of the Archaeological Study Tour  
to Henan Province May 28-June 18, 1982*

Edited by  
*Delbert M. Shankel  
Chu-tsing Li  
Chae-Jin Lee*

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## Introduction

This volume contains the artistic and scholarly products of the University of Kansas—Henan Archaeological Study Tour to the People's Republic of China in the early summer of 1982. The tour came about as a direct result of the cooperative exchange agreement between Zhengzhou University and the University of Kansas. Zhengzhou University is the provincial university in Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan Province—the province in central China which has a "sister-state" relationship with the State of Kansas. Henan Province, like Kansas, is sometimes known as the "bread basket" for its country; and the area along the Yellow River where it flows through Henan is frequently referred to as the "cradle of Chinese civilization" because of the early capitals located there. It is especially rich in archaeological, historical and artistic materials.

Our group was composed of 33 persons—including faculty members and staff, students, alumni and friends of the University. The details of our itinerary and the membership of the group are listed later in the volume.

The editors are pleased that our group can share with the readers some of the stimulating and rewarding activities of our tour, and some of the insights gained by tour members. We also wish to express our appreciation to some of the individuals and organizations responsible for the success of the tour, and our ability to produce this report:

- To the authors who have contributed their efforts to this volume with no thoughts or expectation of royalties.
- To the University of Kansas—the Center for East Asian Studies, the Offices of Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, and Research Administration, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences—for financial support.
- To Zhengzhou University and the officials of Henan Province who provided the necessary invitations and local arrangements.



- To China International Travel Service and our efficient and expert national guides Mr. Chen and Mr. Zhu for impressive handling of all the logistical details of our stay in China.
- To Sunflower Travel Service, Lawrence, and Faye Watson for patient, thoughtful handling of the diverse needs and demands of 33 unique individuals.
- To Pam LeRow for typing this volume.
- To all of our traveling companions for the pleasure of their company and their flexibility, good humor and warm friendship.

*Delbert M. Shankel*  
*Chu-tsing Li*  
*Chae-Jin Lee*

## The Dilemma of Chinese Modernization: Random Notes

*Chae-Jin Lee*

While I was much impressed by the richness of China's long and splendid cultural tradition during our archaeological study tour, I also had the opportunity to witness some aspects of China's present efforts to modernize its economic and social systems. Even in the remote dynastic capitals like Anyang, Kaifeng, and Luoyang, the freshly painted posters for "four modernizations" (*sige xiandaihua*) were ubiquitous. Yet it appeared to be a dilemma for the Chinese people to strike a reasonable balance between tradition and modernity in their daily life and to build a strong and prosperous socialist nation by the end of this century. This dilemma was evident in my random personal observations of people's communes, industrial plants, rural hinterlands, and educational institutions in China.

*People's Commune:* Since about 80% of the Chinese people still live in rural people's communes, which underwent significant changes in recent years, I was pleased to visit the Pengpu People's Commune in the suburb of Shanghai—the same one that I had seen more than six years before. In general, the commune now seemed to be a little more prosperous and relaxed than before; this initial impressionistic judgment was supported by a female commune leader who briefed us with detailed statistics. She reported that this 17,361-member commune specialized in vegetable production and animal husbandry and that it generated an average annual income of 2,694 yuan per family (or 770 yuan per person). The commune's total annual income was divided into 50% for individual distribution, 5% for agricultural tax, 25% for reproduction or reinvestment expenditures (such as purchases of equipment and fertilizer), 18% for social welfare, and 2% for miscellaneous costs.

Asked about the extent of private plots (*ziliudi*) available to commune members, she said that they were limited to 5% (much less than the nationwide average) of the total arable land mainly because the land in Shanghai's over-populated suburban areas was increasingly scarce. She mentioned that there was renewed emphasis

on material incentives for productive activities and that commune members were encouraged to sell the products of their private plots at free farmers' markets.

Gone was the celebrated slogan, "In agriculture, learn from Dazhai," which had overwhelmed the Pengpu and other people's communes six years before. Once a mecca for ideologically-inspired agricultural collectivization, the Dazhai Production Brigade in Shanxi Province was castigated as a "fraud" in the post-Mao era. This dramatic transformation of Dazhai's status represented the new thrust of China's agricultural modernization policy—namely, to de-emphasize ideological and collectivist factors in agriculture, increase the government's purchasing prices of grains, and accommodate the Chinese farmers' age-old preferences for family-oriented pragmatism and perseverance. And the Pengpu People's Commune was in the experimental process of confining its functions to economic areas only so that its administrative and political functions would be assigned to a separate organizational framework. The gradual un-making of an original commune system was unmistakable at Pengpu.

*Industrial Development:* Not far from the Pengpu Commune was the controversial Baoshan Iron and Steel Complex under construction, which some of us had an opportunity to visit for a few hours. This multi-billion dollar project for an advanced integrated steel mill along the Changjiang (Yangzi) River symbolized the promise and problems of China's "high-speed" industrial modernization programs. Started in 1978, this ambitious project relied heavily upon massive financial and technical assistance from Japan (especially, the Nippon Steel Corporation) and required a substantial investment of China's own construction funds. As the Chinese economy faced severe difficulties in the subsequent two years, the Baoshan project became a victim of stringent economic retrenchment policy and former Premier Hua Guofeng was held politically responsible for its failure. His policy of "taking steel as the key link" (*yigang weimang*) in China's industrial programs was denounced. Moreover, the Chinese blamed Japanese "capitalists" for deception and betrayal associated with the Baoshan project. It was indeed a source of serious tension and friction between China and Japan. In my first visit to Baoshan (July 1981), I literally found a ghost town on its huge construction sites because the Chinese temporarily suspended the original plan.

While revisiting Baoshan a year later, however, I was struck by the way the overall atmosphere had changed, largely due to Japan's

additional funding commitments. Groups of Chinese workers were busy at each project, and trucks, cranes, and bulldozers were in full operation. The 113-meter high blast furnace was almost completed. A vessel unloaded coal at the berth along the Changjiang River and it was transported to the power plant on a conveyor-belt system. The 200-meter high power plant smokestack built by Mitsubishi belched pale blue smoke. Asked about the number of people involved in the Baoshan project, Jian Wensheng, Deputy Director of Baoshan's Foreign Affairs Office, said that there were about 70,000 Chinese and 400 foreigners (mostly Japanese).

His staff included about 300 persons competent in the Japanese language and ten English-language interpreters. He maintained that the quality of Japanese equipment delivered to Baoshan was generally good, but not all Japanese equipment was necessarily of high quality. He clearly implied that some Japanese equipment was at 1978 standards—the year when the contracts were signed. The first-phase construction of the Baoshan Complex was expected to be completed by 1985, but the future of its second-phase construction was in a state of uncertainty.

*Henan and Shaanxi Provinces:* As we traveled further into Henan and Shaanxi Provinces, the vast underdeveloped rural hinterlands, the "cradle of Chinese civilization," sharply contrasted with the lively, though confusing, urban life of Shanghai. Farmers were in the middle of summer wheat harvests, but there was no evidence of modern agricultural mechanization. Although a limited number of trucks, garden tractors, and electric thrashers were in use, their principal farm implements—hoe, sickle, and wooden rake—remained unchanged for many centuries. Small school children were out in the fields helping their parents. No arable land was left unused, and even the graveyards for Song Dynasty Emperors were cultivated. New rural housing was a rarity. While it was nice to enter and experience the one-room cave home where Du Fu, one of the Tang Dynasty's greatest poets, was born and raised in Gongxian, I was unable to escape the fact that some Chinese families still lived in the same old cave homes. I developed a sense of respect for Chinese farmers who seemed to espouse the virtues of simple life combined with hard work and of inner dignity amidst poverty.

The archaeological and cultural centers of Henan and Shaanxi Provinces attracted a stream of foreign tourists, including us, in air-conditioned Toyota buses and special first-class trains. In 1976 the

Chinese had appeared to be somewhat hesitant to make "profits" from foreign visitors, but in recent years they effectively overcame their earlier self-constraint and regarded tourist industries as an important way to finance their four-modernizations programs. The Chinese tour guides were better trained and more professionally oriented than before. Zhengzhou just opened a brand-new, high-rise hotel equipped with all the modern comforts, and another new hotel in Xi'an sponsored a disco dance party on its rooftop bar. I was told by a Chinese archaeologist in Anyang that despite China's economic retrenchment policy, the government's expenditures for archaeological excavation projects increased in 1982. The influx of foreign tourists showed some signs of minor spillover effects upon China's rural societies. At the entrance to the Qinshihuangdi Tomb, for example, local residents displayed flourishing "folk industries." They actively competed to sell their home-made toys and shirts to tourists. It may be a harbinger of "creeping capitalism"—another indication of China's economic liberalization.

An extensive campaign was underway to advertise the importance of the census scheduled for July 1982. I saw street parades, billboards, and wall posters which urged the Chinese people to take part in the census—the first one since 1964. The messages were simple—"Let us correctly count the largest population in the world," "Census leads to the better material life," and "Correct census is essential to the four-modernizations policy." It was an important, but difficult task for the Chinese government to compile accurate demographic data on more than one billion population and to control population growth under 1.2 billion in the year 2000, for the systems of rewards and punishments adopted for birth control and family planning run counter to the traditional Confucian concepts of extended family and male heirs.

*Higher Education:* Nowhere was the priority of modernization more stressed than in the institutions of higher learning that we visited. Libraries were decorated with the post-Mao catchphrase, "Liberate your thought and seek truth from facts." At Zhengzhou University, a provincial institution of liberal arts and sciences, a group of female students entertained us with recitations of English poems and short stories and with traditional Chinese musical instruments as well as guitars. Other students practiced their English with us. President Fan Daoyuan, who had visited the University of Kansas in December 1980, was enthusiastic about the expansion of academic

exchange programs with us, and Professor Wang Hongfei, a specialist of American literature, was chosen as the first Zhengzhou scholar to study at Lawrence. In Shanghai, Fudan University Vice President Tan Jiazhen, an MIT-trained geneticist, came to our hotel to discuss the issues of scientific cooperation between China and the United States.

Each of these episodes seemed to reflect a rejuvenation of higher education in China, in sharp contrast with the academic and scientific decay during the ten years from 1966 to 1976. It was apparent to me that China's educational leaders shared a desire to transcend the devastating effects of the Cultural Revolution and to improve China's higher education programs under the broad rubric of the four-modernizations campaign. Although much of this commitment was manifested in the urgently needed fields of science and technology, its effects spilled over into the disciplines of social sciences and humanities.

For the purpose of increasing the number of competent personnel for China's modernization efforts, nationwide college entrance examinations were reinstated in 1977; the objective examination scores, rather than family background, manual labor experience, or ideological commitment, became a principal determinant of students' admission to colleges and research institutes. Only a small fraction of college-age students were selected to enter national and provincial universities. Consequently, the quality of college students improved, and the new emphasis upon academic competition and tangible achievement drew them into libraries, laboratories, and study rooms. College teachers and research scientists were allowed to enjoy a little more freedom than before in creative research, classroom discussions, and foreign contacts. An increasing number of foreign students and scholars were invited to study or teach at Chinese institutions. In this context the University of Kansas maintained the mutually beneficial programs of academic exchange with Nankai University, Nanjing University, Zhengzhou University, and Henan Medical College.

In spite of their concerted attempts to develop agriculture and industry, expand cultural diplomacy and foreign tourism, and improve educational programs, it may not be easy for the Chinese people to achieve their professed goals of four-modernizations, such as the plan to quadruple the total value of China's agricultural and industrial production by the year 2,000. Obstacles are seemingly pervasive, and some are deeply rooted in China's persistent tradi-

tional social structures and bureaucratic politics. Yet they seem to be determined to resolve the dilemma of their current modernization efforts in their own ways with patience. The success or failure of these efforts may have a profound effect upon all of us in the world.

## Observations on Science, Higher Education and KU Exchange Programs

*Delbert M. Shankel*

Science, like other intellectual activities, has had a long and distinguished history in China. The initial development of gun powder and firearms occurred there, along with such developments as macrobiotics and elixers, acupuncture and other quite revolutionary concepts.

Joseph Needham in his book entitled *Science in Traditional China* (1981) makes the following comments:

. . . in China itself since the revolution there has been a great flowering of scholarship . . . in the recent past there have been great historians of mathematics . . . and great historians of astronomy . . . There are still living today profound exponents of Taoism, alchemy and early chemistry . . . Botany and agriculture have had their brilliant exponents . . . Three branches of physics were particularly well developed in ancient and medieval China . . . Nor was there any backwardness in the biological field either . . . In China . . . there was also the idea of combating external disease agents . . . Clearly the circulation of the blood . . . was standard doctrine in the 2nd century . . .

These quotes demonstrate, I believe, the traditional commitment of the Chinese people to science and to educational and intellectual activity.

The "Cultural Revolution" (perhaps more accurately termed the "anticultural revolution"), however, had a devastating effect on higher education and science in the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.). It is clear to even the casual observer that the Cultural Revolution cost the nation a generation of scientists, engineers and technologists. Much of the scientific equipment found in universities is old and most of the scientists working in the universities are either quite old or relatively young. There was, however, a noticeable difference in the availability of modern scientific equipment between our visit to the P.R.C. in the spring of 1980 and the visit made with the Henan Archaeological Study Tour group in the early summer of



1982. Modern scientific equipment made in the United States, Japan, West Germany, France and other countries was much more obvious in the laboratories of the universities on the second visit. The P.R.C. is now making a massive effort to catch up and modernize science and science teaching in order to reverse some of the devastating effects of the Cultural Revolution.

Significant changes not related directly to science and technology are also occurring in the universities in China. There are now seven major national universities approximately equivalent in quality and range of programs to the University of Kansas or other typical major state universities in the United States. Enrollments in these seven major national universities are in the range of 7,000 to 10,000 students per institution. There are, of course, also many "provincial", agricultural, technical, teacher-training and other types of universities and colleges, along with many research institutes and bureaus. The Cultural Revolution closed many of these institutions of higher education and seriously hampered the educational activities of others, but they are now beginning to emerge from the effects of the revolution. In addition they are now selecting students on the basis of competitive exams, tests and other standardized measurements.

Medical education in China is of two basic types—Western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine. Each type of medical school exists in major cities; and in Zhengzhou the capital city of Henan Province, for example, there is a western medical school—Henan Medical College—with which the University of Kansas has a cooperative exchange program, and there is also a school of medicine emphasizing traditional Chinese methods, procedures and medications.

Since the normalization of relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China on January 1, 1979, there has been a dramatic increase in educational exchanges. American students and citizens now have opportunities to study and conduct research in China, and a number of U.S. academic institutions and private organizations have developed collaborative and cooperative programs with the Chinese government or individual universities within the P.R.C. A report by Blumenthal from the U.S.-China Education Clearing House entitled "American Study Programs in China" (distributed last year) provides lists of cooperative programs. The brochure lists U.S.-Chinese institutional agreements between over 70 U.S. institutions and counterpart institutions in the P.R.C. Institu-

tions involved range from Appalachian State University and Boston University to Western Michigan and Yale University. A number of the U.S. institutions have cooperative relationships with three or more institutions in China. Michigan State University, the State University of New York, UCLA, University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin, University of Pittsburg, University of Utah and the University of Kansas are among a limited number of institutions with three or more cooperative exchange programs.

Another publication from the U.S.-China Education Clearing House entitled "Students and Scholars from the People's Republic of China in the United States, August, 1981" by Fingar and Reed demonstrates the very significant growth in numbers of students and scholars coming from the P.R.C. to U.S. institutions. In 1978-79 there were only 54 students and scholars from the P.R.C. known to be studying in U.S. institutions. In 1979-80 the number increased to 1,100 and by 1980-81 the number increased to 2,313. An examination of the fields of study of scholars coming from the P.R.C., included in the same report, indicates something of the priorities which the Chinese have for these exchange programs. For 1981-82 the "advanced scholars" and their fields of research were distributed as follows:

Mathematics and Physical Sciences	28%
Medical and Life Sciences	11%
Engineering	49%
Social Sciences	4%
Humanities	3%
Language Training	5%

Clearly, the Chinese are placing a very high priority on upgrading their educational programs and especially their capabilities in science and engineering.

The University of Kansas currently has in effect cooperative exchange program agreements with four Chinese institutions. They are:

- Nankai University, Tianjin
- Nanjing University, Nanjing
- Zhengzhou University, Zhengzhou
- Henan Medical College, Zhengzhou

A brief history of the development of these cooperative exchange programs may be instructive.

In the summer of 1979, Vice Chancellor Frances Horowitz initiated communications with Nankai University. Nankai University is one of the seven major national Chinese universities. Also in that summer Professor Chae-Jin Lee and Governor Carlin met with Vice President Hu Guoding of Nankai University in Beijing, and Professor Grace Wan of our department of East Asian Languages and Cultures visited Nankai University Vice President Wu Daren in Tianjin.

As a result of these preliminary contacts, the University of Kansas was invited by Nankai University to send a delegation to the P.R.C. to discuss the possibility of cooperative exchange programs. In the spring of 1980, the author, then Executive Vice Chancellor of the University, along with Vice Chancellor Horowitz (Research and Graduate Studies), Vice Chancellor Christoffersen (Academic Affairs) and Professor Lee visited China. The official representatives were also accompanied by Barbara Christoffersen and Carol Shankel traveling at their own expense. On April 15, 1980, the author, on behalf of KU, and Vice President Wu Daren, on behalf of Nankai University, signed a general agreement for academic exchange. This agreement was subsequently approved formally by the University, by the Board of Regents and by Governor Carlin. On the same trip, a cooperative exchange agreement was negotiated and signed with Nanjing University in Nanjing and preliminary discussions were held with Zhengzhou University and Henan Medical College in Zhengzhou. The opportunity for cooperation with Nanjing resulted from the efforts of Prof. Chu-Tsing Li, Murphy Distinguished Professor of Art History, who is a graduate of Nanjing and had visited there in 1979. Later an agreement was developed with Henan Medical College for cooperation with the University of Kansas Medical Center. The general cooperative exchange agreement between the University of Kansas and Nankai University, which is fairly typical of these agreements, includes the following provisions:

1. It is the intention of the undersigned that each year both universities will agree upon a specific number of scholars and students who will be exchanged for study, research, or lecture. In accordance with the principles of reciprocal arrangements and mutual benefits, the host university will assume local expenses—fees, research funds, and living accommodation—for *exchange scholars and students*, whereas their travel costs will be borne by the sending university.
2. It is the hope of the undersigned that both universities will

invite scholars and students for collaborative research, lectures, or curriculum consultation. The host university will ordinarily assume both travel costs and local expenses for *invited scholars and students*.

3. It is further hoped that both universities will recommend scholars and students who will visit the host university for study, research, and international conferences. Both travel costs and local expenses for *visiting scholars and students* will be assumed by the sending side.
4. In each of the above categories, the host university will be expected to provide institutional sponsorship, library privileges, research facilities, and other assistance for visiting scholars and students as far as possible.
5. The two universities agree to exchange academic materials of mutual interest. This will include such items as scholarly publications, curriculum information, and pertinent research reports.
6. It is the intention of the undersigned to work out details of this exchange in a manner acceptable to the appropriate authorities and procedures in both universities.
7. This agreement will be effective beginning in August 1980. A working plan for implementation of this agreement will be made by both universities once an academic year, either jointly or through an exchange of respective proposals.

Each year the specific provisions of an implementation plan are developed between the cooperating institutions under the general provisions of these agreements. To date a number of students and scholars from the University of Kansas have had the opportunity to study in China and a number of scholars, researchers and faculty members from the PRC have studied at KU.

The KU archaeological study tour developed as a direct result of our cooperative exchange agreement with Zhengzhou University. Zhengzhou is the capital city of Henan Province and Henan Province is the province in central China which has a developing "sister state" relationship with the state of Kansas. Zhengzhou University is a provincial university for Henan Province and was established in 1956. There are 11 departments in the University—Chinese language and literature, history, politics, philosophy, economics, law, foreign languages and literature, mathematics, physics, electronics, and chemistry; and 14 specialties are offered through these 11 departments.

The University has 826 "teachers" including 8 professors, 48 associate professors and 411 lecturers. In 1982 there were approximately 3,400 students, including 45 graduate students, enrolled at the University. Also in 1982 as a result of exchange programs, 9 scholars, professors and teachers from the U.S. and New Zealand were invited to the institution to do some teaching and provide lectures. President Fan visited the University of Kansas during December of 1980 and also hosted representatives of K.U. during our archaeological study tour in China. The cooperative exchange agreement between Zhengzhou University and the University of Kansas was signed by President Fan on behalf of Zhengzhou University and the author on December 8, 1980, during President Fan's visit.

Finally, a few general observations regarding higher education, science and the cooperative exchange programs on which we are embarked:

1. As indicated earlier, it is clear that the Cultural Revolution cost the People's Republic of China a generation of scientists and scientific advancement. It is equally clear, given the thrust of their participation in the exchange programs, the level of activity now occurring in their universities and research institutes, and the level of commitment of the people, that they are absolutely dedicated to "catching up" with the rest of the world scientific community as rapidly as possible.
2. Clearly, the Chinese have much to gain in terms of modern technology and techniques by sending scientists, engineers, and research scholars to the United States and other currently more modernized scientific societies. Equally clearly, I believe, there is much to be learned by westerners in areas such as the history of science, the uses of traditional Chinese medications, and methods of scientific thought through visits to China.
3. Cooperative exchange programs can be of immense benefit to both sides in promoting cultural understanding. They also provide opportunities for students and scholars from the United States to study language, philosophy, art, history and culture in the People's Republic of China; and simultaneously provide opportunities for Chinese researchers to gain what they need most—an understanding of modern science and technology while studying in the United States.
4. The Chinese people—including educators with whom we visited—were frank, candid, and open about their desire for

cooperative exchanges of scholars and are anxious to do everything reasonably possible to make such exchanges mutually beneficial.

5. Our archaeological study tour is an example of a side benefit which comes to our institution as a direct result of participation in these exchange programs.

Needham, Joseph, 1981. *Science in Traditional China*, Harvard University Press (Cambridge) and Chinese University Press (Hong Kong).

Blumenthal, Peggy, 1981. *American Study Programs in China: An Interim Report Card*, U.S.-China Education Clearinghouse (Washington, D.C.).

Fingar, Thomas and Linda Reed, 1981. *Students and Scholars from the People's Republic of China in the United States*, August, 1981, U.S.-China Education Clearinghouse (Washington, D.C.).



Bas-relief ostrich (*Struthio camelus*) near Tang dynasty tomb west of Xi'an. The ostrich is known to have occurred in north China ten millenia ago, but within historic time has occurred only in Africa and the Near East.

## Nature in China

*Robert S. Hoffmann*

The view commonly held is that, over much of China, not much of nature is left. Returning tourists may remark that they saw no birds, that the countryside is mostly bare dusty fields, or that no grass grows in the cities. A tourist's impressions are influenced by places visited or by season of the year, though, and I found that with luck quite a few fragments of China's natural world may still be glimpsed.

China has virtually the same land area as the 48 contiguous United States, but its human population is more than four times as large, in excess of one billion people. Most of these are Han Chinese, concentrated in the valleys of the Huang He (Yellow river) and Chang Jiang (Yangtse River) and adjacent alluvial plains in the eastern half of the country. The broad-leafed forests that originally covered this region have been extensively modified by 5000 years of agriculture, and all of the large animals that used to inhabit the forests, meadows, and marshes have disappeared. However, trees still grow in some numbers in city parks, village woodlots, and the sacred precincts around tombs and temples, while fallow fields provide a substitute for meadows. Then too, within the densely populated (500 per sq. mi.) "breadbasket" of the North China Plain, ranges of hills and even mountains (such as Taihang Shan, Song Shan, and Qin Ling Shan) interrupt the tilled fields, and provide havens for the remnants of the native flora and fauna.

As a biologist, I was interested in what I could find of the natural world in the course of a tour of the ancient dynastic capitals of China, aided only by binoculars, and two almost useless guide books to birds and trees. They were inadequate because no guides to Chinese birds or trees (or anything else) were available. So I made do with guides to European species, in which I had noted which ones might be found in China, and which related species I might encounter as well. This led often to uncertainty, temporary misidentifications, and a frustrating number of unsolved mysteries; but to my pleased surprise, I was able



to identify quite a number of the common trees and birds that I encountered. One can still see birds in China

Our tour began in Shanghai, which is far enough south so that species with tropical affinities may be encountered; the all-black thick-billed or jungle crow was one of these, as well as the typically Chinese white-browed babbler. An outing on the Chang Jiang brought sightings of a pair of purple herons along the bank next to a flock of domestic (Peking) ducks, and, far out in the estuary, a black-tailed gull. Unfortunately, waterbirds remained disappointingly rare throughout our trip.

Trains and buses are much slower than airplanes, but they do permit one to incorporate the landscape into a sequence of memories. Our next fortnight afforded many chances for bird- and tree-watching, and gave us a feeling for the fields and forests, river valleys, loess hills, and even mountains and semi-desert landscapes from Kaifeng on the middle course of the Huang He west to the hills bordering the Wei He (Wei River) northwest of Xi'an. While this is a distance of only about 300 miles, the terrain it spans is surprisingly diverse.

One of the common roadside birds turned out to be striking glossy-black, about the size of a grackle or robin, but with a longer tail. My first thought was to call it a paradise flycatcher. However, as I saw more of these small, dark, long-tailed birds, I realized that some had deeply forked tails while others did not, some had a noticeable crest on the head that others lacked, and some had light bellies. This at first suggested to me variation due to sex or age, but it finally dawned on me that the glossy-black, crestless, fork-tailed forms were black drongos, whereas the less common, dull-black and white-bellied, crested birds without noticeably forked tails were the real paradise flycatchers. My pre-trip reading had told me to expect flycatchers, but not drongos, and I was easily led astray.

Another problem I gradually became aware of involved me in such a mundane matter as the city sparrows. My first, and as it turned out incorrect, impulse was to call them house sparrows, as I might have in any Western city. By the fifth day, in Anyang, I finally began to consider the sparrows seriously, and discovered that at least in that place they were all tree sparrows. This was not surprising, since tree sparrows also inhabit European cities (and were even introduced near St. Louis, Missouri), but I continued to expect both species. Eventually it became clear that from Zhengzhou to Xi'an and back to Beijing, every city, town, village, and farmyard sparrow was a

tree sparrow. House sparrows, so ubiquitous in America, were simply not to be found in central China.

The richest forests are to be found in and around temples and tombs, whose environs have long been venerated and protected from the ravages of woodcutters and charcoal-burners, and the pressure of an ever-expanding farm population. At Shaolin Monastery in the Song Shan, we found beautiful, tree-covered mountains, and a variety of birds we had not previously encountered. These included two red-footed falcons nesting in the top of a tall conifer a stone's throw from the main buildings, azure-winged magpies in the courtyard, and, at the old Taoist Temple at the base of the mountains, the lovely Daurian redstart. Similarly, the Longmen Caves near Luoyang, a major center of Buddhist worship, revealed new avian treasures—Daurian jackdaws, both common and lesser kestrels, eastern common swifts, eastern great tits, and a pair of blue rock thrushes feeding young in a nest high up in a rock cleft, and foraging out across the Jian Shui (Yi River) that meandered below the cliff.

As our tour progressed westward from Kaifeng, we gradually entered more arid, hilly country, more or less like travelling westward from Kansas City to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The loess plateau that dominates this part of central China is composed of a thick layer of wind-deposited soil, through which project upthrust sections of bedrock to form the hills and mountains. Wheat fields, irrigation canals lined with poplars, and mountains in the distance remind one of eastern Colorado, or perhaps Utah. Most of these dry hills were barren, or nearly so, but west of Xi'an, at the double tomb of the third Tang Emperor, Gaozong, and his concubine, later Empress Wu, the slopes of the hills had been protected and reforested. Here too birds were much more common than elsewhere, and a number of novelties were sighted; three common choughs wheeling and calling above the hilltops, male meadow and masked buntings singing in the trees, siskins in the undergrowth, a spectacled laughing-thrush in the garden, and a wheatear that I am still not able to identify with certainty. It was probably a pied wheatear, but with a black instead of white belly—perhaps a geographic variant. Upon my return I examined several reference books, and found what looked like my mystery bird—a white-crowned black wheatear. Unfortunately, it has not been recorded from any closer to central China than southwestern Iran, so the mystery remains. But of course one of the fascinations of birding, especially in unfamiliar territory, is

that of trying to solve such puzzles.

The Chinese have been interested in their natural world for thousands of years, as the numerous representations of animals and plants in their painting, sculpture, and ceramics attest (Illus.). There is much still to be learned from careful study of this historical material concerning the original distribution of the Chinese biota, before millenia of human activities wrought such massive changes in the environment. Art provides evidence, for example, of the occurrence in the Chang Jiang (Yangtse) valley of gibbons, tapirs, and rhinoceri, animals whose northern limits of occurrence are now much farther south. On the other hand the giant panda, so familiar in modern iconography, does not appear in early Chinese art, suggesting that it has been restricted to its remote habitat in western China for a long time.

Chinese biologists have embarked now on an extensive set of studies of the fauna and flora of their country, as well as various aspects of the environment (soils, geology, etc.). The majority of this effort is focused on the sparsely populated provinces and autonomous regions of western China such as Xinjiang Uighur (Sinkiang), Qinghai (Tsinghai), and Xizang (Tibet). Not only is less known about these areas, but they have the advantage of being less disturbed by human activities. One may hope that before long Chinese ornithologists will have published field guides to Chinese birds, and that birdwatcher-tourists will be less frustrated in trying to identify their quarry.

One may hope too that the Chinese people will recapture their ancient appreciation of nature, and, leisure permitting, foster a group of indigenous birdwatchers and other amateur students of nature. The conservation movement in China is small at present, and most of the attention has been focused on the giant panda. A series of reserves has been established in an effort to protect the panda population, and American and Chinese biologists have been cooperating on ecological and behavioral studies of this endangered mammal. However, there is much more to China than pandas. It will be important to establish reserves and parks in all parts of the country to preserve and restore samples of the natural world. It will also be necessary to encourage the survival of aspects of nature even in the densely populated valleys and plains of eastern China. One of my most pleasant memories is of watching the swifts—smaller common swifts, large white-throated needletails and one lone white-rumped

swift—circling and zooming past the pagodas and temples, even in the heart of the large cities. Any city needs as much non-human life as it is possible to encourage, and China is no exception.

Birds seen in China, 30 May–19 June 1982. Order of list, and common and scientific names follow C. Vaurie, "The birds of the Palearctic fauna" 2 vol., Witherby Ltd., London, 1959, 1965.

Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> <sup>1</sup>
Chinese Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola bacchus</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Pied Harrier	<i>Circus melanoleucus</i>
Eastern Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco (vespertinus) amurensis</i>
Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Grey-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus cinereus</i>
Black-tailed Gull	<i>Larus crassirostris</i>
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Collared Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Rufous Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
White-throated Needle-tailed Swift	<i>Hirund-apus caudacutus</i>
Eastern Common Swift	<i>Apus (apus) pekinensis</i>
White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>
Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
Grey-headed Woodpecker	<i>Picus canus</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Grey-headed Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos canicapillus</i>
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Crag Martin	<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>
Mongolian Lark	<i>Melanocorypha mongolica</i>
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
White (Pied) Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>
Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>
King Crow (Black Drongo)	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
Grey Starling	<i>Sturnus cineraceus</i>
Azure-winged Magpie	<i>Cyanopica cyanus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>
Daurian Jackdaw	<i>Corvus dauuricus</i>
Jungle (Thick-billed) Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
Collared Crow	<i>Corvus torquatus</i>
White-browed Chinese Warbler (Babbler)	<i>Rhopophilus pekinensis</i>
Black Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone atrocaudata</i>
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i> <sup>2</sup>

Blue Rockthrush  
Daurian Redstart  
Spectacled Laughing-thrush  
Hwa-mey  
Varied Tit  
Eastern Great Tit  
Yellow-bellied Tit  
Tree Sparrow  
Brambling  
Oriental Greenfinch  
Common Rose Finch  
Long-tailed (Siberian Meadow) Bunting  
Black-faced (Masked) Bunting

1) Cage bird

2) Identity uncertain

*Monticola solitarius*  
*Phoenicurus aureus*  
*Garrulax perspicillatus*  
*Garrulax canorus*<sup>1</sup>  
*Parus varius*  
*Parus major minor*  
*Parus venustus*<sup>1</sup>  
*Passer montanus*  
*Fringella montifringilla*<sup>1</sup>  
*Carduelis sinica*  
*Carpodacus erythrinus*<sup>1</sup>  
*Emberiza ciodes*  
*Emberiza spodocephala*

## A Historian's View of the Chinese Archaeological Sites

*James E. Seaver*

During the early part of June 1982 the K.U. Henan Archaeological Study Tour of the People's Republic of China visited several important archaeological sites in the areas of Henan, Shaanxi, and Beijing. As a historian of antiquity in the West and one who has used archaeological materials in my research and teaching for many years, I will present my impressions and observations about some of the important archaeological areas we visited. I will comment on these sites in the order in which we visited them, not in their proper chronological order as historical sites.<sup>1</sup>

Our first true encounter with Chinese archaeology came at the capital of Henan Province, Zhengzhou, where we visited two sites. The first of these was the neolithic village site of Dahecun (Ta-hot's'un), which is located near the city of Zhengzhou. The remains of the village are preserved in a large building and consist mostly of the outlines of small houses, probably made of wattle and daub. We saw post holes where the poles of the houses once stood and the remains of hearths and refuse pits. This site has yielded painted pottery of the Yangshao culture associated with a charcoal giving a radiocarbon dating of c. 3760-3610 B.C. Other radiocarbon dating in the village has produced dates from 2900 to 2500 B.C., associated with Longshanoid pottery; so this village appears to have been an important site occupied by Yangshao and Longshan farmers from about 3760 to 2500 B.C. and possibly later.

The remains of the houses at Dahecun have been carefully excavated and are neatly displayed. In a shed we saw pottery displayed along the walls. Some of the small houses were round, some rectangular, and some had porches in front of the entrance to the house.

After our return to Zhengzhou, we made a brief visit to the Shang site of Erligang, not far from our Guest House. The site was closed, as was the small museum, but we were able to see the location where a

large structure of the Shang period had been excavated. Just a hundred yards or so away from this excavated area, we were shown a portion of the massive Shang wall, which enclosed the Shang city. This wall, made of pounded earth, was originally about 30 feet high, 60 feet wide, and had a total perimeter of about 4.5 miles. The surviving pounded earth wall, still about 25 feet high where we saw it, was quite impressive. Some scholars have suggested that, on the basis of this wall and the extensive buildings enclosed by it, Zhengzhou may have been the site of the ancient Shang capital of Ao.

In Zhengzhou, we also visited Zhengzhou University, where we met with the archaeology staff in the Department of History. Several members of the department spoke of the archaeological techniques they were employing, of the excavations currently going on at Erlitou, and elsewhere, and of some of their future plans. These Chinese scholars are clearly convinced of the importance of the archaeological work they are doing (perhaps the most important in the world today) and have a strong sense of responsibility in carrying out their tasks.

In Anyang we visited the site of the famous capital Yin of the Shang Dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.). Despite the extensive excavation of this area, there are not many archaeological remains to be seen in Anyang today. This is because, as soon as the excavations have been completed and photographed, they are filled in and covered over and then planted with grain. We saw where the Shang palace had been, but the site was now a field of wheat. However, photographs of the excavation were on display, along with a few artifacts, in the small museum on the celebrated site of Yin. Also, one excavation of a relatively small Shang tomb had been left open so that we could get an idea of what these tombs were like when opened. The resident archaeologist, who lectured to us on the site, said that more than one million archaeological objects had been removed from the rich Shang tombs in the area since World War II, artifacts that are to be seen in museums all over China. Many of these bronze artifacts came to the United States in two major exhibitions. In the museum we also saw a number of inscribed oracle bones. Anyang is the most important source for these early examples of Chinese script. We also saw the remains of a recently excavated Shang chariot.

After leaving Anyang, we visited the Gongxian Caves, with their Buddhist sculptures. These caves are not exactly excavated areas, but we were told that considerable clearing and restoration had gone on

in the area to uncover the sculptured areas and to provide for their preservation.

The sculptured figures of the Gongxian Caves were carved during the Northern Wei Dynasty (A.D. 439-534), when Buddhism enjoyed great favor at the court of the rulers, all of whom were from the Toba Tribe. The major sculptures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas at the caves were sponsored by the members of the imperial family, but some of the smaller caves and low reliefs were probably sponsored by wealthy and devout noble families. During this period northern China was reported to have had no less than 40,000 temples. There were 1,367 in the Northern Wei capital of Luoyang alone, and the cave sculptures at Gongxian were a part of the remarkable spread of popularity of Buddhism at this time.

After leaving the Gongxian area we visited the Han tombs which have been excavated at Dahuting, in Mixian County. The two large Han tombs that we visited at Dahuting were extremely well preserved. They were excavated in 1960 and descriptions were published in 1972. The tombs are some distance below the surface of the earth, and the larger of the two is notable for magnificent stone engravings. The lintels of the doorways are particularly impressive. The Tombs contain scenes depicting important persons, rent collecting, kitchen scenes, and family banquets with entertainers.

The second and smaller Han tomb that we visited was decorated with many murals, painted on the walls with mineral colors. The colors of some of these paintings were quite faint, but we could discern scenes of family feasting, with large numbers of interesting entertainers, such as dancers, jugglers, wrestlers, and musicians. Many of the musical instruments were recognizable, so that one could almost imagine the sound of the Han orchestra playing for the festivities. The tombs of Dahuting in Mixian County were the only examples of Han archaeology and art that we saw *in situ*.

At Luoyang, the capital of many dynasties of China, we visited the famous Buddhist sculptures at the Longmen Caves which are somewhat similar to those of Gongxian; but there are many more caves at Longmen, and some are on a vastly larger scale than those of Gongxian. These cave sculptures have been much damaged over the centuries. Some of the sculptures have been much broken up to make roads, and others have been taken away to museums all over the world. It was especially sad to see that many of the heads of the Buddha and Bodhisattva figures have been cut off and taken away.



The present Chinese government, however, has removed the rubble from the caves and has constructed pathways to many of the most interesting caves and their sculptures. This was the most spectacular sculptured area we visited.

The Longmen Caves are located about eight miles south of Luoyang and extend along both banks of the Yi River. We learned that the excavation and sculpturing of the caves began about A.D. 500, during the Northern Wei Dynasty, and continued during the Sui and Tang Dynasties, down to about A.D. 700. At the site there are more than thirteen hundred caves containing over twenty-one hundred grottoes and niches, many inscriptions, and about a hundred thousand images and statues of the Buddha. Many art historians believe that the artwork of Longmen represents the high point of Buddhist sculpture in China.

The oldest cave in the Longmen complex, the Guyang Cave, was begun in 495 and contains some splendid Northern Wei bas-reliefs that depict delightfully elegant flying *Asparas* (angels). The most spectacular cave, the largest in the complex, was made during the Tang Dynasty. This is Fengxian Temple, sculpted between 672 and 675 under orders from the Empress Wu. This cave, which dominates the whole Longmen complex, contains a great statue of Buddha, almost 70 feet high, along with two Bodhisattvas that are 50 feet high and two disciples of about 40 feet each. Heavenly kings and guardians flank these huge figures. The wonderful vision of peace and inner calm of the face of Buddha contrasts effectively with the militant figures and grotesque features of the guardians, and the whole cave makes a profound impression even when viewed from across the Yi River.

In the area near Xi'an we visited a number of important archaeological sites. The first, and probably the most important of these, was the tomb area of the First Emperor of Qin, Qin Shi-Huang-di, located at Mount Li (Lintong County), which is some eighteen miles east of Xi'an.

This tomb has been called "the greatest archaeological find of our time" by Arthur Cotterell in his book *The First Emperor of China*. Most of our group had read this work before our visit to Xi'an, so we were prepared for the amazing sight of the terra-cotta army which was discovered by workers digging water wells in March of 1974.

As Cotterell points out: 'But we know from the writings of the Han historian Sima Qian (Ssu-ma Ch'ien, 145 B.C.-90 B.C.) some-

thing of what the First Emperor intended his own mausoleum to be. In the *Shi Ji* (*Shih Chi*, Historical records) we read:

As soon as the First Emperor became King of Qin [in 246 B.C.] work was begun on his mausoleum at Mount Li. After he won the empire [in 221 B.C.] more than 700,000 conscripts laboured there. They dug through three underground streams; they poured molten copper for the outer coffin; and they filled the burial chamber with models of palaces, towers, and official buildings, as well as fine utensils, precious stones and rarities. Artisans were ordered to fix automatic crossbows so that grave robbers would be slain. The waterways of the empire, the Yellow and Yangtse Rivers, and even the great ocean itself, were represented by mercury and were made to flow mechanically. Above, the heavenly constellations were depicted, while below lay a representation of the earth. Lamps using whale oil were installed to burn for a long time.<sup>2</sup>

This great tomb complex, still unfinished at the time of the First Emperor's death, lies unexcavated under the emperor's tumulus at Mount Li. Two large stone stelae showed us the path to the summit of the tumulus, which is covered with pomegranate trees.

The Chinese archaeologists have decided to wait for a while before excavating the actual tomb of the First Emperor. They told us that they expect to find objects such as cloth, wood, lacquer, ivory and paintings in the tomb but they want to wait for a time when world archaeology has perfected its techniques for preserving such delicate objects. In this they are exercising that sense of responsibility which is so important for the excavator. It may be another century or more before the tomb is opened, and when it is, the whole mausoleum complex may turn out to be one of the greatest monuments of the world.

From the tumulus we went to the area where the army of terracotta soldiers guarding the tomb was discovered. In all, four trenches for the army have been located, but only the first trench, discovered in 1974, has been covered by an immense roofed building, somewhat like a large indoor football stadium, to protect the figures from the weather. This first trench is about 1,000 feet by 200 feet and contains an estimated 6,000 warriors, 24 horses, and many chariots. All the figures are life size, and most of the warriors held weapons, such as halberds, crossbows and spears but these were probably seized by rebels in a revolution that brought about the fall of the Qin Dynasty a few years after the death of the First Emperor. We could also see where the roof over the army had been burned, probably during this

revolt. The terra-cotta figures are solid up to the waist and hollow from the waist to the neck. The heads were fashioned separately, to be fitted into the torsos, and each one is different. Did each soldier pose for the sculptors? Then the figures were all brightly painted and set into ranks. The commanders have ornate armor and elaborate hairdos. The spectacle of this whole army, unprecedented in the history of archaeology, is overwhelming.

A second trench, similar to the one now sheltered by the roof, was discovered in 1976, about sixty feet away from the first trench, to the northeast. This second trench contains one general, 89 chariots, 261 charioteers, 356 horses, 116 cavalymen and horses with saddles. In all, this part of the terra-cotta army has a total of 1,239 human figures and horses.

Later, third and fourth trenches were found. The third trench, located northwest of the first trench, is quite small and contains only 68 figures, most of them probably officers. The fourth trench, located between the second and third, contains no terra-cotta statues. Archeologists speculate that this trench was still unfinished when the Qin empire was overthrown. They also speculate that trenches similar to the second and third should have been found on the south side of the first trench, but test digs in these areas were negative. Who can tell what other surprises await us in the area of the First Emperor's tomb? This terra-cotta army is located about one mile to the east of the tumulus of the First Emperor. Perhaps future excavation will find three more such armies stationed at the other three points of the compass to protect the emperor in his last resting place.

The terra-cotta army of trench number one is viewed from a walkway about sixteen feet above the excavation. In each corridor a line of soldiers, without shields, faces outwards. Evidently Qin soldiers did not use shields at all, and they had minimal body armor. This means that an army always took the offensive. Chinese historical records tell of the ferocity of the Qin armies, but not until the pottery armies were excavated did we realize how much of the strategy of Qin warfare depended on taking the initiative in battle.<sup>3</sup>

Several small museums are also located on this site. In one of these we could study the arms and armor of the Qin army, and in another we could see some of the best-preserved terra-cotta figures and a reconstructed wooden chariot drawn by four magnificent terra-cotta horses. The organization and excellence of this museum complex allowed us to emerge with a very clear understanding of one of

the most important archaeological discoveries of modern times.

From Mount Li and the tomb complex we returned west towards Xi'an but stopped enroute to see the famous neolithic site of Banpo, probably the most important neolithic site yet discovered in China. The site of Banpo, overlooking the Chan River, is the classic location of the Yangshao culture; the site was occupied by a large neolithic farming community from about 6000 to 3500 B.C. and covers an oval area of about 55,000 square yards. Forty-six houses were excavated here. Most of the houses, storage pits, and animal pens are clustered around the center of the site (c. 33,000 square yards), outlined by a ditch about 15 feet deep. The village cemetery, located in the northern part of the village but outside the ditch, yielded 130 adult burials containing magnificent examples of Yangshao pottery with delightful painted designs of fish, animals, and plants.

The houses that we saw at Banpo were about ten to fifteen feet in diameter, square, oblong, or round, with plastered floors. The thatched roofs were supported on wooden posts, while the walls were made of wattle and daub. Fairly late in the occupation of the site, a big longhouse was built, measuring some 65 by 40 feet, and divided into compartments by light walls. This longhouse was probably the administrative and perhaps the cult center of the village.

This site of Banpo village has been excavated expertly and is displayed with great care. A free-standing building covers the entire site. We viewed the excavation from a wooden walkway which encircles the site. Yangshao pottery, stone tools, and other interesting objects found during the excavation were viewed in a large exhibition hall at the entrance to the grounds. Outside the exhibition building we saw several carefully reconstructed neolithic houses of various shapes and sizes. This was certainly the most extensive, interesting, and best displayed neolithic site we visited in China.

Several other important excavations have been carried out west of Xi'an, including two that we visited, Qianling Mausoleum and Zhaoling Mausoleum. Located about 37 miles northwest of Xi'an, the mausoleum of Zhaoling corresponds to the tomb complex of Li Shimin, who became Taizong, the second emperor of the Tang Dynasty (617-649). This mausoleum of one of the greatest Tang rulers was opened to the public in mid 1978. Taizong, while he allowed Daoist and Confucian traditions to flourish, was a devout Buddhist, going out himself to welcome the scholar Xuanzang when Xuanzang returned from India with important Mahayana Buddhist texts.

When Taizong died in 649, he was buried high among the peaks of nearby Mount Jiuzong, some 13 miles from the present Liquan county in Shaanxi Province. The mausoleum area is 36 miles in circumference, and the great central tomb is surrounded by 167 satellite tombs of Taizong's family and loyal ministers. The size of this burial complex is hard to comprehend, but it is impressive to see Taizong's resting place high in the mountains with the satellite tombs on all sides. The princesses' and concubines' tombs are on the hillsides, while the others are on the valley floor. The Zhaoling Mausoleum is especially important because it is the first Chinese imperial tomb to use burial on a mountain rather than on a man-made tumulus raised on the flat, as we saw at the tomb of the First Emperor.

The museum at Zhaoling contains a great wealth of artifacts from the Tang Dynasty, but it is especially famous for its collection of painted pottery figures taken from the fourteen satellite tombs that have been excavated, and for the Zhaoling Forest of Tablets. These inscribed tablets provide a wealth of historical information about the Sui and Tang Dynasties, and also furnish important evidence for the study of Chinese calligraphy, especially of the Tang Dynasty.

While we were at Zhaoling we also visited one of the 14 important satellite tombs that have been excavated in the mausoleum complex of Taizong. This satellite tomb was that of Li Ji (Xu Maogong), which contained some very handsome murals covering an area of nearly 440 square yards. The murals show scenes of hunting, soldiers with pennons, courtiers and guests, polo playing, and other activities of the royal court. All these scenes are very important examples of the Tang style of mural painting and also important documents for the study of the life style of the nobility during the Tang Dynasty.

The Qianling Mausoleum, situated about 50 miles northwest of Xi'an, is the tomb complex of Li Zhi and his wife Wu Zetian, the Tang emperor Gaozong (649-683) and his empress, who are interred together in a nearby mountain. After Gaozong's death, the Empress Wu ruled the empire and established her own Zhou Dynasty (690-705), the only period of Chinese history ruled by an empress.

There is an impressive avenue of stone images of men and animals leading toward the imperial tomb, a pair of immense stelae for the emperor and the empress, and two curious groups of headless statues of foreign ambassadors. As at the tomb complex of the Emperor Taizong, there are a number of satellite tombs at Qianling

associated with the tomb of Gaozong. Five of these satellite tombs were opened and excavated between 1960 and 1971. These tombs had been robbed long ago, but even so, they yielded more than 4,300 funerary objects, of which the most interesting are colored glazed figurines of horses, soldiers, camels, and camel drivers from foreign lands. These figurines, some glazed and some painted, vigorous and highly decorative, are among the most precious examples of Tang art.

During our stay in Beijing we visited the area of the thirteen imperial tombs of the Ming Dynasty. These tombs are located in a beautiful valley in the northwestern suburbs of Beijing. The total area covered by the tombs, begun in 1409 and completed in 1644, is about 24 square miles.

The tomb we visited is called Dingling, the mausoleum of the thirteenth Ming emperor, Zhu Yijun (Wanli) and two of his wives. This mausoleum covers an area of about 200,000 square yards and was built by 20,000 to 30,000 workers between the years 1584 and 1590.

Approaching the Ming Mausoleum area, one comes to a richly decorated stone arch in the conventional form of five passage openings. Then comes the main gate to the tomb area and soon after that the huge 30 foot stela of Changling, mausoleum of the third emperor of the Ming Dynasty. After that the main road, some five miles long, leads to the individual tombs. The middle section of this road is lined with eighteen pairs of statues of men and animals. The very realistic and well-carved statues of civil servants, warriors, and faithful ministers represent the whole official staff of the emperors.

Approaching the mausoleum itself we saw a raised imperial terrace, surmounted by a Ming tower decorated in low relief with the imperial symbols, dragons and phoenixes. In front of the Ming tower is a stone terrace with a stone incense burner, candlesticks, and flower bowls. This was for sacrificial ceremonies to the emperor.

Then, through an arch at the end of a stone passageway, we descended into the tomb proper, which lies about 90 feet below the ground surface. It was excavated between May 1956 and May 1957. Three trenches for sounding were dug, and the entrance to the tomb was found. The door of the underground tomb was sealed by 23 layers of large bricks.

The underground palace tomb of Zhu Yijun contains three central halls with two side halls covering a space of about 1,200 square yards. The handsome middle hall is barrel-vaulted and is 25 feet high and 20

feet wide. This hall contains three marble imperial thrones for the emperor and his two wives. Before the thrones are jars, once containing perfumed oil, which at the time of the excavation still had in them traces of burned wicks.

The back hall, the coffin chamber, is the heart of the underground palace. It is a barrel-vaulted chamber, 100 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 31 feet high; its floor is made of polished granite.

Three imperial wooden coffins for the emperor and his two empresses occupy the center of this hall. Around these coffins are 26 boxes, once full of gold, silver, and jewels. Over 3,000 burial offerings were found in these boxes, including jade cups, gold cups, and gold utensils used by the emperor during his lifetime. The boxes also contained the gold crown of the emperor and the phoenix crowns of the empresses. The gold crown of Zhu Yijun is the first ever excavated in China. Many of these beautiful products of the Chinese jewelers' and goldsmiths' art were on display for us in the tomb. This excavation seems to have been carried out with care and a spirit of reverence for the greatness of China's history. The tomb and its objects are displayed with skill and taste.

Reading and studying about Chinese history and archaeology before our trip made the experience of being on the sites especially meaningful. But only in China itself can one get a true sense of the greatness of the country, the extent of its archaeological and other treasures, and a feeling for the kindness of its people.

1. Many archaeological details in this report have been obtained from Kwang-chih Chang, *The Archaeology of Ancient China*, 3d ed. (1977).
2. Arthur Cotterell, *The First Emperor of China* (New York and London: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981), p. 17.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

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## The Didactic Chinese Museum

*Margaret L. Carney-Ryan*

The People's Republic of China has a wealth of cultural riches to offer both its own citizens and its foreign visitors. Regardless of personal interests or knowledge, China's museums are a fast-developing entity which merits both professional scrutiny and pleasurable viewing.

Each society has a rather ethnocentric way of perceiving other environments and cultures. Having been raised under the influence of museums in the United States, we have a tendency to think that our own museum system is perhaps superior. It seems obvious to us that the progressive and innovative displays in modern U.S. museums and the public's easy access to museum collections are the optimum standards toward which a museum can strive. This biased opinion seems to be reinforced by the current wealth of U.S. museum publications and sophisticated conservation concerns.

Within the last two years, two major museum publications, *Museum News* and *Museum* (UNESCO, Paris), have devoted entire issues of their periodicals to the subject of museums in China.<sup>1</sup> While these issues have attempted a thorough examination of Chinese museums, the results still imply that the staffs of U.S. museums feel China has a long way to go before they meet the high standards of Western museums. On a visit of American Association of Museums members to Chinese museums in 1981, the chief curator of exhibit design and production at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History "decided that exhibit design and development in the People's Republic of China, compared to the state of the art in the United States, was somewhat antiquated."<sup>2</sup>

Having spent time in both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, visiting as many museums as possible, this writer would like to review some of the major differences between Chinese and U.S. museums and share some insights into the desirability of the Chinese didactic way. Because readers of this paper are already familiar with the nature of the majority of the museums in the United States, most



examples given will be of Chinese origin. An exchange of ideas and information is desirable between the museums of the world. And, of course, what works for one museum may not be advantageous for another. Yet we cannot summarily dismiss the Chinese museums with the statement: "a country that has more than doubled the number of its museums in the last thirty years surely has much to teach us."<sup>3</sup>

This paper will introduce the Chinese museum from a non-Chinese viewpoint, yet retain the empathy and respect that is well-deserved by Chinese museums. Problems concerning the various aspects of Chinese museums will be described.

There are two outstanding characteristics of the museums of China today. Most notable is the enormous emphasis which has been placed on establishing new museums and improving and renovating older museums in China since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Also important is the factor that museums in China are essentially didactically oriented.

The Chinese term for museum, *bo wu guan*, was not known in ancient times. Despite this fact, the concept of exhibitions, art collections, and archaeological studies is not new in China. And the various palaces and temples that housed and preserved treasures were no doubt museums known by other names.

The first official museum in China was established in 1905 in Nantong—the Nantong Centre of Natural History. At the time of liberation, China had only twenty-one museums, located in cities such as Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai, and Tianjin.

The enormous increase in the museums of China since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 includes museums in the categories of: history museums devoted to either the history of the revolution or to that of the country as a whole; art museums; museums of the Chinese nationalities; museums of science, production relations, and technology. In the thirty years since liberation the Socialist revolution has pushed through the creation of 349 museums in the People's Republic, without counting the specialized museums founded by various ministries.<sup>4</sup> Since the Cultural Revolution the pace of establishing new museums has quickened considerably.

The creation of these museums is based on the principle that the past must serve the present.<sup>5</sup> Because the museums in China play essentially a teaching role, the object on display is less significant than its didactic meaning. Therefore museum collections in China

contain many replicas and copies of objects belonging to other museums, or even objects reconstituted according to the evidence of ancient texts. This is, of course, in keeping with the Chinese belief that a superbly made copy is to be respected on its own merits, as a worthy creation.

Not only are these copies or replicas appreciated, but a conservation function is performed. Many Chinese museums display original paintings and other objects on a rotating basis. The original painting might be viewable for one month out of each year, with a reproduction, model, or even a photocopy occupying its place for the other eleven months.<sup>6</sup> Therefore the detrimental effects of humidity, lighting and other environmental factors are restricted. This factor may frustrate a foreign visitor because the original work is inaccessible, but because of the didactic orientation of the museums, the Chinese public does not seem unduly dismayed. There are few competent conservationists employed in Chinese museums. Therefore, bronze disease, ceramic problems, and other conservation matters are largely left untreated.

The museums in China all come under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and the State Administration Bureau of Archaeological Data and Museums (which, in last year's reorganization, became a department of the Ministry of Culture). Apparently the State Council directly supervises the Palace Museum and the Historical Museum in Beijing.<sup>7</sup> Most museums in China hold some regular exhibits and occasionally offer some special exhibitions. Of course, only a small percentage of the large holdings in these collections can be exhibited at one time. Therefore, if scholars are interested in viewing objects in storage, they must make special requests to the Ministry of Culture and the State Administration Bureau of Antiquities. Because of the large number of such requests, special viewings are usually limited to a very few objects.<sup>8</sup>

If one is fortunate enough to obtain permission to view objects in storage in a Chinese museum, the intimate unrolling of scrolls amidst "tea ceremony" is a truly exhilarating experience.

The use of reproductions in museum displays is a frequent occurrence since authentic "first-class" items are usually put in storage. All works of art are assigned to one of three categories based on age, rarity, and monetary considerations. Second- and third-class objects remain under the jurisdiction of city and county agencies, while the most precious and fragile pieces become the responsibility

of the State Administrative Bureau of Archaeological Data and Museums in Beijing.

In spite of all the impressive developments involving Chinese museums, gaining access to the museums and their holdings is not easy. No regular exhibition schedule has been produced at any of the Chinese museums. The only certainty is that most major exhibitions are scheduled for the fall months, when the climate is most agreeable in China. This is perhaps the only time of year when the best scrolls will be shown in the museums. At other times of the year the exhibition will be greatly reduced, copies will be utilized, or the exhibition area might be entirely closed to the public.

It would perhaps be most illuminating at this point to cite specific Chinese museums and illustrate the nature of each and how it is successful or not.

One of the most impressive museums we visited in China was at the Banpo Village Neolithic site near Xi'an. This site was discovered in 1953. At the completion of the excavation of a portion of this Yangshao culture site, part of the site was left in its final stage of excavation and was covered by a permanent hangar-like structure. On the inside, the visitor can see the original foundations from an elevated perimeter walkway. 3,000 square meters of excavated area are exposed—revealing dwellings, tombs, silos, enclosures for domesticated animals, kilns, and part of a surrounding moat. Discreetly placed signboards explain the topography of the area.<sup>9</sup> Outside are replicas of the Yangshao culture houses. Nearby exhibits in the museum display stone age tools, animal bones, and pottery excavated from the area. Additionally, lectures and map orientations are frequently given at the Banpo Museum. Individual objects are admirably displayed in the accompanying museum. Reliable replicas of such objects are on display in other museums throughout China.

This Banpo site museum is an example of one of the many expensive efforts to preserve archaeological relics for the purpose of education.<sup>10</sup> This Neolithic site at Banpo Village, preserved *in situ*, attracts large numbers of national and foreign visitors on a yearly basis. The enclosed archaeological site and accompanying museum provide valuable information about the Neolithic period and stimulate reflections concerning the rules governing matrimonial and domestic concerns as well as the moral and ideological concepts that guided the people.<sup>11</sup>

A similar successful technique has been utilized at the Neolithic

site, Dahecun near Zhengzhou. A portion of the excavation has been permanently enclosed while museum case exhibits are included within the same structure. Excavations are ongoing at this exciting Neolithic site. This aura of continuous discovery adds to the inspirational nature of this unique museum.

Another readily observable fact about Chinese museums is the chronological organization of most museums. The history museums are organized chronologically within a Marxist social evolutionary framework (primitive society, slave-owning society, feudal society, first democratic revolution, bourgeois revolution, and post-liberation). The exhibits consist of objects neatly grouped by type and period, and are presented in traditional display cases. Of course one problem of a strongly centralized government is that the government dictates everything. As a result of this lack of individual development, museums tend to copy the formats of Peking's museums (the Palace Museum and the Historical Museum). The resulting uniformity in the museum displays grows a bit tedious to the less indoctrinated foreign visitor.

Within each museum each item is clearly labeled with hand-lettered words in white or gold ink on a small wooden mount. The name, provenance, date and dynastic association of the item are included on the label. Only a few Chinese museums, such as the one at Banpo Village, have English labels in the cases. However, the signs asking that no photographs be taken of particular objects, are invariably in English, even if the captions are not.

The Museum of Chinese History in Beijing is an excellent example of a museum based on the principle that the past must serve the present. Its collection of more than 300,000 objects thoroughly displays China's archaeology and history. The permanent exhibit on the theme of China's social evolution through the ages presents a panorama of China from the Yuan-mou man down to the eve of the Movement of May 4, 1919, divided into four major sections corresponding to the four phases of the evolution of society: primitive society, slave society, feudal society, and, finally, semi-feudal and semi-colonial in the Chinese Republic at the beginning of the century.

Attendance at the Museum of Chinese History in Beijing is high. College students and middle- and primary-school pupils are regularly brought to the museum, depending on the schedule of their history curriculum. Similarly, Beijing's Chinese Revolutionary Museum traces the thirty years of the history of the Chinese Communist Party:

from the Movement of May 4, 1919 to the founding of the PRC in 1949. The exhibits are divided into four sections: the birth of the Chinese Communist Party to the Northern Expedition (1919-27); the Agrarian Revolutionary War (1927-36); the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45); and the War of Liberation (1946-49). The exhibits are intended to publicize the political line, the guiding principles, and the objectives of the Communist Party. The museum essentially is a 'classroom' to familiarize the general public with the traditions of the revolution.

The best known and most elaborate art museum in China is the Palace Museum or Gugong. The construction of the Imperial Palace or Forbidden City was begun in 1406 and lasted fourteen years. It consists of 9,000 rooms spread over an area of 720,000 square meters. The Palace Museum, created out of the Forbidden City in 1925, holds almost a million objects: inscriptions on metal and stone, bronzes, pottery, porcelain, paintings, jewelry, textiles, etc. Of course the overwhelming number of museum objects held in the Gugong creates its own problems, including a lack of staff and time to have a proper inventory, let alone maintain the collection from a conservation standpoint. The imperial chambers furnished in the old traditional style are an integral part of the museum. The designs of the ancient temples, pagodas, and shrines have contributed a lot to the Chinese museum exhibit design. Inside the ceramic display halls of the Gugong, the exhibit areas are composed of free-standing cases with both artificial lighting from within the cases and daylight streaming unrestricted through the windows. The reflections on the glass display cases are not too prohibitive for general viewing, but present problems when photography is attempted.

One of the nicest aspects about the Gugong is the informal, relaxed atmosphere. When we visited recently there usually was an attendant on duty in each exhibit area, but one never felt the cases were being guarded, nor were the museum visitors intently scrutinized by the exhibit attendant (quite the contrary!). The effect was quite relaxed—we felt welcome to linger at each exhibit for what might be deemed an inappropriate amount of time (or threatening to security?) by Western museum standards.

Another innovative display feature utilized in the Palace Museum was the use of projections drawn on the backs of displays that illustrate the entire design pattern of the bronze or artifacts being exhibited.

Museum fatigue at the Gugong was relieved by the grouping of exhibits in separate halls. By the time we had walked the distance between exhibit halls, we were refreshed and ready to see the next exhibit.

Although we did not visit them while at the Gugong, the museum houses impressive conservation laboratories, which combine both modern and traditional conservation techniques. While these facilities are expanding and improving, they are presently quite inadequate to meet the needs of the enormous, diversified, and ancient collections housed at the Gugong.

Museums such as the Shanghai Museum are organized chronologically and on the basis of the types and periods of artifacts being displayed. "Logical" sums up the exhibit design. Aesthetic factors have not been sacrificed.

The unique nature of many Chinese museums cannot be stressed enough. The wealth of archaeological materials and the ingenuity of the Chinese have produced the "exhibits" at Longmen Caves near Luoyang, Gongxian Caves, the Forest of Steles in Xi'an at the Shaanxi Provincial Museum, the underground Tang dynasty figurine displays in the Tomb of Princess Yongtai near Xi'an.

While the outer museum facades may appear new and somewhat modern-traditional to non-Chinese visitors, the intriguing atmosphere at the location of Du Fu's birthplace is a testimonial to the refreshing nature of Chinese museums. Encounters with the unique display techniques utilized in China's tombs and caves are almost inexpressible in impact. We should definitely not judge Chinese museums strictly on the basis of our own facilities in the U.S.

Museums and archaeology in China have an extremely close tie. Of the 11,000 staff members in the 349 museums in China, no one has been trained specifically for museum work; most are historians or archaeologists. The main education that museum staff members receive today is in Chinese history.<sup>12</sup> The inadequate training of staff is one of the most serious problems in museums in China today.

Archaeology is virtually the only source the Chinese museums have for augmenting collections because funds are not available for buying artifacts at international auction or from Oriental dealers in other nations. Because all objects unearthed since the Communist Revolution belong to the state, no cultivation of private donors is necessary. Patriotism induces most individuals to deed their treasures to public repositories. Special exhibitions of donated artifacts

help develop pride in contributing to the country's museums.

There were a few serious problems that were noted on our recent tour of China's museums and archaeological sites. Those that I have not previously mentioned included: environmental difficulties such as the high moisture levels in tombs that were threatening wall paintings and enclosed displays underground; salts desiccating from a Neolithic ceramic jar on display at the Shanghai Museum indicating unresolved conservation problems.

As a whole we were charmed by China's museums. Admittedly, in a brief report such as this one we can cover only a few of the highlights to be found in the museums of China.

The didactic orientation of China's museums is beneficial in the education of the public under the Communist regime. Visitors from other nations (especially museum personnel) can also receive a tremendous museum education of a different nature. In the future, an exchange between museum personnel will be desirable.

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2. Clifford J. Morrow, Jr., "Revitalized Exhibition Design." *Museum News*, Vol. 59, No. 6, May/June, 1981, p. 42.
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6. Information obtained during a conversation between the author and Mr. Shen Ling-xin, a retired official from the Shanghai Museum, on the train from Nanchang to Shanghai, in June, 1982.
7. Chu-tsing Li, "A Hundred Days in China: An Art Historian's Research Experience." *China Exchange News*, published by the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, 8/3-4 (Summer 1980), p. 10.
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*The Empress as donor with attendants (detail), from the Pin-yang cave, Longmen, Henan.  
Photograph courtesy the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.*

## Luoyang Fragments

*Letha McIntire*

The ancient cities of China sometimes mask their illustrious past, producing in today's traveller a vague feeling of disquiet. I often knew that beneath the modern exterior, literally under the cement of the streets I passed over in air conditioned buses, centuries ago men and women lived in the heights of splendor, great poets strolled, and, inevitably, wars raged. I knew all this, but I could not see nor sense the past amidst the contemporary structures that make up a typical twentieth century Chinese city. Thus my disquiet and keen anticipation to see those fragments of vanished eras which have survived.

Luoyang was just such a city. I arrived on a sunny, perfectly ordinary afternoon by train from Zhengzhou. On the way to the hotel, I watched the now familiar scenes roll by: clean, broad avenues shaded by rows of sycamores; dull-colored blocks of apartment buildings; an occasional department store; industrious citizens on bicycles.

Luoyang has a slightly dusty appearance like the other cities of Henan province I had visited. The dust comes from the fine silt brought down by the Yellow River and deposited over the North China Plain from time immemorial. I suppose dust has been a small price to pay for the agricultural bounties of the region, which support modern Luoyang as they once did ancient Luoyang. On first encountering Luoyang, the city's magnificent past seemed linked with its present only through the tan-colored dust softening the contours of buildings and streets.

No city has had a richer past than Luoyang's. Five times it was China's capital (nine if one counts the smaller kingdoms), beginning as early as the eleventh century B.C. when the first Zhou king made it his subsidiary capital. More famous are its days as capital of the Eastern Han, Northern Wei, Sui and Tang dynasties.

No doubt every historian approaches Luoyang with a different set of special memories and expectations, with an intense interest in one era or ancient dynasty over another. For me, it was Northern Wei

Luoyang. My fascination can be traced to graduate school days when I studied China's Buddhist sculpture with Laurence Sickman, then director of the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City.

Modern Luoyang, as well as its venerable predecessors, takes its name from the Luo River which runs south of the city. The present city rises above the foundations of the old Sui and Tang capitals. The Northern Wei capital, founded around 500 A.D., was a few kilometers to the east. During the city's brief existence, Wei Luoyang had a population of a half million or more and covered an area of about ninety square kilometers. There were some five hundred monasteries and temples within the city walls, not to mention the elegant princely residences and a grand imperial palace. But the Wei empire crumbled. The city was abandoned in 534 A.D. and many of its palaces dismantled. What remained of Wei Luoyang was destroyed in 538.

I came closest to the site of the ancient Wei capital when I visited Baima Monastery one afternoon. Nothing remains of the splendid sixth century metropolis, but archaeologists have established the lines of most of the walls and roads of the inner city. The goal of my pilgrimage to Luoyang lay twelve kilometers outside the city, at the Buddhist cave chapels at Longmen. Preserved there are marvels of early Chinese Buddhist sculpture and the most tangible evidence of Northern Wei society and culture.

I had to wait until my second day at Luoyang to visit Longmen. It was better that way. Refreshed, I left especially early that morning and headed south, crossing the Luo River at the outskirts of the city. There was heavy traffic in the suburbs, people going to work and market, so the twelve kilometers passed slowly. The highway went up into the mountains; suddenly a sweeping view opened and I was crossing the massive stone bridge which spans the Yi River and connects the east and west sides of the Longmen cliffs. During the Northern Wei, Longmen was called the "Yi River watchtower," a fitting description of the strategic function of these limestone cliffs. From this vantage point in 293 B.C., a general of the Qin state was able to destroy the combined troops of Han and Wei, some 24,000 men. Only after the Sui dynasty, in the early seventh century, did this area become known popularly as Longmen or "dragon gate."

Under the Northern Wei, Longmen was transformed from a place of the sword to a place of peace and contemplation. The young Wei emperor, Xuanwudi, not only saw to the completion of his father's dream of building a new capital at Luoyang, but undertook the

carving of monumental Buddhist chapels in the limestone cliffs at Longmen in honor of his parents. After the fall of Northern Wei, the faithful from the highest and lowest of Chinese society continued to commission Buddhist works at Longmen. Eventually, over 2,100 caves were excavated, both large and small, and nearly 100,000 images carved, stretching over a kilometer along the face of the cliffs. Excavations began on the western side of the river and spread to the eastern side. The Northern Wei caves are all on the western side and constitute one-third of the total carved at Longmen.

Xuanwudi died in 515 A.D. with the Longmen chapels unfinished, though work had been ongoing there since 500. It took another eight years, until 523, for the center chapel to be completed and the two side chapels were only completed in the Tang dynasty. The three chapels are known as the Binyang caves.

My morning at Longmen began on the western side of the cliffs; the center Binyang chapel was the first major cave I encountered. To explore the object of one's studies and musings is a very fine experience, especially when the setting is exactly right, as it was that morning. It was mid-June and the air was very fresh and clean. The Binyang chapel, as its name implies, was carved to face the eastern sun. I experienced it that early morning precisely as it was meant to be, filled with a sparkling sunlight.

The entrance to the Binyang chapel is guarded by *lokapala*, Buddhist strongmen and protectors of the faith, carved on a grand scale, one on either side of the door. They are still impressive, despite the wounds they have suffered over the centuries. Leaving them behind, I entered the chapel, walking across the large lotus flowers carved on the floor. I looked up into the eyes of the giant seated Buddha, carved in-the-round at the center of the back wall. My understanding of this famous image had been predisposed by Laurence Sickman's familiar description in *The Art and Architecture of China* (first published in 1956): "The abstract treatment of the body and robe taken together with the large, generalized features, lighted by the archaic half-smile, result in an icon of profound sincerity—an image of a kind that occurs but rarely in religious art, like the Pantocrator of Monreale or that of Moissac." I was not disappointed. To Sickman's description, I now have added a personal layer of experience: the radiance of the Buddha in the early morning sun, the incredible gentleness of his smile, and the sheer exhilaration of the moment.

At Longmen, and especially in the Binyang cave, I often thought about the necessary difference between my experience and that of earlier scholars. It was a different China then; so much has happened in the past sixty years. The Swedish art historian, Osvald Siren, published his *Chinese Sculpture* in 1925 with this description of the Binyang cave:

The central Bin-yang grotto is the largest of all the early caves at Longmen and it was, no doubt, originally a very impressive sanctuary, but since it has become a barrack for soldiers and a temporary abode for all sorts of people who have used it for every kind of domestic convenience, even as a kitchen and pigsty, it presents itself in a rather defaced and dirty condition. The room is now divided by brick walls and wooden partitions, which make it difficult to get a proper view of the sculptures, which, furthermore, are covered with smoke and dirt.

Thankfully, the situation described by Siren has been remedied. In 1955 the Chinese government established the Office for the Preservation of Longmen Cultural Properties and in 1961 the Longmen Caves were placed on the list of Important Protected National Treasures. The Binyang Chapel is now in optimum condition.

The central Buddha of the Binyang Chapel stands 6.4 meters tall and dwarfs his two attendant disciples, the young Ananda and venerable Kasyapa, carved immediately to his right and left. Flanking them are two Bodhisattvas. The disciples are as high as the Buddha's palms, the Bodhisattvas as high as his shoulders. Together they fill the almost eight meters of the back wall of the chapel. Along the side walls, Wei sculptors carved a triad of monumental standing figures, a Buddha with two Bodhisattvas. The effect of all these sculptures is imposing, not only because of their grand scale, but because the space of the chapel is just sufficient to contain them. Somehow they become the space of the interior. Rhythms of long flowing robes and flaming mandorlas transform their bulky forms and static poses. The images exert a magnetic pull, first from the sensation of their scale, then from their enigmatic smiles, then from the repeating symbolic gestures of their powerful hands.

Finally turning my back on the central Buddha, I faced the entrance of the cave where the brightly illuminated doorway contrasted with the shadowy walls to either side. I knew what to expect from these walls, not what was there, but what was not there: the mural sized reliefs depicting imperial worshippers. On the right had been the empress and her retinue, on the left was the emperor and his. I have seen dim photographs of the empress procession relief *in*

*situ*; the empress appears to be moving slowly toward the entrance of the chapel and grouped around her are some nineteen other women of the court. Those at the rear of the procession seem to be carved on the adjacent wall as if the scene wraps around the interior.

I have seen the empress relief carving many times, perhaps a hundred, but never in China. It occupies the place of honor in the Chinese Buddhist sculpture hall at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City. It is a legendary work, famous for its complex and elegant composition, for its documentation of the dress and manners of the Northern Wei court, and for its advanced style of figural representation. Though the figures of the empress relief bear some traits in common with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the chapel, their slender proportions, organization, and animation reveal a separate, secular style. The scale of the reliefs, more than two meters tall, and the aesthetically advanced style suggest that they derive from contemporary mural paintings. Procession scenes such as this may have decorated imperial palaces or graced the interiors of the magnificent Buddhist temples of Luoyang. Since no murals of this sort survive from the Northern Wei period, the Longmen reliefs double in significance as records of a lost painting tradition.

In the autumn after returning from China, I had the pleasure of an afternoon visit with Wilma Fairbank, who happened to be in San Antonio. Her name is well known to historians of Chinese art and I was delighted to be able to meet her. Our conversation turned to her old friend, Laurence Sickman, and China in the thirties. When Wilma and her husband, John, arrived in China, Sickman had been there for some time. To Wilma, he seemed an old hand who knew his way around northern China and spoke Chinese. In 1933 Wilma made her first outing away from Peking when she went with Sickman to the Buddhist caves at Longmen. She described their shock, upon entering the Binyang cave, to find a large section of the empress relief rudely hacked from the wall. Small bits and pieces lay about the floor. This was the beginning of Sickman's intimate and impassioned relationship with the empress relief. It is a story that is not well known, even among art historians, in the East or the West.

As early as 1931, Sickman alerted the Chinese Committee for the Preservation of Antiquities that fragments from Longmen were showing up in the Peking art market. The persons responsible for the destruction were most likely Chinese, either very poor or very unscrupulous, who sold their fragments to dealers in antiquities. The

1930s were years of great turmoil in China. Japan occupied Manchuria in 1931, and had advanced to the outskirts of Peking by 1933. The Nationalist Government seemed intent upon exterminating the Communists. There was a world wide depression. China's central government was weak, factionalized, and quite unable to control events in outlying areas. After Sickman's second visit to Longmen in 1933, at his suggestion, Mrs. William Crozier, an American from Philadelphia, offered to finance police necessary to guard the Longmen caves and prevent further destruction. The Chinese authorities declined the offer. When Sickman returned to Longmen in 1934, for the last time, the empress relief was almost entirely gone.

The vandalism at Longmen during the thirties was not limited to the Binyang cave, but the Binyang empress relief is its most famous example. So when these unhappy events are discussed, it is usually in the context of the empress panel. Such was the case in the guidebooks and histories of Longmen I acquired in China which describe the destruction of Longmen's treasures as the work of imperialists in league with Nationalist thieves, or as the work of dishonest antique dealers. These sources mention that the empress relief is presently in the Kansas City museum, implying an association between the museum and thieves. For the empress relief to be singled out in this manner is ironic, since it was, in reality, rescued by Laurence Sickman and the Nelson-Atkins Museum.

After 1934, Sickman set about to find the location of the various fragments of the empress relief. He found parts in Peking, parts in Shanghai, Zhengzhou, Kaifeng, and as far away as Germany. It was clear that the only chance for the great relief to survive was for these fragments to be brought together and an attempt at reconstruction made. It took several years, considerable persuasion, and money to gather the fragments. In the winter of 1939-40, Sickman and a sculptor from the Kansas City Art Institute, Wallace Rosenbauer, began the long process of restoration in the museum in Kansas City. Much of the relief existed only as countless chips of varying sizes, and it was extremely fortunate that Sickman had rubbings made of the reliefs in 1931 while they were still intact. With these and photographs as guides, the demanding work went on for two years.

The masterful reconstruction of the empress relief attests to Sickman's dedication and concern. The original was cunningly carved so that the right side of each figure was modelled in somewhat higher relief—the artist aware that illumination would come from the door to

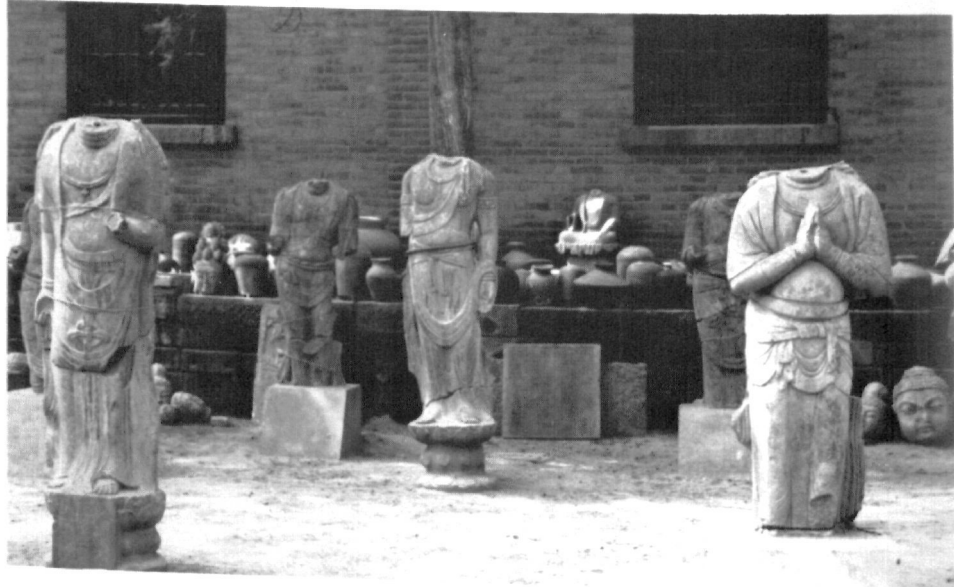
the left—casting a shadow along the right edge of the figures, serving to visually separate them, and providing a modest sense of volume. Even this subtlety in the relief is captured in the restoration and the effect of sunlight coming from the Binyang cave entrance is simulated in the museum installation by a hidden light along the left side of the relief.

The empress and women of her court continue their ancient, dignified ceremony, survivors of nearly fifteen hundred years of Chinese history. When I think of them now, my memory fuses that stately procession with images of a warm, bright morning; sunlight on limestone lotus flowers; and a brown river flowing through willow-lined banks outside the Binyang cave.





A. Heads of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; B. The Zhengzhou Municipal Courtyard, Huayan (left)  
Bienji (center) and Shizuhou (right) Bodhisattvas



## The Dahai Temple Sculptures

*Marilyn Gridley*

The afternoon of June 8, 1982, in Zhengzhou at the Municipal Museum, the guides for the KU-Henan Archaeological tour group unlocked a door and led members of the group into a shaded courtyard crowded with stelae, upright but headless torsos, a sarcophagus and an octagonal pillar carved with reliefs. On a ledge behind the torsos were ceramic bowls and pots, the torso of a small seated Buddha and the head of one of the Bodhisattvas. Other heads lay in a row at the base of the ledge (photos A and B). We were fortunate that museum authorities allowed us into this courtyard because a number of Buddhist sculptures—forty-two in all—had been taken there after their discovery in 1976 at Xingyang, some eight miles east of Zhengzhou. This discovery at Xingyang is a very important one for Buddhist and art historical studies. Very little Buddhist art from the early ninth century survived the persecutions of Buddhism in 845, and five of the sculptures have inscribed dates from the period 820-824 A.D. These securely dated sculptures are invaluable to the study of the development of styles during that period. The 845 persecution was especially thorough in its destruction of all aspects of the esoteric sect, and at least two of these sculptures are of esoteric deities. They are of great importance to the study of iconography during the period. Finally, many of the sculptures are splendidly carved and give some idea of the high level of inspiration and craftsmanship that still existed in what scholars have generally assumed were the declining years of Buddhist art. I especially wanted to see the sculptures because I am doing research on seven pieces of sculpture in the Nelson Gallery and one in the Spencer Museum that may date from the Liao period (907-1115), and the Xingyang statues can document the development of sculpture styles in the period just before 907 and in territory adjacent to that controlled by the Liao. In this article I will describe how the sculptures were discovered and how we knew of them; then I will discuss the importance of some of the individual pieces and the group as a whole.

In 1976, workers unearthed the statues while leveling and repairing the People's Square at Xingyang in preparation for an exhibition of agricultural implements in March of that year. The Zhengzhou City Museum and County Cultural Museum immediately sent archaeologists to investigate and make test digs at the site. Several bits of evidence convinced the archaeologists that the area was the site of Dahai Temple: the inscriptions on the sculptures often mention Dahai; Shaolin Temple monk Miaoxing and others recently confirmed that this area was the old site of the Dahai Temple. From the inscriptions, from the *Xingyang County Gazetteer* and from Ku Tsu-yu's geographical dictionary, the archaeologists further surmised that the temple was founded by 525 A.D., and was apparently at its height during the seventh through the early ninth centuries. After suffering much destruction during the persecutions, it was rebuilt by 1081 (the date of one of the sculptures) and suffered more damage later. Much of the temple remains was apparently destroyed during sporadic attempts in recent years to construct the Square after Liberation when the ground was first broken. The archaeologists believe that if the upper layers of earth had not been already removed during the last thirty years, they would have discovered the foundations of the temple buildings. As it was, they found a flight of stairs, and a vertical shaft-shaped pit filled with Tang bowls, cups, pitchers, bricks, and tiles. Some of the pottery pieces and tiles we saw on the ledge along the side of the courtyard were probably these remains brought with the sculpture to the Museum for safekeeping.

Possibly the first English account of the sculpture in the courtyard appears in Annette Juliano's essay on art and archaeology, which Carol Shankel pointed out to me in the 1979-80 *China Guidebook* by deKeijzer and Kaplan: "Around the back of the main buildings [at Zhengzhou City Museum] is an astonishing sight—several headless stone statues of Bodhisattvas stand lashed to wooden stakes. Rows of bodiless heads rest on a stack of hollow clay tiles . . ." (pp. 87-88). In April of 1980 when the KU delegation was in Zhengzhou, Carol asked to see the sculptures and photographed one of them. Shortly before she returned to Lawrence, the March, 1980, issue of the journal *Wenwu* (Cultural Relics) arrived with an article detailing the discovery. Two pages of glossy photographs and over twenty drawings and illustrations accompanied the article, so that when I saw the slide, I recognized the sculpture as one from Dahai. Two years later, when our group first arrived in Zhengzhou on June 4, Hon-ching and Jean

Lee and I set off to find the Museum and its treasures. To our chagrin we found that between the time of the photograph and the time we arrived on the scene, a wall had sprung up surrounding the courtyard, and the door in the wall was locked. We knew by now that the locked door meant that several days of negotiations also stood between us and the statues. Fortunately we had several days because the group planned to take a tour of sites in Henan making a wide loop that ended back at Zhengzhou.

Even with my preparation, I was stunned when I walked into the courtyard. All sorts of sculptures were there. Many were not from the Dahai find; many from the find were not there. Which was which? What was missing? We had to work fast in the little time allotted for this stop—it had been squeezed into our schedule. Harold Hesler, Chu-ting Li, Carol Shankel, and my husband, Roy, began immediately to take wide-angle shots and closeups of inscriptions that have helped to supplement my own photographs. Among the pieces missing were the seven small Buddhas, four of the Bodhisattvas (deities who could become Buddhas, but who have vowed instead to devote themselves to the salvation of all beings), a number of Bodhisattva heads, the three Lohans (ascetics who have attained enlightenment) and the lion mount. The torso of a small Buddha figure on the ledge (see center of the group photo) was about the right size, but it does not match any of the four Buddhas illustrated in the article, nor does it match the description of the remaining three, so it must be from another site. When I asked the curator where one of the heads was, he looked around at all the many heads lying on the ground, and said, "That one is in storage." I assume, then, that the other missing pieces are also stored, and further arrangements would be needed in order to see them. I was still asking questions of the curator, who was most cooperative and knowledgeable, when our time was up. Any notes and photographs which readers have that they are willing to share would be appreciated.

Using the information gleaned from the photographs, the interview and the *Wenwu* article, I will discuss the importance of the dated and inscribed pieces dividing them, for convenience, first into four categories according to their dates. Alone in the earliest category is a stele dated 525 A.D. Next chronologically is the group of seven small seated Buddhas dated according to the inscription on one of them to ca. 762 and the lion mount which was found in the same location as a seated Buddha. Though the Buddhas were missing from the court-

yard, the authors of the *Wenwu* article discuss them at some length and include photographs of four of them and the lion mount, so I will consider them also in this article. The Lohans, because of their small size, may also belong to this group, but I cannot touch upon them here because they were not in the courtyard and they are not illustrated in the article where they are given only two lines of text. The third group consists of the standing life-sized Bodhisattvas—nine with heads, nine without—and ten Bodhisattva heads without torsos, all dated to ca. 820 by association with the six torsos having Changqing (820-824) dates on their pedestals. Alone in the fourth category is the 1081 standing life-sized Shakyamuni, the historical Buddha who lived during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.

From all appearances, the main image in the 525 stele should be Maitreya, the Buddha of the future (see background of photo D). In the late fifth, early sixth centuries A.D., Maitreya often appears, as this figure does, in a crossed-ankle pose and wearing the skirt, scarf and jewelry of a Bodhisattva. That jewelry here consists of a cusped necklace and a high crown secured with ribbons that fall down over the shoulders; a scarf covers his shoulders like a cape; the ends cross in front at the knees and loop up and over his wrists. Nearly everything else about the stele, though, is associated with Shakyamuni. The disciples of Shakyamuni, Ananda and Kasyapa, are on either side of the figure; Guanyin (Avalokitesvara), Bodhisattva of compassion and mercy, holding a *kundika* (pure-water bottle) and lotus flower, and the Bodhisattva Dashizhi (Mahasthamaprapta), with lotus flower complete the pentad. These two Bodhisattvas become associated in triads with Amitabha, Buddha of the Western Paradise, but at Longmen's Binyang Cave, completed two years earlier than the stele in 523, they attend Shakyamuni.<sup>1</sup> In niches all around the back and sides are scenes from the life of Buddha: his birth from his mother's side, the nine dragons giving him a bath, the scene from the Lotus Sutra where he discusses the Law with Prabhutaratna, the Buddha of the Past. The makeup of the pentad and the scenes in the niches all suggest that the main image may be another of those complex iconography problems like the main image in Dunhuang Cave 275 or the meditating figures of the latter half of the sixth century where the identity of Shakyamuni and Maitreya are inextricably mixed. The Dahai stele image may be Maitreya in Tushita Heaven waiting to be born, or an image of Shakyamuni in his incarnation as a Bodhisattva before he was born as the historical

Buddha. Nothing in the *Wenwu* article indicates that the inscription mentions the Maitreya identity.

On the lotus throne of one of the Buddhas is an inscription which states that it is an Amitabha Buddha made in the second year of Xiansheng (762). Its head and right hand are missing. The other hand appears to be extended with the hand resting on the left knee, but the reproduction is not clear. He sits in a lotus position on a six-sided constricted-waist double-lotus pedestal. He is approximately sixty centimeters high. Another of the Buddhas is labeled Amitabha, probably because it, too, sits in lotus position. His throne is hexagonal with a constricted waist also, but the proportions throughout the throne and his body are much shorter and thicker. He is only forty centimeters high.

The remaining five Buddhas sit on square, oblong, or "Sumeru" thrones with their lower legs pendant in so-called Western pose. This pose—as well as the crossed-ankle pose struck by the main figure in the stele—is an identifying mark of Maitreya. Photographs of two of the Maitreyas are in the article. Both are between forty and seventy-five centimeters high, but are even further apart in style than the two Amitabha Buddhas. One Maitreya, seated on a round pedestal, is as round throughout his torso as is his pedestal, and the curves of his drapery folds emphasize the roundness. The other, seated on a "Mt. Sumeru" or cross-shaped, stepped throne, is lanky, long-legged, and angular. The authors of the *Wenwu* article place all the Buddhas together in the period of the dated one, but I believe they may be a decade or more apart. Even so, they are more like each other than they are like the Bodhisattvas, who are six times their size.

Of the eighteen Bodhisattvas discovered, at least fourteen were in the courtyard. They were lined up in four rows facing the same direction. The named and dated Bodhisattvas were all in the first two rows. Directly on our left as we entered the courtyard was the torso of eleven-headed Guanyin, possibly the most important sculpture of the Dahai find. Hardly more than a score of Chinese sculptures of the deity are known to exist, even though it was extremely popular after Yasogupta (561-577) translated into Chinese the sutra describing it. With so much surrounding evidence to establish an 820 date for this Guanyin, it is doubly valuable. Even though the legs are gone below the knees, four of the hands are missing, the head has been broken off the body, and the main nose damaged, we still have all eleven heads, the torso and arms, all finely carved (photos C and D).



C. Eleven-headed Guanyin;

D. Torso (below)

E. Maitreya Bodhisattva (right);

F. Tien Wang Bodhisattva (far right)









G. Guangxiang Bodhisattva (left);  
H. Nameless Bodhisattva (above)

The numbering, arrangement, and expression of the eleven heads is important in charting the evolution of the representations of this deity. Does the main head count as one of the eleven? Guanyin iconography calls for Amitabha Buddha to be in the crown. Does the Buddha head count as one of the eleven? In this case, the main head and the Buddha head are included in the total. That leaves nine for the sculptor to incorporate into the headdress. Two are behind the ears of the main head; above it are five heads in the first row and two more in the second row. At the top of the pyramid is the head of Amitabha Buddha. The only other example I have read of with this same arrangement (1,2,5,3, top to bottom) is a "fragment of a painting on silk, formerly in Berlin, tentatively dated in the ninth century."<sup>2</sup> Eight of the small Bodhisattva heads have a benevolent expression; only the head behind the proper left ear is fierce. This proportion of fierce to pleasant is common in Japan, but other Chinese examples usually have several fierce heads.<sup>3</sup> The faces have pleasing proportions with an oval or slightly squared contour. The hair of the nine Bodhisattvas is pulled up into a rolled-back chignon centered on the crown of their heads. For the row of five, low simple tiaras are set into the hair, back a bit from the hairline. The two above have only bands. All have small cusped ornaments clasping the chignons at the base. The hair of the main head frames its face with waves that begin at the center part dipping down and back up under the double band which is secured just above the ears by the bow ends of a tie that goes round the back. The hair below the tie and band is carved in many strands; above, the high elaborate chignon is more broadly carved as though it is covered in a cloth similar to the *korymbos* or mass of closely packed curls bunched up inside a veil which is part of the headdress of a Persian king in early centuries A.D.<sup>4</sup>

Two of the six arms hang down at the side, the hands and attributes gone except for what appears to be branches and leaves held by the left hand (possibly the willow branch of Guanyin iconography); two more hands are brought up in front of the shoulders, the hands and attributes also gone; the last pair of arms are brought up in front of the chest, the hands together in a prayer gesture. In the early years of the development of the eleven-headed Guanyin, it had only two arms; in the eighth century, though, Amoghavajra's translation into Chinese of the sutra describing this esoteric form of Guanyin specifies four arms. The six and eight-armed

forms appear by the ninth and tenth centuries at Dunhuang and Turfan, though we no longer have the iconographic text describing the six-armed form.<sup>5</sup>

The torso is absolutely straight with no hint of *tribhanga* (hip-shot pose). This rigid pose is far more common than a *tribhanga* pose for the eleven-headed Guanyin and may be almost iconographic. A most curious detail about the drapery is the first fold of the drapery over the thighs. This fold ends in a single spiral just above the knees. This spiral is also on the Boston Museum of Fine Arts marble Bodhisattva on the right calf and may be the beginning of a calligraphic flourish in the drapery that is a telltale mark of Liao sculpture.

At the far end of the second row of torsos was a standing Maitreya Bodhisattva dated 820 (photo E). Maitreya as a Bodhisattva is rare in the ninth century. A wooden one from the period and possibly from China stands in the Miroku Hall at Muroji in Japan.<sup>7</sup> That Maitreya, though, is clearly dressed as a Bodhisattva; the one from Dahai wears an undergarment tied high at the waist. Over this garment is a monk's robe with an unusual style in which the cloth comes over the proper right shoulder and is tucked down into the section that comes up around the lower torso and drapes over the left arm. A simple necklace consists of a double strand of pearls with four or six larger beads hanging in a single row from the center. On what is left of the proper right wrist is a bracelet.

The Maitreya's head is the third from the right in photo A. The nose is damaged, but the features of the oval face are exquisitely carved. The eyes are half closed; the ridge of the eyebrow shallow and high; the mouth smiles slightly; the lower lip is prominent. The hair is dressed in a series of waves that dip down just over the hairline and back up under a headband with a rosette in the center. An elaborate circlet of lotus leaves secures the base of the high chignon, and a jewel set in a flame-shaped ornament rests against the chignon. The hair originally fell from behind the ears down over the shoulder in three strands. The Maitreya stands on a pedestal with a double row of lotus petals one rising, and one row turned down. The tips of the petals curl out slightly. Decorating the constricted waist between these two rows is a row of convex, swelling, abstracted lotus forms. A study of the development of the Maitreya iconography and imagery could center just on the Dahai Maitreyas: the possible Maitreya in the 525 stele; the five mid-eighth century Maitreya Buddhas, and the 820 Maitreya Bodhisattva.

Seven of the rest of the Bodhisattvas have inscriptions giving them a name and/or a date. Only one, Guanyin, is a well-known Bodhisattva, a two-armed version of the eleven-headed six-armed Guanyin already described above. A head was matched with the body in the *Wenwu* article, but that head was the one in storage. Otherwise, the sculpture is missing only the proper left hand. In the right hand is a pure-water vessel. The necklace is simple: three droplets hang at even intervals from a swag of pearl strands. The Guanyin stands in a rigidly frontal pose. The carving is rather flat and awkward. The scarf that crosses the upper torso has an unusual and meaningless arrangement of the loose end, and the carving gives no indication that the scarf has any real substance as it is tucked behind and brought back over itself to fall down at an arbitrary and unnatural angle. The name is carved above the left leg as well as in the dated inscription.

In the center of the group photograph is the Bienji Bodhisattva. Like the rest, it is headless, but its head is in the picture—peeking out from behind the knee of the statue to the left (and in the photograph of heads, Bienji's is the first upright head to the right). The Bienji Bodhisattva is missing the proper right arm below the elbow; the inscription above the left leg names the statue as Bienji Bodhisattva. The name also appears in the pedestal inscription, which does not include a date. As his name indicates, the Bienji Bodhisattva possesses the power of clever and plausible argument. He is from the realm of the sixteen Bhadrakalpas in the Vajradhatu Mandala, a cosmic diagram used by the esoteric sects of Buddhism.<sup>8</sup> The carving of the sculpture is relatively skillful. The torso has a graceful sway and reasonable musculature. The arm is disproportionately long but nicely carved.

One of the most surprising sculptures is the Tien Wang Bodhisattva (photo F). A Tien Wang, Heavenly King, usually is a guardian figure dressed in armor and heavy boots. This Tien Wang, though, wears the scarves, skirt and jewelry of a Bodhisattva. It also wears rope-tied thong sandals, unique so far as I know among Bodhisattvas after the Gandharan period (2nd to 5th centuries A.D.). An unusual heavy strap-like belt encircles the hips. Above the left leg are the four characters for Tien Wang Bodhisattva. The name appears also in the pedestal inscription, along with the date of 820. This figure may be Tien Wang Rulai, a Buddha of one of the future eons, who currently lives in hell for having been a rival of his cousin the Buddha

Shakyamuni. According to the sutras, Tien Wang does not wear a Buddha robe, but dresses in ordinary clothes.<sup>9</sup> Maitreya, a more commonly represented Buddha of the future often appears in sculpture, as we have seen, dressed as a Bodhisattva; this tradition may be carried over in the representation of Tien Wang with the belt and sandals added to represent "ordinary" clothes. I believe the head which is drawn and photographed with the torso in the article (p. 60, fig. 3) was on the ground behind the Guanyin. The crown has a flaming jewel as the center. Little else could have any iconographic significance. The right arm hangs down to the side; one hand holds a scarf end; the other hand is missing.

The Huayan (Flower Garland) Bodhisattva is first on the left in the front row of the group photograph. Only the reign date corresponding to 820-824 is left in the pedestal inscription. Huayan is the name of a sutra and sect of Buddhism, but Huayan Bodhisattva is the name an Indian monk gave to a priest of the Chingliangguo era (400-420 A.D.) because of his clear-sightedness.<sup>10</sup> Is this Huayan Bodhisattva in the courtyard a representation of this priest canonized? Very little iconography remains to help solve the question of identity. The left hand and the head are missing. The right arm hangs down to the side with the thumb, fourth and fifth fingers of the hand extended straight down; the second and third pulled up into the palm, grasp a section of the scarf. The extended fingers may not be a mudra at all but a further expression of the awkwardness of the whole figure. The right leg has a more pronounced curve to the silhouette than the left, and the figure twists a bit around to its left, giving the sculpture a slight hint of a *tribhanga* posture. The smooth transitions from one part of the torso to the other and into the legs and arms are reminiscent of the smooth flowing planes of Sui sculpture, but here the parts are slightly out of line so that finally the statue is among the least successful aesthetically of the group.

The plainest of the Bodhisattvas in the courtyard has the most exotic name of all. The Lion's Roar (Shizu hou) Bodhisattva stands to the far right of the group photograph in the front row. We know his name only from the four carved characters above his left leg. The Lion's Roar is not ordinarily a name at all. Shakyamuni, when he was born, stood with his right arm raised pointing to the heavens and his left arm down pointing to the earth and uttered the "lion's roar," proclaiming himself lord of all above and below.<sup>11</sup> The Lion's Roar Bodhisattva has his hands and palms together in front of his breast in

a quiet attitude of prayer. His head, feet and pedestal are missing. His dhoti has a minimum of folds and tucks. The sash that secures it is not even tied; the ends are just looped around each other. A wide scarf covers his shoulders like a cape, and the necklace and two bracelets are only simple paired bands.

The Guangxiang (Brilliant aspect) Bodhisattva was standing next to the Huayan Bodhisattva just outside the group photograph on the left. This magnificently carved sculpture is the one photographed in 1980 (photo G). The inscription giving the name and the 820 date of the piece is on the pedestal. The hand and arms are missing, but the elegant torso and pedestal are intact. The scarf and the dhoti follow the contours of the body closely like silk. The delicate curves of the sash-tie of the dhoti hint of Song drapery styles to come. Guangxiang, like *Lion's Roar*, is not ordinarily a name nor is *Jinjangshe*, the name of the last of the seven named Bodhisattvas. This last Bodhisattva was not in the courtyard that day.

Most beautiful in conception and execution is the nameless Bodhisattva in photo H. It is the equal of many High Tang (712-763) masterpieces. Nothing about the torso is distorted or disproportionate. The *tribhanga* pose is convincing, sophisticated, easy. Lawrence Sickman pointed out the fact that some of the folds of the dhoti are round-edged while others are sharp suggesting that there may have been a development in China in the ninth century of a style which lay behind the "rolling wave" drapery of ninth and tenth-century Japanese wood sculpture. The arrangement of the dhoti and sash is quite unusual. No visible sash secures the dhoti at the hips. Instead, at the top the dhoti is rolled down and the short overlayer tucked in at the front. The torso scarf does not cross over from hip to shoulder in the usual way, rather it encircles the midriff. An elegant single-loop knot secures it in the front center. On this sash in the back is an inscription dated 1076. The authors of the *Wenwu* article do not mention it. Stylistically, the torso cannot be an eleventh-century sculpture. The inscription must have been added later, perhaps, as I will discuss below, when the names were carved above the left legs on the other Bodhisattvas.

Aesthetically the distance between this nameless Bodhisattva or the Guangxiang and the Huayan Bodhisattva is enormous, and were it not for the inscribed dates on the latter two, they surely would be thought to date several decades or many miles apart. The Dahai Bodhisattvas, then, are especially important for providing a measure

of the range of style and quality possible in one time and place. Equally important to the vast differences in style and quality are the characteristics the Bodhisattvas do have in common. Basically, the proportions are normal except for the slightly elongated arms that hang down to the side. From the side, too, one can see that the stomachs protrude a bit too much, though this slight distortion is not noticeable from the front. In many Japanese sculptures of the ninth century, the long arm and protruding stomach are common and much exaggerated; they may have been inspired by such Chinese sculptures as these at Dahai. The Dahai Bodhisattvas' faces all have pleasant expressions with none of the puffiness that creeps into the eyes and jowls of much late Tang sculpture. The jewelry on all but the Tien Wang Bodhisattva is simple and light. Chignons are centered on the top of the head, and a clasp secures each chignon at the base. Just back from the hairline on each is a simple tiara or band.

The 1081 date of the standing Shakyamuni Buddha makes it the latest sculpture of the assemblage. Unfortunately it reinforces the evidence that the quantity and quality of stone sculpture declined after Tang. From what is left of the Shakyamuni, we can see that the proportions are not good. The body is too short for the large head. The narrow sloping shoulders emphasize the discrepancy. The head, too, is top heavy (see photo of heads—third from the left). While the chin is narrower than the space between the upper lip and the nose, the forehead is extremely high with an enormous *urna* (symbolic third eye). Adding to the effect of disproportion is the fact that the *ushnisha* (cranial protruberance indicating the Buddha's transcendent knowledge) is wide and only slightly differentiated from the top of the head. The snail-shell curls are large and coarse if we compare them with those of the Tang Buddha head lying next to it in the photograph. Enough of the robe remains to see that it covered both shoulders, and that the sculptor carved only a minimum of folds to indicate it.

The damage to the torso and head of the Shakyamuni is odd. Across the lower two-thirds of the torso are regularly spaced chisel marks that have obliterated the drapery and made a flat rough surface. The curators speculate that some effort was made at one time to make a stele out of the statue, but that it broke at the knees. The front of the head is intact, but the same kind of regular chiseled striations cover the sides of the head. The archaeologists report that many of the striations do not match with those on the shoulders, so

the head must have been chiseled again after it was broken off the body. Why and when this damage occurred will probably never be known, but the fact that Xingyang is called a garrison in the 1081 inscription on the pedestal, and the fact that within the next forty-five years the Jin, invading from the north, consolidated their control over this area after capturing it from the Song would indicate the damage could have been done soon after the Shakyamuni was carved.

What is the relationship of the Shakyamuni to the other sculptures? Although no definite answer is possible at the present writing, certain speculations are in order. The inscription on the Shakyamuni pedestal mentions a Jade Image subtemple at Dahai temple. The Shakyamuni and a number of the excavated statues may be from the altar in one of the halls of this subtemple. The fact that Bienji is one of the Bodhisattvas indicates that they may be the remnants of a sculptured mandala, such as the late eighth or early ninth-century Anguo Temple sculptures excavated in 1959 in Xi'an.<sup>12</sup> The Shakyamuni is the same size as the Bodhisattvas and may have been carved as a replacement for one of the set that had been irreparably damaged. The period between 820 (the date of the Bodhisattvas) and 1081 was a turbulent one. If the Bodhisattvas survived the 845 Buddhist persecution, they faced the chaos of the collapse of the Tang Dynasty in 906 and that of the next half-century tellingly labeled the Five Dynasties period. Although a treaty in 1005 stabilized relations between the Song, who finally gained control of the area, and the Liao to the north, new treaties had to be hammered out repeatedly in the eleventh century to determine the boundary in the present-day Shanxi area directly to the north of Zhengzhou.<sup>13</sup> The fact that five of the Bodhisattvas have their names carved above their left leg as well as in their pedestal inscriptions if the pedestal is not missing, suggests the sculptures were damaged (heads and pedestals knocked off) then marked in a later effort to reconstruct them (possibly as late as 1076, the date of the inscription on back of the nameless Bodhisattva).

How would the Shakyamuni Buddha have fit into an arrangement of the life-sized figures on the altar. Three altar arrangements (two in temples in Shanxi and one in Japan) may provide some clues. At the main shrine hall of Foguang Temple on Wutaishan, three Buddhas (Amitabha, Maitreya, and Shakyamuni) are each flanked by six Bodhisattvas. The hall and the sculptures date from ca. 857. At the Preservation of the Sutras Hall at Lower Huayan Temple in Datong,



three Buddhas (Maitreya, Shakyamuni, and Dipamkara, a Buddha of the Past—the twenty-fourth predecessor of Shakyamuni) are each flanked by six Bodhisattvas; the hall and the sculptures date from ca. 1038. Among the life-sized standing figures from Dahai Temple are at least three possible Buddhas: the two Buddhas of the future, Maitreya and Tien Wang, represented as Bodhisattvas, and Shakyamuni. Unlike the Buddhas at Foguang and Huayan Temples, all three are standing and are the same size as the Bodhisattvas who would attend them. While a combination of standing Buddhas with Bodhisattvas not hieratically smaller would be unusual, it does occur at Muroji in Japan. Five Heian-period (794-1185) sculptures are the main icons on the altar of the Golden Hall there: two are Buddhas; three are Bodhisattvas; all are standing.<sup>14</sup> Though the center Shakyamuni is tallest, the Buddha of Medicine standing to his left is shorter than the Manjusri (Bodhisattva of wisdom) to Shakyamuni's right.

The Muroji arrangement is important also for the study of the Dahai sculptures in that an eleven-headed Guanyin is one of the five. It stands to the right of the Manjusri, and thus it is in an attendant position in the pentad. The eleven-headed Guanyin at Dahai could have been included on the altar with the rest, but a more common and likely arrangement would be to have the eleven-headed Guanyin as the central figure of a triad, as in the relief sculptures of Baoqing Temple in Xi'an or on the altar of the Guanyin Hall at Dule Temple in Jixian, Hebei.

Could the seven small Buddhas from ca. 762 have any connection with the larger statues? On the Huayan Temple altar, three small Buddhas sit in front of the three larger ones. The style of the small ones, though, indicates they are later additions to the assembly, and it is unlikely that the small Dahai Buddhas would have been on the same altar as the life-sized sculptures. Sets of Buddhas abound in this period: the nine Amitabhas, the seven Buddhas of the past, or seven manifestations of the Buddha of medicine, or the five emanations of the cosmic Buddha Vairocana. I know of no grouping, though, that includes two Amitabhas and Five Maitreyas. To commission the making of a Buddha image was in itself an act of merit, and these seven make the most sense as expressions of this piety, possibly in response to the An Lu-shan rebellion 755-62. The lion may have carried a Manjusri as an attendant to one or more of the small Buddhas as, for example, at Foguang Temple.<sup>15</sup>

Taken as a whole, the Dahai sculptures represent a major find.

Their quantity and quality make it clear that Dahai Temple was large and well supported and was in the mainstream of Buddhism during the sixth through the ninth centuries. The early sixth-century stele and mid-eighth-century Buddhas are fine examples of the style of their period. The impressive life-sized sculptures from the early ninth century, though, are the most valuable. Their style, iconography and quality add immeasurably to our slim resources from this period, and any study of them yields a rich reward of greater understanding and appreciation of Tang and post-Tang Buddhist sculpture.

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4. J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Historical Portraits* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), p. 171. I would like to thank David Bauer for bringing the *korymbos* to my attention.
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6. Pal, p. 22.
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11. Soothill, p. 324, and Ting, p. 2452.
12. Ch'eng Hsueh-hua, "T'ang Gilt and Polychrome Statuary" (text in Chinese), *Wenwu*, 1961, no. 7, pp. 62-63.
13. Klaus Tietze, "The Liao-Sung Border Conflict of 1074-1076" in *Studia Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, ed., by Wolfgang Bauer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1979), pp. 127-132.
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15. Marilyn M. Rhie, *The Fo-kuang ssu: Literary Evidences and Buddhist Images* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), fig. 13.



*Lion at the fourth Song emperor's tomb*

## Phoenix and Phallus, Stubble and Song: Possibilities for Immortality

*Elizabeth Schultz*

We visited tombs. The Han tombs in Mixian County, Henan Province; Zhaoling, the mausoleum of the second Tang emperor, and Qianling, the joint tomb of the third Tang emperor and his empress, both in Shaanxi Province; through the great marble arches to the Ming tombs outside Beijing; up concrete steps to the preposterous tomb of the 81-day, twentieth-century Emperor Yuan Shikai. Of course, with other bus loads of tourists—European, American, Japanese—we saw from a distance the grand mound raised by Qin, China's first unifier, its river of quicksilver and its continents of jade still unexcavated by either bandits or archaeologists, just as we also strolled with the other tourists along the catwalks crisscrossing the pits where Qin's terra-cotta army, each soldier, archer, general, larger than life size, stands at perpetual attention. On those hot June days, we went deep underground, down steep stairways, into the cool chambers arranged as the rooms of a palace once had been with the high empty sarcophagus in the central room. Or we climbed the tumulus, rising, as the guides point out in plain English, like a breast from the flat plains, to view, to even command, the surrounding world. These were the tombs of emperors, empresses, princes, princesses, concubines, consorts, and royal slaves. The only tomb on the tour which we seemed to by-pass was the massive mausoleum in Tiananmen Square where Mao lies embalmed in his crystal coffin for the devout, the curious, the ticket-holders to stare at.

But it is the Song tombs in Gongxian County, Henan Province, that I want to tell you about. Not the Song tombs to which we were driven by bus, those which covered acres, their avenues of carved statues stretching out along the four points of the compass. Rather it is the smaller tombs which were just across the road from our guest house that seem more important to me. Perhaps, initially, it was just because they were so approachable. From the guest-house gate we

could see about eleven mounds, a prince and his concubines we were told, and after supper, Peggy and I walked over to investigate. The air was translucent. Everywhere in the province, the great harvest was in process, and with chaff still lingering in the air, the sun's last light seemed to sift through to us, a pale yellow dusk. We walked now among rows of stubble, the harvesters having finished their work here this afternoon, following an irrigation ditch which ran between the rows. It turned at the base of a tumulus, and so did we, and rounding the small hill, we saw the first figures.

Each of the tombs we visited in China was approached through an avenue of immense and marvelous stone figures, beasts and birds, foreign ambassadors and ministers, stone stele and cloud pillars: a spirit path. To reach the enormous earthen mound—one of the Tang emperors had designated a natural mountain as his own for eternity—our bus often drove right down the spirit path. We were then permitted either to enter the tomb or to climb. But the stone figures marking the way to this Song prince's mound rose up from a wheat-field. A pair of lions' heads faced each other across the rows of stubble. They seemed caught in the earth, caught in time, and my immediate thoughts were all out of Greek myth; they were warriors, lion-helmeted and sprung from Jason's dragon seeds, or they were Titans, repressed by Olympians. Their chins buried, these heads, however, snuffed the ground, and out of yearning to bridge the cultural gap between me and the Chinese, I patted one great head. A smooth stone, warmed by the long day's sun. But these lions were not to be possessed either by sophisticated images or by sentimental strokes, for they belonged to this land, this history, and the other stone figures we saw ahead.

The animals go two-by-two: horses, rams, elephants, camels. The rows of stubble continued between them, but in the deepening dusk, these animals became dream figures. Are they rising up or sinking down, I wondered. But for them there was no struggle. They were calm. A great horse stood placidly up to his knees in the earth; his mate across the field was headless; yet he stood firmly on his pedestal, his haunches high above us. The rams were kneeling, bearing time and the changing light as they had borne the block of stone around them before they were revealed as rams. Their lines were all patient curves, round buttocks, horns turned down and in on themselves like the flat shells of tree snails, knees bent and hooves tucked under. Down the field the figures continued to rise like

phantoms. And we were phantoms, too, until we came alongside them and saw just how carefully the elephant's ear had been carved. An ear more delicate than I would have expected, but done by a human hand from life.

We had been walking diagonally through the field toward the west and another mound. We crossed another irrigation ditch. Along the ditch grew bush clover, the small blossoms pink and lavender, and grasses. This mound was larger, with a snarl of shrubs and brambles around its base and paths lacing their way up to the top. Following the base around, we discovered to the south more lions. These had heaved themselves above the ground or had never been buried. Their power was concentrated in their heavy stunted bodies and short legs, their magic in their tails swishing in perfect symmetry up over their backs. Just the two stood there, forming a gateway to the top of this mound, into the mound, to vistas and interiors of the sumptuous Song dynasty we could only fantasize. With the sun setting, shadows clustered beneath the brambles and closed over the lions. The light filtering through the harvest haze was fading to mauve. Someone appeared in the lions' gateway, and then we saw the couple, a young man and woman. He walked to his bicycle which was leaning behind one of the lions, and she got up from the pedestal where she'd been sitting. With one hand he wheeled the bicycle away; his other arm circled her waist. It was a tryst. We'd disturbed them.

Continuing to walk around this large tumulus, we passed three women. Bent over, and busy, busy, busy, searching for the grains of wheat that had fallen among the stubble when the sheaves were gathered during the afternoon. Their hands flitted back and forth between the earth and their baskets. They moved down the rows, unaware of intruders, and we moved around the hill. Into an explosion of light. Streaks from the setting sun shattered the haze in the air and the quiet of the evening. And all about us, goats and sheep were bleating and leaping. Had the stone figures come to life? We could see another avenue of them leading away from this tomb. But no, we realized we'd walked into a herd. The herdsman came along after his animals, lashing his staff through the air over their backs, calling out. A black and tan dog darted in and out, yipping. We stood back and watched. Goats and sheep in confusion. They scurried and scrambled, herdsman and dog behind, a stream flowing up the tumulus, shifting and separating into the intricate network of

paths, spreading out over the mound, some seeping up over the top. With such tiny hooves' defying gravity. Their nimbleness, their scrawniness, their chaos defying the orderly way of the stone animals, defying, some might have said in another age, the imperial tomb. The herdsman did not follow his flock up. He sat now, his legs apart, at the bottom of the mound and called his dog to him. The dog came and let his head be cradled and rumped, and a young woman and a boy also came.

"Ni hao ma," I said, the words for "hello," in addition to "xie xie," the words for "thank you," being my only Chinese. "Ni hao ma," the woman replied and went on and on greeting me. Like the herdsman, she was browned by the sun. Shoeless, in spite of the stubble, and smiling. The boy stood behind her, listening, and he watched us as we watched them. I waved, held open my hands palm up. I spoke my other words, "Xie xie." I wanted to say many more thanks; this was the vista that had awaited us through the lions' gate, and this the possible interior. But we could not enter; we withdrew, waving. And the boy and the woman joined the man and the dog. They set out together, on the path we'd come on, going back around the tumulus. They turned before disappearing into the dark and waved. We went across the field toward the continuing avenue of figures.

The sun was gone now. The air had taken on a blue opacity. We were not the only ones strolling. Up ahead families—groups of four or five, young and old—were walking along the irrigation ditch which ran parallel with the rows of stubble, and the rows of figures. Parallel, too, with the plane trees planted behind one line of figures, a long shade canopy, and planted everywhere we went in China, fast-growing and broad-leafed, part of the Communist government's attempt to re-forest the land and to nurture the soil. Bats flecked the sky. Rags of darkness. Their twitters hung in the air. Two little girls came up behind us. Their chattering embraced us. We turned, and they stopped, hands to their mouths. I found two rainbow decals in my purse and held them out. One tugged the shirt of the other, and I stepped forward, peeling the back off the decals, putting rainbows on both girls' collars. They said nothing, but took hands and ran off across the field. We could hear them laughing all the way. We passed a group of four, two adults and two children; we passed a young man and a young woman, he holding his hands clasped in front, she holding a bouquet of bush clover clasped behind. We smiled and

nodded; they all smiled and nodded. The stone figures loomed above us all. We had come to the ambassadors and ministers. Tall and austere. The pairs intact and in place on their pedestals. Holding long swords, double-bladed axes, ceremonial tablets, small caskets, they stood unquestioning. Their eyes looked out across the field to their doubles, repeatedly confirming one another and the necessity of dignity, the necessity of homage as they reflected one another's gaze. But their homage was no longer to empire; it was rather to eternity. Darker than the encroaching darkness, these lines of statues formed two dikes against it. They gave us—Peggy and me and the other evening strollers—borders within which we could meet and greet. Unlike the lapis lazuli figures in Yeats' poem, these statues hewn from mountain stone and set on the plains were not gay. Theirs was a solemnity which gave us gaiety.

A main road from town intersected the spirit path. We could see the signs and shadows of steady, silent traffic. An immense load of wheat on a two-wheeled cart, pulled by a single man. Long pipes dangling from another cart, moving in the opposite direction. A woman with a brush broom over her shoulder. Two men, each with wooden pitch-forks. Several strollers turned away from the field onto the road and joined the traffic. Less gay now, but moving with a greater sense of purpose, going North or South, becoming silhouetted, single-dimensional, like Chinese paper-cuts, dark like the stone figures themselves against the darker night. We paused by the last figures. A monolithic tablet leaning back against the night and an obelisk taller than any of the figures, pointing up into the night: a cloud pillar. Like the other figures, they both had their duplicates across the way. We stood before one of the tablets and saw inscribed in relief the phoenix amidst fire and cloud, the bird of empresses and of their rule in heaven. Not dimmed by darkness or by time, the bird soared. Ethereal, yet established here forever on this stele. The obelisk was uninscribed, unadorned, a strong and simple phallus, symbol of emperors and their conquest of earth. It, too, rose, a straight thrust up away from us to touch a star. We couldn't say if this phoenix and phallus were the beginning or the end of the spirit path. I only knew that here were manifestations of the power of magic and myth for West as well as East, for Song royalty, for herdsman and harvester, for young lovers, for foreign visitors.

We had come into this sacred landscape by light; we had come over ditches and pot-holes, through shrub and stubble. "Shall we go



home by the road?" I asked Peggy. "Well," she determined, "if this was the right way in, we can't go wrong beginning here and going back the way we came." So deciding against the road, we carried our memory of bird and obelisk back over the fields and through the night: our golden boughs.

The way back. We watched our feet and our markers: the figures and the tumuli. They focused darkness in themselves; the figures became columns for a sky of stars, and the tumuli massive thrones. They appeared more clearly to us than the earth and stubble at our feet which would surely trip us up if we didn't step carefully. The white shirt and white blouse of a pair of lovers appeared phosphorescent from behind the phoenix stone as our temporary guides. We didn't speak, and the whole night was still of human sound. There was only a throbbing of cicadas which seemed to drift back to us from the horizon as the sound of the earth's spinning.

Until the singing started. We heard it sweet and pure. But who was it? And where? The sound dipped and lifted, moved out to the edge of the earth with the cicadas and returned, humanizing the night. Our guides had vanished into shadows, and then we saw them again, will-of-the-wisps, their white clothes glowing as they moved on to climb one of the smaller mounds, leaving us to approach the mound over which we'd seen the goats and sheep spill. On top of it now was the form of a young man. The uniform was that of the People's Liberation Army; the voice was his. He stood, one arm outflung, his head back. An operatic pose, an agitprop gesture, an expression of dignity and homage. Was the song one of the lonely life of a guard on the Manchurian border? Or of his love so like a red, red peony? The song changed, and we simply knew that he was singing his heart's ease. We could see now in the dark the shadows of people sitting on top of every mound, some sitting apart, hugging their knees, some leaning against each other. Thrones indeed.

So we visited tombs and the museums often established on the premises of the imperial burial grounds, housing the treasures which had been excavated from them. With these vast structures and these vast accumulations, the emperors had desired to achieve immortality. Although grateful for the historical information such a desire has provided our generation, I had always, nevertheless, dismissed the desire itself not merely as reflecting history's fashions or religion's promises, but as expressing personal despair or personal megalomania. From the perspective of my twentieth-century liberalism, I

had protested the labor of those millions, the deaths of those thousands who had been pressed into creating these tombs and treasures for the sake of imperial individuals. Yet this walk at the end of a day in June, at the end of the harvest, 1982, out among the tumuli of a Song prince and his concubines and down the avenues of stone figures, when the people of Gongxian were also out walking, has convinced me that I'd never understood the possibilities for immortality. Peggy and I found our way home, the soldier's song following us.



*Market stall in Kaifeng*

## “Understanding the Music” and “Eating With One’s Eyes”

*Curtis Hansman Brizendine*

One’s experience of China is intimately related to and shaped by what one brings to that experience. But whoever you are, whatever you bring, understanding involves, paradoxically, both a suspension of disbelief and the maintenance of disbelief—a spirit both receptive and critical. My experience was shaped by the fact that I am an art historian. Art historians are not merely chroniclers or cataloguers. Rather, they attempt to develop acute visual sensitivity toward the goal of accurate, systematic perception. They hope to translate systematic perceptions into verbal terms and to read them—that is to deduce the meanings of what they see. What follows is a very personal essay on two cities which I visited in China. It is neither scholarly nor art historical, but what is there was shaped by my training. It attempts to convey the process by which earlier impressions and ideas were confirmed or denied in this first, most important trip to a country I have studied for nearly fourteen years.

There couldn’t be two cities in China more different than Kaifeng in Henan Province and Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province. The former is located in the vast plain just south of the Yellow River in the heart of China’s wheatland where flour-based products are staple. The latter is in the heart of Jiangnan (the region south of the Yangzi River), China’s rice bowl. The north is semiarid, the south subtropical, and virtually every aspect of the natural environment and human existence are different. Yet each was chosen in succession, with some reluctance, as a capital of the introspective dynasty which called itself Song (960-1279), each proved to be somewhat less than the ideal site for a capital, each fell at the hands of a stronger, more capable foreign opponent, and each in its own quiet way impresses one with a sense of its antiquity and uneven importance within the context of Chinese history. The patina of centuries and the veneer of modernity have failed to cloud the traditional ambience of these cities. More so than any other cities in China, these are special. They breathe with the soul

of the past. There are written descriptions and painted portraits of both. Astonishingly, one is struck by the fact that they are not now so very different than they were in the 11th and 12th centuries however modern they might seem initially.

When compared with other cities in China—Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Xi'an, even the capital of Henan, Zhengzhou—Kaifeng seems small, provincial, hardly worth the considerable trouble it takes to get there. Yet the city has a magical quality, some very special, ineffable appeal. Of all the places the University of Kansas Henan Archaeological Group visited in the spring of 1982, Kaifeng affected me most profoundly. Perhaps it was the ghosts of ages past—the spirits of great men had lived there and from that very place ruled the brilliant yet ultimately uncertain and troubled Song Dynasty. Kaifeng as it now exists seems to entreat one to attempt to understand the past, to unravel its complex history, to unfold the multiple layers veiling tradition and continuity. Walking through its streets and alleys, one feels compelled to reconcile the place with Meng Yuanlao's retrospective description of it—*Dong-jing meng-hua-lu* (Memories of the Splendors of the Eastern Capital)—written in Hangzhou around 1147 or Chang Zeduan's pictorial record, the *Qing-ming shang-he-tu* (Spring Festival on the River, Beijing Palace Museum). One feels there, very strongly, the ancestors of the city's present residents.

Traveling as we did from Shanghai on the night train, China first looked like Montana or Kansas, darkness pierced infrequently by sharp points of light. Still plagued by the somehow anomalous jet-lag, internal clocks not yet attuned to an agrarian country where the cycle of the sun determines the rhythms of the day, we woke at the first light (4:30 or so) and sat watching, frustrated, as China sped by too quickly. On a train there are only frames of a whole—precise, incisive, striking images; there were no machines in hundreds of miles of fields, few animals in fact, only thousands and thousands of people spread in groups of ten and twenty in space and time as far as one could see, over the several hours we watched. Suddenly, the shape of the haystacks suggested a possible origin of one type of neolithic dwelling; the land looked rich, there were new buildings everywhere, yet those waiting for the train to pass, seated on all manner of self-powered vehicles, appeared poor and already or perpetually weary. In China, railroad ties are bright, white concrete bows. Tongshan, Shangqiu, Minquan, Lankao, Kaifeng. Rising from

the wheatfields just south of the Yellow River dikes, modern Kaifeng presents a low profile broken only by the silhouette of pagodas, the Dragon Hall, and their modern counterparts coal burning towers and isolated high-rise apartment buildings.

The weather in May is exceedingly dry and dust clouds the otherwise clear sky. Particles catch the sunlight and sparkle like thousands of jewels. The sun itself is bright, intense, warming, healing. Walking about in a foreign country is a bit like riding a train; there are, initially, only isolated images which prompt one's memory. In winter and spring there are only meat and bean curd (for the very rich), coarse rice and bread, cabbage, potatoes and onions; no fresh fruit at all. Green shoots had barely begun to emerge—still a month until *cai* would be readily available:

In Kaifeng in the 10th month five days before the beginning of winter, the western imperial garden submits winter vegetables. The capital area grows cold, and in the winter months there are no fresh vegetables.<sup>1</sup>

Yet there was an almost palpable optimism in the air—after all, only one month to wait as compared with the six long months which had already passed. Now as then, the arrival of spring really means something.

Bird cages with as many as three occupants hang from the eaves of houses and among the branches of nearby trees. On the first intensely hot day an old woman in drab dress, feet gnarled from childhood binding, sat on a low stool in the cool shade of a plane tree and listened to her merry captives. In the 11th century the residents of Kaifeng hung jujube and dough birds in these same places on the eve of the Qingming festival.

The most important gatherings in China take place over refreshments of some kind: tea at least, but usually an ordinary meal or a banquet. In Song China, Kaifeng was renowned for eating establishments of every variety and level, catering to every element of society. Because Kaifeng was filled with officials from all parts of China there was a demand for restaurants specializing in one or another of the already established regional cuisines. The great restaurants might lure customers with exhibitions of works by famous amateur and professional painters or the advertised patronage of great intellectuals—poets, historians, or officials—who frequented their establishments. Cui Bo, Guo Xi, Li Tang, Su Shi and Huang Tingjian had been in such places. On the more popular level, houses specializing in

noodles, soups, *bing* ("breads") and such came in and out of fashion largely it would seem on the basis of their more informal advertising:

Each place had three to five men to prepare and mix the dough and man the braziers. From the 5th watch their voices could be heard far and wide.<sup>2</sup>

People who carry dishes on a tray slung on a shoulder pole sing out along the side of the road. People in the capital consider it commonplace, but if a *rustic from some distant place* (emphasis mine) should be confronted with it, he would think it extraordinary.<sup>3</sup>

The significance of the phrase "Xiao jian duo guai" (the less you've seen, the more seems strange) took on added significance. The songs of vendors and cooks still fill the streets of the city as goods are peddled from house to house, street to street. Dark, cool shops are filled with hundreds of varieties of cookies and *bing*, most hard and slightly salty reflecting the northern Chinese preference.

Market streets and particularly the night market were the most vital centers for officials and commoners alike.

The precious and rare of the four seas were all brought to be traded in the market of Kaifeng; gathered together were all the flavors of the realm.<sup>4</sup>

In the free markets one could already buy small, bitter southern apricots, clothing from the east and northwest, tiny locks with keys, western designer sunglasses (at the cost of a month's salary), or even gilt vacu-mold images of Guanyin. Informal tea stalls press outward from street residences and market doorways—four or five stools and a variegated collection of cracked glasses, filled with light brown liquid, covered against insects and dust with squares of glass, provide the places for and refreshments over which the most important encounters of the day take place.

The *Qing-ming shang-he-tu* provides visual evidence as to the importance of thatch roofs weighted with bricks and woven straw screens and ceilings in both city and suburbs. In smaller streets one is drawn toward the source of a rhythmic clack, clack, clack—an old woman sits weaving straw matting on a vertical loom. The rafters of contemporary buildings are shielded with her work.

Those who visited Song Kaifeng were impressed not by the magnificence of its natural environs, but by the beauty and brilliance of its palaces, gardens, temples, and residential districts. One Japanese visitor was fascinated by the interior enrichment characteristic

of Song buildings, the prevalence of gold, silver, and jewels, and the extravagant interior furnishings.<sup>5</sup> As Nelson Wu has observed, the Chinese city "manifests an intellectual order superimposed upon the natural terrain."<sup>6</sup> Capital cities were both schematic diagrams reflecting a conception of the cosmos and spatially perceived emblems of the rational imperial order. All but the least important cities were surrounded by walls pierced with towers and gates which had the pragmatic function of civil defense and the perhaps subconsciously conceived psychological function of emphasizing the point at which the natural order ended and the intellectual order began. The importance of this psychological function has not to my knowledge been explored by modern scholars but will be understood by anyone who has seen fragments of city walls in China or looked carefully at the *Qing-ming shang-he-tu* where one is led from the natural disorder of the countryside, to the somewhat more orderly world of the suburbs, to a city gate which marks, unequivocally, the transition to the highly ordered, regulated inner city where streets meet at right angles, houses and commercial buildings neatly parallel the avenues, and the small or sprawling country or suburban houses are replaced by larger, more formal, axial city dwellings organized on a series of garden courtyards. Such a selective and highly structured order seems more potent when considered in contrast to the most characteristic examples of Northern Song painting such as Fan Kuan's "Travellers Among Mountains and Streams" (National Palace Museum, Taipei) or Guo Xi's "Early Spring" (1082, National Palace Museum, Taipei).

Despite the reflections of traditional Kaifeng cited above and the existence of several heavily restored Song structures—the Shanggouzi, Fan Pagoda, Tie Pagoda and the Dragon Pavilion—it is most difficult to determine precisely how the Song capital impressed residents and visitors—that is to come to an understanding of the substructure of the city. Although the city walls have for the most part been destroyed, Kaifeng is still aligned along two broad avenues—which in the traditional mode of planning provided the major north-south/east-west axes. The former led originally to the magnificent palaces and gardens of the Song emperors. The latter parallels the famous, but no longer extant, Bien canal which flowed eastwards toward the suburbs and eventually into the countryside. Situated between these major avenues and waterways are the smaller streets and alleys which constitute the residential neighborhoods and dis-



tricts of the city. In particular, the imperial way was said to have been most magnificent. It was lined with flowering trees and narrow canals filled with lotus. Vendors of all kinds set up stalls on either side of it. The palace, originally in the northern part of the city was modeled on that of the Tang emperors at Changan, but was perhaps outwardly less ostentatious. In the tradition of earlier rulers Huizong, the last Northern Song emperor, added an extensive garden north-west of the palace. His passion for strange rocks contributed to its character. Hundreds of acres were covered with artificial rock formations constructed of specimens imported from all of the empire. Water was used to create vast lakes and waterfalls. Rare plants, trees, birds and animals were set into this man-made paradise. The strange, austere beauty of the garden is perhaps captured in a hanging scroll by the most famous artist of Huizong's court, Li Tang. *Whispering Pines in the Mountains* (1124, Taiwan Palace Museum) presents a sharply circumscribed view of a landscape far too neat and ordered to be quite natural. Could he have been representing Huizong's garden?

Although it adhered to the basic principles of Chinese planning, Kaifeng is said to have been far more informal than earlier capitals such as Tang Changan or later ones such as Ming Beijing. By 1126 the residents numbered over a million and the rapid population growth and corresponding economic surge resulted in a city which was of necessity more sprawling and less regular than its predecessors had been. The actuality of this becomes clear when modern Kaifeng is compared with Xi'an (formerly Changan) and Beijing where the axiality and regularity are more strictly defined. Yet in Kaifeng the ambience remains more traditional than in either of these cities and while its substructure remains illusive, the potential for uncovering it remains. In May excavations of the foundations of the imperial palace had just begun and what is found will confirm or correct our present understanding.

From Shanghai another rail line leads south to Hangzhou. It has been nearly six weeks since we visited Kaifeng. The group has dwindled to five and we are accustomed to the rhythm of the country and the process of traveling but are still acutely aware of images. Songjiang calls to mind Song Xu and Zhao Zuo; at Jiaying, Wu Zhen's home, we rush off the train to stand on his ground; just past Yuhang we glimpse a woman washing her hair in the rice fields; "In heaven there is paradise, on earth there are Suzhou and Hangzhou." As we travel through this wet, marshy landscape blanketed with the

jade green of new rice and punctuated by soft, low hills I realize how foreign this land must have seemed to those residents of Kaifeng who had been forced into exile here after their own city was sacked by the Jin Tartars. Landscape and climate are entirely different, vegetation is more prevalent, distant views are clouded by oppressive, wet atmosphere. Views are more intimate, forms are reduced to essentials, obscured distances have an almost lyrical pregnancy. All of this makes the radical shift from the monumental, descriptive style of Northern Song painting to the intimate evocative style of Southern Song painting acutely more comprehensible.

In July, Hangzhou is hot and muggy and the coolness of evening which comes slowly is welcome. The weather explains the more languorous pace characteristic of the south. That it is necessary to rest after the noon meal is apparent when we rush out to see the Xileng yinshe (Seal Carvers' Association) in the heat of the day and spend the whole afternoon on top of the hill, overlooking West Lake, in a pavilion drinking cup after cup of strong tea, eating bitter, preserved berries, and venturing out occasionally to inspect this or that legend carved into the living rock. One writer asked "Where on earth is there such a place as this?" Though this place just above the Boti (Dike of Bo Juyi) dates only to the founding of the Association of seal carving in 1903, the view is similar to that preserved in the painting of West Lake done by the 12th century artist Li Song: Hills surrounding the lake are covered with trees, buildings and pavilions; the shore is dotted with boat-docks; and the water is thick with boats whose occupants, seeking the coolness over water, travel toward the "Heart of the Lake Island" or the "Island with Four Pools Inside" where one may sit and drink tea or eat the cool almond curd. The less adventurous walk along the two long dikes, named for poet-officials who had served here in the Tang and Song, lined with the famous willows.

People say willow leaves are like sad eyebrows,  
Even more a sad heart is like willow love-threads.  
When the love-threads are broken, when hearts are broken,  
Neither can ever be restored. Bo Juyi?

Hangzhou is rich in folklore and more potent with romantic associations than Kaifeng and it is clear that while the irregularly shaped walled capital to the east of the lake was the focus of government, it was the lake itself and the surrounding hills which were what most excited residents and visitors.

Green mountains surround on all sides the still waters of the lake. Pavilions and towers in hues of gold and azure rise here and there. One would say, a landscape composed by a painter. Only towards the east, where there are no hills, does the land open out, and there sparkle like fishes' scales, the bright colored tiles of a thousand roofs.<sup>8</sup>

Hangzhou was a city which inspired poets and painters. Su Shi lived in Kaifeng off and on throughout his life but it was Hangzhou that inspired poems. Bo Juyi traveled throughout China, yet some of his most poignant poems are related to Hangzhou:

. . . Nearing the sea, the river grows broader and broader,  
Approaching autumn, the nights longer and longer.  
Thirty times we have slept amid mists and waves,  
And still we have not reached Hangzhou!<sup>9</sup>

Hangzhou, like Kaifeng, was famous for markets and restaurants serving various regional cuisines, but the famous dish is Xihuyu (West Lake Fish) a whole fish served in a rich brown sauce sprinkled with slices of green onions and slices of fresh ginger. We ordered it three evenings running enchanted by its rich flavor and fearful lest we never again taste it.

The famous sites are not in the city, but in the area surrounding the lake. We visited Lingyinsi (a 4th century monument) on an afternoon which promised rain. It was too dark to take photographs so we wandered in and out of the dripping, dank formations of natural rock with thousands of carved Buddhist images. Caught in a heavy shower we waited in a small pavilion with two women who tried to sell us tea. "Its pure, the finest quality, only \$.50 for a *jin*" they sang and finally discouraged by our disinterest left to find more receptive customers. In the temple we ate cakes then watched the ceremony of putting images to sleep accompanied by bells, drums, and the smoke of candles and incense. Even the oldest monks fanned themselves as they chanted. The form is there, but is Buddhism alive in China? In the evening light rain fell. We walked along the Suti—no people, very quiet. We argued about the merits of the present system—no one is hungry, but is a full belly more important than intellectual freedom—and the extent to which one could overlook the deficiencies in the pursuit of what we wanted—to view paintings. There was an underlying bitterness as we "songed" (said farewell to) Yen with melon and peanuts—the world after all is not so large a place that prejudices can be left behind.

I think it is in these two early capitals—less cosmopolitan, less

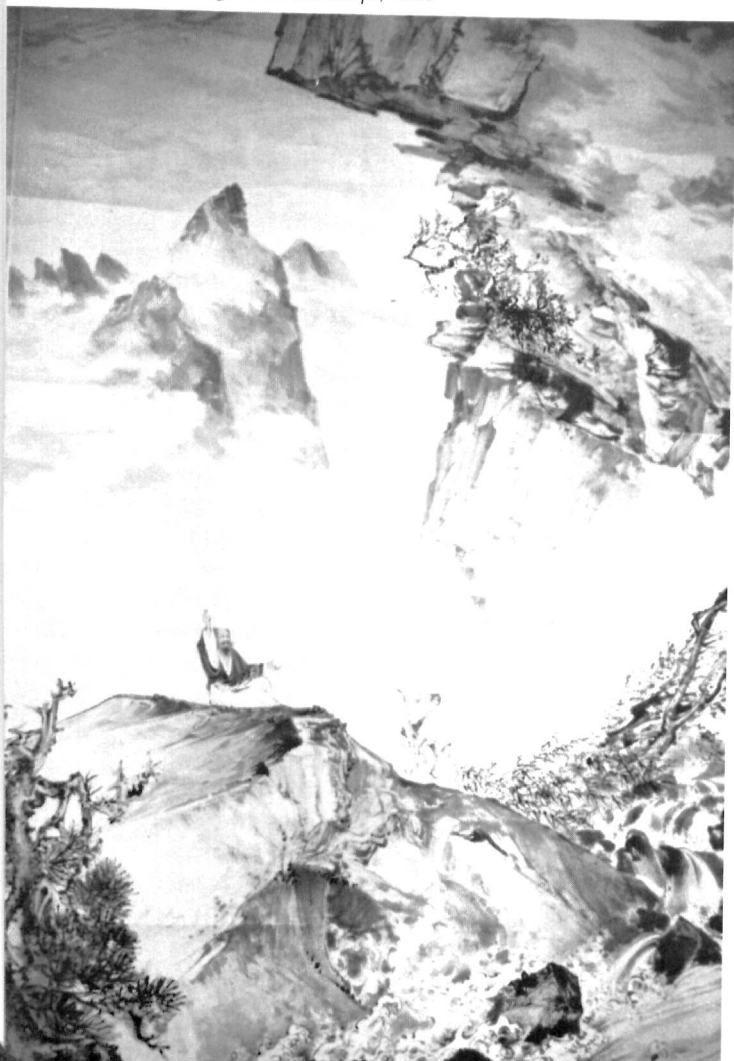
changed by contact with the West—that one can come closest to understanding what China is and was, and in the process come to understand oneself in an entirely different way.

1. Meng Yuanlao quoted by Michael Freeman, in K. C. Chang, *Food in Chinese Culture*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, p. 154.
2. Meng Yuanlao quoted by Freeman, p. 162.
3. *Guan pu nai de weng* quoted by Freeman, p. 162.
4. Meng Yuanlao quoted by Freeman, p. 158.
5. Sickman and Soper, *The Art and Architecture of China*, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971, p. 422.
6. *Chinese and Indian Architecture*, New York: Braziller, 1963, p. 30.
7. Hans Frankel, *The Flowering Plum and the Palace Lady*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976, p. 98.
8. Jaques Gernet, *Daily Life in China On the Eve of the Mongol Invasion*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959, p. 23.
9. Arthur Waley, *Translations from the Chinese*, New York: Knopf, 1941, p. 235.

*Figure in Ancient Costume, 1935*  
(detail)



*Two Figures in Landscape, 1958*



## Xie Ruijie—Painter of the Yellow River

*Yao-wen and Chu-tsing Li*

After an absence of twenty-six years, we returned to China in July, 1973. At the Zhengzhou Railway Station we were intrigued by two unsigned paintings of the Yellow River. It was apparent that they had been painted by the same artist even though artists were not permitted, because of the Cultural Revolution, to sign their works. One painting depicted the magnificence of the River with the title, "The Yellow River on the March." The other portrayed a newly constructed dam with a broad cascade of water. The powerful movement of the water was the major characteristic of both the paintings. Though we were impressed by the paintings, we were not able to find out the identity of the artist.

During our 1979 trip to China, we visited one of Beijing's painting stores. There we discovered a painting entitled "The Unmoveable Rocks in Midstream" that reminded us of those Zhengzhou paintings. In the foreground of this work was a scene of white-crested waves hitting against coal-black, rugged solid rocks. Although the sky was blue and although two birds were flying at ease over the predominantly reddish brown water and two white sails were gliding through water in the distance, the sound of the surging and swelling waves pounded our hearts and roared in our ears. The inscription said: "I painted this from my Yellow River sketch in Beijing in 1976." The painting was signed with the name Xie Ruijie.

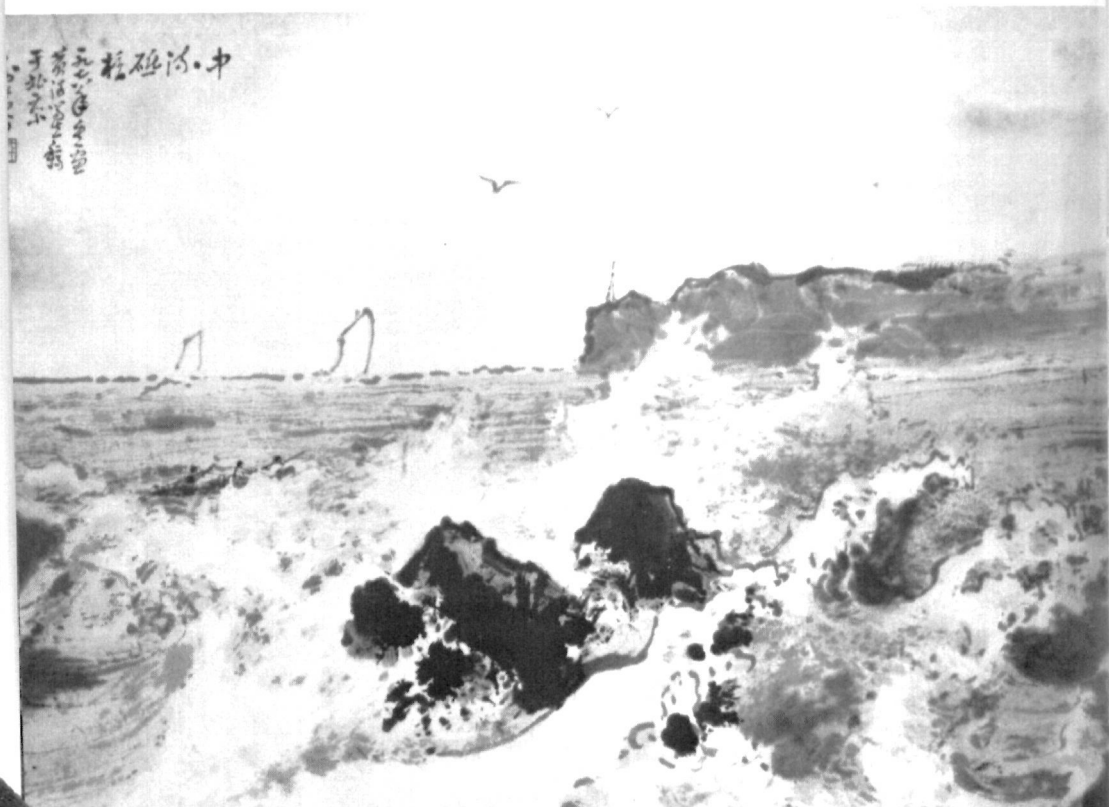
After these initial encounters we discovered that one of his paintings had come to Kansas, as a gift to Governor Carlin from the Henan Provincial Government after Henan and Kansas had signed an agreement to become sister states. Later, in the August 1981 issue of *China Pictorial* were printed a number of his paintings of the Yellow River along with a short biography of Xie. From it we learned that he was an artist from Henan, especially known as the "Painter of the Yellow River."

During the summer of 1982, we went with the KU Henan Archaeological Study Group to Zhengzhou; a meeting with Xie was



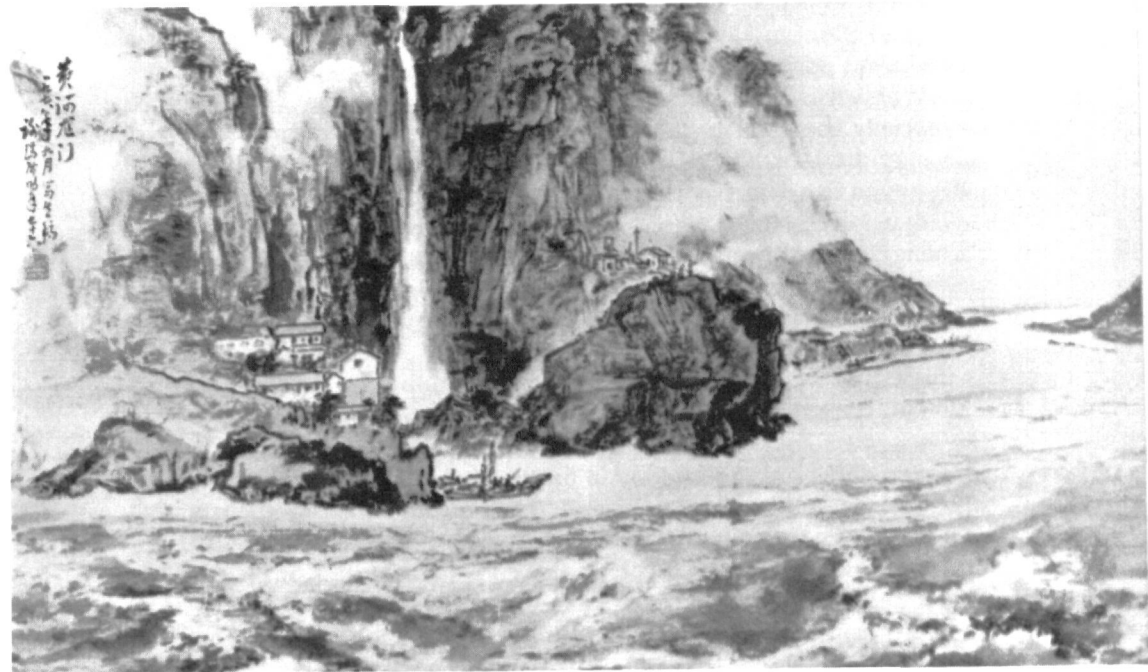
*The Yellow River on the March, 1972(?)*

*The Unmovable Rock in Midstream, 1978*





*The Dragon Gate in the Yellow River, 1978*



*“Dressing Table Rock” in the Yellow River, 1979*



arranged by the Henan Bureau of Foreign Affairs. Xie came to our hotel with some of his works. We were surprised to learn that he was already a man of eighty years. His hair had gone white. His dark, fine face was somewhat bony. He was blessed with vigorous good health. He walked erect and unaided. When he spoke he uttered his words softly with a heavy and unmistakable accent which betrayed his Henan origin. What impressed us most was his great enthusiasm for Henan, for art, and for his own work.

He was born in Gongxian, the same district in which the famous Tang poet, Du Fu, was born, not far west of Zhengzhou, in 1902 and grew up in that area. Aspiring to be an artist, Xie went to Shanghai to study in the Shanghai Art Institute and graduated in 1924, with a major in Western art. Returning to Henan, he taught art at the Kaifeng Woman's Normal School and other institutions for a number of years. Since at that time Kaifeng was the capital of Henan, he was beginning to gain recognition as one of the leading artists in that province. During this period he gradually turned from Western oil painting, which he practiced mainly during the 1920's, to traditional Chinese painting, which he took up during the 1930's. This was a significant change in his artistic development.

When war broke out between China and Japan in 1937, Henan, especially the eastern half, quickly became the area of major battles. To stop the Japanese advance, the Chinese Government deliberately destroyed the dykes at Huayuankou, north of Zhengzhou, in June of 1938, using the flood waters to cut off the roads between Kaifeng and Zhengzhou. Although this action did somewhat slow the Japanese advances, it caused one of the greatest disasters in Henan's history, drowning thousands of people and rendering numerous homeless. Luckily, before the Japanese occupation of Kaifeng, Xie and his school had already moved to the mountainous region of western Henan, where he spent his war years between 1938 and 1945. Living in the open country, he gradually left behind the habits of a city-dweller and began to find joy in nature. In his art, he also left behind the figures and birds and flowers to become a landscape painter.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, he took an even more active role in the cultural activities of Henan. He was the first president of the Kaifeng Art School when that city was still the capital of the province. In 1953 the capital was moved to Zhengzhou, which, because of its location at the intersection of the two most important north-south and east-west railroads of China,

was developing into a large industrial city. Xie followed the move to be the president of the Zhengzhou Art Institute. In that capacity he became a leader in introducing many programs to promote socialist realism in the new direction for the arts under the government's guidelines.

It was probably during one of his visits to some of the monumental projects, such as the great dam at Sanmenxia in western Henan on the Yellow River, that he became fascinated by the scenes of that famous river known as the "cradle of Chinese civilization." Sometimes with his students and sometimes by himself he sketched the scenes of the river in these areas and all the human activities that went on around it. This began around 1955. From that time on, the Yellow River became the major subject of his paintings.

Because it reflects China's long history—all of its brilliance and grandeur, as well as war, flood, famine and other human disasters—the Yellow River is a great subject for art, music, and literature. In order to better understand this river, Xie began to conceive the idea of painting a series of works depicting the many parts of the long river, from its origin in the Qinghai Province all the way to the Yellow Sea. Thus in 1963 he began to travel almost the whole length of the river, from the high plateaus of Gansu to the deserts of Ningxia and Inner Mongolia, the mountainous regions of Shaanxi and Shanxi, and the fertile plains of Henan and Shandong. Everywhere he made sketches to capture the beauty and majesty. On the basis of these sketches he began to work on the series of paintings which was to glorify the Yellow River.

Unfortunately in 1966 the Cultural Revolution threw the whole country into a long period of turmoil. Like most of the intellectuals and artists in the country, Xie was branded as a "reactionary" and sent to the farms to do manual labor, even though he was already over sixty years old. Not only did his creative work come to a complete standstill, but also he had to face the tragedy of seeing his lifelong work, including most of his paintings, sketches, and personal notes, destroyed by the Red Guards and other radical groups. Not until 1972 when things began to change for the better was he able to resume his painting activities. The paintings of the Yellow River that we first saw at the Zhengzhou Railway Station were probably done during this period. Later, especially after the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, he was fully restored to his former status as the leading artist of Henan.

Perhaps as compensation for the wrongs done to him during the period of the Cultural Revolution, he has been given, during the last several years, many important positions and titles by the government. This is a typical practice in present-day China. He now holds the following titles: Member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Association of Literature and the Arts, Member of the Executive Board of the Chinese Artists Association, Vice-Chairman of the Henan Association of Literature and the Arts, Chairman of the Henan Branch of the Chinese Artists Association, and Chairman of the Henan Association of Calligraphy. All these make him the undisputed artistic leader in Henan Province. In order to honor his achievements, the Henan Association of Literature and the Arts held a one-man exhibition of his works in Zhengzhou in July, 1980, including more than one hundred paintings.

Travelling in various parts of Henan, we found that his leading position in the art of Henan could easily be confirmed. Among the paintings we saw by various Henan artists, none could match his in both technique and expression. A few native Henan artists who have achieved prominence have taken up residence elsewhere, such as Qin Lingyun, who is now a member of the Beijing Painting Academy. Xie Ruijie's subjects and approaches are closely tied to Henan. But what distinguishes him from the others is that in both subject and style he has created a direction of his own, quite different from that of the past masters in China as well as that of his contemporaries in other parts of the country.

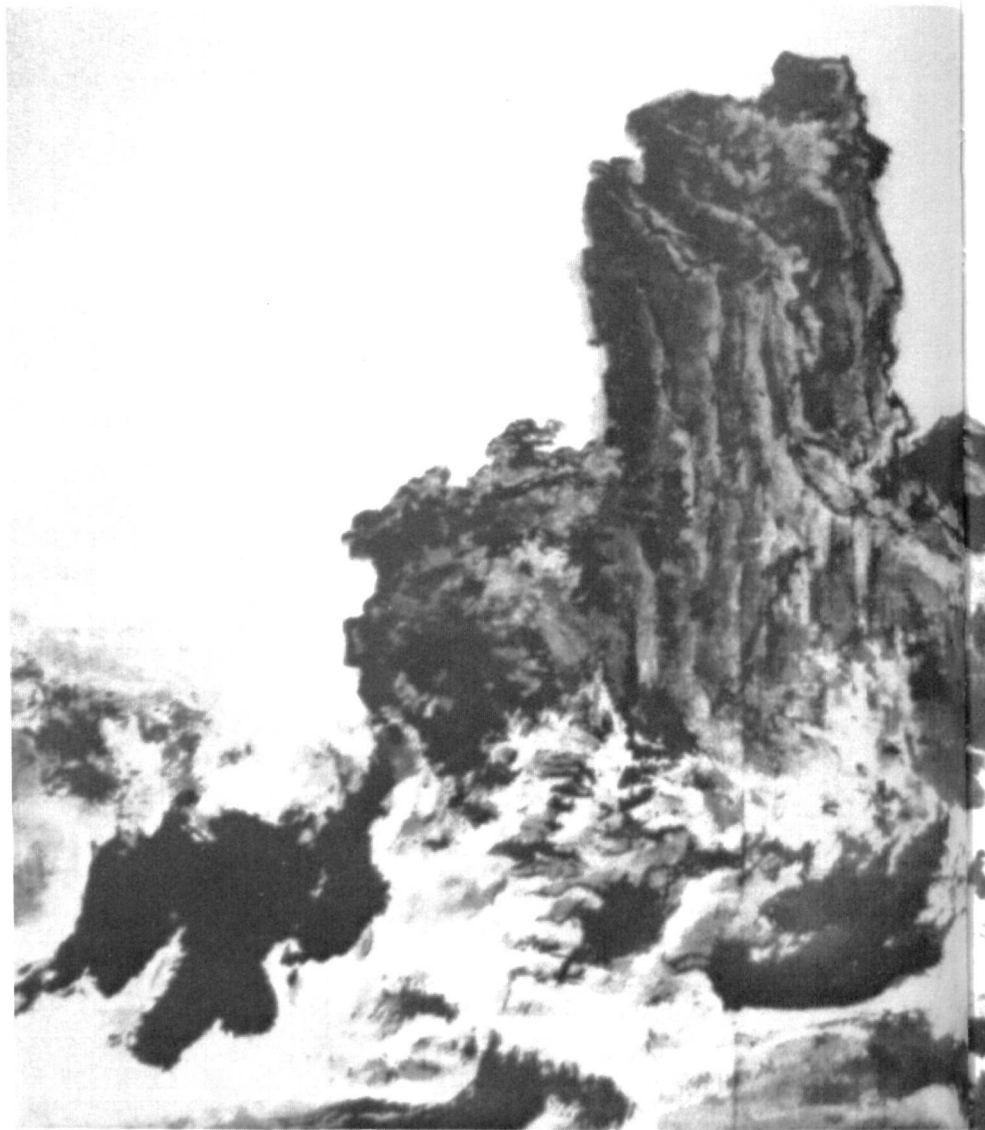
When we met him in the reception room of the Zhongzhou Hotel, we wanted especially to hear about his ideas on art. Indeed, he was quite well prepared to talk about them. All through his life he was always very much concerned with theories and ideas. As early as 1933 he had already published a book, *A Brief Discussion of the Methods of Figure Painting*, in which he showed how Chinese painting could borrow certain practices of human anatomy from Western painting. Recently he, along with other Henan calligraphers, contributed to a volume of essays, *On Calligraphy*. With his long years working in the field, he has developed his own theory of how to approach his art.

Like many Chinese cultural leaders nowadays, Xie attempted to emphasize the nationalistic character of Chinese art: "Chinese painting is actually the painting of the Chinese people. Its development is very much in line with that of the whole culture of the Chinese people." According to him, Chinese painting, because of this na-

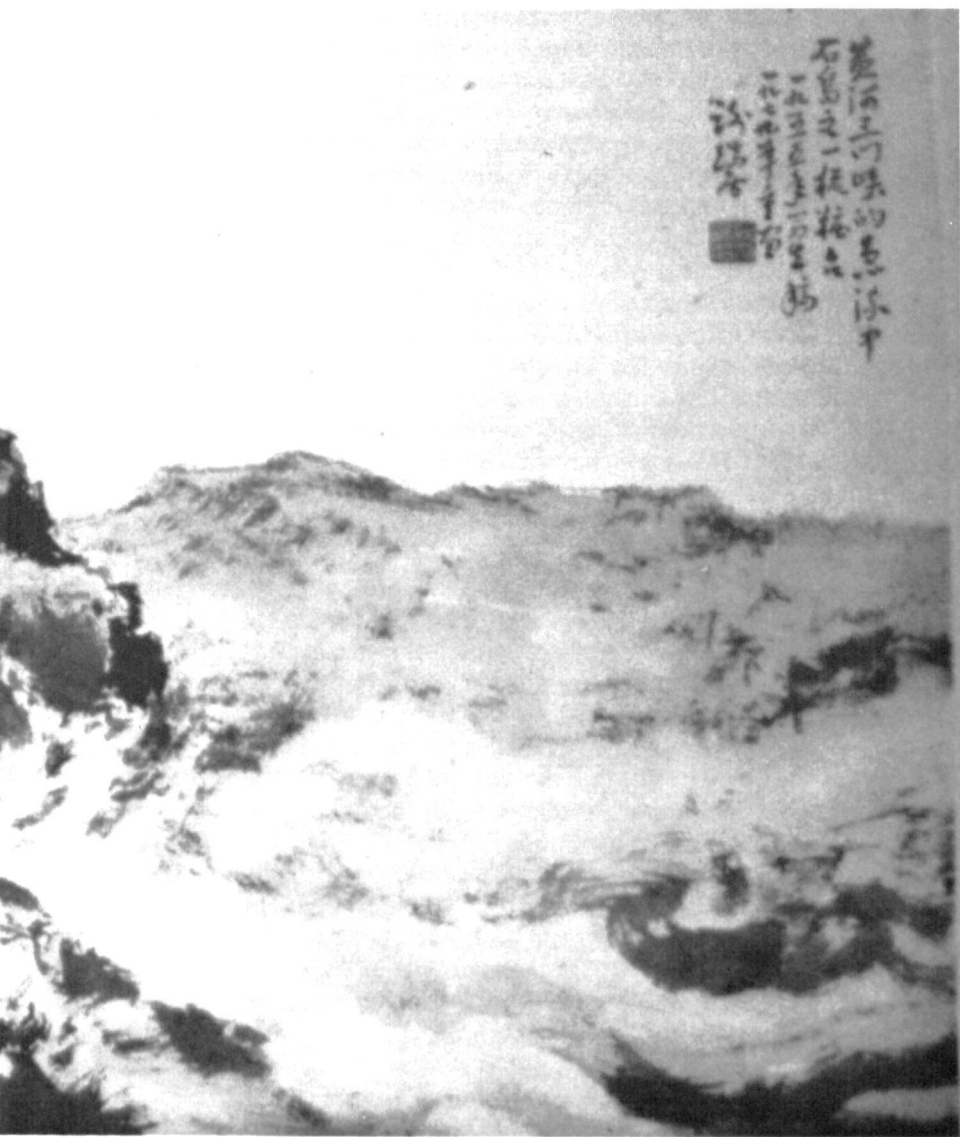
tionalistic premise, must develop along the line of realism. In other words, it must be based on nature. Explaining in greater detail how one should go about this, Xie echoed back many of the major ideas in the Chinese tradition:

1. Spirit movement. There is an important Chinese saying in painting: both form and spirit must be present in a work of art. This is to say that spirit must be expressed through the form in order to attain a level of excellence. Paintings must have the power to move people. If a painting cannot do that, it must be dead.
2. Line. The line in Chinese painting comes from calligraphy. In painting, the method of writing characters is used. Once it is executed, it cannot be changed or repeated. If it is not done in one breath, it will lose its life. Through line one can express one's feelings.
3. Ink. In Chinese painting, ink is more important than color. The ink in each brush can vary from thick to thin and from dry to wet. Depending on the amount of water in the paper, the effect of the ink on paper varies. In Chinese painting, this is called brush expression.
4. Painting and poetry. The Chinese say: There is poetry in painting; there is painting in poetry. This is a unique quality in Chinese painting.

Among the paintings he showed us at the Zhongzhou Hotel was one early work depicting a man in ancient costume taking a big stride toward the left. He has thick brows, a mustache, and long beard; his long hair is bundled up behind his head. There is no background except some washes of blue above and red below. The man seems to be moving very fast, so much so that his head and torso are bent forward and his right leg stretches far ahead while his left leg is behind. His sleeves and garment seem to have caught the wind blowing from the left. Since there is no ground or rock represented, he seems to be shown flying through the sky. Interestingly, the inscription he put on this painting is, "Stand firmly on the concrete ground and move ahead bravely." It must have been a depiction of some ancient hero in Chinese literature. Done in Chinese paper and ink with some color, it is a work based on a Chinese subject and executed in the Chinese manner. The date of the painting is 1935. It shows that by that time he was already working in the Chinese tradition with some Western influence.



*The Great River Flowing Magnificently Above and Below Like Eternal Spring, 1981*



A second painting depicts a landscape with high cliffs on the right and distant mountains surrounded by clouds on the left, but the subject is still landscape. Two men in ancient costume are shown on the rocks in the middle of the composition, with one in a dark blue garment; he stretches one arm upward and the other toward the right talking to the man in white. The right arm of the man in blue seems to be pointing up to a big bird flying by the cliff. Again it seems to have come from some historical or legendary subjects of the past. This was done in 1958.

Already in this 1958 painting some of his main characteristics have become apparent. The rocks and mountains, with their angular shapes and modelling betray some of his Western painting training. In the lower part of the painting, water flows down from the rocks, creating rapid movement. Churning waves and foam are depicted with great vitality. These are characteristics found in many of his later Yellow River paintings.

The majority of his paintings are those which depict various scenes from the famous Chinese river. A number of paintings of this subject were among those he brought with him to show us. Some show broad over-views of the river running through mountains and plains; others capture the dramatic power of the waterfall at Hukou in the middle section of the river. One of his favorite themes is the "unmovable rocks in midstream," based on a famous river site in the western part of Henan. There, a high mountain island stands in the middle of the river. To Xie, this is not only a dramatic theme of the water challenging this famous group of rocks, but also a symbol of the strong and unshakable spirit of man fighting against all odds in his struggle with the forces of nature. Another favorite subject is the joining of the river to the Yellow Sea in Shandong Province. A few boats are shown sailing against the high and powerful waves under white clouds and open sky. All of these are places that he visited and sketched for his paintings. This strong attachment to nature is one of the most characteristic aspects of his paintings during the last thirty years.

In these paintings the basic characteristics of his style are most evident. Rocks are usually depicted in sharp light and dark contrasts as a way to emphasize their strength and solidity, with rugged outlines against the sky or the river. The sky is usually blue with white clouds, mostly on sunny days. This is one of the major elements that comes from his training in Western painting. The mark

of his style is the water, usually shown in the form of rapidly moving currents, high and stirring waves, and sparkling and flowery foam. The water is seen clashing against the rocks and the cliffs with such force that it creates drama and excitement! Everywhere we can see that Xie was fascinated by the strength, power, and force of the river and by the battles between the rocks and the mountains on the one hand and currents and waves on the other. In the midst of these elements, men and birds are small, seen as an insignificant part of this grand drama of nature. This can best be seen in a work that represents a culmination of his art, "The Great River Flowing Magnificently Above and Below, Like Eternal Spring."

As an artist, Xie, after a lifelong development that took him through stages of progression from Western to Chinese painting and from figure to landscape, has in these paintings of the Yellow River found his subject and style which can appropriately characterize him as a "people's artist."

Departing from the traditional Chinese literati approach of dreamy subjects, he takes up actual scenes and places along the river, especially in Henan, as his focus. Moving away from the manner of ink play and pure brushwork favored by Chinese masters of the past, he incorporates many of the devices of Western art, such as light and dark contrasts, blue sky and white clouds, detailed descriptions of waves and foam, big stretches of horizon lines, boats and birds silhouetted against the open sky, to strengthen the realistic quality of his approach. Most important, all these combinations of traditional and Western elements are made for the purpose of serving his intent, namely to glorify the great land of China and his native Henan in their grandeur and beauty. This is the constant theme of many Chinese artists under the present regime. However, in this development, Xie did not follow any other artist. Instead, he created his own universe. Echoing his own theories, his paintings reveal his mastery of the traditional Chinese emphasis on line and ink to portray actual scenes of nature with some elements of Western painting, achieving the spirit movement and expressing poetry in painting. Hence, in subject, style, and meaning, Xie has achieved a unified expression all his own as one of the most significant artists of modern China.



## Old Chinese Monuments—A New Inspiration

*Joseph Chang*

### Inscription

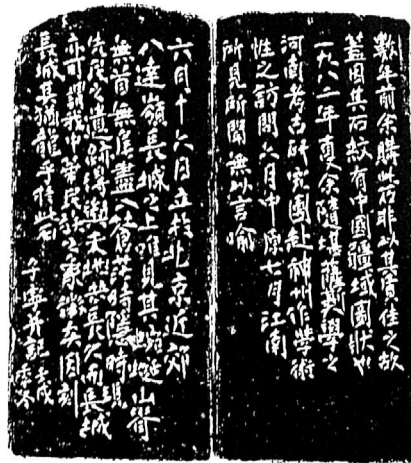
Several years ago I bought this seal-stone, not for its fine quality, but for its unusual mineral coloring that reflects the contours of China. In the summer of 1982, I went to China with Kansas University's Henan Archaeological Study Tour for an academic visit.

We traveled around the Central Plain in June and the Jiang-nan area in July. My experiences are indescribable.

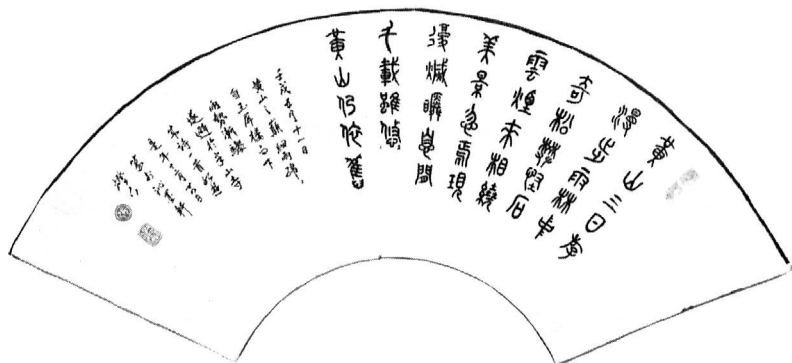
On June 16th, I stood on the Great Wall at Bada Ridge near Peking. Watching the Great Wall winding along the mountain ridges into the mist, I was unable to see its beginning or end, as it appeared and disappeared from time to time.

Ancestral relics have lasted as long as the universe, and the Great Wall can be regarded as the symbol of the Chinese People. Therefore I carved Chang-cheng Qi you lung hu (The Great Wall that is like a Dragon) on this stone.

Zi-ning inscribed in the Winter of 1982.



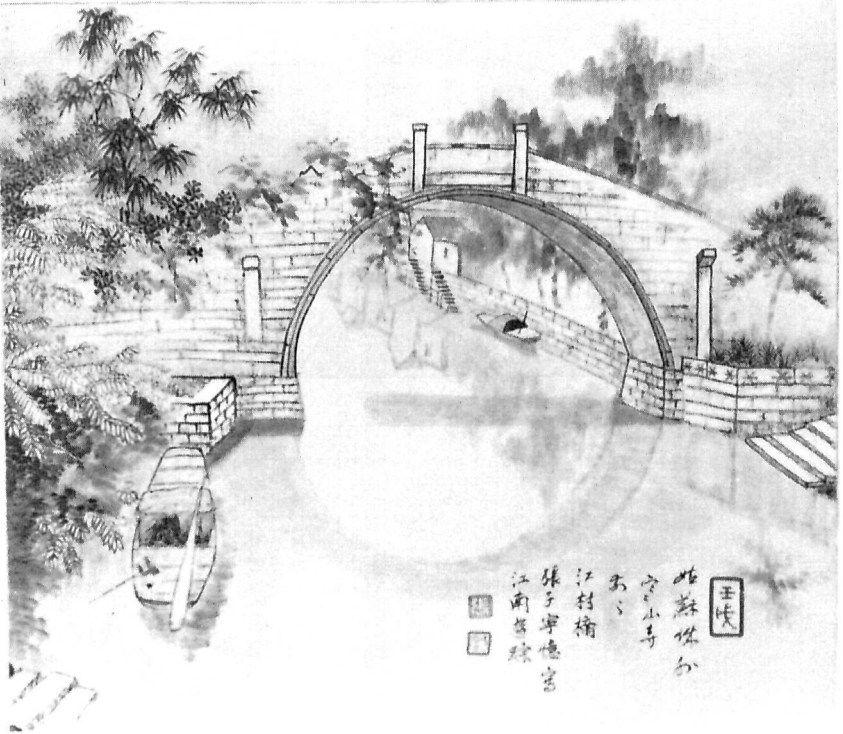
The Great Wall That is Like a Dragon



### Poem on the Trip to Huang-shan, 1983

The three-day trip to the Yellow Mountain.  
 Ambling amid forest in the rain.  
 Strange pines cling to fantastic peaks,  
 Enshrouded by everchanging mist.  
 Abruptly, beautiful scenery appears,  
 Vanishing at the twinkling of an eye.  
 A thousand years revealed, and yet eluding one.  
 The Yellow Mountain always remains constant.

Note: On July 1, 1982 endless drizzle fell on the top of Yellow Mountain. Coming down from the Jade Screen Tower, the rain got harder. Therefore, seeking shelter, I went into the Half Mountain Temple. The poem was written to commemorate this trip. On February 6, 1983, the poem was written in seal script under the lamp of *Qin-mo* studio. [Translated By Diana Tenckhoff]



The Chiang-ts'un Bridge at Han-Shan Temple  
Su-chou, 1982

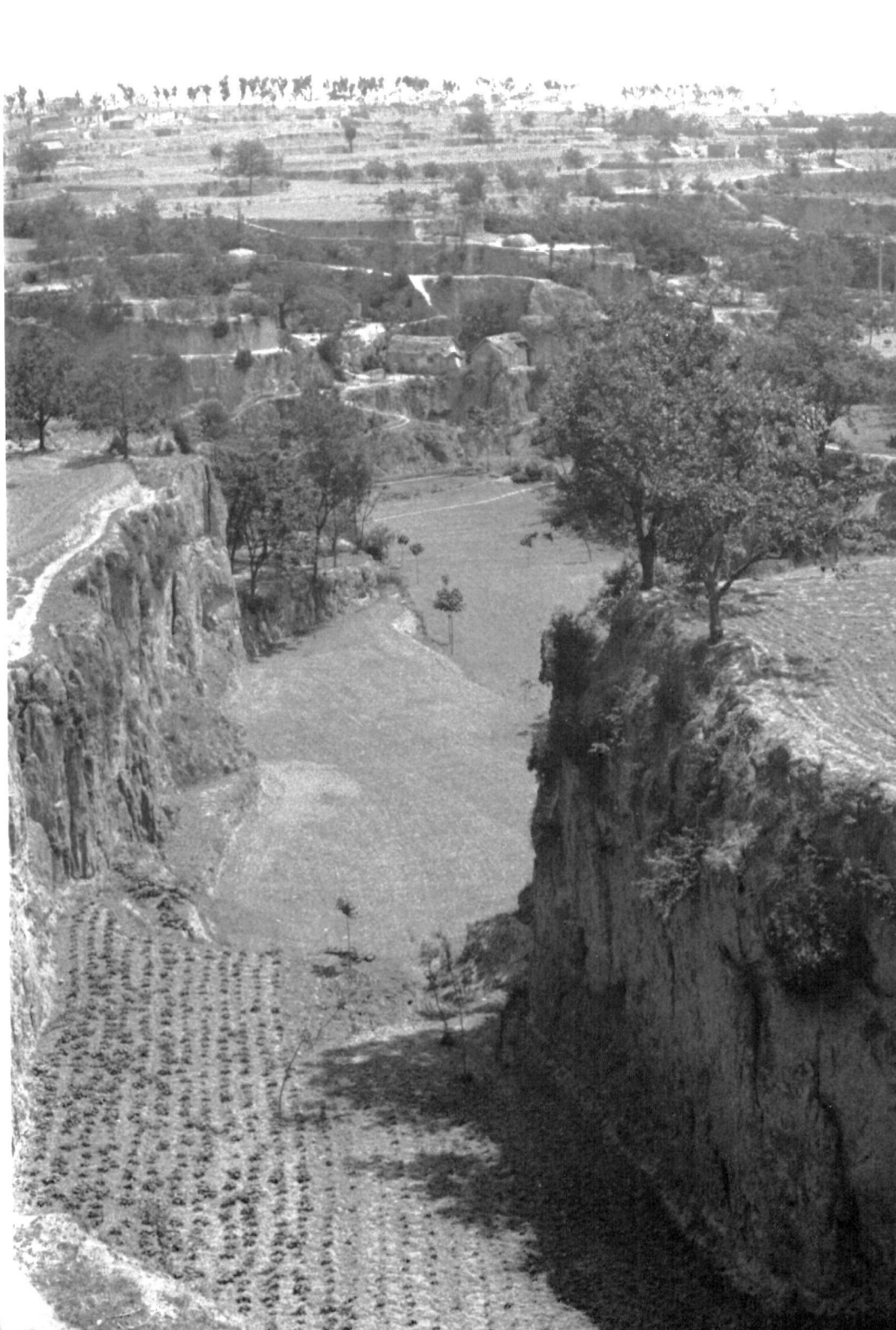


## Photographs

*Carol Shankel*

*The Forest of Pagodas at Dengfeng; Henan Province landscape (right)*

*Stone figure at the third Song emperor's tomb (p. 110); Iron guardian figures at Zhongyue Temple (p. 111)*









## PRC Diary—June 1982

As the following entries will demonstrate clearly, I am not a poet. These pieces were written to flesh out a prosaic diary that too often consisted of such entries as this: 6/6—meal with sea-slug *fricassee*. All were written on the dates given. Most I wrote in the early morning, a circumstance which perhaps accounts for their light, even casual tone. Most were written in the long hours before breakfast; so, maybe a note of discomfort has crept into a couple of them.

Roy E. Gridley  
30 August 1982

**Kaifeng Interview**  
**(apologies to R.B.)**

There are many painters here; but are there any poets?

I only knew one poet in my life,  
a Muslim Hui, he seemed to me,  
yet my father said White Russian.

In summer I was early in the street  
but always he was there before me,  
coming from a hutong behind Xiangguo,  
watching women washing piles of cabbage,  
listening to them curse the street-sweeps.

He'd tip his once-white cotton cap back,  
calculating, I guess, the night's progress  
on the scaffolding for the big moon-gate  
always being built though never finished  
as long as I lived here on Wufangxi Lu.

He then surveyed un-nipped faded flowers  
in the earthen pots on balconies and sills  
before he checked the health of parakeets  
perched in my father's hanging bamboo cages.

No housewife dared to toss dishwater  
from a dark doorway while he passed.  
For they knew he was taking inventory:  
checking for thinness fried-bread-baker's dough,  
catching the morning sun glinting off the oil  
or gleaming on the butcher's cleaver cutting  
into chunks long tails of fresh-killed oxen.

His long, thin, and boney fingers examined  
braided branches of garlic and lettuce-root;  
he stroked reprovngly mules' raw yoke-galls,  
and his front teeth plumbed for ripeness  
pears, apricots, figs and even pomegranates.

To us boys he seemed the street's chief-  
inquisitor, recording every hawker's cry,  
children's laughs or tradesman's quarrel.

He watched officials, too, scowling gently  
when the first curtain-cars honked too much.  
When the man who popped our wheat and corn  
in his little cast-iron cannon was hassled  
and ordered off the street for making noise,  
my poet watched awhile, then sauntered  
west to disappear into the old ghetto:  
the next day, our popcorn man was back.

My poet helped the people see things right.  
He was, I am sure, Kaifeng's true master,  
if the town but knew.

Kaifeng, 3 June 82

[This imaginary interview begins with an apology to Robert Browning for two reasons: the first and last lines are taken from his "How It Strikes a Contemporary," *Men and Women* (1855); and, I had in mind Ezra Pound's comment in "Chinese Poetry" (1917) that "this kind of poem," a dramatic monologue written in colloquial language, has been much neglected in the West but can "be found in the Chinese . . . [and can] be found in Browning's *Men and Women*." There are still many painters in Kaifeng; their activity centers at the painters' cooperative. Perhaps the most famous painting now associated with Kaifeng was in a genre long neglected by Chinese connoisseurs and collectors: Zhang Zeduan's *Qing Ming Shanghe Tu* (Spring Festival Along the River) depicting the busy street life in the city in the early twelfth century. The Xiangguo monastery dominates the center of Kaifeng and is surrounded by a maze of hutongs. Wufangxi is an imaginary street, but I thought of it as leading westward into the old Jewish quarter which dates from the seventh century and whose merchants and bankers were particularly important during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.]

### From a Hint by Hoffmann

Shang-shaped hoes and sickles  
rest briefly in a dark corner  
of Anyang Binguang courtyard.  
Tomorrow, we must cut back  
along choppy Taihang Shan  
to Zhengzhou.

5 June 82

[In the 1920's the ruins in "the Wastes of Yin" near Anyang provided archaeological verification of the existence of the Shang Dynasty (1766?-1122? B.C.). This site became the training ground for modern Chinese archaeologists; it is, thus, the cradle of a vast enterprise: the discovery, preservation, restoration, and study of much of China's past. Among the objects retrieved at Anyang were farming implements whose forms persist in the hoes and sickles wielded constantly during every daylight hour by the farmers on the Great Plain of China. The Taihang Shan range of peaks, late in the afternoon, is silhouetted to the west of the railway that runs south of Anyang to the Huang River and on to Zhengzhou. *Binguang* is guest house.]

### Formal Toast to Du Fu

Du Fu, tangy old Tang poet  
of friendship and of travel  
we, travellers from Kanza,  
come as friends to Henan,  
to this your native place.  
Welcome us, great poet.  
We are grateful guests.

Gongxian, 6 June 82

[Du Fu's native village and cave-home is located some fifteen kilometers east and a bit north of present Gongxian County, Henan. A visit there suggested a "formal toast" to this Tang poet because so many of his poems (e.g. those to his friend Li Bai or "Journey Northward") speak not only of friendship and travel but they often evoke memories of banquets and the inevitable toasting. *Kanza* is an eighteenth-century spelling of European travelers to Kansas.]

## Words to Li Bai

Li Bai, old Tang tippler,  
immortals drank with you  
from Changan to the sea.

You knew the trouble of travel:  
once, in a drunken Daoist dawn,  
the immortals and the money gone,  
an angry innkeeper drove you out.

My Henan hosts are kinder;  
but, standing by your tomb,  
I peel my eye for that innkeeper.

Dengfeng, 7 June 82

[*Tippler* may seem too mild a word to describe Li Bai's (and other's) frequent portrayal of himself as a drinker. Du Fu does describe him something like this in the well-known poem "Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup":

One measure of wine and Li Bai writes a hundred poems;  
his sleeping place is the market wine-shop of Changan;  
when the Emperor calls him, he refuses to come aboard;  
says, he's an Immortal of Wine, not just an "Official".

More even than Du Fu, Li Bai dwells upon the troubles of travel. My poem was written in confused anticipation that the following day I might be able to visit Li Bai's tomb. The confusion stemmed from several sources. Someone had skimmed too quickly this sentence in Nagel's guide: "Du Fu, considered with Li Bai to be the greatest Tang poet, is buried two and a half miles west of (Yanshi)," which is quite close to Dengfeng. Also there were in my ears and eyes older romanizations of Li Bai as Li Po or Li Bo and of Bai Juyi as Po Chu-l, whose grave was also not far away, south of Luoyang. Then, there was Bai's poem, "The Grave of Li Bai." The troubles of travel. Li Bai assuredly drowned while trying drunkenly to embrace the moon's reflection in the Yangtze; however, he is buried apparently near Taiping, Anhui, several hundred miles east of Dengfeng. My hosts rightly informed me that a side trip to see Li Bai's grave would be too great a diversion.]

## Zhengzhou Alba

Wind, lightning, and then rain  
(strong as the storm that astonished  
Parkman, Johnson County, May, 1846)  
has washed the good yellow earth  
from all fourteen floors of  
the concrete Zhengzhou Binguan.  
Eleventh-story iron windows  
open to the cocks' alarm.

Zhengzhou, 8 June 82

[Cocks crowing at dawn can be heard even near the noisy Shanghai waterfront. In modern Zhengzhou the crowing was astonishingly clear. There the topography, climate, and particularly violent rainstorms are very similar to those of the prairies and plains of Kansas. The Bostonian Francis Parkman records in *The Oregon Trail* his surprise at the violence of rainstorms his party encountered as they moved westward out of Westport and across Eastern Kansas. An *alba* is a Provençal love lyric in which the stormy passions of the night subside in the calm of dawn.]

## For Claudia

Politic Bai Juyi,  
could we stay a week  
guests on Fragrant Hill,  
we'd play at being you:  
making merry, making  
poems with friends;  
bell at morning,  
drum at evening,  
filling the voids left  
by the broken, stolen heads  
of Longmen.

Luoyang, 10 June 82

[Bai Juyi spent his late years (ca. 829-846) at Luoyang, first as "mayor" then in other official roles, but always at a remove from the dangerous intrigues of the court at Changan. He was often at the Xiangshan monastery in the hills southeast of the Yi River; he often entertained guests from the capital and became known as "the lay monk of Fragrant Hill." Shortly before his death Bai arranged his poems and claimed that none of his late poems associated with Fragrant Hill contained any "bitter words"; they are records of placid enjoyment." Arthur Waley, from whose biography of Bai I've just quoted, argues that both in his life and his late poems Bai continued to express his bitterness at the mis-government plaguing the late Tang Dynasty. Western visitors to the Longmen caves across the river from Fragrant Hill come there in part because they have seen in the museums of Europe and America so many of the stone heads broken or chiselled from the approximately 100,000 images carved there during the centuries before Bai Juyi. The bell traditionally announces morning at Buddhist temples; the drum, evening.]



### Line on Carol's Comment

The mountains south of Xi'an  
cleanly etched this morning  
above a belt of rusty smog  
streaked by factory plumes.

Concrete watertowers, dispersed  
as pawns on Xi'an's ancient grid,  
wait in attendance, flanked by  
the four stadium floodlights.

But look, a crane—twenty-  
stories high and turquoise,  
begins a stately morning bow  
to the Big Wild Goose pagoda.

Xi'an, 12 June 82

[Unlike Israelites, Athenians, Romans, Parisians, Londoners and Bostonians, the Chinese chose for their great cities flat ground upon which they could align themselves with the cardinal directions and upon which they could impose a grid-pattern. It was not, then, just the vast, flat fields of wheat, corn, soybeans and sorghum of Central China that reminded me of home: the city plans, too, help visitors from the American Midwest. Most such visitors arrive through the asymmetrical, river-determined and "westernized" cities of Shanghai or Guangzhou. When they move on to the ancient heartland of China—Kaifeng, Zhengzhou, Luoyang, Xi'an—they can, excuse the pun, more easily orient themselves. In Xi'an as in most Chinese cities, the ancient high rise monuments such as Big Wild Goose pagoda (706 A.D.) can still compete with more recent structures for the eye's attention.]

**Sunday Morning in Xi'an**  
**(to Grant)**

I did not wait for the green light  
but, on red, a white-haired gent  
acting as blocking-back, crossed.

I refused to compare the swifts  
circling round Little Goose pagoda  
with those who nightly dive into  
Centennial Grade School chimney,  
until, at 9:20 a.m. a night-hawk  
folded his wings and screamed.

I braved three barbershops,  
but was afraid clipped locks  
would set my hat at hazard.

Behind the hemp-twine shop  
lumberyard-like bins of brooms,  
shovels, rakes, cornshellers stood:  
still, I found no wooden pitchforks.

Before the Xi'an movie temple  
showing Shaolin's brutal monks,  
many people milled and munched  
dense as Kansas *X<sup>im</sup>* traffic.

Having many blocks to go before I ate  
I sauntered home.

Xi'an, 13 June 82

**"Datong became a frontier fort . . ."**

**-Nagel-**

Space only the eye can fill  
domes over the temple walls  
of Huayan and Shanhuasi.

A stiff wind bends tamarisk  
and rustles the cottonwood,  
Chinese elm, Russian olive.

Sand burrs, green so safe,  
fill the dusty gaps between  
fireweed and buffalo grass.

Soapweed guards Liao lions.

Khitan & Kiowa

Jurchen & Cheyenne

Mongol & Comanche

Mounted nomads moving south  
sought grass for their ponies.

Datong, 22 June 82

[The sky, climate, soil and vegetation of Datong in Northern Shansi seemed to me remarkably like that of, say, Dodge City. I had noted in guidebooks that the Chinese character for Datong means "great togetherness," "great harmony," or can mean even "great similarities." Huayan is a Buddhist temple complex that now consists basically of Lower Huayan, built by the Khitans during their Liao Dynasty (907-1115), and Upper Huayan, built by the Jurchen (Jin Dynasty, 1115-1234). The Mongols of the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368) preserved both structures as have all subsequent dynasties and governments. Shanhuasi temple may have been the site of an even earlier temple erected under the Tang, but there the buildings have undergone periodic destruction and restoration.]

### **A Poem**

Beijing's most jaded heads  
squinted in the noon sun,  
then gawked agog, no wonder,  
as she, easy, happy, young  
(her graying father smiling  
beside, toting her new son)  
stepped out in brown sandals  
over pink polyester anklets  
and moved with comely grace  
under a mauve silk gown,  
slit just above the knee,  
slowly along Wangfujing.

Beijing, 30 June 82



**Poems**

*Joseph C. Kuo*

## 还乡

千里迢迢故国行，  
铁鸟振翼如巨鹰；  
一别神州三十载，  
青春不复老寿星。

### **Returning Home**

I travel a long distance to visit my home,  
The iron bird I ride raises its wings,  
flying along like a huge eagle;  
Thirty years have passed since I last saw  
the Divine Land,  
Gone is my youth, I come back with gray hair.

## 珠江

珠江两岸农业兴，  
处处梯田片片青；  
男女老幼皆劳动，  
但祈上苍降福星。

### **The Pearl River**

Agriculture flourishes on both sides  
of the Pearl River,  
Green terraced fields stretch out everywhere;  
Men and women, young and old,  
are all on the land working,  
May blessings befall Chinese heirs.

## 龙门石窟

风尘仆仆伊水行，  
龙门宝窟负盛名；  
壬戌踏遍秦皇墓，  
山河依旧故人暝。

### **The Longmen Grottoes**

A long journey takes me to the Yi River,  
Here are the famed Longmen Grottoes,  
I roam through the Qin-shi Emperor's Tomb,  
The landscape remains unchanged,  
but my old friends are no more.



## 万里长城

万里长城万里长，  
滚滚黄河入大洋；  
长江百利无一害，  
中华文化借发扬。

### **The Great Wall**

The Great Wall extends ten thousand "li",  
The rolling Yellow River flows toward the ocean;  
The Yangtze River is all benefit and no harm,  
By which the Chinese culture thrives.

## Foreign Devil

*Peggy Sullivan*

The mail had stacked up while I was in China. I sorted a month's accumulation, paid the bills, and then scanned the magazines. In *Newsweek* I read a piece about the Russian presence in Vietnam. *Newsweek* reported that Soviet advisors in Saigon were taunted: "Russian! Russian!" A Soviet merchant seaman was quoted as having said of the Vietnamese, "They're like any Asians. They smile at you, but you never know what they mean." The Russian's statement took me back to my encounter at the Over the Water Restaurant in Zhengzhou.

Central China was in a drought. Our American tour group crossed the canal bridge and entered the Over the Water Restaurant on an evening rich with incipient rain. Hotel baths were limited. Rain would have been welcome in Zhengzhou. It would have patted down the yellow dust that has courted China for a millennium.

We were guided past Chinese diners to an upstairs room at the peak of the canal bridge. Our guide remarked that this was the foreigners' dining room. European and Art Deco, the room had leaded glass doors, stalactite chandeliers, marble archways, and dusty potted palmettos. Ceiling fans cut the thick air, and the glazed room glittered hot.

Beyond the tables there was a fan-shaped bandstand, and on it the orchestra, five old Chinese gentlemen, was playing 1940's music. They ended "*Bei mir bist die schon*" and moved into a medley of Glenn Miller favorites. "Where was all of that brass, that decadent saxophone, during the Cultural Revolution?" one of us remarked.

A dancing couple, non-Asian, performed stylish dance patterns on the marble floor.

We were shown to our banquet table, and I watched the tall couple. They wore brimmed hats, and they both wore the colors red and navy blue. The woman's hat was angular, shot through the crown with a red arrow. Its brim cast a mysterious shadow on one side of her face. She wore short navy-and-red gloves, and her blue

crepe dress was gathered at the hip by an arrow-shaped pin. The man wore a thirties' coat, a red tie, and odd red socks. His shoes were professional dancing shoes. Someone suggested that the couple was our evening's entertainment.

Then waiters placed celadon-green Maotai bottles on the table, and I foresaw that there would be tipsy friendship toasts. The first course was shrimp arranged in the shape of a flying phoenix on a large hors d'oeuvres tray. Then came crisp carp with thread-fine noodles, a magnificent dish, and then sea cucumbers and onion, then a warm, sweet fruit soup. Then meat-filled biscuits, jellied eggs, and Chinese dates stuffed with lotus seeds. And that wasn't the end of it.

At some time between the monkey-fur fungus and the duck-with-pancakes-and-sauce, six non-Asians entered the foreigners' dining room. We thought by their manner that they were French. They attempted to order the things that they saw on our table, but the waiters quietly told them that ours was a special banquet. The six grumbled but settled down to make their eating arrangements.

From our table someone said, "I wish they'd been sent away. I almost starved in France, ignored by waiters."

Someone else said, "Yes. The French know how to make one feel like a foreigner."

Then I remembered the look on my sister's face when, because she'd misunderstood the menu, a Parisian waiter had made meat sounds to her—"Moo. Moo. Oink. Oink." Then he'd thrown back his head and crowed. I had been embarrassed for all of us who find ourselves cast in the role of foreign devils. I was frowning at the table of Frenchmen when one of them raised his eyes to mine. Maybe hearing "String of Pearls" had caused them, but I saw that there were tears in his eyes.

As the meal continued a waiter paraded the duck, drawing laughter and appreciative sighs. The duck still had its head and feet. The waiter gestured to its beak and said something, beaming with animation. One of our Chinese speakers translated, "The beak contains the choicest part. A tiny tongue."

Suddenly too hot, and without appetite, I pushed back my chair and went to the French windows. I opened them. A breeze caused the heavy, dusty drapes to move slightly. I saw that a beautifully-made balcony hung over the canal. The heat pushed me out onto it. To one side was a stack of oily bottles encased in rope. A black bicycle was tucked in against the wall. Large bats dived and skimmed the

water, making dinner at the Over the Water Restaurant. Then fat drops of rain began to fall into the canal.

By leaning out and looking to my right into the hazy light I could see into a window of the kitchen. The cooks were busy. They looked extremely hot. Everything I'd seen so far in China bespoke forced labor. Colossal labor: the subterranean royal tombs, excessive pleasure palaces, the Great Wall, the 1982 wheat crop that we'd seen harvested by hand. Mile after mile we saw people and animals being rushed to bring in China's wheat safely. Harvest scenes from the Old Testament. The powerful had always made the unpowerful work, for as long as that yellow dust had blown, unspeakable labor demanded, and done.

I felt thick with sadness as I looked into the bustling kitchen. Foreign devil. I would never know even one of the people working frantically in that hot kitchen.

I lifted my hair and twisted it onto my head, skewering it there with my only Chinese souvenir, a hair ornament that I'd bought in a government-regulated antique store. The comb was made during the reign of the Guangxu Emperor and had such beauty, age, and value that I'd hesitated to buy it, afraid to possess such a powerful article. Delicate foliage formed the background for two lapis lazuli dragons. A tiny silver vine wrapped turquoise flower petals each of which was tipped up to catch the sunlight. The dragons' heads were turned up and over backwards like pets hoping to have their throats caressed. Altogether, the hair ornament spoke of delicacy, decoration, and vanity. It had been formed by an artist who'd signed it, *Mi Po made this in silver 1879*. Another woman, a woman with bound feet, at another melancholy moment, had certainly worked this comb into her hair the way I was working it into mine. I felt her, the way I'd hoped I would when I bought the comb. Touching it with the fingers of both hands, my elbows out, I leaned into the rain drops thinking of the old women we'd seen using canes, crutches, or else shuffling along with no support except their tiny, deformed feet.

When I leaned in out of the rain I saw that I'd been joined by one of the Frenchmen.

It irritated me for him to say, "You are a gay group."

I nodded.

"So lively, and full of . . . well, life."

I leaned out again so that I could see into the bright kitchen. *Until I speak he won't know who I am*. Then I realized that in the restaurant

he'd heard us speaking English. And he'd addressed me in English. So I said, "We're Canadians. But not French Canadians."

"Are you touring?"

"Yes. We're a dance troupe." I gestured inside to the couple who were improvising at half time a tango to the beat of the orchestra's "Mexican Hat Dance." Despite the inane music, their deliberate tempo created a theatrical, sensual choreography. "They are our stars," I said.

He smiled. "How nice. I'm from the Soviet Union."

"Hello."

He offered me a cigarette, a short non-filtered Camel. It was an American cigarette, but I hadn't seen one like it since childhood. I don't smoke, but I reached out to accept the cigarette because he was my first Russian. We talked about the heat and the bats. He said that he was a staff member to the Soviet Ambassador. "I'm stationed in Peking."

I said, "Our guides call it Beijing."

"Oh, *Beijing*." The word seemed to tire him. "Truly, now, why are you in China?"

"I'm on a Henan provincial tour. Art and culture. Museums and archaeological sites."

"Have you seen the pottery army at Xi'an?"

"We arrive there in three more days—going by train—after Luoyang."

Abruptly he asked, "How have you been treated in China?"

"Well. Our Chinese hosts do extra things for us."

"Like what?"

"Those of us interested in literature noticed that on our way to view Buddhist carvings in the Gongxian caves, we would pass near Du Fu's native place. We asked for a detour, and the guides arranged it."

The Russian said, "You've been out into the provinces."

"Yes. We foreign devils drew a crowd at Du Fu's cave. I slipped a primrose tribute into a crack of the doorway and turned around to see naked children watching me. One of them held a tiny live rabbit by its ears. One had a green finch dangling from a string. It was dead."

"Was it so primitive?"

"All they had was dirt. They'd made their houses from the earth; their walls were tamped yellow soil."

"Always the wall."

"The wall keeps the non-Chinese out—"

"And it defines what *is* Chinese," he quickly finished my sentence.

"Well, anyway, the Chinese have been generous and flexible with us. It can't have been easy for them."

He sighed.

"This banquet," I gestured inside, "Generous—"

"The purpose of this banquet is to get you overly full so that you won't ask any embarrassing questions."

"We've gotten every answer we've asked for—"

"You are either naïve or else you've been here only a short while."

"We will travel for over three weeks in China," I replied.

"I have been in China almost three years." His eyes drooped. There was a tone in his voice. Even though he was speaking English, I recognized the tone. I'd read about it, and here it was: the unmistakable Russian sigh, the weariness fraught with a sorrow beyond words. I knew that it wasn't "String of Pearls" that had brought tears to the eyes of my Russian. He leaned over the railing and let his fingers uncurl. The cigarette rolled from his hand and fell sleepily into the canal. "The Asian problem," he said. "The efforts. Artistic exchanges. Sports exchanges. All failed efforts. The Asians—. It's always the same. One never knows what lies behind their smiles." My Russian was feeling the pain. He was a foreign devil.

"You find yourself in an uncomfortable role," I commented.

"Yes."

"We've done it for years. But now Russia offers the bottle, only to see it crash."

He was confused by the metaphor. He said, "We offer, yes."

"But it crashes."

"To what do you refer?"

"An impression," I said, "of a trivial meeting in history. Still, I've always remembered it."

"Why?"

"Maybe my age."

"What was the meeting?"

"Sometime in the fifties a Russian ship was stranded in American waters. It was stuck there for some reason."

"In the nineteen-fifties?"

"I'm not sure it was the fifties. It's not a question of *when*, you

understand."

He offered me another cigarette, and I started to accept it. Then I said, "No. I won't take that."

He gestured for me to continue.

"American seamen came alongside the grounded ship and saw that it flew a Russian flag. One of the Americans had a movie camera. He photographed the whole thing."

"I see."

"Young Russian sailors stood on deck. They looked worried. The Americans waved, but the Russians wouldn't look at them. Then the Americans made a rig, cast it over to the Soviet ship, and tied a pulley to it. Then they tied three bottles of whiskey to the pulley and hauled them across: one, two, three bottles. But the arrogant Russians stood on deck with their arms folded and let those friendly bottles break. They showed no emotion. Crash, crash, crash. I saw it on television, and it made me feel hopeless for all of us."

"Now you feel more hopeful?"

"Now Russia sends diplomats to China—. Now Russia occupies Afghanistan."

"Well," he said in a low, jaded tone, "your Canadian dancing master is an American diplomat—or spy—whatever you choose to call him. And Garbo in there is his American wife."

I looked up quickly to see him touch a finger to his lips to quiet any questions. I whispered, "How do you know?"

"It's my job to know."

Then louder I asked, "Well, why are they dancing?"

"They dance for their amusement. To pass the time. They dress and dance to match the architecture, I suppose. Nonetheless, they are fine dancers."

"Nonetheless."

"He is my counterpart. We all work now."

"Sure, sure, but here, tonight, no one is who he ought to be."

"What about your young sailors? Perhaps they weren't at all arrogant, even if they seemed that way to you. Maybe they were under certain orders, or more likely, maybe they were afraid to be photographed accepting gifts."

I smiled. "I'd better watch you. You are, after all, a professional diplomat."

"Still, your story seems impressionistic. You were young. Perhaps your memory emphasized certain parts."

"Perhaps." We resumed looking at the rain and I asked softly, "Do you like "String of Pearls" very much?"

"What is it?"

"The song."

"I don't know it."

"The orchestra played it earlier. It made you sad. I saw that you had tears—"

"Me? I must have yawned. *Ennui*. Those were tears of boredom. Also, my work is tiring."

"You lie to me, diplomat."

"Oh, it's tiring to be here, in China."

"I know. I'm tired. I ache, but I don't lie."

"Then why did you tell me you were Canadian?"

"Because I thought you were a Frenchman."

"Why did you think that?"

"More simple-minded impressionism, but I'm learning."

"What have you learned?"

"About what?"

"What do you travel to learn about? Ultimately? It is yourself."

"About myself I have learned that I was born in the year of the dragon. In the west I am a Libra: oversexed, complaining, unbalanced. But in China: I am a dragon!"

"Do you speak Chinese?"

"I do not. But I have spoken with Chinese people in Shanghai. They are anxious to speak English. Students, mostly boys, surrounded me, politely pressing me with their questions. That was in Huangpu Park, you know, along the river?"

He nodded.

"They asked me, *Why have you come to China?*"

"I speak five languages."

"But you don't know why you're in China."

"I work. Here." He turned his fine hands palm-side up and spread the fingers wide. I looked down carefully at them all. They were empty and open. I heard a sound. I looked into the dining room. Our tour leader was tapping the tiny toasting glass with a table knife. A green Maotai bottle had been moved close to him. He stood and began a toast.

Still looking inside I said, "They're starting the toasts. I must go back in."

"I heard the call." He smiled and offered his hand.



“What’s behind your smile, Soviet Ambassador?” I asked, taking his open, friendly hand and holding it with both of mine. From inside I heard the Chinese toast, “Ganbei!” sung out in many voices. “Goodbye, my first Russian.”

“Goodbye, American woman.”

I stepped through the French doors, back into the heat, the toasts, and the gaiety.

“Hey!” he called.

I turned. He said in a clear voice, devoid of melancholy, “We’re all of us sailing—in the most frightful waters!” He pantomimed with thumb and one finger holding a small, shallow cup. He snapped it to his mouth and threw back his head in an imaginary drink. Then he held up his tiny make-believe cup in a salute, “Ganbei!”

the end

GLOSSARY

- An Lu-shan 安祿山  
 Anguo (si) 安國寺  
 Anhui 安徽  
 Anyang 安陽  
 Bada Ridge 八達嶺  
 Bai Juyi 白居易  
 Baimasi 白馬寺  
 Baojing (si) 寶慶寺  
 Baoshan 寶山  
 Bienji 汴京  
 binguan 賓館  
 Bo Juyi 白居易  
 Boti 白堤  
 Bowuguan 博物館  
 Changan 長安  
 Changjiang River 長江  
 Changqing 長慶  
 Ch'eng Hsueh-hua 程學華  
 Dashizhi 大勢至  
 Datong 大同  
 Dazhai 大寨  
 Dengfeng 登封  
 Dong-jing meng-hua-lu 東京夢華錄  
 Du Fu 杜甫  
 Dule (si) 獨樂寺  
 Fan Kuan 范寬  
 Fan Ta 繁塔  
 Fouguang (si) 佛光寺  
 Fudan 復旦  
 Gansu 甘肅  
 Gongxian 鞏縣  
 Guangzhou 廣州  
 Guanyin 觀音  
 Guo Xi 郭熙  
 Half Mountain Temple 半山寺  
 Henan 河南

Huanghe 黃河

Huayan 華嚴

Hui (Muslim) 回

Hukou 湖口

hutong 胡同

Jade Screen Tower 玉屏樓

Jiang-nan 江南

Jin 金

Jixian 藺縣

Kaifeng 開封

Ku Tsu-yu 顧祖禹

Li Bai 李白

Li Tang 李唐

Liao 遼

Ling Yinsi 靈隱寺

Longmen Shiku 龍門石窟

Luoyang 洛陽

Nanjing 南京

Nankai 南開

Ningxia 寧夏

Qin Lingyun 秦嶺雲

Qin-mo studio 沁墨軒

Qing Ming Shanghe Tu

清明上河圖

Qinghai 青海

Qinhuang Mu 秦皇墓

Sanmenxia 三門峽

Shaanxi 陝西

Shandong 山東

Shang 商

Shangguosi 相國寺

Shanxi 山西

Shaolin 少林

Shenzhou 神州

Su Shi 蘇軾

Taihang Shan 太行山

Taiping 太平

Tang 唐

Tieh Ta 鐵塔

Tien Wang 天王

Ting Fu-pao 丁福寶  
Wangfujing 王府井  
Wanli Changcheng 萬里長城  
Wenwu 文物  
Wu Zhen 吳鎮  
Xi'an 西安  
Xiao-jian duoguai 少見多怪  
Xie Ruijie 謝瑞階  
Yi River 易河  
Yigang weimang 以鋼為網  
Yuan 元  
Zang Zeduan 張擇端  
Zhejiang 浙江  
Zhengzhou 鄭州  
Zhongzhou Hotel 中州賓館  
Zhujiang 珠江  
Zi-ning 子寧  
Ziliudi 自留地

May 28—June 18, 1982

- 5/28—Lawrence to Los Angeles and Tokyo.  
5/29—Overnight at Narita Nikko Hotel-Tokyo International Airport.  
5/30—Tokyo to Shanghai  
    Afternoon: Bus tour of Shanghai (in the rain)  
5/31—Morning: Pengpu People's Commune  
    Afternoon: Shanghai Art Museum or Baoshan Iron and Steel Complex  
    Yu Garden  
    Evening: Peking Opera performance  
6/01—Morning: Fudan University or shopping  
    Afternoon: Boat tour of Shanghai Harbor  
    Evening: Overnight train to Kaifeng.  
6/02—Morning: Briefing at hotel  
    Afternoon: Longting (Dragon Pavilion)  
    Kaifeng Painting Academy  
    Xiangguo Temple  
    Xiangguo Temple Association of Painting and Calligraphy.  
6/03—Morning: Longting (again)  
    Liuyankou on the Yellow River  
    Iron Pagoda  
    Kaifeng City Museum  
    Afternoon: Former house of the Shaanxi-Gansu Association  
    Former Jewish District.  
    King Yu Terrace  
    Po Pagoda  
    Bus to Zhengzhou.  
6/04—Morning: Zhengzhou University  
    Lunch: K.U. officials hosted by President Fan  
    Afternoon: Dahecun archaeological site and Museum  
    Interview with Xie Ruijie, painter of the Yellow River  
    Evening: Train to Anyang  
6/05—Morning: Wenfeng Pagoda  
    Yinxu Museum  
    Shang archaeological site  
    Lunch: Banquet hosted by the Foreign Affairs Office of Anyang  
    Afternoon: Anyang City Museum  
    Train to Zhengzhou.  
6/06—Morning: Bus to Gongxian  
    Poet Du Fu's native place  
    Afternoon: Buddhist Caves of Gongxian  
    Former Country Estate of Kang Baiwan (Millionaire Kang)  
    4th Song emperor's tomb  
6/07—Morning: 3rd Song emperor's tomb  
    Shaolin Temple and the Pagoda Forest  
    Afternoon: Zhongyue Temple (Daoist)  
    Songyue Pagoda  
    Songyang Academy  
    Evening: Shaolin Boxing  
6/08—Morning: Bus to Zhengzhou  
    Han Tombs at Mixian  
    Afternoon: Zhengzhou City Museum and Provincial Museum  
    Evening: Dinner at the Restaurant Over the River  
    Concert by Beijing Singing and Dancing Group

- 6/09—Morning: Train to Luoyang  
Arts & Crafts Store, or Luoyang Museum  
Afternoon: White Horse Temple  
The old town of Luoyang.
- 6/10—Morning: Longmen Caves  
Afternoon: Longmen Caves of Luoyang Museum  
Train to Xi'an.
- 6/11—Morning: Chin emperor's tomb  
Museum of Warriors and Horses  
Afternoon: Lintong County Museum  
Huaqing Hot Springs Pool  
Banpo Museum
- 6/12—Morning: Big Wild Goose Pagoda Qianling Tombs  
Evening: Mr. Chen of C.I.T.S. briefs group on independent travel in China  
Movie—"Shaolin Temple"
- 6/13—Morning: Bell Tower  
Zhaoling Tombs  
Afternoon: Xianyang Museum.
- 6/14—Morning: Great Mosque  
Shaanxi Provincial Museum  
Lunch: Sichuan style restaurant  
Afternoon: Plane to Beijing
- 6/15—Morning: Forbidden City  
Afternoon: Temple of Heaven  
Evening: Acrobatic show
- 6/16—All day: Ming Tombs  
Great Wall
- 6/17—Morning: Beijing Zoo  
Summer Palace  
Afternoon: Boat trip on Lake  
Friendship Store  
Evening: Farewell Banquet.
- 6/18—Morning: Museum of History of the Revolution  
Lunch: Minzu Hotel Restaurant  
Afternoon: Beijing to Tokyo

## TOUR PARTICIPANTS

- Ellen B. Avril*, Graduate Student, Art History, KU  
*Curtis Hansman Brizendine*, Assistant Professor of Art History,  
Swarthmore College  
*Elizabeth M. Brooker*, Architectural Business Consultant, Shawnee  
Mission  
*Claudia G. Brown*, Adjunct Curator of Oriental Art, Phoenix Art  
Museum; Faculty Associate, Arizona State University  
*Margaret C. Byrne*, Professor of Speech and Language Pathology, KU  
*Margaret Carney-Ryan*, Graduate Student, Art History, KU  
*Joseph Tsenti Chang*, Graduate Student, Art History, KU  
*Grant K. Goodman*, Professor of History, KU  
*Marilyn Gridley*, Graduate Student, Art History, KU; Lecturer,  
UMKC  
*Roy E. Gridley*, Professor of English, KU  
*Harold Hesler*, Engineer, Shawnee Mission  
*Marxie Hesler*, Housewife, Shawnee Mission  
*Robert S. Hoffmann*, Distinguished Professor of Systematics and  
Ecology and Curator of Mammals, Museum of Natural  
History, KU  
*Sally Hoffmann*, Program Coordinator, Spencer Museum of Art, KU  
*Joseph C. Kuo*, Associate Professor of East Asian Languages and  
Cultures, KU  
*Chae-Jin Lee*, Professor of Political Science and East Asian Languages  
and Cultures and Associate Dean, KU (Tour Coordinator)



*Hon-ching Lee*, Professor of Art, Rockford College; Director of the Clark Arts Center Gallery, Rockford, Ill.  
*Jean H. Lee*, Poet, Rockford, Ill.  
*Chu-tsing Li*, Judith Harris Murphy Professor of Art History, KU (Tour Coordinator)  
*Yao-wen Kwang Li*, Freelance Writer, Lawrence  
*Letha E. McIntire*, Assistant Professor of Art History, Trinity University  
*Elizabeth Schultz*, Professor of English, KU  
*James E. Seaver*, Professor of History and Director of Western Civilization Program, KU  
*Virginia Stevens Seaver*, Editor, Regents Press of Kansas  
*Carol Shankel*, Public Information Coordinator, Spencer Museum of Art, KU  
*Delbert M. Shankel*, Professor of Microbiology and Biology and Special Counselor to the Chancellor, KU (Tour Leader)  
*Barbara Stein*, Graduate Student, Systematics and Ecology, KU  
*Marilyn Stokstad*, Distinguished Professor of Art History, KU  
*Peggy Sullivan*, Owner/Editor of Lantana Press, Lawrence  
*Barbara Ashton Waggoner*, Courtesy Lecturer, Center of Latin American Studies, KU  
*George R. Waggoner*, Professor of English, KU  
*Faye Watson*, Manager, Sunflower Travel Agency, Lawrence  
*Grace C. Yen*, Graduate Student, Harvard University





**Photographic Credits:**

*Curtis Brizendine*, 82

*Joseph Chang*, 100-01, 106, 107

*Marilyn Gridley*, 62, 63

*Robert Hoffmann*, 22

*Joseph Kuo*, 124

*Chu-tsing Li*, 92, 94

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*Carol Shankel*, 2, 56, 64, 74, 108, 109, 110, 111, 142-43

*Xie Ruijie*, 95 (top)

*Zhongguo Shuhua*, 95

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